

LESSON ESSENTIALS

UNDERSTANDING SALVATION

LESSON 1: HOW CAN I KNOW I AM SAVED?

The Bible makes it clear that whoever believes in God has eternal life. It's that simple. This lesson will ease many of your fears and uncertainties as it gives you more clarity on the subject of your salvation.

New believers sometimes find it difficult to believe that they have been saved without good works and sacrifice. This lesson will help you minister to them, giving you the ability to demonstrate with Scripture.

An assurance of salvation can't be based on emotions and good works. It needs to find a basis in something more solid – the Word of God and the change in our life that occurs when we receive the Holy Spirit. This lesson will help you figure out how you can know for sure that you are a Christian.

REFLECT

Unless you deny God and stop living for Him the gift of salvation is truly yours to keep. Don't let the devil convince you to believe anything else.

Doesn't Jesus' Word in John 10:27-28 serve as an assurance of our salvation? The passage says, 'My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of My hand.'

Miriam was having trouble sleeping. She had read her Bible before bed and saw the words in John 3:36 that said "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him." This troubled her deeply because she had prayed to receive Jesus Christ just days before and was reading through the book of John. She eagerly wanted to please God, and wasn't sure she had done enough to receive salvation. Miriam believed that God was powerful, and couldn't bear the idea that the wrath of God remained on her. It was thoughts of the afterlife that had prompted her to seek out who Jesus was in the first place. Miriam wondered - could she know for sure that her many sins were forgiven, and that she would be saved?

Every one of us has times of doubt. We wonder if our faith is real, or if God's promises are true. These are times to draw close to God, read His promises again for ourselves and receive assurance. God has not left us all alone to worry about the state of our soul, or to guess at how to please Him. God has provided two means of assurance for us!

First, the Word of God contains assurance for us. The Bible is like no other book in the world. It is inspired by God and is the basis for salvation and for Christian living. It was written down by 40 different people over a span of 1500 years – and yet it is perfectly cohesive and absolutely complete. What other work can make those claims?

Secondly, salvation changes our lives in a radical way. We can sometimes fool ourselves that a change has taken place in our lives because we act in a certain manner. But a truly saved person will exhibit a change in their life that is much deeper than just acting like a Christian.

After a sleepless night, Miriam went to visit her friend Leena who had first shared the Gospel with her. She asked Leena how she could know for sure that she was saved, because at the moment she didn't feel saved. Leena hugged her and assured her that there are answers for her questions. Leena explained that feelings are not an accurate measure of whether or not we have received the gift of salvation from God. Feelings come and go. We also cannot rely on doing many things for God in the hope that He will see us and give

us salvation. That isn't how God's gift works! Miriam still wondered how she could know her salvation for sure. Leena picked up her Bible and proceeded to ask Miriam a series of questions.

First Leena asked Miriam if she had admitted she was a sinner. Miriam said that she had, that her sins grieved her and she needed Jesus Christ to forgive her sins. Then Leena asked if Miriam believed that Jesus Christ was the son of God, and that He is Lord. Miriam said she absolutely did. Together they looked at Romans 10:9 which says, "if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved" and they also looked further into the book of John, which Miriam had been reading. John 5:24 says "Truly, truly I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes in him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgement, but has passed from death to life". Miriam saw these verses and felt relief, because she knew in her heart that these things were true of her. Leena brought Miriam some tea, and as they talked further and looked more into the Word of God, Miriam could see that she could have faith in her salvation based on the Word of God.

Leena had known Miriam for a long time, and could confirm that there had been a deep change in Miriam's life. Instead of a rebellious spirit, she had begun to seek God in obedience to His will. She displayed love for God's people and a willingness to sacrifice things in her life that were displeasing to God. Leena showed her 1 John 5, which gives many truths to us, and explains how we can know we are saved. After reading this, Miriam could recount how she was beginning to understand the Word of God, where it seemed like nonsense to her before and that she was able to obey God increasingly. Miriam was confident again that she would not suffer the wrath of God, and that indeed her sins had been forgiven. Her friend was able to bring comfort to her from the Bible, so she could have assurance of salvation.

If someone is wondering about their salvation, we can simply ask them these questions: Do these verses from the Bible describe

"If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved"

Romans 10:9

the change that has occurred in your life? Have you done what is required of you from Scripture (that is repented, confessed, and believed)? Have you received new life, a new heart and mind, and the Holy Spirit? If they do not see evidence of these things in their life, it might be a good opportunity to share the Gospel with them again. If you are wondering if your salvation is secure, there is no need of signs or miracles. God's Word is a sign to us, and our heart changing by the work of the Holy Spirit is a miracle in itself.

We can trust God's word and the work He is doing in us, and be confident that as we remain close to God through obedience He will hold on tightly to us. John 10:28 says "I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, no one will snatch them out of my hand". God will hold onto us, and protect what is ours because of salvation. Jude 1:24-25 says "Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Saviour, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen"

IN REVIEW

- Feelings are not an accurate proof of our salvation. Emotions can sometimes be misleading, but the Word of God isn't.
- The source of assurance for our salvation is the Word of God and the evidence of a changed life.
- God's Word tells us that we must admit we are sinners, believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and that God raised Him from the dead, and confess that He is Lord.
- This will result in obedience, love and the presence of the Holy Spirit with us. Our lives will change as we become more like Jesus Christ.

