

100 BIBLE LESSONS

These lessons were originally given at Manila, Philippines, in 1958 and 1959 by former missionary to China, Alban Douglas. Give these lessons to people you visit, youth groups, hospital patients, church visitors and new members. Use them in Sunday School, bus ministry, jail services, nursing homes, Christian schools, small discussion groups and many other places. God's Word will answer your questions and help solve your problems.

LESSON 9 – ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

INTRODUCTION

Assurance of salvation is necessary if a believer is to help others spiritually. "In my church some think that they are Christians, most of them hope so, some say so, and a few know that they are saved." – Rev. H. Hildebrand

Are you married? Are you sure? You are either married or not. There is no halfway place. A person is either saved or lost. Either "in Christ" or outside. Salvation is a miracle change. Has the miracle taken place? Yes, or no? If we are "in Christ" then we ought to have the full assurance of salvation. Many church people do not believe that it is possible to be sure of salvation now. They feel that it is sacrilegious to make such a statement. Faith believes God. If we were saved by works then they would be correct, for one would need to keep working and furthermore, the quality of the works would need to meet a standard. But salvation is a gift (Eph. 2:8) which we receive and then we possess salvation.

I. DEFINITION OF ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

To have assurance of salvation is to be absolutely confident that we are saved and that if we died suddenly, we would go to heaven. Assurance of salvation is possessing salvation – possessing the Lord Jesus Christ. Salvation is eternal life; it is the life of God; it is Divine life. If I possess eternal life, then I am saved. John 10:28-29, *And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.*

II. WHO MAY HAVE ASSURANCE OF SALVATION?

1. Those who have received Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior. Jn. 1:12, *But as many as received Him, to them gave He power (authority) to become the sons of God...*
2. Those who believe in Jesus Christ. John 3:16, *...whosoever (Alban Douglas) believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life...* John 3:36, *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life...*

III. BASIS OF ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

Can assurance be based on feelings? No, never. Satan might control or influence our feelings. Health, weather, circumstances and environment affect feelings. To some entering salvation it is a real emotional thrill. No feelings at all to others. God has given us three things upon which to base our assurance:

1. The witness of the Holy Spirit. Romans 8:16, *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.* Previous to conversion, the Spirit will have been convicting of sin, righteousness and judgment to come. Now His gracious ministry is changed. In a believer, the Holy Spirit speaks peace to the soul and grants an inner rest that confirms to the individual that he really belongs to Jesus now. Gal. 4:6, *And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.* The Holy Spirit gently whispers to my spirit, "You are a child of God now."

2. The Word of God. Very often, the Holy Spirit witnesses through the written Word. 1 John 5:10, *He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself...* 1 John 5:13, *These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may KNOW that ye have eternal life, and that ye MAY BELIEVE on the name of the Son of God.* Condition, "believe": result, "know." If the devil comes and tempts you to doubt your salvation, put your finger on this verse and rebuke the devil in the name of the Lord and Satan will flee from you. Say to Satan: The Word of God says that if I believe on Jesus Christ I have eternal life. On (give the date) I believed on Jesus, therefore I have eternal life. I am saved. My sins are forgiven. I am on my way to heaven. Let the Word of God be the foundation on which you build a strong assurance. Then others will come to you seeking one who speaks with authority of eternal things.

Other verses of Scripture upon which to base assurance of salvation:

Jn. 5:24, *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my Word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, HATH everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.* (Believeth – Hath)

Acts 13:39, *And by Him all that believe are justified from all things.* (those who meet the condition of believing are justified)

Luke 7:48, *And He (Jesus) said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.* (When the sins are removed, the path to heaven is open and clear.)

Roman 10:13, *For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.* (If I have called on the Lord Jesus, then I am saved.)

3. The changed life. Everyone around sees the change in us and assures our own heart that we are saved – truly a child of God – truly born again. 1 John 3:14, *We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.* This is a positive sign, exemplifying salvation. The Christian is a new creature in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17) and this is manifested in new affections, new likes, new dislikes, new loves and new hatreds. The power and presence of evil habits are gone, confirming that I am truly saved.

IV. THE PROBLEM OF ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

Since the Word of God and the Holy Spirit are so clear that it is possible to have the assurance, why do so few have assurance? With some it is because they have listened to the devil's accusations.

The acid test boils down to answering two questions:

1. Have I received Jesus Christ as my personal Lord and Savior?
2. Do I truly believe on the Lord Jesus Christ?

If I can answer a definite "yes" to both questions, then on the basis of the Word of God I am saved. To doubt the Word of God is a terrible sin casting shame on God's Holy Bible. It is not presumption to believe the Word of God. It is faith that honors and pleases God that rejoices His heart, Heb. 11:6.

V. HINDRANCES TO AN ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

1. Failure to trust the Word of God. If I am truly saved, then I must pray that God will increase my faith and help me to believe what the Bible says. A liberal education often undermines faith in the Bible. Pray that this will be removed and that God will give me an old-fashioned faith in the Word.
2. Spiritual drowsiness. In Pilgrim's Progress, Pilgrim fell asleep and lost his scroll. Often Christians fall asleep and lose both their joy and assurance of salvation. If this has happened you must confess your sins according to 1 John 1:9, and start again.
3. Worldliness. The love of the world chokes out desires for God, the Word and prayer.
4. Lack of the fullness of the Holy Spirit, John 7:37-39. This is often caused by lack of surrender to the control of the Spirit in my life. Cure – Do not try to serve two masters. Yield your will to Him and He will guide.
5. Over-emphasis on doctrines like predestination, election, or carnal or eternal security.
6. Sin and Backsliding: Cure – 1 John 1:9.

CONCLUSION

Lord, search my heart and see if I possess salvation – if Jesus truly lives within. If I am truly saved, help me never to doubt the plain statements of the Bible. If I am not saved, O Lord, take away a false security. I want to know the truth.

Caution: Be careful in persuading people that they are saved. This is the work of the Holy Spirit and He is the one that knows and searches the heart.

Assurance of salvation made me a much stronger Christian. Assurance is not presumption or pride, it is simple trust in God's Word. To say "I know I'm saved" requires humility, for it can only be done by His grace and mercy; He saves me; He keeps me; He will bring me to heaven.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Define assurance of salvation.
2. What is salvation?
3. Who may have assurance of salvation?
4. On what 3 things is assurance of salvation based?
5. List 5 verses that teach assurance of salvation.
6. What is the biggest change that comes in the life when Christ enters that person?
7. Why do many people not have assurance of salvation? (5 reasons)
8. Is it presumption to say, "I'm saved"? Why?
9. List 5 hindrances to full assurance of salvation.
10. Should a personal worker persuade a new convert that he is saved? Why?