

FOUNDATIONS FOR YOUR FAITH

Lesson #1: Assured of My Salvation

What do you do when someone expresses questions concerns about whether or not they are a child of God? It is tempting to try talking this person into the realization of what they have done. "Do you remember when you prayed..." or "I remember when you went down front." It may even be, "don't you recall the tears you shed?" None of these activities guarantee a person that they will possess eternal life. Though any of these, and more could be added, may accompany the salvation experience, none of them guarantee that our future with God is sure.

The best way to provide anyone with assurance of life in Christ is to make sure they fully understand and believe the correct things. Our salvation does not depend on doing or saying the right words at a point in time. It does rest on our belief in certain things about ourselves, and then about Jesus Christ.

As we begin this study of the "Basics of the Christian Faith", it is important to fully understand the foundation of our new life. In this first lesson, we will cover once again the things that a person must know and believe to become a Christian. Every person on earth who is capable of understanding must deal with four issues:

I. The fact of sin

Romans 3:23

Isaiah 57:20

Man was not always this way:

Genesis 1:26-28

Psalm 8:5,6

Because Adam sinned, we all suffer:

Romans 5:12

2. The penalty for sin

Romans 6:23 (c.f. vv 16,21)

Proverbs 10:16

Galatians 6:7,8

Genesis 2:17; 3:1-7

3. The provision for sin

Romans 5:8

Why is it necessary that blood be shed in order for sin to be forgiven?

Hebrews 9:22

Leviticus 17:10,11

4. Responding to the provision: We must believe (trust)

Romans 10:9-13

John 1:12--according to this verse, how to we "receive Christ"?

FAITH: Sometimes the Bible refers to belief as faith. Romans 5:1,2 tell us that is through faith that we experience justification (meaning, our debt with God is cleared.) This faith is the way that we enter God's good favor. Hebrews 11:1 adds that faith is "being sure of what we hope

for..." Several points can be noted:

1. Faith is based on facts; it is not a leap in the dark
2. It is intelligent
3. It is a decision that we make to believe; it does not just happen
4. It is confident, similar to putting your full weight on something that you weren't sure would hold you

Faith in Christ means we believe that Jesus paid the death penalty (which we deserve) by the shedding of his own blood. Because of this, God wipes us clean and welcomes us as a member of His family.

HOW CAN I BE SURE OF MY SALVATION?

1. Review the essential elements of salvation recorded above

2. John 5:24

3. 1 John 5:11,12

4. John 10:27-30

In the coming week, take your Bible and read the Book of Philippians. Read carefully, as much as you can comprehend. When you finish it, go back and read it again. As you repeat this process, there are several things you might want to be looking for:

Truths to believe
Promises to claim
Commands to obey
Sins to forsake

As you read God's Word, remember that this is one of the primary ways that He desires to speak to you, letting you know what he expects in your new life. Read prayerfully, asking God to make His Word clear to you.