

ARE YOU SURE OF HEAVEN?

Radio Message by Dwight Porter

You cannot know for sure of reaching heaven! Nobody knows until the time comes! There are many tributaries to the river of God. Every religion is a step toward heaven! We are all striving for the same place and if God sees us struggling, He will surely take us to heaven. We are all the children of God. Someday we shall all be together in heaven!

Have you heard any of the above statements? I have many times! The tragedy is that those who declare them actually believe their statements to be true. Since when is the way to heaven left to man's speculation? The bible is very plain on this subject; but many people take the word of a man or an organization or a church.

Friend, the issues at stake are too high for you to meander through this life without the positive assurance that you are going to heaven. If you do not reach there, you can right now have full assurance of Hell; for there are only two places of abode after this life--Heaven or Hell!

Have you stopped to realize that the foundation of fellowship with God is based on assurance? How can you have fellowship with God and lack full assurance that He has forgiven, cleansed and received you into His family? You ask, can I know for certain that I am on my way to heaven? Of course, you can!

Do not be denied this assurance. You can be absolutely sure of heaven this very moment! But how? Keep reading! The assurance must come from God. It must be communicated unto you by His Spirit through His Word, the Bible. Dare to open your heart and mind to this wonderful reality. Keep reading!

TESTIMONY OF GOD'S WORD

First of all, let us consider how we are saved. It is by accepting and believing that Christ will actually do what he has promised. Where did we hear the promise of Christ to save us? We read of it in the Word of God. You are saved because of active faith in the Person of Christ; in other words, you have rested upon the claims of Christ and have believed that He will actually do what he has promised.

In John 3:36 we read, "He who believes on the Son has everlasting life." Here we have the simple statement of God's truth. If God is pleased with the merit of His Son; accepts you as a sinner through His merit and is satisfied with His work at Calvary on your behalf, then you should be satisfied.

In John 1:12 we read, "But as many as received Him (Christ) to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." This 'power' signifies authority or right. As many as believe on Christ, God has given authority to become the sons of God.

Another verse that gives positive assurance to the believer is John 5:24 where we read, "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." I want you to notice the present tense here. "Hath everlasting life--is passed from death unto life." Here is something experienced and assured right now and is ours this very present moment.

Notice what God says, "He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son" I John 5:10. It is a serious matter and we must believe God's record. "And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life." I John 5:11, 12.

WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT

When a sinner comes to the Saviour seeking deliverance from his sin, and is willing to rest upon the work of the Saviour, the result is always apparent. When a sinner is rid of his sin, through the cleansing power of

the Blood of Christ, there is always a witness within his heart. You cannot come in contact with a Holy God without a witness within, revealing sin. You may be under intense weight of condemnation with the sentence of death and hell hanging over you, but there will be a witness within your heart the moment you are delivered of the judgment and set free. Allow me to mention that the first witness within a believer is not for the purpose of service or for self-satisfaction; it is for the assurance of Salvation. There is no peace in this glorious Christian life until you are sure and positive of your position in Christ. There is no service for your master until you have utmost confidence that Christ is your Lord and Saviour.

In John 5:10 we read, "He that believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself." Need we go further to realize that God has provided ample provision for you to know that He has kept his promise to you?

In Ephesians 1:13, we read, "In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of Promise."

Notice the time of this sealing. It is after you believe. Friend, God expects you to believe Him before He is going to give you assurance of a finished transaction. Many people are so bound by the flesh that even to this day they are dissatisfied because of insufficient feeling. We are so controlled by our senses when it comes to taste, hear, sight, smell, and touch; that we try to place feeling into spiritual things. The witness of the Spirit is on a different basis than that of so-called feeling.

We are sealed by the Spirit of God. It denotes a finished transaction. The Spirit of God witnesses that we have accepted the finished work of Christ.

This term, sealed, also denotes ownership. It is the duty of the spirit of God to witness to our hearts that we are owned by God himself. In II Timothy 2:19 we read, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his."

This sealing has to do with the heart and with the conscience, satisfying both as to the settlement of sin and sonship. In Romans 8:16 we read, "The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God." It is not easy to put into words exactly how this witness is manifested, for it is a witness not in the flesh but in the spirit. When one is saved there is usually a great joy within. This may be part of the witness but this is not enough. We dare not base so important a matter of our soul's Salvation on emotions, which often fluctuate with every changing set of circumstances. This is not a matter of feeling, but the witness of the new relationship. The witness that is born to us is that we are in the family of God. We are the Sons of the Most High God.

The Holy Spirit witnesses within our being when this new relationship with God becomes a reality in our lives. There is a deep, real witness that is difficult to explain, but non-the-less positive experience. When born of the spirit, we know we are the sons of God. In Romans 8:15 we read, "For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of Adoption by whom we cry out, 'Abba, Father.'"

It is wonderful to realize that this is not something of our creation. God is the prime mover. Without the spirit of God in our heart we can never recognize Him as our Father. Here is the fundamental principal and final proof. Only by His Spirit can we have an abiding testimony within our heart, bearing witness to what He has accomplished for us. We trust in the consciousness of God's promise and can look up and say, "My Father."

A CHANGED LIFE

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new I Cor. 5:17. One of the indications of the change is an absolute turning from sin. We must realize that repentance is as much of a work of the Spirit of God in the heart as the inflow of a saving Grace, which transforms the life of a sinner. All the believing in the world is of no avail until there is a willingness to turn from sin, and man must have God's help to do that. The Bible states in Isaiah 65:7, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

Friend, I seriously question a profession or a wind of doctrine that does not turn up sin by the roots. Jesus Christ died on Calvary's cross to save us from all sin. In this transformation we will discover a new power to resist and overcome sin. When the guilt and condemnation of sin are gone, there will also go the bondage to the dictates of sin, and in its place will be a new power and joy in righteousness.

Have you come in contact with Jesus Christ? Have you acknowledged your need and confessed your sin and admitted that you are the sinner that God declares you to be? If your life has been changed, and you have found pure desires to replace the sinful desires of Satan himself; it is an indication that you have been born again. For only the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit can impart holy and righteous desires.

OBEDIENCE TO GOD

"Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, 'I know Him,' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him" I John 2:3-5.

I can hear somebody ask, why should obedience be a test of relationship? Can we obey God without a spiritual transformation? In answering your question, I declare that without the transforming Grace of God, it is impossible for man to adequately obey the commands of the Lord. It is not that it is improbable that an unregenerate man will do the will of God, it is absolutely impossible. The result of the regenerating work of the Holy Ghost in the heart will be the impartation of a desire and an ability to obey the commands that God has revealed to us.

We read in John 14:23, "If anyone loves me, He will keep my word." The manifestation of love will be obedience. In John 14:21 we read, "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love Him and manifest Myself to him." We may say that obedience is a proof of salvation because it demonstrates the reality of a transformation of the old carnal nature and an infusion of the love and life of God within. Only the regenerated heart will submit to the will and commandments of God. Are you obeying Him? It is not necessary to mention the different commands of God for the Bible plainly declares them. "Teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you" Matt. 28:20.

LOVE THE BRETHREN

"For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another, not as Cain who was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. Any why did he murder Him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous. Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you. We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death" I John 3:11-14.

It is the work of God's grace that places us in the position of loving others, who are cleansed by the Blood of Christ. We will love the children of the Lord, when our own life has been made righteous through Jesus Christ; otherwise the lives and experiences of Christians become a source of condemnation to our soul, and we do not enjoy their company. In John 3:19-21 we read, "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evils For everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. For he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God."

A Christian can expect the man whose deeds are evil to shun his presence. No man, whose life is sinful enjoys coming to the light because his deeds are reproved. He feels condemned. No unregenerate man loves the true children of God; for he is condemned not only by their words but by their very presence. If a person loves "the brethren" and enjoys the

fellowship of those who are truly spiritual, it proves that his own life has been touched by the Grace of God.

Remember friend, love is positive and is obtained only from Him who is the source of all love. If we have that love, it proves that we are in fellowship with God. "Beloved let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love" I John 4:7,8.

THAT YE MAY KNOW

Are you aware that God gave us an entire book in the Bible dealing with the assurance of Salvation? It is I John. Many of the scriptures used in this message are located in this book. Here is the verse that gives the purpose of I John. "These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God" I John 5:13.

RESULT OF ASSURANCE

Friend, if you have full assurance of your Salvation, you are the happiest person in all the world. You will rejoice in the glorious fact that you are a Child of the King. The disappointments of this life have no bearing upon you. You may go through heartaches and sufferings; but you are bound for a land where all tears are to be wiped away and where there will be no more suffering. Such assurance will have definite bearing on your life while you remain on this earth, awaiting the return of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

IMPORTANT TO KNOW

Now, let us keep the record straight! You will have the witness of the spirit, you will love the brethren, you will walk in obedience of God's commands, and you will have a changed life because you have been saved. You do not do these things in order to be saved. God tells us that by these evidences you know that you have been transformed by God's Spirit in regeneration.

This assurance will establish your entire Christian experience. For whenever there is doubt and uncertainty there is instability. Until we realize that our experiences are founded upon that which is certain and unchanging, we will feel like the man in the parable who built his house on shifting sand. Emotional exaltation and self-centered evidences make a poor foundation for Eternal Life; but once one gains an assurance of Salvation, based on God's Word and His eternal work, it is a rock under our soul.

This confidence will bring you to the place of a positive life of prayer, imparting an assurance that will appropriate God's promises. How glorious to realize that by his Mercy has he saved us, by His Grace alone are we adopted into His family. Our past sins are under the Blood and now God treats us as sons and grants us the privilege of asking anything in His Name.

The world today needs the rallying call of men and women who are in full dedication to God, who know whereon they stand and who are not afraid to go forward depending upon the power of God to render the service that He has commissioned them to. How many in a world of sin are only waiting for a sincere and urgent call from those who know that Salvation

Additional free copies of this message are available. It is a reprint from our free publication, THE CHALLENGER. Also, available are nine free lessons of our free Home Bible Study Course.

The Hour of Grace & Power

PO Box 5900

Titusville, FL 32783-5900

www.thehourofgraceandpower.org