

So That You May Know

An Expository Study of the Epistle of **1 John**

Chapter 15- The Affections of the Heart

140. The Assurance of Salvation- Part 9

WAOY Thursday 01/24/08

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We're continuing our verse by verse "journey" through the Epistle of **1John**, and today I want to continue to look at what the Apostle John taught about, "The Assurance of Salvation". So, let's read **1John 3: 19-24** again together:

19 We will know by this that we are of the truth, and will assure our heart before Him

20 in whatever our heart condemns us; for God is greater than our heart and knows all things.

21 Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God;

22 and whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight.

23 This is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as He commanded us.

24 The one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. We know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.

Now on the last broadcast- we were discussing the issue of Assurance and of how what we think about Assurance is tied to what we think about both Salvation and Sin. And on the last broadcast- we were looking at the three questions that we need to ask and answer about this issue:

1. What happens when someone who is saved- sins?
2. How are sins that are committed *after* Salvation paid for?
3. And just how do our sins that we commit after we are saved affect our Salvation?

Now how you answer these three questions formulates your view of just how secure and steadfast your Assurance is. So let's continue to look at the first question:

What happens when someone who is saved- sins?

For over thirty years- I rejected the Biblical teaching about Salvation because I misunderstood what it meant by what it said. I thought that people were teaching that sin didn't matter and that they were saying that once you were saved- you could sin with no concern at all.

And I still think that this is a valid concern- especially for someone who truly desires to walk holy before God. And this concern deserves to be examined. But as we talk about this, beloved- let us not forget some basic truths about ourselves that we may tend to forget.

When you say that you don't believe that people are secure in their Salvation when they sin- you are assuming that *some* people sin while others don't sin- and that is just not true. To say that sin causes you to lose what God gave you is to say that God's gift is predicated upon us and our ability to hold up our end of the deal. And if that is true- then no one is saved- because all men sin and come short of the Glory of God.

Now I have actually met some people who say that they don't sin anymore. These people actually believe that they have reached a place of sinless perfection in this life. All I can say about that is that these people are self- deceived and not living in reality. And I have also met people who believe that sinless perfection is *possible* in this life and on this earth- but they have just not reached it yet- but they're getting closer- every day. I sure hope that works out for them.

But for the rest of us- God's Word is clear- all men sin and come short of God's glory. And as I have said many, many times on these broadcasts- sin is the great equalizer of all mankind. Rich people may be different than I am and they may well have more privilege in life than I do- but as it pertains to sin- there is not one iota difference between me and the richest man on earth. He is a sinner just as I am. Tall people may have an advantage over short people; white people may have more opportunity than black people; smart people may have more doors opened to them than ignorant people- but as it pertains to

standing before the Creator of the Universe- all men are the same- we are hopelessly lost and unable to stop sinning.

Neither Education, nor Talent; nor Money; nor Position; nor Social Status; nor Political Connections; nor Ingenuity can relieve anyone of their sin problem. You cannot educate your way out of sin; you cannot earn enough money to eliminate sin from your life; you cannot will yourself out of sin; and you cannot put forth enough effort to crawl out of sin.

We sin because we are human; because we are not Divine; because we are not Deity; because we are fallen and depraved and have been radically ruined by the Fall of Adam in the Garden. We sin because our nature is corrupt and we sin because we love to sin and we want to sin and we desire to sin. That is why we are separated from God and that is why God is correct to judge us all.

Salvation is bringing my sinful soul into right relationship with God through the shed Blood of Jesus Christ and the imputation of Christ's Righteousness to me through the agency of Faith alone.

At the very instant that I am forgiven and washed in that pure red Blood- I am clean and pure- and at that very second- the same Righteousness that Jesus Christ earned by living a totally sinless life is imputed or credited to me and God Almighty declares me to be righteous.

Now the important part of Justification that we must get right- is that at the moment that God *declares* me to be righteous- I am in fact- still sinful. The Reformers used a term to describe this glorious event and they called it, "*Simil iustus et peccator.*" And that is Latin for, "*Simultaneously Just and Sinful.*"

Now what this means is that even though God has *declared* me to be righteous- I am not sinless myself. You see- the Righteousness that God has imputed to me- is not mine- it is Jesus Christ's Righteousness. My Righteousness is as filthy rags- but Jesus never sinned- so His Righteousness is both sinless and spotless.

I didn't earn this Righteousness and this Righteousness does not belong to me- it is what is called an *alien* Righteousness; a *forensic* Righteousness; and a *legal* Righteousness that God credits to me because of the finished work of Jesus Christ.

That is my only claim to Heaven. I have no other claim. I don't deserve to go to Heaven; I cannot earn Heaven; and I am not worthy of Heaven now and will not be worthy of Heaven 100 years from now.

So even though this Righteousness is real- it is not my own- it isn't the result of what I have done- it was earned and paid for by the life, death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ- and that is what makes it eternal.

So at the instant that I am saved- God declares me to be righteous- even though in reality- I am still sinful. When I was saved- I didn't completely stop sinning. At the moment that Jesus washed my sins away- I was involved in activities that the Bible says is wrong. Two days later- I still was. 37 years later- I still am. I not trying to sin now and was not trying to sin then- and many of my sins were things that I didn't even know were wrong- but to God they were sinful- and yet I was saved- and if I had died at that instant- I would have gone to Heaven.

So my Justification was purchased solely by Jesus- and it was given to me as a gift by the Grace of God through the agency of Faith in the finished work of Christ- alone.

Now how could this possibly be true? Let me say that the overwhelming majority of the people on earth today do not believe what I just taught you- but that is exactly what the Bible teaches. There is no other religion on earth that teaches what I just taught you- except Biblical Christianity.

For example- The Jew does not agree with this. The Jew says that only righteous people can go to Heaven and thus unless a man is righteous by his obedience to the Law- he cannot stand in God's Presence. So off he goes to obey the Law. And that is fine- but what happens when he fails? What happens as he is struggling to climb up the Mount of God and he sins? Well, he has to start all over again. Everything that he has done to that point to earn his own righteousness is completely washed away and he is back at square one. At the moment that he sins- he is a transgressor of the Law- he is not righteous and he has to start all over again.

So the progress that the Jew makes toward becoming righteous only lasts as long as the Jew doesn't sin. As soon as he sins- he is back at the starting gate- hoping to go again. And when you realize that all men sin- and when you realize that it is only a matter of time before the

Jew sins- then you can realize very quickly that by putting forth human effort to keep the Law of God – no one will ever be saved- which is exactly what God’s Words says in **Hebrews 7:19**:

(for the Law made nothing perfect), and on the other hand there is a bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.

Now the “**better hope**” that the writer of Hebrews is talking about here is not more human effort or a new slant on keeping the Law. No, the “**better hope**” is Grace – that marvelous gift from God that allows sinful human beings to go to Heaven.

The Old Covenant- the Law of God- made no one perfect before God- precisely because no human being could even live up to the standards that the Law set. If any human actually did perfectly keep the Law- then they could earn Heaven- but because we are all sinful and flesh and mortal and weak- no human being has ever or will ever perfectly keep the Law.

Except Jesus. Jesus perfectly kept the Law. He never sinned one single time in thought, word, or deed. And because He was perfectly sinless- only Jesus developed His Own Personal Righteousness to the point that He alone literally earned Heaven. By being tempted in all points like as we are- yet without sin- Jesus Christ fulfilled the Law. This is what it means when the Bible says that Jesus fulfilled the Law- it means that Jesus perfectly *obeyed* the Law in all aspects and never sinned one time.

And the result of His sinless life is that Jesus alone developed His Own Righteousness to the point that He actually worked His Way into Heaven. That makes Jesus the most unique and special Person Who ever lived.

So my Justification is not about me- it is about Jesus. My Justification is not made true because I quit sinning- it is made true because Jesus didn’t sin. My ability to go to Heaven was not earned by me; nor was it purchased by me- neither is it payment for all my good and noble effort.

I am justified for one reason- I trust that what Jesus did for me- what Jesus did that I *cannot* do for myself- that I trust that what Jesus did is sufficient to God to allow me- a sinful human being- to enter into Gods Presence and not be judged for what I truly am- a filthy sinner.

I receive this justification- not because I am worthy of it; nor because I earned it; nor because it is payment for what I worked so hard to achieve. I receive justification because Jesus did two things: He died with all of my sins upon him so that the full fury of God's wrath against all my sins has been fully and eternally paid for and because Jesus lived a sinless life so that His spotless Righteousness could be imputed to me by Faith and by Faith alone.

So my sin or my lack of sin or my effort not to sin has absolutely nothing to do with why and how I am justified. And because that is true- then my Salvation is safe and it is secure and it is certain and it is eternal.

Well, I have to stop right here, but please join me again on the next broadcast as we continue our "journey" through the Epistle of 1John. May God help us all.

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.