

Doctrine of Assurance of Salvation

Part 7

Full Assurance of Salvation

1. It is estimated that there are 60 million Americans who claim to be born again Christians.
2. Many will say they are born again because they made a decision for Christ, or because they were baptized, or joined a church.
3. Biblically, to be born again means to be changed by the regenerating work of God the Holy Spirit.
 - *Ephesians 2:1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; 2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;);6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:*
4. When a person is born again, there is a change in the will, in the emotions, and in the intellect.
5. In the moment of conversion God takes away the heart of stone, and gives a person a heart of flesh that quivers, and moves at the Law of God written upon the new heart.
 - *Ezekiel 11:19 And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh:*
6. In the moment of salvation, a sinner realizes that there is no “island of righteousness”, or “island of power” in the soul that allows fallen man to engage in a co-operation work with God. Salvation is wholly of the Lord.
 - The sinner is dead in sin, and must be quickened. *Ephesians 2:1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;*
 - The sinner is in bondage to sin, to the body of sin, which must be destroyed. *Romans 6:6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*

- The sinner has no power to change himself. *Jeremiah 13:23 Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil.*
- The sinner, the unregenerated person, has a moral bias against God. The soul's inclination, or disposition, is against God. There is no genuine affection for Christ. *Romans 1:20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: 21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.*

7. To the question, "Am I saved?", comes three lines of inquiry.

- "Do you love Jesus perfectly?" If the answer is an honest, "No", that becomes a root cause for lack of full assurance of salvation.
- "Do you love Jesus as much as you ought to?" Again, the honest heart, if it says, "No", adds to the deficient feeling of assurance of salvation.
- "Do you love Jesus at all?" Ah, the answer, if it is honest, can rejoice in hope, for a person knows if they truly love someone. People know their own affections, they know their inclination, and they know the bent of their heart.

Special Note.

The answer must take into consideration the biblical Christ, not the Christ of a person's vain imagination. The Christ of Mormonism is not the Christ of the Bible. The Christ of Islam is not the Christ of the Bible. Care must be taken in the response. The Christ who is the symbol for Liberation Theology is not the Christ of the Bible. The Christ of the Community Organizer, and the Social Reformer is not the Christ of the Bible. The Christ of the Liberal Theologians is not the Christ that appears in Scripture.

8. If a person has any love for Christ, then they are regenerated, because no unbeliever can have any real affection for Jesus Christ. Love for Christ pleases God.
- *Romans 8:8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.*
9. There is grave danger in ministering to unbelievers, for it is possible to make Christ so attractive that individuals are converted to the organization presenting Jesus, but not to the Lord Himself.
10. A loving church, an effective youth ministry, a concerned outreach ministry might very well become a substitution for the real Jesus.

11. There is a popular belief in Christendom that it is possible to be regenerated by the Holy Spirit, indwelt by the Holy Spirit, but not controlled by the Holy Spirit. Such a person is known as a Carnal Christian, which is an oxymoron. That is like talking about a Heavenly Devil.
12. The Carnal Christian does not bring forth any spiritual fruit. Such a view of being a Christian is diametrically opposed to the teaching of Jesus Christ, who said that the production of spiritual fruit would be the sign of salvation. The most important spiritual fruit is obedience to the will of the Father.
- *Matthew 7:15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. 16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? 17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. 19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. 20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. 21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.*
13. Every person starts life in the flesh. Regeneration does not annihilate the flesh, though that would be wonderful if it happened.
14. So the Christian must still struggle with the flesh, knowing it is the will of God that the flesh be mortified, or put to death.
- *Colossians 3:5 Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:*
15. Unfortunately, the flesh does not die easily. There are times when every Christian is carnal. Moreover, it is impossible to mortify the flesh apart from the indwelling work of the Holy Spirit.
- *Romans 8:13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.*
16. The critical concept to grasp is that regeneration is something the Holy Spirit really and truly does to a soul, effecting a change in life.
17. The Holy Spirit changes the disposition of the heart. He changes the will. He changes the affections. He writes the Law of God upon the heart. He removes a stony heart, and replaces it with a heart of flesh that trembles at the Word of God, loves Jesus Christ, and has positive religious affections.
- *Ezekiel 36:26 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.*

18. In addition to regeneration, the Holy Spirit does other work in the life of the believer that brings forth full assurance of salvation..

- The Holy Spirit gives the earnest, the pledge, or guarantee of full salvation. *2 Corinthians 5:1 For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. 2 For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: 3 If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. 4 For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. 5 Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.*

19. Those who say a person can be saved today, but lost tomorrow, ignore the promises of God, and the work of the Holy Spirit.

- *Philippians 1:6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:*

20. All of God's promises to Christians are sincere, and without vacillation. God does not say, "Yes," and "No", at the same time. God has sealed us, and given us a guarantee.

- *2 Corinthians 1:15 And in this confidence I was minded to come unto you before, that ye might have a second benefit; 16 And to pass by you into Macedonia, and to come again out of Macedonia unto you, and of you to be brought on my way toward Judaea. 17 When I therefore was thus minded, did I use lightness? Or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be yea yea, and nay nay? 18 But as God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay. 19 For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea. 20 For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us. 21 Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; 22 Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.*

21. A seal is a sign of the Author's authority, and authenticity. The King of the Universe places His seal upon every believer until the day of redemption.

22. The professing Christian evaluates his own life, but ultimately, the source of confidence of salvation comes from the inner testimony of God the Holy Spirit.

- *Romans 8:11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. 12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. 13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. 14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.*

15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. 16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: 17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

- 23.** The Holy Spirit bears witness to our human spirit that we are the children of God.
- 24.** This testimony of the Holy Spirit can be known to be true, and not a false spirit, because the Holy Spirit bears testimony through the Word.
- 25.** The further a person gets away from the Word of God, the less confidence a person will have of their salvation. The closer a person studies the Bible, the more confidence there will be of salvation, because the Holy Spirit uses the Word to confirm one's salvation.