

“Everyone” and “Not Everyone”: A Sure Assurance of Salvation

Holiness

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How do you know you're saved? How can be sure you have eternal life?

- “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” 1 Corinthians 10:13
- “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.” Matthew 7:21
- “Making a decision has never converted anyone ... No one has been justified by a profession of faith.” R.C. Sproul.

1. Assurance depends on where I start: from a human perspective or from God’s perspective.

a. Human perspective:

- i. Something I’ve said: the right words.
- ii. Something I’ve done: the right actions.
- iii. Something I felt: right emotions. “fallen emotions”, “repeated decisions for Christ.”

b. From God’s perspective:

- i. **Assurance of salvation begins with God’s action**; the human experience of salvation is secondary. “All this is from God.”
- ii. “From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh (NIV. “... from a worldly point of view”). Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. All this is from God.” 2 Corinthians 5:16-17
- iii. **God’s action begins in election** according to His **good will and purpose**: “He predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will ...” Ephesians 1:5
- iv. **The Golden Chain of Redemption, ... Salvation, ... Glory, ... Grace.** “Those whom He predestined He also called, and those whom He called he also justified, and those whom He justified He also glorified.” Romans 8:30
- v. “I am sure of this, that **He who began a good work in you** will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.” Philippians 1:6.

c. Do you need any more assurance of salvation than that?

2. But you and I still long for, seek after some assurance on a human level.

- a. **What about improved behavior?** “Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus you will recognize them by their fruits. Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.” Matthew 7:19-21.
- b. **What about a better attitude?** More “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control ...” Galatians 5:22.
See 1 Corinthians 13:4f. “(I am) patient and kind; (I do) not envy or boast; (I’m) not arrogant or rude. (don’t) insist on (my) own way; (I am) not irritable or resentful ...”
- c. **What about stronger emotions?** “The pride of your heart has deceived you ...” Obediah

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- d. **What about my desire to talk about what God has done for me?** “For necessity is laid upon me. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!” 1 Corinthians 9:16. “I am not ashamed of the gospel ...” Romans 1:6.
3. **“I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out.** For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing.” Romans 7:18-19.
 - a. Ability = “work down to the end-point,” “bring to decisive finality.”
 - b. I don’t have the “ability” – “in my flesh” – to have the right behavior, attitude, feeling.
 - c. But, “I have the desire ...” (Romans 7:15, 16, 19, 20.) That very desire marks you as God’s.
4. **God’s first act of grace in salvation is the Desire for the things of God.**
 - a. **The unsaved, unregenerate, natural man does not desire the things of God.**
 - b. “Those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.” Acts 2:41-42
 - c. **“They devoted themselves ...”** = *proskartereō* (from “towards” + “show steadfast & prevailing strength,” to consistently showing strength which prevails (in spite of difficulties); to endure (remain firm), staying in a fixed direction.
 - i. “Apostles teaching”
 - ii. “Fellowship” = *koinonia*
 - iii. “Breaking of bread”: only appears twice in the NT; “they recognized him in the breaking of the bread.” Luke 24:35
 - iv. “Prayers”
 - d. **Other Godly desires follow, but these four are foundational.**
5. **God’s lasting act of salvation of grace is enduring to the end.**
 - a. “But the one who endures to the end will be saved.” Matthew 24:13.
 - b. “Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it.” 1 Corinthians 9:24
 - c. “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.” 1 Timothy 4:7. “I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.” 1 Corinthians 15:10.
 - d. “Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter/finisher/completer/mature-er of our faith ...” Hebrews 12:1-2
6. **How do you know you’re saved? How can be sure you have eternal life?**