

“Everyone” and “Not Everyone”: A Sure Assurance of Salvation Part 2

Holiness

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How do you know you're saved? How can you 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.

“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

a. **Human perspective:** Something I've said; something I've done; something I felt.

b. From God's perspective:

- **Assurance of salvation begins and ends with God's action;** the human experience of salvation is secondary. *“All this is from God.”*
- **God's action begins in sovereign 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
- **God's action continues in sovereign keeping.** “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. God's first act of grace in salvation is the Desire for the things of God.

a. **How were you made a new creation?** *“That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’” John 3:6,7*

b. Where does that Desire drive us? To Christ Himself and His Body.

“So Jesus said to the Twelve, ‘Do you want to go away as well?’ Simon Peter answered him, ‘Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, and we have believed ...’” John 6:67-69

c. *“They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.” Acts 2:41-42*

d. **“They devoted themselves ...”** = *proskarteréō*: to consistently show strength which prevails, in spite of difficulties; to endure; remain firm; staying in a fixed direction.

i. “Apostles teaching”

- ✓ “I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received ...” 1 Cor 15:3

ii. “Fellowship” = *koinonia*

- ✓ “If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.” 1 Jn 1:6-7

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- iii. “Breaking of bread”
 - ✓ “The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ?” 1 Cor 10:16
- iv. “Prayers”
 - ✓ “Praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication ...keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints ...” Eph 6:18

3. 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. “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.” 1 Tim 4:7.
- c. “I worked harder ... though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.” 1 Cor 15:10.
- d. “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 ...” Heb 12:1-2

4. The “flesh” v. “the Spirit”, not “works” v. “faith”

- a. The great mystery is why the Lord allows the flesh to persist, on the big stage, but also on the stage of my heart. “*The mystery of lawlessness is already at work.*” 2 Thess 2:7.
- b. “It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all.” John 6:63. “I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh.” Rom 7:18
- c. “Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?” Gal 3:3
- d. “... *'flesh' signifies the entire nature of man, sense and reason, without the Holy Spirit.*” Martin Luther, Preface to the Epistle to the Romans, 1535. “*I want, what I want, when I want it.*”
- e. **The utter condemnation of the flesh:** “*The mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; **indeed, it cannot.** Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.*” Rom 8:7f
- f. “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.” Rom 7:18-19.
- g. “The desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, **to keep you from doing the things you want to do.**” Galatians 5:17