



John 17:9-12

How Can I Know I am Saved?

Based on God's Word, we can know that we have eternal life.

Assurance of salvation and security of the believer has nothing to do with our feelings, but everything to do with the integrity of God. He wants to save us and He is trustworthy. He has done everything possible to save us through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The moment we believe on Christ and receive Him as our Savior, we can rest on His Word and the witness of the Holy Spirit. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life (1 John 5:12-13).

In God's mind, once a son, always a son. God chose to adopt us, and that is a permanent relationship with Him. Once you are a child of God, you are always His child. Once you are in the family of God by faith in His Son, you are there to stay forever.

In this majestic stately prayer Jesus reminds us that every believer has been given to Christ by the Father. It is a just description of every child of God. The Father through the Holy Spirit has drawn us to Christ. Our Great High Priest goes before the throne of God bearing the names of His people upon His breastplate. None of His are omitted. We are continually remembered before the throne.

Both the Father and the Son equally esteem believers. Believers are the Father's property. He has made them His by adoption; He has confirmed His interest in them by regeneration; He esteems them as His peculiar treasure. Moreover, Jesus has an equal propriety in the believer. Will Christ lose the purchase of His blood, and suffer His own members to perish, for want of continual intercession and protection?

WE ARE ETERNALLY SECURE IN THE SON

Jesus was praying for His disciples the night before He went to the cross. Jesus was not praying for the lost on this occasion. He will reach the world through His disciples. Everything will depend upon them after He ascends to heaven. This is a crisis moment in the dawn of world redemption. God's eternal purpose is at stake. The crucial hour has arrived. No wonder He is praying for the steadfastness of His disciples. The future of the Church depends upon it.

The Father and the Son are mutually interested and involved in redeeming the lost world. And all things that are Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine; and I have been glorified in them (v. 10). Albert Barnes gives us the sense of the passage, Those who are my disciples are Thine. That which promotes

of the passage, "Those who are my disciples are Thine. That which promotes My honor will also promote Thine. I pray, therefore, that they may have needful grace to honor My gospel, and to proclaim it among men. "

All I have refers to those You gave Me in verse nine. The disciples are a mutual possession of the Father and the Son. All that is Yours is Mine, and Mine is yours. "I pray for them because they belong to You. Jesus repeatedly asserts, "They are Yours. "

I have been glorified in them (v. 10). Jesus glory has already shone in His disciples faces, imperfect as they are. That offers us hope, does it not? Not only is the reflection seen, but Jesus uses a verb tense in the original language that says and this will remain (perfect tense). Their goal is to glorify Christ. I have been glorified in them. And when He is glorified the Father is also glorified.

Now it is true that when Jesus was praying, "I am no longer in the world " He was in the midst of His disciples, probably in the Mount of Olives, and perhaps before He prayed the agonizing prayer, "Not My will; Thy will be done. Perhaps the paradox can best be stated, "I am, as it were, no longer in the world, or very shortly I will no longer be in the world. The departure of Jesus is so near that He can use the present tense to express the future. Even though His work will be completed tomorrow on the cross when He declares, "It is finished, He can pray tonight with conviction that His work in the world is done. Jesus speaks as if Calvary has already taken place. It is a certainty in His mind and will. In His thought His work is now finished and He is on His way back to the Father. What a Savior!

He was leaving the disciples to return to heaven. They would be left in a hostile world system that was opposed to the kingdom of God. The emphasis Jesus made in His great high priestly prayer was that all whom the Father has given to Him would come to Him; none will be lost. "I am no longer in the world; and yet they themselves are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, *the name* which You have given Me, that they may be one even as We are. While I was with them, I was keeping them in Your name which You have given Me; and I guarded them and not one of them perished but the son of perdition, so that the Scripture would be fulfilled (John 17:11-12).

Jesus prays for the disciple s security

"I am not praying for the world (v. 9), meaning those who are in opposition to God. Here He is specifically praying for those whom the Father has entrusted to Him for keeping. What would we expect Him to ask for their future needs? Will He ask for financial security, personal honor, a special place in heaven, or political influence? No. He prays that they will be kept from evil, separated from the world, qualified for duty, and brought home safely to heaven. Soul prosperity is the best prosperity . . . is only real when it is in proportion to the prosperity of the soul, says Marcus Rainsford. The apostle John summed it up wisely, "Beloved, I pray that in all respects you

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apostle John summed it up wisely, Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers (3 John 2). That is the emphasis that is needed in our day. Are you prospering spiritually as well as you are financially?

Jesus was keeping the disciples

While I was with them, I was keeping them in Your Name. ”

F. F. Bruce says, If themselves they were weak indeed, but the Father s enabling grace and the guidance and illumination of His Spirit, they would fulfill the mission with which they were now being entrusted and bring glory to their Master in fulfilling it. So confident of this is He that He speaks in the perfect tense: I ‘ have been glorified in them (John, p. 331).

Jesus says in His prayer, I was keeping them in Your Name (v. 12). The Name is the LORD God s covenant name, Jehovah or Yahweh. In the Old Testament the Name of God denotes His character and His power. The Name refers to everything God is in His covenant relationship with His people. Jesus had guarded the disciples as a treasurer the Father had entrusted to him. He kept the disciples who had been with Him for three years in the Father s authority and power.

While I was with them, I was keeping them in Your name which You have given Me; and I guarded them and not one of them perished but the son of perdition, so that the Scripture would be fulfilled (v. 12).

Remember these words of Jesus in John 6:37, 39-40? All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out. . . This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day. ”

While I was with them, I was keeping them in Your name which You have given to Me; and I guarded them, and not one of them perished . . . (v. 12). Jesus literally said, I continued to keep. I continuously kept watch over, protected, or shielded them (cf. vv. 6, 11, 12, 15).

Imagine the magnitude of what Jesus is praying. The future of the Christian church depended on those eleven men being kept steadfast in the faith. This keeping ministry of Jesus went on from day to day. Jesus kept them true to the Father s name.

To keep watch over, and to keep an eye upon are synonymous here reinforcing the protection of the disciples. Perhaps the Shepherd allegory is in mind (10:28).

What about Judas?

Does the case of Judas teach that a born-again person can be eternally lost? No. Judas *never* belonged to Jesus. I have manifested Your name to the men whom You gave Me out of the world; they were Yours and You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. . . for the words which You gave Me I have given to them; and they received *them* and truly understood that I came forth from You, and they believed that You sent Me (John 17:6, 8). Judas was not one of those who believed.

Jesus called Judas the son of perdition. The word perdition means ruin, loss, not extinction. Jesus is referring to Judas character rather than his destination. Judas was characterized by lostness, not that he

referring to Judas' character rather than his destination. Judas was characterized by lustiness, not that he was predestined to be lost, to catch the play on words in the original language in verse twelve. The true disciples are in safe keeping because they are in Christ. They need not fear being lost. Phillips tries to catch this play on words in regard to Judas when he translates, not one of them was destroyed, except the son of destruction. The *New English Bible* also tries to bring this out, Not one of them is lost except the man who must be lost. "

E. W. Bullinger notes, the son of perdition is referring to the person thus spoken of as belonging very emphatically to that which they are said to be the sons of . . . Here the one who is lost is in a very emphatic and terrible sense. Raymond Brown says, the son of perdition is referring to one who belongs to the realm of damnation and is destined to final destruction. Judas had the character of a destroyer. He was a traitor and murderer, utterly lost and given over to evil. The terrible thing about Judas' character was his deceit and deception. He could kiss and kill at the same time.

Some of the Scriptures that could possibly be referring to the fulfillment in this passage are Psalm 41:9, 10; 109:4-13; 69:25; 55:12-15; Isaiah 57:12, 13.

Leon Morris stresses that Jesus is not saying that Judas was an automaton. "He was a responsible person and acted freely. But God used his evil act to bring about His purpose. This is combination of the human and the divine, but here the emphasis is on the divine. God's will was done in the handing over of Christ to be crucified (Morris, *NIC, John*, p. 728).

John Calvin said, It would be wrong for anyone to infer from this that Judas' fall should be imputed to God rather than to himself, in that necessity was laid on him by the prophecy. "

F. F. Bruce writes, Judas was not lost against his will but with his consent. . . he chose to respond instead to the great adversary. Jesus has no responsibility for Judas' fatal decision. Judas, like the other disciples, had been given by the Father to the Son, but even among those so given apostasy is a solemn possibility (p. 332).

However, It does teach what would happen if God did not regenerate the person dead in trespasses and sins and then keep them regenerated, says Boice. If it were not for God, who could stand? Who could stand against the onslaught of the world if God did not keep us? Note the use of son of destruction in 2 Thessalonians 2:3.

Are you in Christ? Have you believed on Him as your Savior? The apostle Paul wrote, *For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus* (Phil. 1:6). Has he begun the good work of salvation in your life? If you are not in Christ now is the time to trust Him as your personal Savior. He died for you on the cross to give you eternal life with the Father.

WE ARE ETERNALLY SECURE IN THE FATHER

What Jesus was offering those disciples and us is double security. None of the disciples were lost. Jesus kept those whom the Father gave Him. Now Jesus recommits the disciples to the Father's safe keeping.

Jesus gives them back to the Father

Now before His death Jesus prays, Holy Father, keep them in Your Name (v. 11). Apart from the Father's perseverance they would all be lost. God does the keeping. What a great relief to know that our salvation

perseverance they would all be lost. God does the keeping. What a great relief to know that our salvation does not depend upon us for saving or for keeping.

Jesus prays, Holy Father. Godet says the holiness in God the Father is the free, deliberate, calm, immutable affirmation of Himself who is the good, or of the good which is Himself. It draws a deep line of demarcation between us . . . and the world. God is frequently spoken of as the Holy One. He is exalted far above all the creatures. It contrasts with the world which is unholy. Lenski notes, God is holy in that He is absolutely separated from and actively opposed to all sin. He is utterly the opposite of anything associated with Satan and his world system.

Holy Father, keep them. The word *tereo* is translated, keep, hold, reserve, preserve someone or something unharmed or undisturbed by or through something. Here it probably means to keep them from evil, even though the object is not stated. George Turner suggested to keep the disciples from sin and if fellowship with God. Jesus wants the Father to stand guard over the disciples and protect them in His power. The believer lives in a sphere of effective power to protect Him and keep Him safe. We are kept by the personal protection of the Father.

All of the disciples died as martyrs, with the exception of the apostle John who was exiled to the island of Patmos. But none of them were lost.

The writer of Proverbs describes our safety in the Father as being in a strong fortress. The name of the Lord is a strong tower; The righteous runs into it and is safe (Prov. 18:10). Can anything touch us when we are safe in God's fortress? Can anything touch us when we are safe in Him? During graduate school Ann and I lived in New Orleans. We would take a Saturday afternoon off and enjoy visiting an old Spanish island fortress with its dungeons, gun wells, towers, etc. It was fun imagining what the soldiers must have experienced in those strong stone towers. Nothing can touch us when we are safe in the Father's arms.

Raymond Brown suggests the disciples are to be both marked with and protected by the divine name that has been given to Jesus. . . . Jesus asks God to keep the disciples safe with the divine name that has been given to Him. . . . If we are right in our contention that for John the name is *ego eimi*, I AM, we have an example of how this name protects the disciples in John 18:5-8; for when Jesus says *ego eimi*, those who have come to arrest Him fall down powerless, and Jesus demands that they allow His disciples to leave unharmed. The great I AM then permitted Himself to be bound and led away (cf. John 10:17, 18).

G. Campbell Morgan asked, What name? God has only one name according to the Biblical revelation. God, is not a name. It is a designation. The Lord is not a name; it is a title. He has only one name, and His name is Yahweh —Jehovah as we now render it. Jesus had borne that name, linked with the thought of salvation; Jesus the Greek for Jehoshua, Jehovah-salvation, merged into one. I have manifested Thy name. That first group of men, as Hebrews, knew that God had one name. God had said this is My name, My memorial name to all generations. Now said Jesus, I have manifested Thy name to them. ”

The purpose of this commitment to safekeeping is that they may be one, or that they may keep on being one. That unity is demonstrated by their common love for Christ and for one another. The apostle Paul stressed that this unity can be possible only as believers are indwelt and controlled by the Holy Spirit (Eph. 4:3). It is brought about when God's people abide in the truth of His Word and are Spirit-filled both individually and corporately.

Our security is with God

Harry Ironside candidly said, you may be sure that whenever the Father gives any one to Jesus, He gives him

Harry Ironside candidly said, 'you may be sure that whenever the Father gives any one to Jesus, He gives him for time and eternity. Such a one will never be lost. People call this the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, but I rather like to think of it as the perseverance of the Savior. He says, 'Those that You gave Me I have kept. If I had to keep myself, I would be hopeless of getting through. . . . Something would happen to me to lose my hold on Christ and be lost. But it is His hold on me in which I rely. None can pluck the believer out of His hand. I receive great comfort from those words. ''

When all the saints chosen of God arrive in heaven, Jesus will be able to say to the Father, 'Those that You gave Me I have kept, and none of them is lost. Ironside adds, 'You may think you know of exceptions to this; but it will be made manifest in that day that these apparent exceptions were like Judas himself, never really born of God. ''

James Boice writes, 'We are safe, not because of ourselves (for we are weak), but rather because we are kept by the Lord Jesus Christ and the Father. ''

There will always be those who will reply that this is just an excuse for sinning. 'You are just going to give people an excuse for sinning, 'is the usual cry of the legalists.

Let it be very clearly stated with the apostle Paul that if you are eternally secure, because you have been born again, you really want to love the LORD God with all your heart. The last thing you want to do is use grace as an excuse for sinning. When we know the Father is all for us we want to guard our heart from all evil. We want to please Him with all our heart because He loves us so much.

There are no hopeless cases with God. He will not allow it to be hopeless for us. Our heavenly Father is faithful. We can trust Him with our lives for now and eternity. He is our keeper, and He will keep us safe.

WHEN WE ARE SPIRITUALLY INSECURE

Why do sincere people doubt their salvation?

There is sin in their lives

Sin in the lives of believers always produces feelings of separation from God. It makes us feel isolated, alienated and out of fellowship with Him. If sin is the constant bent of your life, you should wonder about your salvation, 'writes Stanley. The apostle John said, 'No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God (1 John 3:9).

If you sin and feel absolutely miserable that is a good sign that you belong to Christ. It should cause you to stop immediately and ask God to forgive you and repent. The true child of God experiences a loss of fellowship when he sins. God has provided us with a spiritual bar of soap that always restores fellowship with Him. Use it frequently. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9).

There is an overemphasis on appearances and performances

There is usually an emphasis on performance to keep your salvation. You aren't working hard enough, or long enough, or good enough, or doing the right things to keep your salvation. You aren't perfect enough. How will you ever know when you have worked hard enough or done the right kind of works? You can't.' Some religious leaders use this to control and manipulate their people.

There is an overemphasis on emotions

You either don't have enough feelings or the right kind of emotions. If you place the emphasis on emotions rather than the teachings of God's Word you will not have assurance of salvation. You cannot live on emotions. You live by truth.

They are not abiding in God's Word

The Bible says, "Believe on the Lord Jesus and you shall be saved. Why do you want to add to it, or change it? Is God trustworthy? Do you accept His integrity? Then take all of His Word seriously.

Satanic attacks

Satan will be more than happy to whisper in your ear, or have someone else do it for him, "You really are not good enough to be a true Christian. Look at you, you are not worthy to be called a Christian. He is constantly pointing his finger and accusing us. Who is the accuser of the brethren? It is not the Holy Spirit.

SOME ABIDING PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

When we accept the promise of the Savior we have double security in the Father and the Son.

The words of Jesus in John 10:26-30 summarize beautifully what He prayed the night before He died. He begins by referring to the Pharisees, "But you do not believe because you are not of My sheep. Then Jesus gives several characteristics of true believers. My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one. "

His sheep are in the habit of listening to His voice because He knows them personally and they are in the habit of following Him. When the Good Shepherd gives His sheep eternal life they will never ever perish. Jesus put a strong emphasis on the negative when He said, "they shall never perish. It is a double negative in the Greek. Furthermore, He said, "No one shall snatch them out of My hand. "My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. And if that is not enough Jesus adds, "I and the Father are one" in essence or nature.

When you choose to take God at His word you will have a sense of perfect peace with God and security.

God has demonstrated His trustworthiness and integrity over and over again down through the centuries. God is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9). That is why Jesus Christ gave His life as a ransom for sinners (Matt. 20:28). He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed (1 Peter 2:24). Jesus Christ died in our place so we could spend eternity with Him. The Father desires that all men be saved by simple faith in Christ. He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9). He has provided everything we need for Him to save us. All that we need to do is believe. That is our responsibility. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God (John 1:12-13). The apostle John said, "He who believes in the Son

flesh nor of the will of man, but of God (John 1:12-13). The apostle John said, He who believes in the Son has everlasting life. Do you believe? Have you asked Him to be your Savior? Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life (John 5:24).

Put your own name in John 3:16. For God so loved the world (_____), that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever (that you, me, anyone) believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. ”

What an awesome thought that God knows everything about me and still loves me and wants me to spend eternity in heaven with Him.

Charles Stanley writes: Based on His wonderful Word –all of it –we can *know* that we have eternal life. It has nothing to do with feeling. But it has everything to do with the trustworthiness of God. He wants us saved. He has done everything possible through Christ to make that happen. Once we receive Him as our own, we can rest on the Word of God and in the witness of the Spirit. Once you re in the family of God, by faith in His Son, your name is written in the Book of Life (*The Glorious Journey*, pp. 143).

Three sincere questions

Ask yourself these three questions:

Do I believe the Word of God? Are you willing to take God at His Word –all of it?

Do I have the inner witness of the Holy Spirit that I am saved? The apostle Paul stressed that the Holy Spirit would bear witness that we are believers. The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God (Rom. 8:16).

Am I walking like a believer in Christ? Has Christ made a difference in my life? Our salvation is not a feeling, or an emotional state; it is a fact based on the finished work of Jesus Christ at Calvary. Once a family member, always a family member. ”Once a son, always a son. Then live like a member of His family.

For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:38-39).

Let s go back to our opening verses from the First Epistle of John. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life (1 John 5:12-13). Have you been born again? Do you *know* that you have eternal life? If you have lingering doubts you can settle it once and for all right now. Just stop and get on your knees and pray this thing through with God. Acknowledge to Him your insecurity, confess all known sin to Him, claim the shed blood of Jesus Christ to cleanse you of all sin, and if you have never done so ask Jesus Christ to be your Savior. He will save you right now if you will trust Him *alone* for salvation. If you already know Him He will make your heart right with God, and restore the broken fellowship.

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