

Lesson 2: How to be Sure you are Saved

Key Verse: 1 John 5:11-12

"¹¹ And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹² Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

Dear Friend,

Are you troubled with doubts about your salvation? Perhaps you have gone forward in a meeting, prayed, and asked Christ to come into your heart and yet you are not sure about your salvation.

You say, "Sometimes, I feel like I have been saved and other times, I don't feel like I am a child of God. If only I could be sure of my salvation."

You can be sure! God does not want you to go through life wondering whether or not you are a true Christian.

What is a Christian?

First of all, we need to find out what a Christian really is. If someone were to ask you, "What is a Christian?" what would you say? Perhaps you would say, "A Christian is a person who reads his bible, prays to God and goes to church." You would be quite right in saying that a Christian should do these things, but a person can do all these things without being a Christian. Or you might say, "A Christian is a person who lives a good life, helps other people and does good deeds." Again, a person may do these things without being a true Christian.

What then is a Christian? A Christian is a person in whom Christ lives. He lives in us by His Spirit. The Bible says, *"Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts..." Galatians 4:6*

The Bible makes it clear that anyone who does not have this personal relationship with Jesus Christ is not a true child of God. God's Word says, *"Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His." Romans 8:9b*

How does one become a Christian?

Many people are not saved, they have no assurance of their salvation, because they have never really understood what they must do to become a Christian. The words which best express what we are to do are: (1) Repent, (2) Believe, and (3) Receive. Let us see what we mean by these words.

1 - REPENT—We must repent of our sins.

Repentance is essential to salvation. It is mentioned over 55 times in the New Testament. The Bible says that God *"commands all men everywhere to repent."* (Acts 17:30)

What does it mean to repent? Repentance is not just being sorry for your sins. Judas was sorry that he had betrayed the Lord Jesus but he never repented. Repentance is not just quitting a sinful act. Some men have quit certain sins, not because they wanted to obey God, but because of personal reasons such as health, business, reputation or family. This is not repentance.

What, then, is repentance? Repentance is a sincere heart sorrow for sin that leads a person to turn from his sins to God to do His will. David expressed true repentance when he said, *"I thought about my ways, and turned my feet to Your testimonies."* Psalm 119:59

The Lord Jesus gave us a clear illustration of what it means to repent. He told of a certain man who had two sons. He went to one of his sons and said, *"Son, go work today in my vineyard."* (Matthew 21:28) The son replied, *"I will not!"*

The father went to the second son and said, *"Son, go work today in my vineyard."* That son replied, *"I go, sir."* But he did not go.

No doubt the father was deeply hurt by the way his sons were acting. But the story does not end here. Something happened in the heart of the first son. Apparently, he saw how rebellious and disobedient he had been and how he had hurt his father's heart. He repented of his sin and went and did what his father wanted him to do.

We are like the first son. We have said, *"No!"* to God many times. We have been selfish and self-centered. We have gone our own way and done our own thing. We have hardened our heart toward God.

In His love and mercy, God uses various means to soften our heart and cause us to turn our heart toward Him. He sends His Holy Spirit to convict us of our sins and show us how sinful and selfish we have been. Sometimes it is the goodness of God that leads us to repentance. We see how patient and loving He has been with us.

When we repent and turn to the Lord, we find that He is merciful and gracious and most willing to forgive us. The Bible says,

"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon." Isaiah 55:7

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Here are some simple questions to help you know whether or not you have truly repented.

- Have I experienced deep sorrow in my heart for my own personal sin?
- Is my sorrow for my sin so strong that I am absolutely willing to turn away from it?
- Can I say that there is no sin that I am not willing to give up?

When we give up our rebellion and turn our heart toward God, we are ready to believe on His Son and receive Him as our Savior and Lord.

2 – BELIEVE – We must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Many people believe the facts concerning Christ. They believe that He is the Son of God and that He died on the cross for the sins of the world. But they do not love Him supremely, nor are they willing to obey Him and follow Him. This is not true faith in Christ and it will never bring salvation.

God's salvation is a person—the living Lord Jesus Himself. The Bible says, *"He who has the Son has life."* (1 John 5:12) We are told to believe on Him: *"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved..."* Acts 16:31

What does it mean to believe on Him? To believe on the Lord Jesus Christ means to believe that He is the Son of God and that He is worthy to be loved, worshipped, and obeyed. The Bible not only stresses faith but it also stresses love. We must give our heart to the Lord. The Lord Jesus was asked one day, *"Master, which is the great commandment in the law?"* Jesus replied, *"You shall love the Lord your God, with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment."* Matthew 22:37-38

Loving the Lord is not just having certain feelings; it is the definite choice of our will. David said, "I will love You, O Lord." (Psalm 18:1) This is what we should do. Let us lift up our heart to Him and say, "Lord Jesus, I will love You with all my heart, with all my soul, and with all my mind! You are worthy to be loved, worshipped, and obeyed." If we truly love the Lord, we will obey Him. There is no such thing as loving the Lord without being willing to obey Him. Jesus said, "If anyone loves Me, he WILL KEEP MY WORD..." (John 14:23)

The following questions will help you know if you truly believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

- Have I recognized God's great love toward me in giving His Son to die for me?
- Is my love for God so sincere that I am willing to follow Jesus as my Lord?
- Can I truly say, "I will go where He wants me to go, do what He wants me to do?"

3 – RECEIVE – We must receive the Lord Jesus as our Savior.

To become a child of God, there is *something to believe* and *Someone to receive*. That "Someone" is the Lord Jesus Christ.

We must not only believe the facts concerning Him—who He was and what He did—but we must receive Him as our very own Savior. We receive Him by asking Him to come into our heart.

Jesus likened our heart to a house with a door. He said, *"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if anyone hears My voice, and opens the door, I will come in..."* Revelation 3:20

This is true salvation—the Lord Jesus coming to live in our heart. The Bible says, *"As many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe on His name."* John 1:12

Evidences of God's Salvation

If a person has truly repented, believed, and received Christ, there will be some definite evidences of salvation in his life. We are going to consider some of these evidences. As you think about them, ask yourself, *"Is this true of me?"* God will definitely speak to your heart as you weigh these evidences against your own life.

1 - The desire to share Christ with others.

One of the first signs that a person is truly born again is that he wants others to experience the joy and peace he has found in Christ.

2 - A love for other Christians.

One way we know that we are truly saved is that we love other Christians—those who are our brothers and sisters in Christ. The Bible says, *"We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death."* 1 John 3:14

3- Changed desires.

A person who is truly saved has a new set of desires. Whereas in the past, he did not care for the things of the Lord, now he loves them. The Bible says, *"Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation: old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new."* 2 Corinthians 5:17

4 - The witness of the Holy Spirit.

When we are truly born again, the Holy Spirit comes to live in us. One thing that He does is to cause us to know that God is truly our Father and we are His children. The Bible says, *"The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."* Romans 8:16

5 - The presence of Christ.

Why have all these changes taken place in your life? They have taken place because Christ Himself has come to live in your heart. The Apostle Paul said, *"Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified (not true Christians at all)."* 2 Corinthians 13:5

Christ very definitely and very personally comes to live in the heart of every true Christian. The Apostle Paul said, *"Christ lives in me."* (Galatians 2:20)

Go over these evidences of salvation until you reach a firm and honest conclusion regarding your salvation. Either God's evidence is real in your life and you are saved, or His evidence is not real in your life and you have never truly been born again.

How to Make Sure of your Relationship with God

If you are not saved or you are not absolutely sure of your salvation, you need to make sure.

A young man who lived on a farm often had doubts about his salvation. Thoughts would come rushing into his mind such as these:

Are you sure you have taken Christ as your Savior? Do you know that you are a child of God?

One day he decided to do something to end his doubts once and for all. He walked out by the barn, knelt down, and prayed something like this:

"Lord, if I have never received You as my Savior before, I am doing it right now. Come into my heart, cleanse me from all my sins, and make me Your child from this day forward. I take You as my Savior right now."

Then he took a wooden stake, drove it into the ground where he had prayed, and wrote the date on it. Thereafter, when Satan tried to make him doubt his salvation, he would go to the stake, point to it, and say, *"See, Satan, here is the date and place where I received Christ as my Savior. God's Word says, 'He that has the Son has life.'"*

If you have doubts about your salvation, why not do as this young man did and settle the matter, once and for all. You can do this right now. Come humbly and kneel before the Lord Jesus. Tell

Him, *"Lord Jesus, I do believe that You are the Son of God who died for my sins and rose again to be my living Savior. Right now, I am trusting You as my personal Savior. Come into my heart and take Your rightful place on the throne of my heart. I want to love and obey You with all my heart."*

After you have sincerely prayed, trusting Christ as your Savior, make a record of your decision. Write it in your Bible:

"On [give the date] I settled my doubts and trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as my personal Savior. The matter is finished!"

This can be your "stake" to refer to whenever Satan tempts you to doubt your salvation.

A Final Matter: Understanding but not Willing

If you have fully understood what it means to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and to receive Him, and yet you are still not saved, there is a reason. The reason is that you are not willing to give your heart to the Lord. You are not willing to obey Him.

To help you understand what it is that is keeping you from being saved, consider carefully the following questions:

- **Is there some sin in your life which you are not willing to give up?**
- **Are you involved in a sinful relationship with someone which you are not willing to give up?**
- **Are you holding bitterness or unforgiveness in your heart against someone and you are not willing to give this up?**
- **Is there some point of pride which you are not willing to give up in order to be saved?**
- **Have you committed some sin against someone which you are not willing to make right?**

Whatever it may be in your life, if you are not willing to obey God, then it means that you have not repented. You will not be saved unless you change your heart attitude and repent. The Lord Jesus said,

"...unless you repent, you will all likewise perish." Luke 13:3

You need to turn your thoughts to the Savior who loved you enough to die for you. The Lord Jesus not only shed His precious blood for us, but He also shed many tears over our sins. He lovingly and earnestly warned us of the terrible consequences of dying with our sins unforgiven. Read [Mark 9:43-48](#) (click on link). Let God speak to your heart.

Maybe you are saying, *"Yes, God is dealing with me about a certain sin in my life, but I do not see how I can give it up."* There is still hope for you if you will come to Jesus. He is the Friend of sinners!

Come just as you are. Kneel down before Him and tell Him the truth about yourself. If you are not willing to give up your sins, tell Him this. If you are willing for Him to make you willing, tell Him this. Do not be afraid to tell Him anything so long as it is the truth. Be absolutely honest with the Lord Jesus.

Do not harden your heart. Instead, put your heart in Jesus' hands. He can change you. He said, *"All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out." John 6:37*

Questions

1. What is a Christian?
2. Define repentance.
3. What does it mean to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ?
4. What must one do to become a child of God
5. Name evidences of salvation.
6. What changes about a person once they become a Christian?
7. Will a Christian sin?
8. As a Christian, must one love other Christians? What about non-Christians?
9. Which statement is true for you personally?
 - a) I'm saved and I know it!
 - b) I am not saved.
 - c) I am not sure if I'm saved or not.
10. Is there any sin that you just are not willing to give up?