

Adult Devotion: Assurance of Salvation

Materials: Bible, journal or writing paper, pen

Introduction: Gifts are wonderful things. The sweet anticipation of opening colorful boxes and bows once candles are blown out and cake is served is enough to enliven any celebration! Watching a beloved child excitedly tear into his birthday presents is one of the true delights of parenthood. This joy is also experienced by our Father God when His children receive the amazing Gift He has prepared! During this last in a series of three Awesome Journey Adult Devotions, we will discover the vital importance of being assured of our salvation through the Father's gift of Jesus Christ.

It may be helpful for this study to write down the following scripture reading before journaling your thoughts on paper.

Jesus has taken care of the problem of sin because He loves us and wants us to know Him. **He has taken the initiative to establish a relationship with us.** There is a right way to live your life by surrendering yourself into the hands of God and entering into a personal relationship:

- **Admit** that God has not been first place in your life; repent of your sins (turn away from) and ask for His forgiveness. 1 John 1:9
- **Believe** that Jesus died on the cross to pay for your sins and that He rose from the dead and is alive today in heaven. Romans 10:9 Acts 4:12
- **Accept** God's free gift of salvation. This is not earned, but freely given. Eph. 2:8-9

Our relationship to God is not restored by anything we do, but on the basis of what Jesus already did for us!

- **Invite** Jesus Christ to come into your life and to be the boss, director, and Lord of your life. John 1:12-13 Revelation 3:20
- **Confess** with your mouth that Jesus Christ is the Lord of your life and your personal Savior. Romans 10:9 Romans 14:11-12 Romans 10:13

We can be assured that we have God's gift of salvation.

- 1 John 5:11-13
- John 10:27-28

Assurance is the awareness of belonging to Jesus and having complete confidence in Him and in your relationship. An issue arises in that some of us are unsure about our connection with Him because we have not experienced a personal relationship.

Uncertainty is an enemy to our confidence and this comes from:

Not trusting in Jesus as Lord and Savior:

- Romans 10:9-10

Salvation is not based on our performance but on our relationship to Jesus Christ:

- 2 Timothy 1:12

Trusting our feelings rather than God's Word:

- Philippians 1:6

Our relationship with the Lord cannot be based simply on emotion. We need to rely on the facts that come from God's Word. We are to commit ourselves to the completed work of Jesus on the Cross, trust Him and then remain confident in what He is doing in us.

Sin and disobedience will create uncertainty:

- James 1:8

When a believer in Jesus does not nurture his relationship with the Lord through His Word, prayer, community, sharing the Gospel with others, discipleship or mentorship, and worship, that relationship will dry up.

How can we help someone who is not sure of their salvation?

Ask them to share their story of meeting Jesus personally. Ask them specifically when and where it was that they trusted in Jesus Christ as their Savior.

If they are unable to answer these questions well, if their story is unclear or uncertain, it may be due to a misunderstanding of what it means to be transformed or changed by the cross and the gift of eternal life.

It is important to emphasize that salvation means relationship through the new birth and that it is not by way of our own efforts:

- John 3:3

When we are born again this involves accepting a priceless gift—eternal life.

John's entire Gospel comes to a focus in Chapter 3 verse 16. God's love is not static or self-centered; it reaches out and draws in. Here God sets the pattern of true love, the basis for all love relationships: when you really love someone, you are willing to pay the price for that person's responsive love. God paid with the life of his Son, the highest price he could pay. Jesus accepted our punishment, paid the price for our sins, and then offered us the new life that he had bought for us. When we share the gospel with others, our love must be like Jesus'— we must be willing to give up our own comfort and security so that others might join us in receiving God's love.

Spiritual rebirth begins a life that will never end; the alternative is worse than death. Jesus says that those who believe in Him have (present tense not future) eternal life. To receive eternal life is to join in God's life, which by nature is eternal. Thus, eternal life begins at the moment of our new birth.

- John 3:36

New life, or being born again...

...means dying to the old life. When a person dies to the old life and belongs to Christ, a new life begins. A pre-Christian's mind-set is centered on his or her own personal gratification. Those who don't follow Christ have only their own self-determination as their source of power. By contrast, God is at the center of a Christian's life. God supplies the power for the Christian's daily living. A born again believer finds that their whole way of looking at the world changes when they receive Jesus as their Savior and Lord.

- 1 John 3:9

...gives us a new understanding of sin. True believers do not make a practice of sinning, nor do they become indifferent to God's moral law. All believers still sin, but they are working to gain victory over sin. True believers do not make a practice of sinning; they do not ignore their moral struggles and trials because God's new life has been born in them.

Determine if the person had been depending upon their own feelings; if so, share with them the above scriptures related to receiving eternal life through Jesus Christ.

Is the person you are talking to harboring sin in their life? Examples: 1 John 1:9; 1 John 2:1; Romans 12:1

Is the person immature? Their uncertainty may come from arrested spiritual development. It is important that we emphasize the need to pursue a vital spiritual relationship with Jesus by:

- Reading and studying the Word of God; learning to make integration and application into your life.
- Committing your life through prayer and thanksgiving to the Lord
- Taking care of sin through repentance, confession, and forgiveness
- Developing relationships with other believers through small groups, classes and involvement and service through ministry.

As a person unsure of his relationship with Jesus begins to understand more clearly, the need may arise for directed prayer (such as for salvation), repentance, or further discussion (such as on the need for a savior). Don't hesitate to contact your mentor or pastor for guidance.

This week reflect on your personal assurance of salvation (do you yourself have complete confidence in Jesus and in your relationship?), how this affects your

relationship with the Lord and with others, and pray as the Spirit gives you direction. For further discussion or prayer, don't hesitate to reach out to your mentor or pastor.