

So That You May Know

An Expository Study of the Epistle of **1 John**

Chapter 15- The Affections of the Heart

145. The Assurance of Salvation- Part 14

WAOY Friday/Monday 02/01-4/08

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We're continuing our verse by verse "journey" through the Epistle of **1John**, and today I want to continue to look at what the Apostle John taught about, "The Assurance of Salvation". So, let's read **1John 3: 19-24** again together:

19 We will know by this that we are of the truth, and will assure our heart before Him

20 in whatever our heart condemns us; for God is greater than our heart and knows all things.

21 Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God;

22 and whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight.

23 This is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as He commanded us.

24 The one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. We know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.

Now on the last broadcast- we were looking at the three questions that we need to ask and answer about this issue:

1. What happens when someone who is saved- sins?
2. How are sins that are committed *after* Salvation paid for?
3. And just how do our sins that we commit after we are saved affect our Salvation?

And how you answer these three questions formulates your view of just how secure and steadfast your Assurance is. Now on the last broadcast- we were looking at the second question and on today's broadcast- I want to examine the third question:

4. How is our Salvation affected by our sins?

As I told you before- the modern Church is divided on this issue. But whereas we are divided over this issue- the Scriptures are crystal clear. Salvation is a Sovereign work of God alone and is not made better or worse by what we do or do not do. That is what the Scriptures teach and that is the only reason why Salvation is called eternal.

Only what God does is eternal. Everything that Man does or that Man is involved in is not eternal- but is very, very temporal and is unstable at best. Now that is not just a noble statement- but that is a fact.

As I have taught before- if Salvation is the elimination of sin- then no one is saved. If only sinless people are saved- then no one is saved. If Salvation is won or lost by how much we sin or don't sin- then no one is saved. You have to acknowledge that this is true- or else you have to believe that sinless perfection is not only possible in this life- but also required.

In my own personal experience- those who believe that Salvation can be lost also believe that somehow the sins that they personally commit never rise to the level of jeopardizing their own Salvation. So while in theory they believe that you could lose *your* Salvation- very few if any believe that they will ever lose theirs.

And they reach this conclusion based upon an unbelievable logic- that because they are sincere- that even when they sin- God sees their hearts and they stay saved!

So in effect- they have created two groups of sin- one group- that while bad is not so bad that it actually kills Salvation and another group or category of sins that are so bad that they rise to the level of actually killing Salvation.

And again- what I just described to you in exactly what Roman Catholicism teaches. Protestantism teaches now and has always taught that Salvation is Sovereign act of God and is therefore eternal.

So the odd thing is that there are those who call themselves Evangelical Protestants; and who attend a Protestant Church- and yet they believe the Theology of Roman Catholicism- at least as it applies to Salvation- while those who call themselves Catholic and who attend a Catholic Church actually disbelieve what Catholicism teaches and they

believe Protestant Doctrine- as it pertains to Salvation. Mixed up world- huh?

Now the problem that people have with teaching like this is that it seems that I am saying that sin doesn't matter. When you teach that Salvation is not destroyed by sin- people get the idea that you are saying that sin is okay or that sin is no big deal and then people wrongly assume that they can sin with impunity.

Let me be very clear about two things:

Sin matters to God and sin should matter to us. Those people who sin with impunity are not saved. Saved people- those who have been truly and genuinely born from above do not dwell continually in sin. If you have been following me in these messages for any time- you will remember that we dealt with that issue very thoroughly on earlier broadcasts. But to summarize what God says about this let's go over a few Scriptures:

If we say that we have fellowship with Him and *yet* walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth;

Notice that John is not addressing genuinely saved people in this verse- but John is dealing with people who "say" that they are saved. If anyone *says* that he is saved- he may well be in the Church; he may sit on the pew; he may even sing in the choir or even be the pastor- and yet if this person does not walk with Jesus Christ in humble submission and obedience- then John teaches us here that this person is lying- and he is not really saved. Now keep in mind here that John is not saying in this verse that a person must be sinless. When you look at this verse in the Greek- which is the language that John wrote it in- that you can very easily see that the tense of the verb that John used here causes this verse to mean that if a person walks in darkness continually or as a normal activity of his daily life- he is a liar and is not really saved.

Now look at **1John 2:9**:

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.

This is a favorite verse of those who believe that you can lose your

Salvation—in fact it is what is called a proof text to prove that Salvation is conditional. But let's look very closely at this verse. On the surface- this verse seems to say that a saved person does not have the ability to sin anymore because the seed of Christ now lives within him. Therefore- those who sin must not be saved. But does it really say that?

Again, the key to correctly understanding this verse lies in the language it was written in. The Greek verb that was translated into English as “commit” in this verse actually means: *to continue in something as a normal course of their daily life*. This verb has to do with being dominated by something or being under the continual control of something. So when you place this definition on the verb- and read this verse- you get an entirely different meaning. This is an example of why correct exegesis of the original languages is so important if we are to correctly understand the Scriptures.

John was not teaching that saved people are sinless in this verse- not at all. But that is exactly the meaning that you would get if you didn't do your homework. So this verse that seems to suggest that saved people no longer sin- doesn't say that at all.

John was saying that saved people are no longer in prison to the domination of sin in their lives; that sin no longer dominates or controls them- as it does with lost people. And the reason that sin no longer controls them- is because the seed of Jesus Christ lives in them or in other words- because they are saved.

Now how can I be so sure that John taught that sin did not destroy Salvation? Because of what John taught. Let's read two more verses in **1John 1:8** and **1John 1:10**:

8 If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us.

10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.

John wrote this Epistle to those who were saved and he says here that if we- those who are saved- say that we have no sin- we deceive ourselves; the truth is not in us; and we make God out to be a liar.

Now you can't have it both ways, beloved- either Salvation is of God or it is of Man. If it is of Man in any way- then Salvation is unreliable and undependable and unpredictable and we have no idea whether we

are saved from one minute to the next. And if that is true-then we have no assurance at all. And if that is true- then we all need to convert immediately to Catholicism because Protestantism does not teach that about either Salvation or Assurance and never has.

If Salvation is eternal – then we don't need to pay for our sins after we are saved. They have already been paid for. Jesus paid for all of our sins- not just the ones that we committed before we were saved.

“Well Brother Blair, are you saying that we don't need to confess and turn from those sins that we commit after we are saved?” Not at all. We *do* need to confess those sins and we absolutely need to turn from them by and through the power of the Spirit that lives within us. But that is *not* what saved us.

I really believe that part of the problem in our understanding of this lies in the fact that we get Salvation confused with Sanctification. Turning daily from sin toward God is Sanctification- not Salvation. Salvation made us fit for Heaven and is a onetime *event*. Sanctification is a lifelong *process* – that as we grow in Grace and become strong in the Lord and the power of his Might- we see our sins more clearly. As that occurs- we repent and turn from them. That doesn't save us- that causes us to be more like Jesus.

Salvation is a Sovereign work of God alone toward sinful and lost Man. But Sanctification is a cooperative effort between God and saved and redeemed Man. We must understand that Sanctification is a lifelong process that only begins once we are truly born again. Being sanctified means that we are molded and shaped into the image and likeness of Jesus Christ by various means including trials and persecutions.

As we are sanctified year after year- we are literally becoming more holy- our love for God grows; our understanding of Scripture improves; our ability to follow Jesus is made more mature- and the result is that we sin less and less. But because our sanctified soul is encased in sinful and unredeemed flesh- we will never reach a place on this earth where we are totally sinless.

All of the commands of the New Testament that say to yield or to strive or to choose or to follow or to do certain things are all commands to believers- people who are already saved. That is because once we are saved- God has given us the new divine nature and we have been

restored into right standing with God and are now *able* to cooperate with God in our Sanctification.

But before we were saved- the Bible says that we were dead in sins and trespasses and were *unable* to affect our own Salvation or even assist in it. Therefore Salvation- unlike Sanctification- is a Sovereign work of a gracious God to undeserving sinners. May God's Name be evermore praised.

Well, I have to stop right here, but please join me on the next broadcast as we continue our journey through the Epistle of **1John**. May God help us all.

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