

Sermon Notes
“God’s Purpose of Grace”

Material for this message was drawn from a series of sermons by Dr. Calvin Wittman (2009)

Focal Scripture Reference: John 10:27-29

Once you become a Christian, once you have accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord, it is critically important for you to be certain about the assurance of your salvation. And the source of our assurance is the inerrant and infallible word of God.

Article five of the Baptist Faith and Message contains a summation of Southern Baptist’s understanding of what the Bible teaches on the assurance of our salvation. Here is what article five says,

“All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end.

Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.”

Our Assurance of Salvation

The doctrine of assurance of salvation is founded on scriptural teaching that says once we are His no one can take us from God’s saving hand. It is also founded on the scriptural truth that God gives us eternal life through salvation in Jesus Christ. It is not life until we sin again, it is not life until we feel differently, and it is not life until times get tough and our faith grows weak. It is eternal life that will never end.

There are several scriptures that provide us with assurance of our salvation. Listen to what Jesus says in our focal scripture reference, **John 10:27-29:**

²⁷My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand.

Romans 8:38-39

³⁸For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹neither

height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Philippians 1:6

⁶...being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

God's Word is filled with the assurance that our salvation is secure. Sadly, despite all of the scriptures that point to the security of a Christian's salvation, many find themselves unsure about their salvation status. Let me give you four reasons people may doubt their salvation:

1. They Have a Faulty Understanding of How They are Saved

If you are under the false impression that you are saved by good works, then it makes sense that you might also think your salvation could be lost by bad works. This is a problem for many people. They feel that they can lose their salvation. After all, if you could earn it, you could lose it. If you could deserve it, you could desert it.

However, since the Bible clearly teaches that you cannot earn salvation, since it is a gift of God not of works, then the truth is you did not deserve it in the first place. None of us did. How could you lose it simply because you slipped and committed a sin? This is why a proper theological understanding of salvation is important.

God did not choose to offer salvation to us based on our merits or what we deserved. The truth is He chose to save us despite of who we are, what we've done and certainly, contrary to what we deserve. Salvation is based on God's goodness and grace, not on our merit.

When you get a proper understanding of that; when you get a clear picture of how bad your sins were and how great God's grace is, it will give you a new and deeper appreciation for your salvation. A second reason people may doubt their salvation is ...

They are Ignorant of God's Promises in His Word

The level of biblical illiteracy today is astonishing. Many professing Christians today know more about their favorite sports teams or television shows than they do the doctrines of their faith. It is no wonder that so many of them are so easily led astray by every wind of doctrine that blows across the religious landscape.

The antidote for this is simple: get grounded and rooted in the word of God and learn what it says. God's word tells us that He gives us eternal life. This is what God says to us through His Word in **1 John 5:11-13**

¹¹And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹²He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. ¹³I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.

Here is a third reason people may doubt their salvation ...

They are Out of Fellowship with God

Christians who are out of the will of God cannot clearly hear Him or sense His presence in their lives. There are many Christians today who experience doubts about their salvation for no reason other than they are simply out of fellowship with God. Folks, our fellowship with God is all about relationship. It is about walking and talking, breathing and being; it is about practicing the presence of God in our lives.

But far too many Christians have allowed sin to remain in their lives, unconfessed and unaddressed. They are no longer sensitive to God's presence in their lives. In such a state, it is no wonder that people would begin to doubt their salvation. The solution for this is simple: Get right with God.

1 John 2:1 says,

¹ My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. ²He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

Finally, a fourth reason people may doubt their salvation is that ...

They are not Saved

One of the reasons people doubt their salvation is simply because they are not saved. They may have knowledge of the church. They may have knowledge of the scripture. They may have grown up in a Christian home, surrounded by Christian friends and have all the trappings of religion, but at the end of the day, they cannot say that they have ever experienced a transformation of their life. The kind of transformation that only Jesus can

bring when He gives a person a new heart and a new mind. It is to this end that Paul tells the Christians at Corinth in **2 Corinthians 13:5**

“Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves.”

The reason many people will go to hell from a church pew is that they never gave themselves an honest spiritual examination. They never stopped to consider whether they were really saved. If you are truly saved, you should know it.

God does not want you to be paralyzed by fear or doubts that are ungrounded or unfounded. The solution is clear - Know what God's word says about your salvation. Stand on the truth that it is God who saves you and not anything you have done or could ever do. Ground yourself in good doctrine.

Remember that your salvation is a reflection and an extension of God's character. He is faithful. Let Him show you if there is any sin in your life. If there is, deal with it at the Throne of Grace. And, if you still have doubts, stop for a moment and really examine yourself spiritually to see if you have accepted God's gift of salvation.