

Isaiah 32:17-18 "The work of righteousness will be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever. My people will dwell in a peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places."

Jude 1:24 "To Him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before His glorious presence without fault and with great joy to the one and only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority through Jesus Christ our Lord before all ages now and forevermore."

- Who does the keeping?

John 6:37-40 "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

John 10:27- 29 "My sheep hear My voice and I know them and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone 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 My Father's hand."

- Whose hand is it that's holding on to you?

For Personal Reflection

- Is your assurance based on anything you're DOING?
- Is it based on what you're NOT DOING that you think makes you better than other?
- Or is it based on what God has DONE for us in His Son Jesus Christ?

Soul Check

Are You Doubting or Delighting in Your Salvation?

Is it Possible to be Sure?

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I. It's Possible – Even Normal – for a Christian to Live with Assurance that They're On Their Way to Heaven

God wants every believer to be delighting in their salvation, but even church leaders sometimes say otherwise.

"Church teaching is that I don't know, at any given moment, what my eternal future will be. I can hope, pray, do my very best - but I still don't know." Cardinal John O'Connor, *New York Times*, Feb. 1, 1990, B4

"You open the account when you are baptized. Receiving the sacraments and performing good works is like adding money to your account. Committing a venial sin takes money out. A mortal sin bankrupts your account. In order to restore it to a positive balance, you have to receive the sacrament of confession. And whether you go to heaven or hell is decided by the status of your account at the moment of death. If you have money in the bank, you go to heaven. If not, you don't. And since nobody knows what his final balance will be, no one can know where he is going until he gets there." *Conversations with Catholics*, James G. McCarthy, Harvest House Pub., 1997, p. 41

I John 5:11-13 "And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life..."

Hebrews 6:11-12 "And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises."

Hebrews 10:9-23 “Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, and having a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.”

Romans 8:16 “The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children.”

- What kind of God is our God?

He wants us to know that we’re forgiven, and to confidently draw near with a full assurance of faith.

Hebrews 10:22 “Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

II. It’s also Possible – and Extremely Common – for Non-Christians to Live with a False Assurance that’s Everything’s Right Between Them and God When it’s Not

Matthew 7:21-23 “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’”

In George Barna’s book, *What Americans Believe*, 99% of Americans said they think they’re on their way to heaven (*What Americans Believe*, Barna, p. 198-199).

- “I was baptized”
- “I was confirmed”
- “I go to church”
- “I try to keep the 10 commandments”
- “I was raised in a Christian home”
- “I take the Lord’s Supper”
- “I raised my hand in a religious meeting”
- “I walked forward”

You can have a false assurance that’s rooted in what you’re doing, and you can have a false assurance that’s rooted in what you’ve NOT done.

Luke 18:9-14 “Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: 10 “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.’ And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me a sinner!’ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

Romans 3:19, 23-24 “Now we know whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped and all the world may be guilty before God... for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.”

III. So Your Assurance Better Be in the Right Place and Resting on the Right Person

It’s the confidence we have in God’s righteousness applied to us in Christ that allows us to rest.