

Wednesday Night BIBLE STUDY



Wednesday, May 27, 2020 – First Baptist Church Buda
Midweek Prayer Meeting & Bible Study

PSALMS, HYMNS AND SPIRITUAL SONGS
“A Bible Study Drawn from Old and New Songs of Faith”
Ephesians 5:18-19

Music has a rich history in the story of God's people beginning with the songs of the Old Testament called Psalms, and the rise and spread of Christianity around the globe with the great teaching hymns of faith. And even today, though music has sometimes been a point of contention and division centering on styles and methods of worship, many of the spiritual songs of our day are rich and power lyrics and sounds of worship that exalt our God and feed the souls of men. The Apostle Paul instructs us in Ephesians 5:18-19 to, “¹⁸...be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.” – Ephesians 5:18-19 We are actually commanded in God's Word to dive head long into the music of faith... to be “*singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord*” with all kind of expression of music (psalms, hymns and spiritual songs). What many miss in great hymns and songs of faith is the rich Biblical tradition and teaching embedded in many of those songs. The Bible study will attempt to dig into some of those select songs of faith and the powerful Biblical truths and lessons those songs that generations have loved to sing may have for us. Perhaps this will change our worship as we begin to sing these lyrics with deeper appreciation and understanding for what they are actually proclaiming.

BLESSED ASSURANCE, JESUS IS MINE – HYMN #334
“*Finding Blessed Assurance of Your Faith*”
1 John 5:13, Selected Scriptures

“¹³These 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, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.” – 1 John 5:13

Fanny Crosby (1820-1915) is heralded as one of the world's most prolific and talented hymn writers/composers of all time. Blind from shortly after birth, Fanny nonetheless wrote 8,000 hymns. It might seem unlikely that a blind writer of hymns living in a slum and taking care of the poor and needy (though blind) and a wealthy woman living in a mansion in one of the most affluent part of New York would have anything in common — but Fanny Crosby, the blind hymn writer, was a humble woman with a number of distinguished friends. Grover Cleveland, who later became President of the United States, met Fanny Crosby as a young man, and they became lifelong friends.

The woman-friend living in the mansion was Phoebe Knapp, the daughter of a Methodist evangelist. When she was just sixteen years old, Phoebe married Joseph Fairchild Knapp, a young man who went on to found the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company. The Knapps were extremely wealthy. They worshiped at the John Street Methodist Church in lower Manhattan, which is where Fanny Crosby also attended as an active member in her adult years — and so a friendship was born between Fanny Crosby and Phoebe Knapp. Phoebe, the wealthy matron, often invited Fanny, the blind hymn writer, to her palatial home. Phoebe enjoyed music, and had a music room furnished with a collection of musical instruments. During one of Fanny's visits, Phoebe invited her to the music room, where Phoebe sat down at the keyboard and played a tune that she had written. "What does that tune say to you, Fanny?" Phoebe asked? Fanny clapped her hands in delight and said, "That happy tune says to me, 'Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!'" And so a hymn was born as a collaboration between the two women, that was to become one of Christendom's most beloved hymns. *Blessed Assurance* was published in 1873.

I find this hymn especially important for Christians and the church, because so many struggle with questions of assurance of their faith and salvation. Most have experienced "doubts" about their salvation, wondering if they are really saved, truly saved, or if they need to do more or have done enough to be saved, or if they have lost their salvation... if that is even possible.

HYMN LYRICS AND QUESTIONS: "Blessed Assurance, Jesus Is Mine" (Hymn #334)

¹*Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine! O what a foretaste of glory divine!*

Heir of salvation, purchase of God, Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.

²*Perfect submission, perfect delight! Visions of rapture now burst on my sight;
Angels descending bring from above echoes of mercy, whispers of love.*

³*Perfect submission, all is at rest! I in my Savior am happy and blest,
Watching and waiting, looking above; filled with his goodness, lost in His love.*

Chorus:

*This is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long;
This is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long.*

Questions from the song "Blessed Assurance, Jesus Is Mine": The following are some questions to consider from the song "Blessed Assurance, Jesus Is Mine" regarding assurance of one's salvation.

- (1) In verse 1 of the song what things might Fanny Crosby be suggesting are the things that give a Christian assurance of their salvation and how might each give one assurance?

Answer: *"Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine! O what a foretaste of glory divine! Heir of salvation, purchase of God, born of His Spirit, washed in His blood."*

1. **Heir of salvation** - In stating that one is an "heir" it means that they belong to God's forever family and will as such one day received the inheritance of a family, which in this case is ultimate salvation, Christian will never be disinherited. 1 Peter 3-5 says, *"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,"* and

into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you,⁵ who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.”

2. **Purchased by God** - We have been bought with a price, the precious blood of Jesus Christ, we belong to Him and He will never turn us away... we belong to Him... He bought us and He owns us. Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, “*Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; ²⁰ you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.*” That price was the ransom that was paid for us and our sins. Jesus paid the ransom for us giving us an eternal inheritance. I love how Hebrews 9:15 says it, “*For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance—now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.*”
3. **Born of His Spirit** - We have been born again, into His forever family and His Spirit lives in us guaranteeing us as His. 2 Corinthians 1:20-22, “*For no matter how many promises God has made, they are “Yes” in Christ. And so through him the “Amen” is spoken by us to the glory of God.*” Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, ²² set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.” And in 2 Corinthians 5:5, Paul tells us, “⁵ Now the one who has fashioned us for this very purpose is God, who has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.” And in Ephesians 1:13-14, Paul’s words powerfully give us this assurance, “¹³ And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession—to the praise of his glory.” Wow! As believers we have had the Spirit of God born in us and that “guarantees” our salvation and right standing with God.
4. **Washed in His blood** - Again, we have been bought through the precious blood of Jesus Christ and our sins, past, present and future, have been washed away... the only thing that can separate us from God is our sin and our sin has been atoned for. When God looks at us now He looks through the blood of Christ and sees us as not guilty and as His own. John tells us in 1 John 1:7, “*If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, His Son, purifies (washes) us from all sin.*” Peter speaks of this precious blood and the hope it gives us in 1 Peter 1:18-21, “*For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. ²⁰ He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake.*” Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God.” And the writer of Hebrews said it this way in Hebrews 9:11-15, “*But when Christ came as high priest of the good things that are now already here, he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not made with human hands, that is to say, is not a part of this creation.*” ¹² He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption. ¹³ The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them

so that they are outwardly clean.¹⁴ How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!¹⁵ For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance—now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.”

- (2) In verse 2 of the song “Blessed Assurance, Jesus Is Mine,” from what does Fanny Crosby suggest she receives internal aids in assurance? Explain how each might aid in assurance of one’s salvation.

Answer: “*Perfect submission, perfect delight! Visions of rapture now burst on my sight; Angels descending bring from above echoes of mercy, whispers of love.*”

1. **Echoes of mercy** – What might she be suggested with the idea of “echoes of mercy” and how might we receive these?
2. **Whispers of love** - What might she be suggesting with the idea of “whispers of love” and how might we receive these?

- (3) In verse 2 and verse 3 what do you think Fanny Crosby might have in mind with the phrase “*perfect submission*”, and what might this have to say concerning our assurance?

Answer: I think the idea here has to do with our yielding and surrendering to Christ. If we are living a yielded, surrendered, submitted life in Christ... letting Him be Lord and have His way in us, and living in submission to Him we will have assurance. Our doubts about our salvation are answered and that kind of life confirms that we are His. As she says in verse 3 of the song “all is at rest.” In other words, we will have a peace about our salvation and won’t be struggling with questions of assurance.

Those who struggle with questions of assurance of their salvation or with whether or not they are truly saved may do so because they lack a clear understanding of what Scripture teaches concerning salvation. More particularly, how one is saved, and what keeps them saved. The doctrine of the “eternal security of the believer” and questions of assurance of one’s salvation are closely tied.

A GOOD DEFINITION OF ETERNAL SECURITY

“Eternal security is the work of God that guarantees that the gift of salvation, once received is forever and cannot be lost.”

There are three (3) important parts to that definition that are important to understand:

3 Important Parts to the Definition:

- (1) **Salvation is the work of God (*Ephesians 2:8-9*)** – “⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast.”
- (2) **Salvation is a gift (*Romans 6:23*)** – “²³For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

(3) Salvation is forever and cannot be lost (John 10:27-29) – “²⁷My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. ²⁸And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. ²⁹My 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. ³⁰I and My Father are one.”

Unfortunately truth be told, many professing believer often lacks assurance of their salvation, they may struggle with doubts about the reality of their commitment, and lack a sense of security in their salvation either stated or unstated. Again, there is a direct link between our assurance of salvation and our understand and grounding in the very Biblical teaching of the doctrine of eternal security and how a person is saved. This is the premise of this study:

STUDY PREMISE: A proper and Biblically based understanding of what God’s Word truly teaches about the eternal security of the believer may prove the greatest foundational help for dealing with one’s doubts and lack of assurance.

Why? Because no matter how we feel (and there may be times that we don’t “feel” saved) we can know we are saved based on what God says in His Word. Remember we are not saved by what we do, but what God does and had already done on our behalf. It is a settled fact!

What do you think about the following by quote? What do you think Os Guiness is saying about faith in general, about assurance? Share your thoughts

“Faith does not feed on thin air but on facts.” -Os Guiness

* Os Guiness is a Christian apologist and social analyst who lives in McLean, Virginia.

CASE STUDIES

The follow are representative of the kind of problems Christians have with assurance. See how you might assist each with his or her struggle with assurance:

Case Study 1: An elderly lady who was on her deathbed said to her son, “I believe in Jesus Christ. I love Him and have tried to live for Him. But I have been far from perfect. Now I can only hope my faith is acceptable to God.” She died as she lived... with a sad uncertainty. What you have shared with this elderly woman to help her with her struggle to find assurance?

Case Study 2: The owner of a small business was a faithful in church attendance and was compassionate to the poor... basically a “good” Christian man as many would say. But he never enjoyed the full assurance that he would go to heaven. His comment to the pastor as they discussed his struggle with assurance was this, “Right now I feel good about my relationship with God. But I don’t always have this feeling. I often find myself worrying about the future. I’m afraid I might die right after I commit a serious sin.” He went on to cite Paul’s comment about working out our salvation with fear and trembling, and then he said he was afraid he might be cast away. He concluded, “I sure wish I could know if I’m going to heaven – but I’m afraid that’s impossible.” What would you share with this man to help him with his lack of assurance?

Case Study 3: A young house wife who received the Lord a few years ago and underwent a remarkable change has been struggling lately with doubt and has begun to lack assurance of her own salvation. She believes that assurance is possible, and she longs for it. But she is plagued with feelings of doubt and fear about everything – including her relationship with the Lord. She doesn't even understand where these feelings are coming from, but she had said to her pastor, “I sometimes even have a hard time sleeping at night and will wake up with bad dreams that I am not saved.” She desires assurance of her salvation, but it had become a struggle for her lately. **What would you share with this young mother to help her find some peace and assurance?**

The lack of assurance of salvation in these case histories comes basically from two sources:

2 Common Sources of a Lack of Assurance:

1. Misinterpretation of Scripture
2. Personal emotional makeup

REASONS WHY PEOPLE LACK ASSURANCE

When a person doubts his or her salvation there can be several different reasons why that is happening in their life. The following provides a list of some of the primary reasons that people may lack assurance or have doubts in their life about the security of their salvation. This list is not exhaustive and there may be other reasons, but these are the primary reasons of a lack of assurance that we have examined. These have been restated just a little differently for us:

5 Primary Reasons Why People Lack Assurance: We looked at these in previous weeks so just in the way of review the following are a few of the reasons that some lack assurance of their faith restated.

1. **A Commitment Problem** - Doubting the reality of one's commitment to Christ. Some doubt the reality of their commitment to Christ. Sometimes when a person cannot see visible or tangible evidence of their commitment to Christ and Christian ideals/practices/behavior it causes them to doubt and lack assurance. They may question, “Did I really mean it when I prayed?” Maybe my heart wasn't sincere enough?”
2. **A Procedure Problem** - Questioning the correctness of the salvation process. Some question the correctness of the procedure they went through when they were saved... can't pin-point a specific time and place, didn't say those “exact” words in the sinner's prayer, didn't do it right the first time, wasn't at a church, wasn't with a minister, etc.
3. **A Doctrinal Problem** - Lack of Biblical teaching and grounding. Often when one is struggling with doubts and a lack of assurance it may simply be a learning/grounding problem. A lack of Scriptural grounding and learning on the foundational and doctrinal understanding of “salvation” and particularly “the eternal security of the believer”. Those who don't believe in eternal security will naturally lack assurance... how can they ever know. Those who attach works to salvation will naturally doubt. Why? Because a lack of grounding on the basic Biblical teaching on such things as salvation, and doctrines such as “the eternal security of the believer” cause us to just not “know” for sure. We've never studied it and been convinced of it.

4. **A Sin/Disobedience Problem** - Unconfessed or unrepentant sin. Sin in a believer's life will always lead to doubt if it remains unconfessed and unrepented of. You can be sure that Satan, the enemy, will jump on our failings to point the finger and cause us to question the validity of our salvation.
5. **A Unregenerate Problem** - Lack of salvation or lostness may be a legitimate reason for doubt. That is they have not truly been saved or regenerated (made new) through a genuine personal relationship with Jesus Christ. For that one who is having doubts or lack of assurance of their salvation they should always check it out and be sure that they are indeed saved. Some have reason to doubt because they are lost. Sometimes it is not a lack of assurance or doubting your salvation, but the conviction of the Holy Spirit that they were never saved, and are in fact lost.

ASSURANCE VERSES SECURITY

Before launching too deeply into a Biblical study on "assurance" it is important to clarify and establish the difference between "security" and "assurance." There are many studies the center on the study on the doctrine known as "The Eternal Security of the Believer" or the doctrine commonly called "once saved, always saved," or "the perseverance of the saints." Sometimes this doctrinal study is lumped in with a study on assurance of salvation, and they are certainly linked together. A strong understanding of the "The Eternal Security of the Believer" as a Biblically based and sound theological doctrine will certainly help one with issues of assurance. Two primary questions on assurance help to see their link.

2 Questions on Assurance: *We can't really answer the second question without answering the first. So let me ask the question a little different way, "Is it possible for us to really know anything for sure? Can you really be assured of your salvation?" Only if salvation is secure and you have full faith in it.. and it is?*

1. **Is salvation secure?** – The answer is "yes," but we need to support that answer Biblically. The Biblical doctrine of "Eternal Security" helps us to do so. Scripture make it abundantly clear that our salvation is secure.

4 Scriptural Proofs that Salvation is Secure:

- (1) **The Sovereign Decree of God the Father (John 3:16-18)** –
 - (2) **The High-Priestly Work of Jesus Christ (Hebrews 7:23-25)** – He ever lives to make it secure and assured.
 - (3) **The Sealing and Guarantee of the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 1:21-22)** – The Holy Spirit marks you with an irrevocable mark that can't be taken away assuring you that you belong to God.
 - (4) **The Affirmation of Scripture, God's Holy Word (1 Peter 1:23-25)** – God's Word doesn't lie and it never fails. You have been saved and you can be assured of this because you were born again not of perishable seed but of imperishable (nothing can destroy it) through the Word of God... the affirmation of Scripture.
2. **Can we experience that security?** - Is it possible to know (have assurance) that we are saved? The answer is "yes," but how do we know and get that assurance?

Invalid Proofs:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| (1) Signing a card | (6) Regular church attendance |
| (2) Walking an aisle | (7) Emotional feelings |
| (3) Raising a hand in a service | (8) Religious duty and service |
| (4) Baptism | (9) Keeping spiritual disciplines |
| (5) Church membership | (10) Family heritage |

Valid Proofs: There are two ways according the New Testament that we can experience assurance and security

- (1) **Pure doctrine... know the truth** – 2 John 9 says, “*Anyone who runs ahead and does not continue in the teaching of Christ does not have God; whoever continues in the teaching has both the Father and the Son.*” One of the things that causes a person to doubt their salvation and lack assurance is a poor understanding of the doctrine of salvation in Christ. True assurance is available only to those who abide in the true biblical doctrine of Christ. If you have a wrong view of Jesus Christ, you will not experience assurance and security in your salvation. People who follow the teachings of cults or unbiblical religions, and do not affirm the Christ of the Bible, will never experience a genuine sense of assurance. That’s why they work so frantically to earn salvation. They try to be affirmed by their work because they never experience assurance. The same is true for a person in the church who may not have an accurate understanding of Christ and how He saves us. They may be genuinely saved by calling on the name of Christ, yet never have grown in God’s Word enough to understand that we are saved by the finished work of Christ and what he has done and not what we have done. They may work and serve, and sweat out religious service in order to gain a peace and assurance of their salvation, but it never comes because they have not yet learned to fully rely on Christ and His grace alone.
- (2) **Pure living... living the truth** – Matthew 7:18 says, “*A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit.*” One of the things that cause a person to doubt their salvation and lack assurance is when they still sin and can’t seem to stop. If you see corrupt fruit in your life, it’s logical to assume you’re a corrupt tree. It is vital that you see a pattern of holy living in your life if you are ever to know assurance. Paul wrote in Titus 2:11ff that, “*The grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness... we should live soberly, righteously, and godly (lives)...*” Therefore, if you are not denying ungodliness in your life, you will have a difficult time at best believing and convincing yourself that you are really saved. In other words, you will lack assurance.

So you see questions of “security” and the doctrine of “Eternal Security” are vastly tied to our assurance of salvation and having that victory in our lives. However, though vastly tied together, they are two distinct things. The definition and understanding given below may help in clarifying the two:

The Difference Between Security and Assurance:

1. **Security = When we trust in Jesus Christ, our eternal security in Christ becomes a spiritual reality whether we understand it or believe it** - Ones belief in security in Christ does not make it true or false. If we have trusted in the person and work of Christ for personal salvation, security is a fact.

2. Assurance = A confident realization of that security - Assurance is the realization of what we have in Christ such as eternal life, forgiveness of sin, and being the object of God's personal care as his children. Assurance has to do with our comprehension of the facts and provisions of salvation through faith in Christ. This is a crucial doctrine because, properly understood, it will touch the believer's life in several areas. Not only does it give assurance of salvation, but with that also comes a greater assurance of God's provision in all areas of life. **Romans 8:32** says, *"He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?"*

IMPORTANT NOTE: When people do not have assurance, we should always begin by sharing the gospel to be sure they have truly trusted in Christ. Once this is confirmed, then move on to the matters of assurance. Never assume anything. Someone's eternal destiny is at stake. In other words, if you are sharing with someone who is lacking assurance of their salvation don't try to talk them into to the fact that they are saved, or convince them that they are saved. A person's salvation must be confirmed in that person's life by the Holy Spirit, not by you or I.

PRINCIPLES FOR ASSURANCE

2 clarifying principles for assurance should be kept in mind not only for our own personal understanding of assurance in our lives, but also for a correct Biblical understanding of assurance.

2 Principles for Assurance:

Principle 1: We need to draw our assurance from faith in the facts of Scripture and not from our feelings - Our faith and thus our assurance must stand on the sure promises of the God's Word rather than on our feelings. Some days you may not "feel" saved... that doesn't change the fact of your salvation based on God's work and His word full of promises and truth that confirm the fact.

The Biblical order to remember is: FACTS → FAITH → FEELINGS.

Feelings are the responders of the soul or heart, and can be based or influenced by external sources and temporal things. They can be deceptive and often untrustworthy. They are human and therefore they are often fleeting, and flimsy, and faulty. They are to follow and respond to our understanding of Scripture, but they are never a safe guide to what we should believe or of the state of our salvation. This is an important principle in understanding assurance because you will often hear someone say, "I don't feel very saved!" "I just don't feel it anymore." This may indicate that the person is basing his or her salvation or assurance of such on "feelings" rather than on the finished work of Christ. This leads to the next point.

Principle 2: We need to draw our assurance from faith in the facts of Scripture and not from our works - Works or the Biblical changes that occur in our lives as a result of the grace of God can confirm the reality of our life with God. We must be ever so careful, however, in making such subjective ground the basis of our assurance, for when a believer is out of fellowship he or she can have the appearance of an unbeliever especially if the condition lasts for any length of time. Paul writes in **1 Corinthians 3:1-4** about just such a case, *"So, brothers and sisters, I could not speak to you as spiritual people, but instead as people of the flesh, as infants"*

in Christ. I fed you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready. In fact, you are still not ready, for you are still influenced by the flesh. For since there is still jealousy and dissension among you, are you not influenced by the flesh and behaving like unregenerate people? For whenever someone says, "I am with Paul," or "I am with Apollos," are you not merely human?"

If we depend on works or obedient living to prove our salvation then we are faced with the following dilemma: If we are living obediently now (the supposed proof of salvation), the possibility exists that could change in the future. If later on we cease to live obediently, then that would prove (based on the above premise) that we are not now true Christians in spite of our obedient lifestyle. So present obedience can never really prove our Christianity and thus, we could never have assurance.

Proper Christian living should never be the fundamental grounds for assurance of salvation. Rather, assurance of salvation which should rest in the merit and sufficiency of the Savior and the believer's new life in Christ, must be the fundamental basis for proper Christian living. Colossians 3:1-4 says, *"Therefore, if you have been raised with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Keep thinking about things above, not things on the earth, for you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4When Christ (who is your life) appears, then you too will be revealed in glory with him."* As John shows in 1 John 1:6-7, Christ-like behavior is an evidence of genuine fellowship and that a person is truly walking with the Lord in the light. Listen to it in 1 John 1:6-7, *"If we say we have fellowship with him and yet keep on walking in the darkness, we are lying and not practicing the truth. But if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin."*

SOME FINAL HELPS IF YOU LACK ASSURANCE

If you are plagued by times of doubt about your salvation or lack assurance, consider the following guidelines for maintaining assurance:

6 Helps for Dealing with A Lack of Assurance:

1. **Read your Bible** – Read your Bible, especially the book of 1 John, to remind yourself of the solid foundation on which your salvation stands.
2. **Communicate with God through prayer** – Communicate with God through prayer, and confess every known sin. Keep sin confessed up and stay prayed up. This will help minimize the enemies ability to falsely accuse your of not being a child of God.
3. **Obey God's commands** – Obey God's commandments, and do what you know is right. This to will help to protect your heart from the attacks of the enemy, but will also confirm over and over again that you belong to God... that you are His.
4. **Spend time with other Christians** – Spend time with strong Christians, and let their love help you.
5. **Reach out to others in love** – Reach out in concern to others because you love them. Focusing on others is what we are called to and this will help to confirm your faith.
6. **Do some heart checking and soul searching** - Recognize your doubts and depression may be more emotional than spiritual. This will help you avoid unnecessary feelings of guilt because of your supposed lack of faith.