

# Wednesday Night BIBLE STUDY



Wednesday, June 24, 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, *“<sup>18</sup> ...be filled with the Spirit, <sup>19</sup> speaking 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 is 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. We have looked at the great old hymn, “Farther Along.” then we looked at the subject of assurance of salvation by looking at the hymn “Blessed Assurance, Jesus is Mine”. Then last week we took at that great hymn that some have called the Baptist Fight Song, *“Victory in Jesus.”* Let’s look at another great hymn of faith, one that some may consider to have a more somber feel to it, that speaks really to loss in life and how to deal with it.

### I KNOW WHOM I HAVE BELIEVED – HYMN #337 I Know Whom I Have Believed – Uncertainty vs Certainty *2 Timothy 1:12, John 5:13, Selected Scriptures*

*“<sup>12</sup> For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day.”* – 2 Timothy 1:12

*“<sup>13</sup> 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, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.”* – 1 John 5:13

Daniel Webster Whittle was named after American politician Daniel Webster. Whittle reached the rank of major in the American civil war serving in the North’s Union Army under Sherman, and for the rest of his life was known as Major Whittle. During the war, Whittle lost his right arm at the battle of Vicksburg, and ended up being captured by the South and became a prisoner of war to the South. Recovering from his wounds in the hospital, he looked for something to read, and found a New Testament. Though its words resonated with him, he was still not ready to accept Christ. Shortly after, a hospital orderly woke him and said a dying prisoner wanted someone to pray with him. Whittle objected, but the orderly said, but I thought you were a

Christian; I have seen you reading your Bible. Whittle then agreed to go. In his own words he recorded what took place at the dying youth's bed side: ***"I dropped on my knees and held the boy's hand in mine. In a few broken words I confessed my sins and asked Christ to forgive me. I believed right there that He did forgive me. I then prayed earnestly for the boy. He became quiet and pressed my hand as I prayed and pleaded God's promises. When I arose from my knees, he was dead. A look of peace had come over his troubled face, and I cannot but believe that God who used him to bring me to the Savior, used me to lead him to trust Christ's precious blood and find pardon. I hope to meet him in heaven."***

After the war, Daniel Whittle married Abbie Hanson, August 22, 1862. They had one child, Mary (May), born 1870. Whittle became treasurer of the Elgin Watch Company in Chicago, Illinois. It was during this time that he heard the powerful preaching of **D.L. Moody** in Chicago, and they eventually became fast friends (as a matter of fact, as a side note, his daughter, Mary May married William R. Moody, son of D. L. Moody. She was a gifted singer, and would later assist her father and D. L. Moody in their evangelistic campaign efforts, and she wrote the music for several of her father's hymns, including "Moment by Moment" #415). In 1873, at the urging and encouragement of D. L. Moody, Daniel Whittle left his successful position with the Elgin Watch Company to become an evangelist. Of his decision to devote his life to the Gospel Ministry, Whittle said that, while at work, he ***"...went into the vault and in the dead silence of the quietest of places I gave my life to my Heavenly Father to use as He would."***

He enjoyed a very effective and successful ministry for the rest of his life. He conducted evangelistic campaigns across North America and Great Britain, often accompanied by popular gospel singers such as **Philip P. Bliss**, **James McGranahan** and **George Stebbins**. These men not only sang at Daniel Whittle's evangelistic meetings but also set to music many of his more than 200 hymn texts (which he usually wrote under the pseudonym **"El Nathan"**). He was ably assisted musically by these talented and well known writers. Many of Whittle's hymns bear the pseudonym "El Nathan." Again, Whittle's works include over 200 hymns but perhaps one of his most noted and recognized hymns is the one we are looking at in this study, **"I Know Whom I Have Believed."**

This is a beautiful and powerful hymn that reminds us of our confidence in Christ. **Indeed, it is the Lord Jesus Christ who has loved us, redeemed us, and keeps us safe till the end. Amen.** The text of the hymn contrasts the ***"I know not" stanzas with the certainty of the "I know" chorus...*** we cannot understand God's saving grace to us (st. 1); we cannot explain our spiritual birth (st. 2); we are unable to comprehend the work of God's Spirit (st. 3); and we do not perceive clearly the future of our earthly lives (st. 4). **But we do know by faith that God is true to his word!**

This hymn, like the one we studied several weeks ago... "Blessed Assurance Jesus is Mine," has a special message of comfort and help for those who may struggle with questions of assurance and security in their salvation. Again, like we said a few week ago, many a believer has experienced "doubts" about their salvation, wondering if they are really saved, or if perhaps they could lose their salvation. The hymn writer, in this case, offers us word of hope that he found with such a struggle. This hymn is a sermon in itself.

#### **HYMN LYRICS AND QUESTIONS: "I Know Whom I Have Believed" (Hymn #337)**

- 1. *I know not why God's wondrous grace to me He hath made known,  
Nor why, unworthy, Christ in love redeemed me for His own.***
- 2. *I know not how this saving faith to me He did impart,***

*Nor how believing in His Word wrought peace within my heart.*

3. *I know not how the Spirit moves, convincing men of sin,  
Revealing Jesus through the Word, creating faith in Him.*
4. *I know not what of good or ill may be reserved for me,  
Of weary ways or golden days, before His face I see. \*doesn't appear in our hymnal*
5. *I know not when my Lord may come, at night or noonday fair,  
Nor if I walk the vale with Him, or meet Him in the air.*

*Chorus*

*But "I know Whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able  
To keep that which I've committed unto Him against that day."*

**Questions from the song "I Know Whom I Have Believed":** The following are some questions to be considered from the song "I Know Whom I Have Believed" regarding the security of the believer and assurance of one's salvation.

- (1) In **verse 1** of the song what "uncertainties" of his does Daniel Whittle point to and what does he base these uncertainties on? *"I know not why God's wondrous grace to me He hath made known, nor why, unworthy, Christ in love redeemed me for His own."* Answer: He points to the uncertainty of why God extended His grace (free and unmerited favor) to him, and why God loves Him and redeemed at paid such a great price for. These uncertainties on his part, according to the song, are based on his recognition of his own unworthiness. Remember that before a person is saved they must see their own sin and their need for a Savior, and their own inability to save themselves. This is consistent with the abundant teaching of Scripture. Paul put it like this in **Ephesians 2:4-9**, *"<sup>4</sup> But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, <sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), <sup>6</sup> and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, <sup>7</sup> that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. <sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup> not of works, lest anyone should boast."*
- (2) How does **verse 1** describe grace, and what do you think the writer means by this? How might this aid us in assurance of salvation? *"I know not why God's wondrous grace to me He hath made known, nor why, unworthy, Christ in love redeemed me for His own."* Answer: The writer describes grace as "wondrous." Some synonyms of "wondrous" might give us some indication of what the writer might be saying; synonyms are amazing, astounding, astonishing, extraordinary, mind-blowing, miraculous, phenomenal. Grace truly is all of these things, but what makes grace so "wondrous" in the first verse of this great song is that **the writer was extended it (grace) when according to his own words, he was unworthy of it.** This helps us to define and understand grace as the **"free and undeserved favor of God."** I think this is helpful in our assurance of salvation because it tells us that our salvation is not something that is based on how good we are, our goodness or what we do, our worthiness, but is based on what God chose to do... extend it to us. If we didn't work for it, earn it, or deserve it, it is not based on anything did in the first place, so we don't have to work, preform, or be worthy of it keep it. Remember grace and salvation is totally the choice and work of God through Jesus Christ. Remember Paul said, *"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God"* (Ephesians 2:8).

It is a gift... not something we have earned of somehow become worthy of, and as a gift He won't take it back. Here is how Paul put it in **Romans 5:8-10**, *"<sup>8</sup> But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. <sup>9</sup> Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. <sup>10</sup> For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life."*

- (3) In verses 2-5 (this includes the verse 4 that is not in our hymn books) of the song what "uncertainties" of does Daniel Whittle point to and what do you think he is saying in this? *"<sup>2</sup>I know not how this saving faith to me He did impart, nor how believing in His Word wrought peace within my heart. <sup>3</sup>I know not how the Spirit moves, convincing men of sin, revealing Jesus through the Word, creating faith in Him. <sup>4</sup>I know not what of good or ill may be reserved for me, of weary ways or golden days, before His face I see (this is the verse that doesn't appear in our hymnal). <sup>5</sup>I know not when my Lord may come, at night or noonday fair, nor if I walk the vale with Him, or meet Him in the air."* **ANSWER:** He says that he is uncertain or not exactly sure of the mysteries of God... how saving faith to him is imparted, nor how just reading God's Word bring a peace inside of him, or exactly the Spirit does what He does convicting of sin and revealing Jesus in the Bible, or why bad things happen or even why he is so blessed, nor does he has all the answer of when Jesus may come again or of end time event. I think that he is saying that he doesn't understand and is uncertain of all the mysteries of how God works and even the marvelous work of God's salvation.

Here is a truth that we all need to grab hold of... *you don't have to understand everything there is to know about God, in fact you won't ever know all there is to know about God.* You don't have to have all the answers and know everything about God in order to be saved. Again Paul said it like this (Ephesians 2:8), *"For by grace you have been saved through faith..."* We are saved by faith, not by our knowledge of all we know about God. Again you will never know all there is to know about God. Listen to **Romans 11:33-36**, *"Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has become His counselor? Or who has first given to Him and it shall be repaid to him (God is not and never will be indebted to us, we can't every do anything to earn God's favor)? For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever, Amen."*

- (4) How does this thought portrayed in these verses of the song, aid us in assurance? *"I know not how this saving faith to me He did impart, nor how believing in His Word wrought peace within my heart."* **Answer:** *Often when someone begins to have doubt about their salvation, it will hinge on whether or not they did everything just right or knew all they needed to know when they were saved.* They may learn or hear some truth about God and His salvation that they have never heard before and begin to doubt if they were genuinely saved because they didn't know this when they were saved. This truth of God's mystery helps us to know and understand that we don't have to know everything and have all the answers. We just have to believe and by faith trust our lives to Him... He does all the work.
- (5) The chorus of this song seems to be the writers answer to all of the "uncertainties" he speaks of in the verses of the song. What is he "certain" of and what do you think he is saying about how this aids him in assurance of (Chorus) *But "I know Whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I've committed unto Him against that day."* **Answer:** He is certain of Who or Whom he is going to trust and he is certain of His (God's) ability to saved Him! He is holding on to that! His faith sustains Him! Remember, the writer of Hebrews, tell us in **Hebrews 11:1**, *"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."* The NIV says it like this, *"Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see."*

Can I put this in “Buddy terms” for a moment... for the purposes of our study, “Faith is the internal certainty of things we hope for, the certainty in us of things that may seem uncertain and unseen.”

How can you know anything for sure? Clearly, the Bible tells us that God desires us “to know”... to be “certain” (1 John 5:13), but in a world of “uncertainty” how can anything be seen as “certain.” Even Scripture describes the uncertainty of the world in which we live.

## I. UNCERTAINTY VS CERTAINTY

**UNCERTAINTY EXERCISE:** Listen as the following passages are read from the Bible and beside each record the “uncertainty” that is revealed in each. What conclusions can you draw concerning the uncertainty of the world in which we live.

### 1. **Matthew 6:19-20 – the uncertainty of material or temporal things**

<sup>19</sup> “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. <sup>20</sup> But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal.” – Matthew 6:19-20

### 2. **John 16:33 – the uncertainty of our circumstances and treatment**

<sup>33</sup> “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” – John 16:33

### 3. **James 4:13-16 – the uncertainty of life itself**

<sup>13</sup> Now listen, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.” <sup>14</sup> Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. <sup>15</sup> Instead, you ought to say, ‘If it is the Lord’s will, we will live and do this or that.’ <sup>16</sup> As it is, you boast in your arrogant schemes. All such boasting is evil.” – James 4:13-16

### 4. **Luke 21:32-33 – the uncertainty of the created heaven and earth**

<sup>32</sup> “Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. <sup>33</sup> Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.” – Luke 21:32-33

### 5. **Luke 12:13-21 – the uncertainty of our health**

<sup>13</sup> Someone in the crowd said to him, ‘Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.’ <sup>14</sup> Jesus replied, ‘Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?’ <sup>15</sup> Then he said to them, ‘Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions.’ <sup>16</sup> And he told them this parable: ‘The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. <sup>17</sup> He thought to himself, ‘What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.’ <sup>18</sup> Then he said, ‘This is what I’ll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain. <sup>19</sup> And I’ll say to myself, ‘You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.’ <sup>20</sup> But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?’ <sup>21</sup> ‘This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God.’” – Luke 12:13-21

### 6. **Matthew 10:21-23 – the uncertainty of earthly relationships**

<sup>21</sup> “Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death. <sup>22</sup> You will be hated by everyone because of me, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. <sup>23</sup> When you are persecuted in one place,

*flee to another. Truly I tell you, you will not finish going through the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.” – Matthew 10:21-23*

What effect do these uncertainties about this world and our life in general have on our ability to have assurance?

**CERTAINTY EXERCISE:** Listen as the following, very familiar parable from the Bible is read and this answer and discuss the question that follows.

**READ: Matthew 7:24-27, The Parable of the Wise and Foolish Builders**

*<sup>24</sup>Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. <sup>25</sup>The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. <sup>26</sup>But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. <sup>27</sup>The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.” – Matthew 7:24-27*

**QUESTION:** Given the “uncertainties” mentioned above (i.e. the uncertainty of material things, money, our circumstances, life in general, our health, earthly relationships, etc... in other words the sudden storms) what does “assurance” (if we can find it and know it) do for us in the midst of those uncertainties?

It would be reassuring, to say the least, to have some evidence that your hope is not merely “wishful thinking”... that is a certainty. Such evidence is available us. The New Testament letter of 1 John describes the evidences that can give us strong certainty, surety, assurance in a life that is literally dotted with things we are not, and cannot be sure of.

**II. BASIC QUESTIONS ON CERTAINTY OF SALVATION**

There are at least two important questions that have to do with the certainty of salvation and you can’t answer the second question without answering the first. Let’s briefly look at these two questions...

**2 Questions on Certainty:**

1. **Is our salvation our salvation a certainty or is it uncertain?** – In other words, can I be sure of my salvation? Can I feel assurance of salvation? If Jesus saves me is that salvation certain?
2. **Can we really experience the certainty of our salvation?** – In other words, can I really experience and know that assurance and know for certain that I am saved?

Let’s consider these two question separately for a few minutes:

**IS OUR SALVATION CERTAIN AND SECURED?**

**4 Scriptural Proofs that Salvation, Once Received, is Certain and Secure:**

**Proof #1: The Father declares that salvation, once received, is certain and secure**

- Read: John 5:24, John 3:16 & 18, John 6:37-40
- In these verses who has declared that salvation is secure? *These verses tell us that it is the Sovereign decree of the Father that salvation is secure.*

- What are some of the words and phrases that appear in these verses that point to the assurance that salvation is secure? (list as many as you can) *Everlasting life, not come under judgment, not perish, not condemned, no wise, not be cast out, lose nothing, raise him up at the last.*
- Explain the phrase, “shall not come into judgment” in John 5:24. Does that mean forever that you will not come into judgment?

**Proof #2: The Son (Jesus Christ) declares that salvation, once received, is certain and secure**

- Read: John 17:11 & 15, John 10:27-29, Hebrews 7:25
- Based on these verses who works (intercedes) to keep our salvation secure? *Jesus works to keep our salvation secure... he ever lives to make intercession for us.*
- What words and phrases in these verses point to a secure and assured salvation? (list as many as you can) *Keep them (Jn.11:15), know them (Jn.10:21), eternal life (Jn.10:28), never perish (Jn.10:28), no man can pluck them from my hand (Jn.10:29), save completely (Heb.7:25)*
- In your own words explain the phrase “save completely” or “save to the uttermost” in Hebrews 7:25.

**Proof #3: The Holy Spirit declares that salvation, once received, is certain and secure**

- Read: 2 Corinthians 1:21-22, Ephesians 1:13-14
- Based on these verses who indwells the believer to give us assurance and security of salvation? *The Holy Spirit of God indwells the believer to seal us and guarantee assurance and security of our salvation.*
- What words and phrases in these verses point to the fact that salvation is secure and assured? (list as many as you can) *Makes stand firm (2 Cor.1:21), seal of ownership (2 Cor.1:22), guarantee (2 Cor.1:22), seal (Eph.1:13), promise (Eph.1:13), guarantee (Eph.1:14)*
- Explain the phrase “deposit, guaranteeing” that appears in both of these passages.

**Proof #4: The Word of God (Scripture) declares that salvation, once received, is certain and secure**

- Read: 1 Peter 1:3-5, 1 John 2:1-2
- Where are these 2 promises and all of those pertaining to security and assurance found? *These 2 promises and all of those pointing to the security and assurance a believer can have in salvation are found in God's Holy Word, the Bible.*
- What words and phrases in these verse point to a secure and assured salvation? (list as many as you can) *Inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, fades not away, reserved in the heavens, kept, advocate, atoning sacrifice.*
- Do God's promises still hold true when we sin? Explain your answer Biblically. *Yes, God's promises still hold true when we sin, because Jesus died for our sin past, present and future (salvation is something He accomplished... not us)*

**NOTE: This fourth proof that salvation is certain and secure is the one we want to focus on in this study... the affirmation of God's Word. God's Word doesn't lie and it never fails. If you have been saved, you can be certain of this because you were born again not of perishable seed but of imperishable (nothing can destroy it) through the Word of God... that is the affirmation of Scripture.**

**Key Passages that affirm the principle that God's Words declares that our salvation, once received, is certain and secure:**

- (1) **1 John 5:13 – Scripture (God's Word) want us to “know” that salvation is certain and secure** *“<sup>13</sup> I 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.”*
- **What “things” is this verse talking about?** *The “things” written in Scripture (God's Words) and perhaps even more directly those things written by John, inspired by the Holy Spirit, and recorded in John's writing... particularly in this letter of 1 John... things pertaining to salvation and eternal life, and how a person is saved, what salvation is based on, what it means to be saved, etc.*
  - **Why does John say that these things were written?** *In order that you and I many “know” (that is that we may be sure or have assurance) that we have eternal life or salvation.*
- (2) **1 John 1:1-4 – Scripture (God's Word) is an accurate (or factual) telling of what has been heard, seen, touched, handled and witnessed first hand in order that we may be certain of it** *“<sup>1</sup>That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. <sup>2</sup> The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. <sup>3</sup> We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. <sup>4</sup> We write this to make our joy complete.”*
- **What do you think is meant by “you may also have fellowship with us?”** *It means, in order that you and I may share in the same certainty and confidence as those (like John) who witnessed these things first hand. If you saw something first hand and knew it to be true and related it to me, I might say, “Well you saw it happen so you can be sure of it, but I didn't see it first hand... I just heard about it... so I'm not so sure!” John is tell us that he witnessed these things first hand and he wants us to believe him and have the same certainty and confidence that these thing are true that he has.*
  - **How does this verse relation to 1 John 5:13?** *These are some of the specific things spoken of in 1 John 5:13*

**CAN WE EXPERIENCE CERTAINTY AND SECURITY IN OUR SALVATION?**

This is the great question of being and know that you are saved... having that certainty and assurance. I hear you saying it is certain and secure, but we live in a world of unsure and insecure things, where things are so uncertain, so how can I experience this security and certainty of salvation. Well, the answer to that is you “can't” if you are looking to find that kind of assurance and certainty in the wrong things, but on the other hand you can if you build on the right kind of foundation, and look for certainty based on the right things.

**5 things you should not count on to give you certainty and security of your salvation:** These things can't provide you with any true sense of certainty really, because they may or may not prove anything. These things provide a shaky foundation on which to build a sense of security and assurance of one's salvation. Which means that those who may have done these things that are truly saved, may look to these things to give them a sense of certainty and security, but they won't find it here.

And even more tragic, if one thinks he or she is saved by doing any of these things they will never have assurance, or a sense of certainty of their salvation because they probably are in fact not saved if they are base it on man-made procedures, church membership, religious duties, how they feel or how morally good they are. These things can't save in the first place. Here are those 5 that you should not look to or count on to give you certainty of salvation:

1. **Correctly followed procedures** – Walking an aisle, signing a card, raising a hand, canned prayer and outlines, etc. So many times those in religious circles look to these things to try to validate their salvation experience... “Well I walked aisle when I was 5 years old, and knelt at the front with the preacher, so I must be saved!” It’s good if you did that, but if that’s all you got it’s probably not going to give you very much assurance that you are truly saved.
2. **Enrollment in proper institutions** – Being a member of the church... even the “right” church in the “right” way will not give you real sense of security and certainty of salvation. In other words, church membership in any church is no assurance of salvation. **Dr. John McArthur** make a startling statement when he *years have estimated that perhaps 50% of Americans identify themselves as born-again Christians. But on the basis of the Bible’s description of true believers and the fact that few really come on God’s terms, those estimates could not be remotely correct. By scriptural standards, it is hard to believe that even half (50%) of the* says, *“Various polls in recent church members in the United States (today) are true believers.”* Being a church member doesn’t guarantee salvation and will not give you any sense of certainty.
3. **Ritualistic following of religious rites/duties** – Baptism, tithing, regular church attendance or Sunday School attendance, active involvement in the church... singing in the choir, teaching a Sunday School class, serving as a Deacon or other church leader, serving on a Committee, etc... none of these things assure that one is a Christian. Sometimes these things can actually give us a false sense of security because everyone else may tell us what a good “Christian” we are because we do “good” things are so involved in the church and religious things. But there is no certainty of actual salvation in these things. I have known many people who were good church men and church woman, but were not saved until later on... only to realize that all along they had been trying to work their way to heaven.
4. **Maintaining a strong morals** – Moral living and a good clean moral lifestyle has often been used as a leading indicator of a person’s religious standing with God. The more moral a person appeared to be the closer to God and heaven they were considered to be. Scripture even seems to promote this kind of thought with a call toward godliness, purity and holiness... even emphasizing the “fruit” of a person’s life as being an indicator of genuine relationship with God. It should be remembered, however, that the Biblical mandate toward morality is always toward those who are already believer or God’s children. It is a call to believers on who to live once they are in relationship with God and what He expects of His children. The facts are that there are “good,” moral people both inside and outside the faith. There are very morally excellent people of all faiths and even morally excellent atheist. Being moral will never guarantee a true sense of certainty and security of salvation.
5. **Reliance on feelings**– Feelings is never a good gage of whether or not a person is saved. Human feelings are very frail and fragile, and can be very deceptive. A person may even dangerously convince themselves that they are saved and okay with God, so that they say things like, “Well, I’ve thought a lot about it and I feel like everything is okay and I’m right with God now!” Remember

the Prophet Jeremiah said in **Jeremiah 17:9**, “*The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?*” Feelings can deceive us, and we should never base our salvation or sense of certainty on feelings.

**NOTE:** *These things are often the very things... indicators that we look to for validation of our faith and salvation, but they are a poor gage of genuine salvation and will most likely provide a shaky foundation for security of salvation and a sense of certainty of being saved. They may even more dangerously give one a false sense of security that keeps them from finding genuine salvation. Many Christians do, however, struggle with assurance of their salvation and doubts about their salvation because they are looking to these very things for validation rather than the things God had provided to give us a certainty.*

**SO THE QUESTION REMAINS...**

***“Can we really experience certainty in salvation and if so how?”***

The short answer is “yes”... with the right kind of foundation we can find that certainty of know that we are saved! And what is the right kind of foundation? What foundation must we build our lives on in order to begin to build that kind of security and certainty into our lives so that we can walk victoriously and confidently in our faith?

### **III. BUILDING A STRONG FOUNDATION**

Listen to it again as I read the parable of the wise and foolish builder and see if you can’t answer the question of what the foundation for certainty and stability and security must be... Matthew 7:24-27,

*“<sup>24</sup>Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. <sup>25</sup>The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. <sup>26</sup>But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. <sup>27</sup>The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.” – Matthew 7:24-27*

**Based on Jesus “Parable of the Wise and Foolish Builders” in his Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 7:24-27, the foundation my life must be built on in order to weather the storms and live in assurance is The Word of God!**

### **IV. SOME FINAL HELPS IF YOU LACK A SENSE OF CERTAINTY IN SALVATION**

If you are plagued by times of doubt, consider the following guidelines finding certainty and security of your salvation:

#### **6 Helps for Dealing with A Lack of Certainty in Salvation:**

- 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.