

BY GRACE YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED
[ASSURANCE OF SALVATION INTRODUCED & DISTINGUISHED]



The greatest thing that we can desire - next to the glory of God - is our own salvation; and the sweetest thing we can desire, is the assurance of our salvation.

All saints shall enjoy a heaven when they leave this earth; some saints enjoy a heaven while they are here on earth.

These two statements above talk about *Assurance of Salvation*. *Assurance of salvation* is a pearl which many desire but few obtain.

It is one thing for a man to be saved, and another thing for a man to *know* that he is saved. It is one thing for a man to have faith, and quite another for that man to *know* that he has faith. A man can be a child of God and yet not know that he is a child of God, just like a child in the womb or a baby in the arms may be the heir to the throne, yet he is ignorant and oblivious to it.

To be saved, to be in a state of grace, this makes a man's condition happy, safe and sure. But to see, to know, to be convinced that one is in such a state, is what makes your life here sweet and full of comforts. To be assured of your salvation is to have heaven here on earth -- and that is sweet, extremely sweet. This is why *assurance* is said to be sweetest thing that a Christian can desire while here on earth. *Assurance of salvation* simply means being assured that you are saved, being assured that you have eternal life.

Having introduced the subject, we proceed to make an important *distinction*, namely **ASSURANCE IS NOT FAITH**.

What is *Faith*? Faith consists of three elements: *Knowledge*, *conviction* and *commitment*. The beginning of faith is *knowledge*. To know who Jesus Christ is, what He has done, what He will and can do. And to know who I am - a sinner who deserves God's punishments. But faith is more than just knowledge, for faith is to be convinced and convicted of what I know, and to commit myself entirely to the One Person - Jesus Christ. Faith is the conviction that we are lost. And faith is the commitment to Christ, freely offered to us in the gospel, in order that we may be saved. That in brief, is *faith*.





What is *Assurance*? It is the conviction that we are saved, convinced that salvation is ours. To be assured is to be able to say like the words found in the **Song of Solomon 2:16** ~ "*My beloved is mine, and I am his.*" It is to be able to say that Jesus Christ is mine. He is my Head, my Lord, my Husband, my Redeemer, my Saviour. It is to be able to say that I am His. I am His by purchase and I am His by conquest. I am wholly His, I am peculiarly His, I am universally His, I am eternally His.

The language of *Faith* "*I believe God's promise of salvation is true!*" while the language of *Assurance* is "*I believe God's promise of salvation is mine!*" One is certain about the promise itself, the other is certain about the possession of the promise.

It is important to make the distinction between *Faith* and *Assurance*. We must emphasize the fact *Faith* is not *Assurance*. *Assurance* grows out of *Faith*, but it is not *Faith*. Before we can have *Assurance*, we must have *Faith* but we can have *Faith* without having *Full Assurance*. A person can be saved without *Assurance*, but he cannot be saved without *Faith*. There is a difference between being a prince, and knowing that you are a prince.

A Christian can have struggles in his faith, can question his own salvation and doubt whether he is saved. He is lacking in the *Assurance of Salvation*. But it does not necessarily mean that he is lacking *Salvation*. *Assurance* is not required for the *being* of a Christian, but the *well-being* of a Christian.

It is our duty is to preach *Faith in Christ* to sinners, not *Assurance of Salvation*. We are to call men and women, boys and girls to believe in Jesus Christ that they may be saved. But we are not required to demand that men must be able to say "*I believe Jesus died for me*" before they can be saved. We should only demand that men confess that they are sinners, that Jesus came to die for sinners, and that they should and have committed themselves to Him for salvation.

I will end with the words of Paul the apostle in **1 Timothy 1:15** ~ *This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.*

*This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners -- this belongs to the essence of **Faith**; of whom I am chief.* -- this is *Assurance*.