

How We Can Know that We Are Saved

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[Scripture quotations taken from the NASB](#)

There may be times, especially for those who are young in the Christian faith, that we may question whether we are really saved. There is instruction given to us in the Scriptures about how we can know and have confidence that we are in fact saved and one of God's own people.

There are certain traits that all genuine believers will exhibit in their lives, which serve as evidence that they are indeed saved. Perhaps the best summary of these traits is given in 1 John, where we read:

“Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome. For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?” (1 John 5:1-5)

So, we see from this passage in 1 John 5 a summary of three traits that will be exhibited in the lives of every genuine believer. ***We will all believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God (John 14:6, Acts 4:12, many others). We will all exhibit love for other believers. And we will all have a heart to obey God's commands, as they are given to us in His word.***

This is not to say that our lives on this earth will be characterized by perfect obedience to God's word (consider 1 John 1:5-2:2, Romans 7:7-25). However, it is to say that our lives will be fundamentally characterized by obedience to God's

word, as opposed to unbelievers whose lives are characterized by sin and self-seeking.

John's teaching in 1 John 5:1-5 is a summary of some of Jesus' teaching given to His disciples in the passage known as the upper room discourse (John 13:1-17:26). In John 13:34, after Judas had left the group to betray Jesus, Jesus gave His disciples a new commandment, that they love one another even as He had loved them. In the following verse, He said: "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." (John 13:35). Jesus again gave His disciples the command that they love one another in John 15:12 and 15:17. So we see that love for other believers is a trait that all Christians will exhibit.

As we are considering the love believers will have for one another, we should understand that this love is more than just lip service or a verbal profession that we love someone and wish them well. Rather, it is a love that will manifest itself in actions taken and mercy shown for a brother or sister in need. And these actions and mercies will cost us something that we could have kept for our own benefit.

In 1 John 3, we read:

"We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth. We will know by this that we are of the truth, and will assure our heart before Him." (1 John 3:16-19).

We find a similar lesson in James 2, where we read:

"What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith, but he has no works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and be filled," and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that? Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself." (James 2:14-17).

The Parable of the Sheep and the Goats recorded in Matthew 25:31-46 is yet another lesson from the Scriptures which teaches us that a genuine faith in Christ is going to manifest itself by works of love and mercy shown toward other believers, even toward the "least" of Jesus' brethren, and ours. And at times these works of mercy will cost us something, in money, or time, or both.

However, if we find ourselves to be among those who possess very little of this world's goods, and all that we have to give is our time in some service to another believer, or our time in prayer for them, then we should indeed give these things for our brother or sister in need. Such things are a manifestation of a genuine faith in Christ.

Another evidence that will be manifested in the lives of every believer is obedience to God's commands, as they are given to us in His word. In John 14:15, Jesus taught that if we love Him, we will keep His commandments. As He continued His teaching, He said: "He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him." (John 14:21). Jesus then continued saying: "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him. He who does not love Me does not keep My words...." (John 14:23-24).

So, another way that we can know we are saved is that we have been given a heart to obey God's commands. And again, this does not mean that we will live lives of perfect obedience to God's commands, but it does mean that our lives will be fundamentally characterized by obedience to God's word, whereas the priority of unbelievers is the pursuit of their own personal gratification, regardless of whether it involves transgression of the word of God.

There is yet another way that we can know we are saved. In John 1 we read: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (John 1:1). And again in John 1, we read: "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14).

So, we see from these verses that the word of God and Jesus Christ Himself are one and the same. The word of God, as revealed to us through the Holy Bible, is God's revelation of His Son Jesus Christ to mankind.

Therefore, we can know that we are saved, that we do indeed have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, if we have a ***strong connection to the word of God***. If we find ourselves regularly going to the Bible, looking for comfort, edification, and encouragement, and we find for ourselves some message, some teaching, some exhortation which strengthens us and brings life to us, then we can know that we are indeed saved. (Also consider John 6:35-69.)

However, there may be times, especially for those who are young in the Christian faith, that we may question if we are really saved. Young believer, if this happens in your life, as it has with so many of us, ***get back into the word of God and prayer and stay there*** until this condemnation of the devil passes, ***and it will surely pass***. Our lives as Christians will be one of recurring spiritual warfare (consider Ephesians 6:10-17), and Satan will come to accuse us at times. We were all burning sticks snatched from the fire when God called us to faith in His Son, and Satan will not be allowed to prevail over us because of what Jesus accomplished for us at Calvary. (Consider Zechariah 3:1-5, many others.)

Maybe we are not young believers, but we have failed in our devotion and obedience to God's word in some way. Maybe Satan, the accuser of the brethren (Revelation 12:10), is being allowed for a time to "sift us as wheat", as he did with Peter (Luke 22:31-34), and maybe we too, as Peter did, have failed in our devotion to the Lord.

Surely the apostle Peter knew what it was like to question his faith after a time of great testing in his own life when he failed the Lord miserably. Peter's failure rose to the level that he denied he even knew the Lord three times, ***but we know that he did not continue in that denial***. And we know that Jesus did not change His mind about His calling of Peter (Luke 22: 54-62, Romans 11:29). We also know that Peter was indeed one of those whom the Father had given to Jesus, and he would by no means be cast out (John 6:37). Peter was one of only twelve apostles and one of the greatest saints in all of Christendom.

Peter's trial, failure, and restoration is recorded in the Bible to encourage us, and to let us know that God will never let go of us, regardless of our failures. If we have failed in our devotion to God and obedience to His word, let us recall the exhortation of the apostle Paul when he said: "...one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 3:13-14).

With Paul's exhortation in mind, let us forsake our sin and return to the Lord in obedience to Him, knowing that the rod of chastening is coming into the lives of all believers involved in sin, and it will be painful. In fact, God's chastening for sin in our lives is yet another way that we can know we are saved. (Consider Hebrews 12:3-13.)

Christian, regardless of our failures, God's word teaches us that ***there is no such thing as a believer losing their salvation***. We are not kept in this state of

grace by our own personal loyalty, devotion, and obedience to God, rather we are kept safe by the power of God (1 Peter 1:3-9, many others).

Jesus taught that God our Father is not willing that any of His people should perish (Matthew 18:12-14). And as Jesus said again: “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, ***and they will never perish; and no one will 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 the Father’s hand.***” (John 10:27-29, emphasis added.) There is no power in all of creation that will be able to separate us from the love of God that we have been given through Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:38-39).