

Blessed Assurance

How confident are we in our salvation? How comfortable are we in trusting God and that He has **really** forgiven us? Some carry a HUGE burden of guilt and never forgive themselves or feel God can forgive them. Others feel their lives are meaningless. "How could God ever love me?" We are the greatest investment God ever made! Romans 8:35-39 teaches that nothing **external of ourselves** can separate us from Jesus' love. If our hearts belong to Jesus – **NOTHING** can remove us from His love.

We must not doubt God's ability to forgive. Christians have used their faith to take advantage of God's mercy & grace. When a person obeys the gospel, God says **they are** forgiven! Paul writes, *even when we were dead in our transgressions, He made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.* Think of it: we, who were formerly alienated from God, are seated **with** Jesus! The sins of the past have been wiped away. And, it is from this point that we must get up & get going – moving in trust & confidence that God **will** do as He promises!

Consider John's writing. *A main emphasis in the book is the Christian's assurance of forgiveness.* His teaching in I John 1:7 emphasizes that we are to live our lives as close to God as possible. But, when we sin God is always ready to forgive us, and John outlines that in verses nine and ten. Verses nine and ten are statements of fact. If we are honest with ourselves and with God – and confess our sins – then we can experience the comfort of forgiveness that is only possible because of Jesus' death on the cross. God says he'll forgive us...do we doubt it?

Some believe they have to live in a perfect manner and if they don't, they'll just hope for the best at judgment. Where's the comfort in that? Does that sound like assurance? This is not an encouragement for people to live as they please, and then seek forgiveness afterward. Remember I John 1:7? *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.* Forgiveness is contingent on our active obedience and service. One cannot hope for salvation while living a life for self going down his own paths. I John 3:21-24 teaches that God wants us to make truth the pattern of our conduct. He wants us to walk in the light and work to be pure!

Don't remain so guilt-ridden that you never experience comfort in Christ. *He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.* (2 Cor. 5:21) Why did Jesus become sin? So we might become righteous! God gives us the power to live differently, **for Him!** God's forgiveness creates a new reality for us! It has been said, *Trusting in God's transforming forgiveness is one of the most liberating things we can do!* God is transforming us into His likeness. *Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.* (2 Cor. 3:17-18) **This is a process that takes time!** God wants to heal us from our sin and be converted from the old life to the new! Don't keep picking at the scab of the old wounds of sin. Experience **the comfort** that can be found by letting go & trusting in God's power to save!

There is great comfort & happiness to be found in Christ! Christians can go from guilt & hopelessness to being with Christ! Remember Paul's words: *(He has) seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.* (Eph. 2:6) We can experience the comfort, peace, and joyous expectation because our sins have been washed away. We have the awesome potential to live lives full of abundance! Do you have this comfort? Do you have the comfort knowing that Jesus is your advocate? (I John 2:1) Do you have the comfort of knowing that Jesus is interceding on your behalf? (Romans 8:33-34)

Seek the comfort that is found only in Christ!

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