

# Assurance of our Salvation (1)

Proposed Study Outline: *The Assurance of Our Salvation*

- I. Introduction
- II. Biblical illustrations of assurance of one's salvation
- III. Assurance of salvation as the heart of the Reformation teaching
- IV. Foundation of the assurance of our salvation
- V. Reasons for the lack of assurance of our salvation
- VI. Manner how to be assured of our salvation

## I. Introduction: *What is your only comfort in life and death?*

- A. Main purpose of the Heidelberg Catechism?
  
- B. Main purpose of this mini course: *help believers in Jesus to be assured of their salvation*

1. This was Paul's purpose in his ministry to saints
  - a. his prayers: Eph. 1:15-19 (3:14-19)

Eph. 1:15-19

*Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,*

- b. his ministry: Rom. 15:13; Col. 2:1-3 (1 Thess. 3:10)

Rom. 15:13

*Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.*

Col. 2:1-3

*For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh; That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*

2. This is to be every preacher's purpose:
  - a. Catechism q. 84: How is the Kingdom of heaven opened?

*Thus, when according to the command of Christ it is declared and publicly testified to al and every believer, that, whenever they receive the promise of the Gospel by a true faith, all their sins are really forgiven them of God for the sake of Christ's merits.*
  - b. W. Brakel's testimony: *the task of the preachers is not just to preach about Jesus and to set Him before the people with the recommendation to consider Him as the fountain of light and life. It is to lead the person to receive Jesus Christ.*

## II. Assurance of salvation as seen in confessions of saints

### A. Examples of the Bible saints' confessions

1. Ps 32:1-2, 5:

*Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile (...) I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.*
2. Job 19:25:

*For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:*

3. Ps. 17:15

*As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.*

4. Rom. 8:35-39

*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

5. 2 Tim. 1:12

*For the which cause 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 that which I have committed unto him against that day.*

6. 2 Tim. 4:8

*Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*

6. 1 Peter 1:8

*Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:*

B. Examples of Paul's intentional ministry regarding assurance of salvation

1. Eph. 1:4-8

*According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the*

*forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence.*

2. Col. 1:21-22

*And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled. In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight: if ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard.*

4. Col. 2:9-15

*For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; and having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.*

C. Reflection question: *Were these believers different than we are?*

III. Assurance of **our** salvation is **heart** of the Reformation teaching

A. The *Reformers left* the doctrine of Roman Catholic Church on assurance

1. Rome's teaching on assurance in short

a. it is privilege for a few (V. 9)

b. it is never certain (V. 10)

c. it is a dangerous doctrine (V. 12)

d. it is only obtained by a special revelation (V, rej. 5)

2. Rome's reasons for this teaching
  - a. it is the natural consequence of *salvation by works*
  - b. it translates into power and money for the church

Andrew Bonar: *The RCC hate the doctrine of assurance because it took the 'bread out of their mouth'. For if God pardons so freely, so simply, so surely, so immediately upon believing, alas for the priesthood. Who now will pay for the absolution (pardon)?*

B. Why is the assurance of our salvation so important?

1. Because it is not just a *minor side issue* (V. 12-13)
  
2. Because Satan concentrates all his efforts to 'rob God's Church from their comfort' (V. 15)

C. The subject of the assurance of salvation is the *climax of Canons of Dort*

1. Head V is exclusively devoted to *perseverance of the saints*
  - a. This perseverance is based on God's preservation: John 10:28, 29; Is. 43:1-2; 1 Peter 1:5 (49:14-16 – 54:17)

John 10:28-29:

*And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.*

*My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.*

Is. 43:1-2

*But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through*

*the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.*

1 Peter 1:5

*Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

- D. What are the reasons God's children miss the comfort of their salvation?
1. physical or natural causes
  2. daily pestering of the indwelling sin (V 2)
  3. spiritual desertion through moral lapse into soul and fellowship wounding sins (V 5-6)
  4. temptations of the devil (V 3-4)
  5. imperfect understanding of the Gospel of justification by faith
  6. wrong expectation about how to be assured of your salvation (V. 10)

Q & A Period