

WHY BAPTISTS BELIEVE WHAT BAPTISTS BELIEVE, PART 10

THE ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

How do I know that I am truly saved? Let's start off with one of my favorite passages in the Bible, John Chapter 10. Jesus is responding to some questions by the Pharisees. He says: "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me" (John 10:27).

[Question 5] What 3 things characterize Jesus' sheep (His followers)? The first thing to notice is that they **hear** Jesus. Second, Jesus **knows** each one of them. The third thing is that they **follow** Jesus.

Here are some more verses from John Chapter 10: "I give them eternal life, 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 10:28-29).

[Question 6] Are you one of Jesus' sheep? Based on the passage we just read, what one word best describes your relationship with Him? Our relationship is **secure** (we have **security**).

[Question 7] Who can snatch you out of God's hand? **No one can**. That's pretty secure!

I love these verses from First John Chapter 5. "Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life" (1 John 5:12-13).

[Question 8] "I write these things to you... that you may **know that you have eternal life.**"

We depend on Jesus, the Son of God to save us. We fully depend on Him. We completely trust Him to keep us secure in our salvation. If Jesus doesn't come through, we're going to Hell. We take Jesus at His word when He says that no one can snatch us out of His hand or out of the Father's hand. No one includes you. Not even you can snatch yourself out of Jesus's or God the Father's hand. That is pretty secure.

Baptists hold to the Doctrine of Eternal Security. The Baptist Faith and Message says this under the heading "God's Purpose of Grace": "All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation."

In John Chapter 3 Jesus is talking to a man named Nicodemus. He is a Pharisee, an expert in the Law. He's got some questions for Jesus. He's searching for answers and he goes to Jesus by night because he doesn't want his fellow Pharisees to know. He asks Jesus the question, "How do I get saved?" He knows Jesus can answer him. Jesus tells Nicodemus: "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God... Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again'" (John 3:3, 7). When we are "born again" in a spiritual sense (using Jesus's words for salvation), we receive many things. These are all a part of the "benefit package," if you will.

[Question 9] We receive forgiveness of our sins, eternal life, peace with God; we have a bright future, the hope of glory (heaven). We receive the righteousness of God through Christ. Yes, we receive all those things! They can all be found in the passages listed. I want you to look up those verses on your own.

There are a lot of believers who struggle with whether or not they are really saved. It doesn't matter if they've been saved for years or just got saved. A lot of us were saved at a really young age - a long time ago. Some were saved more recently. But that question is still there for many believers, "How do I really know that I'm saved?" If you find yourself in that group, I'm going to give you three verses that I hope will help you. "And by this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments" (1 John 2:3). The first indicator that we are truly saved is that we keep His commandments, we obey Him, we obey the teachings of our Lord in the Bible.

"We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death" (1 John 3:14). The Apostle John was paying attention to Jesus when He taught His disciples, "Just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:34-35). The second indicator that we truly belong to Jesus is that we will have a love for our fellow believers, our brothers and sisters in Christ.

"The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God" (Romans 8:16). In this verse notice that "Spirit" is capitalized, speaking of the Holy Spirit. So, the third indicator is that the Holy Spirit lives in us and He will let us know that we are God's children, that we truly belong to Him. He will also let us know if we are NOT so that we can get that matter settled.

[Question 10] So then, what three evidences assure us that we truly know Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord?

1. We **Keep** His **Commandments** (1 John 2:3);
2. we have **Love** for the **Brothers** [and the sisters] (1 John 3:14);
3. the [Holy] **Spirit** tells us that we are His children (Romans 8:16).

[Question 11] Here is a quote by Jimmy Draper, former president of the Southern Baptist Convention. He made the following statement: “Being born again takes only a **moment**, while reaching spiritual maturity takes a **lifetime**.” I think that he summarized that pretty well. In the first part of that quote, he is talking about regeneration that takes place when you first get saved. The second part is referring to sanctification, which we said is a lifelong process.