



Old Testament Reading – Psalm 51:1-19  
New Testament Reading – 1 John 2:3-17

## Certain and Sure

# “The Essential Evidence of Saving Faith”

## 1 John 5:11-13

**Wayne J. Edwards, Pastor**

This series of sermons began with the question, “**How can I be certain and sure of my eternal salvation?**”

- We have looked at the **theological basis for our eternal assurance.**
  - Salvation is by grace alone, through our faith alone, and in Christ alone.
- We have looked at the **outward evidence of our eternal assurance.**
  - While the root of our salvation is the work of Christ, the witness of the Holy Spirit, and the promise of God’s Word, the fruit of our salvation is

manifested in the way we live. We live what we truly believe; the rest is just religion.

- We have looked at the **essential elements of a confession of faith.**
  - To receive Jesus Christ as our Savior is to acknowledge and fully submit unto Jesus as our Lord.
- In this sermon, we want to look at **the essential elements of saving faith.**
  - The call of the gospel is to discipleship – to obey every command Jesus gave to His disciples. (Matthew 28:18-20)
  - Obedience is not a requirement for our salvation but rather the evidence of our salvation. (Luke 6:46)

This question prompted a follow-up question: **“Is it possible to be a Christian and continue to live in sin, without ever submitting unto Jesus as Lord?”**

- The Apostle Paul answered that question in Romans 6:2, **“God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?”**
- When a person is “born again,” he no longer lives to please himself but to glorify God and praise Him forever.
- While his citizenship is transferred to the Lamb’s book of life in heaven, he must still live in this world and yet not be of the world to prove his faith in Jesus Christ, and to prepare him for heaven.
- In John 3, the Apostle said the change was so transformative, so life-changing, it is as though the person was “born again.”
- In 2 Corinthians 5:17, the Apostle Paul said, **“If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; all things have become new.”**
- In Ezekiel 36: 26, God described His work of salvation as a heart transplant: **“I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.”**
- One cannot be saved by the grace of God and not be changed. As Martin Luther said, **“While we are saved by our faith alone, the faith that saves is never alone.”** Saving faith always produces good works.

So, the question is not, have we made a profession of faith in Jesus Christ and been baptized, or have we made a confession of faith in the essential doctrines of the Christian Faith? The question is, **do we have a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ?**

- There is an eternal difference between a shallow profession of faith in Jesus as our Savior and a true confession of our faith in Jesus as our Savior and Lord.
- In 2 Corinthians 13:5, the Apostle Paul told the Christians to test or examine themselves to see if they were truly in the faith.
- In 1 John 5:13, the Apostle wrote: ***“These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.”***
- John said he wrote his epistle to those who believed they were saved to provide a way for them to test their intimacy with the One whom they were trusting to assure them of everlasting life.

***1. The Walk Test – 1 John 1:5-7 – “This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.”***

- The essential evidence of our relationship with God is not measured by our participation in man’s religious institutions but rather by the depth of our intimacy with a holy God.
- While we need the support, encouragement, and accountability of our brothers and sisters in Christ, we can sin and still have fellowship with them, for they are but sinners saved by grace.
- However, a believer in good fellowship with God cannot live in the darkness of sin, for the light of God’s holiness dwells within them and exposes their sins.
- The term “walk” means our way of life – our moral values, our daily decisions, and life goals.
- While we will all succumb to the appeal of sin at times, for we are still sinners by nature and by choice, the question is, are we living in it or are we turning from it?

***2. The Sin Test – 1 John 1:8-10 – “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.”***

- One of the main verifications of our eternal salvation is that we keep short accounts with God and with others. Not only do we set aside time each day to confess our sins, but we also live in continual repentance of our sins and in reconciliation with others.
- **Some Christians deny the existence of sin** – they have made some wrong choices, but they haven't done anything that would offend God.
- **Some Christians think they live above sin** – they see sin manifested in the lives of others, but they are too religious to sin.
- **Some Christians recognize their sin nature** and they are quick to confess their sins and make things right with those affected by them.
- God's desire is that we not sin, but if we do sin, we have an Advocate, Jesus Christ, who will intercede for us before the Father.

**3. The Obedience Test – 1 John 2:3-5 – *“By this we know we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments. Whoever says, I know Him, but does not keep His commandments is a liar and the truth is not in him, but whoever keeps His Word, in him truly the love of God is perfected.”***

- Not only will true believers resist and repent of sin, they will also pursue righteousness by keeping the Lord's commandments.
- In John 15:5, Jesus said, *“If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.”*
- In 1 John 3:7-9, the Apostle said, *“Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as God is righteous. He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning.”*

**4. The Love Test – 1 John 2:15-17 – *“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.”***

- While we are to love the people who live in the world, we are not to love the corrupt systems of the world, which are opposed to God's Word, God's Will, and God's ways, and designed to feed the corrupt nature of man.

- Lust of the eyes – ***“I see something that looks good for me!”***
- Lust of the flesh – ***“I want what I see to make me happy!”***
- Pride of life – ***“I have what I wanted for my own pleasure!”***

## **5. The Truth Test – 1 John 5:1-5 – *“For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?”***

- A true Christian must believe Jesus was and is both Christ and God.
  - To confess Jesus as “Christ” is to acknowledge His Lordship – He is the King, the Ruler of everything, including our lives.
  - To confess Jesus as “God” is to recognize His deity, that He is co-existent, co-equal, and co-eternal with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit.

### **SIX IMMEDIATE CHANGES IN THE LIFE OF A NEW BELIEVER**

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| • A new awareness of right and wrong | • An increase in testing            |
| • A new hunger for God’s Word        | • A greater love for Christians     |
| • A deep desire for a changed life   | • A deep desire to see others saved |
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