

Powerful Christian Living

Chapter Ten

Assurance of Salvation and The Renewed Mind

When we are born again or saved the very life of God is planted within us through the gift of the holy Spirit. We have become partakers of the divine nature. We have “Christ in” us the “hope of glory.”¹ And God wants us to be certain that we are saved. Therefore the Bible declares,

And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. 12 He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. 13 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.

(1 John 5:11-13)

And we can face anything in life in a godly manner because the Word of God proclaims,

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.
(Philippians 4:13)

And,

You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.
(1 John 4:4)

Some people say that it is presumptuous or arrogant for us to say that we know for sure that we are saved. But God wants us to know for sure and to be confident and assured so that we can mature spiritually. God doesn't want us to worry all of our lives wondering if we are saved. He desires for us to grow up into all that we are in Christ.² There are two basic ways that God assures us of our salvation. The first way is through His written Word—the promises of Scripture. For example Jesus said,

All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. 38 For I have come down from

¹ Colossians 1:27

² Ephesians 4:15

heaven³, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.
39 This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me
I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. 40 And this
is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and
believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the
last day.”
(John 6:37-40)

Have you come to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ? If so then he will never cast you away—you will never be lost again spiritually! In another place Jesus Christ declared,

My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.
28 And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither
shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. 29 My Father, who has
given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch
them out of My Father’s hand. 30 I and My Father are one.⁴
(John 10:27-30)

Isn’t that wonderful? No one will ever snatch you out of God’s hand. The Bible tells us clearly and plainly that those who come to God by faith in Jesus Christ are saved. Scripture says that we can be

confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you
will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ
(Philippians 1:6)

The second way that God assures us of our salvation is by the transforming work of both the Word of God and the Spirit of God in our lives. The apostle Paul wrote,

Now the Lord *is* the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord *is*, there is
liberty. 18 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 by the Spirit of the Lord.
(2 Corinthians 3:17, 18)

In these two verses of Scripture the “mirror” represents the written Word of God; the Bible. When we read God’s Word we see a picture or a reflection of who we are supposed to be. We are to become more and more like the Lord Jesus Christ. We are to become more faithful, kind, and loving. As we see this person that we are to grow up into and we obey God’s

3 See appendix three

4 Jesus and the Father are not one in essence or person, but rather they have and share in one purpose which is to keep safe and saved those who come to Christ by faith.

Word to us, the Spirit of God works within us and we are transformed more and more into that wonderful image of Christ.

There are only two ways to live life. We can either live life by the standards of the world or by the standard of the Word of God—the world’s way or the Word’s way. We can follow the world’s way and reap the consequences or we can obey God and be blessed.⁵ We need to understand that people do not have the attitudes and beliefs they hold by accident. Nor do they have their personal successes or failures by accident. All of us are the sum total of our thoughts and actions and the people and ideas that influence us.

A baby is not fully programmed at birth to become a certain kind of adult. The baby becomes the kind of adult he or she is by the beliefs, attitudes and actions of their lives. The same is true for a Christian. When we are saved we do not automatically become good and holy people in our thinking or behavior;⁶ our thinking and behavior changes for the better as we allow God’s Word and Spirit to shape our lives. The great key to living a faithful, godly Christian life is our being transformed by the renewing of our minds.

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is your reasonable service.* 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.
(Romans 12:1, 2)

Since God has been merciful to us saving us by His grace and granting us everlasting life in His kingdom, we are to live holy lives. We are to freely dedicate ourselves to following His will in all things. In this way our lives are pleasing to Him (and to us as well).

I once heard this story about a church that had a revival meeting every year. At the end of the service a man would come down to the front of the church and cry out, “Fill me, Jesus, Oh fill me up, fill me, fill me!” But then after the revival the man lived like the devil for the rest of the year. The next year the revival came to the church again, and again the man cried out “Fill me, Jesus, fill me!” After the revival the man went back to his old ways. The third year the revival came to the church and the man went down to the front again and cried “Fill me, Jesus!” Finally, a lady from the back of the church yelled loudly, “Don’t fill him, Jesus. He leaks!” Well, we don’t want to leak! We want to hold God’s Word deep in our hearts and live lives that please God, please us and are pleasing to others. This means we need to be dedicated to serving God.

⁵ Psalm 1:1-6, Romans 8:5-8, Galatians 6:7, 8

⁶ Although we are holy and without blame spiritually in Christ: Romans 3:21-26; 8:1, 1 Corinthians 1:30, 31, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Ephesians 1:3, 4

I beseech⁷ you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God⁸, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is your reasonable service.*
(Romans 12:1)

The phrase “present your bodies a living sacrifice” is interesting. In the Old Testament the sacrifices offered to God were animals that were killed. Their blood was shed to atone for sins and their bodies burned on the altar. But now, since Jesus Christ has offered one sacrifice for sins forever,⁹ we are asked to offer ourselves as living sacrifices. Our lives are not a sacrifice for sins, but we offer our lives to God by living powerful, godly lives for His glory and our own good.. This is our “reasonable service” or our “heartfelt, intelligent worship.” Worship for the believer is not in the performance of some ritual. It is thinking and living a holy life before God; it is our doing all that we do for His honor and glory.

God is looking for worshippers and our worship is not to be limited to Sunday morning. All that we say and do, every day of the week, should be worship and service to God. God desires worship from a mind full of truth and a life infused with His Spirit.¹⁰ This leads to a life that looks more and more like the image of Jesus Christ. Therefore we are told,

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.
(Romans 12:2)

The Greek word translated “do not be conformed’ is suschematizo, which means to be molded or squeezed into a form. We do not want to be pressured or manipulated into thinking and living like unbelievers in the world. Don’t let outward, worldly pressures determine how you think and behave. Rather allow yourself to be “transformed” by allowing the Word of God to renew “your mind.”

The Greek word translated “transformed” is metamorphoomai. We get our English word “metamorphosis” from this Greek word. The dictionary defines “metamorphosis” as a change in composition, a change in character, a change from one form of life to another. This is the kind of change that happens when a caterpillar becomes a butterfly. In Scripture it speaks of a glorious change.

Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves; 2 and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His

⁷ To humbly beg

⁸ All that he has done for us in Christ

⁹ Hebrews 10:12

¹⁰ John 4:23, 24

clothes became as white as the light.
(Matthew 17:1, 2)

When Jesus was “transfigured” before Peter, James and John, the full glory of God was seen in him. Something like this happens to us spiritually when we are transformed by the renewing¹¹ of our mind. Our mind controls our desires, urges, fears and actions. And we control our mind by thoughts, words; ideas. Here are a few other translations of Romans 12:1, 2 for you to consider.

I appeal to you therefore, brethren, and beg of you in view of [all] the mercies of God, to make a decisive dedication of your bodies [presenting all your members and faculties] as a living sacrifice, holy (devoted, consecrated) and well pleasing to God, which is your reasonable (rational, intelligent) service and spiritual worship.

²Do not be conformed to this world (this age), [fashioned after and adapted to its external, superficial customs], but be transformed (changed) by the [entire] renewal of your mind [by its new ideals and its new attitude], so that you may prove [for yourselves] what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God, even the thing which is good and acceptable and perfect [in His sight for you].
(The Amplified Bible)

So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you.
(The Message)

The question now is this: how does renewing of the mind and the personal transformation take place? Here are the three “R’s” of the renewed mind:

- **Refuse** to allow ungodly attitudes, feelings and situations to control you
- **Remind** yourself of what Scripture says on a particular issue
- **Replace** error with truth

¹¹ The Greek word for “renewing” is *anakainosis*, which does not mean new in time but new in quality

And then finally, **act** upon the truth; obey God's Word. Let me provide you with some examples. Instead of giving in to anxiety and stress the Bible encourages us to focus on God and to make our needs known to Him in prayer.

You will keep *him* in perfect peace,
Whose mind is stayed on You,
Because he trusts in You.
4 Trust in the LORD forever,
For in YAH, the LORD, *is* everlasting strength.
(Isaiah 26:3, 4)

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.
(Philippians 4:6, 7)

What kind of biblical attitude should we have about our daily work? The Bible says,

Bondservants, [employees] be obedient to those who are your masters [employers] according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; 6 not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, 7 with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men, 8 knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free.
9 And you, masters [employers], do the same things to them, giving up threatening, knowing that your own Master also is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.
(Ephesians 6:5-9)

And *whatever* you do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.
(Colossians 3:17)

He who has a slack hand becomes poor,
But the hand of the diligent makes rich.
5 He who gathers in summer is a wise son;
He who sleeps in harvest *is* a son who causes shame.
(Proverbs 10:4, 5)

Here is a biblical view on money.

Honor the LORD with your possessions¹²,
And with the firstfruits of all your increase;
10 So your barns will be filled with plenty,
And your vats will overflow with new wine.
(Proverbs 3:9, 10)

There is *one* who scatters, yet increases more;
And there is *one* who withholds more than is right,
But it *leads* to poverty.
25 The generous soul will be made rich,
And he who waters will also be watered himself.
(Proverbs 11:24, 25)

How should we deal with temptations?

No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man;
but God *is* faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what
you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape,
that you may be able to bear *it*.¹⁴ Therefore, my beloved, flee from
idolatry.
(1 Corinthians 10:13, 14)

We could go on and on about every topic imaginable. In fact a very good way to learn what the Bible says about a particular subject is to consult a topical concordance. This is either a book or an on-line tool that lists various Scriptures that deal with specific issues.¹³ There are also whole sections of Scripture that deal with what we are to believe and how we are to behave.¹⁴

When we are born again we receive a new nature. But now our minds need to be renewed so that we can live in harmony with who we are in Christ. And the great truth is that when we decide to live for God He will be right there to help us.¹⁵

¹² Give God a portion of your financial gain as an offering.

¹³ An on-line topical concordance can be found at: <http://www.biblegateway.com/topical/>

¹⁴ Ephesians 4, 5, 6; Colossians 3

¹⁵ Isaiah 40:31; 1 Corinthians 15:10; Philippians 2:13