

Saved?

How Do We Know?

HOW DO WE KNOW IF WE ARE SAVED?

God has not left us in the dark when it comes to knowing if we are saved. 1 John 5:13 states, *"I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may **know** that you have eternal life."*

The question is, "What is written so that we can know we are saved?"

From Acts 2:38 and Ephesians 1:13, we see that when we repent and believe we receive the Holy Spirit and the following verses tell us that it is through the Spirit that we know we belong to Jesus. 1 John 3:24 says, *"... this is how we know that he lives in us; We know it by the Spirit he gave us."* 1 John 4:13 says *"We know that we live in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit."* From these verses we can see that our assurance of salvation comes from the presence of the Spirit in our life.

HOW DOES THE SPIRIT MAKE HIS PRESENCE KNOWN TO US?

It's one thing to read in the Bible that we receive the Spirit when we believe but how do we **really** know that the Spirit is in our life? In Romans 8:16 & 14 it says, *"The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children"* and *"those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God."* The Holy Spirit witnesses to us that we are a child of God and, as we allow Him to lead, He will change us so that what is said in 2 Cor 5:17 becomes a reality in our life ... *"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!"* That is, the Spirit leads us to leave our old, sinful way of life behind and begin afresh ... we are born again and start a new life that pleases God.

HOW DOES THE SPIRIT LEAD US TO BRING THIS NEW LIFE?

When we repent and receive the Spirit into our life we don't get turned into sinless saints although immediate and obvious changes can occur in new believers. What does happen though, to all who accept Jesus as Lord, is that the sins of their past are forgiven and the Spirit begins to work in their life to keep them from future sin and to conform them to the likeness of Jesus.

Regarding the Spirit, John 16:8 says, *"When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment."* It is the Spirit's conviction of sin that brings guilt and repentance into a believer's life and leads them to confess that sin, receive forgiveness and be cleansed of it. This is stated in 1 John 1:9 ... *"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."* It is through this process that a person is not just forgiven but cleansed of sin and can walk in newness of life. Matt 1:21 and 2 Thess 2:13 tell us that a person is saved from their sins through the sanctifying work of the Spirit.

WHAT HAPPENS IF WE DON'T RESPOND TO THE SPIRIT'S CONVICTION?

Romans 8:12-13 say, *"... brothers, we have an obligation ... if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live."* These verses make it clear that we have a responsibility to follow the Spirit's leading otherwise we will die (which is a polite way of saying we will end up in hell).

The little book of 1 John makes it very clear that a person who is 'born of God' will not continue in sin. 1 John 3:6-10 say, *"No one who lives in him keeps on sinning ... He who does what is sinful is of the devil ... No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him ... This is how we **know** who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God; nor is anyone who does not love his brother."*

No one will be saved by simply asking Jesus for forgiveness and then living a sinful lifestyle. It would make a joke of Jesus' death to say, "Thanks for dying for my sins Jesus. Now I'm going to carry on as usual because you have died for all my sins, past, present and future." We are not saved by a simple 'thank you Jesus'. We must, through the power of the Holy Spirit, lead a life that is pleasing to God. Sinful lifestyles include ongoing lying, stealing, drunkenness, hating, lust, coveting, bitterness and fits of anger. We can never live a perfectly sinless life but, through the Spirit, we must be kept from a life of wilful, repetitive sin ... otherwise we will die. See Gal. 5:16.

SO, HOW DO YOU KNOW IF YOU ARE SAVED?

In Luke 13:3 Jesus said, *"unless you repent, you too will all perish."* and in John 3:3 He said, *"... no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again."* So, if you have repented of your sins and asked Jesus to be your Lord then you will have begun a new life and **know** the Holy Spirit's presence in your life as He brings conviction of sin, guides you in all truth and brings glory to Jesus as stated in John 16:8-14. Hebrews 12:14 says, *"without holiness no one will see the Lord."* The Holy Spirit's presence enables us to walk in holiness and **that walk** is our absolute assurance of salvation.

1 John 5:3 says, *"This is love for God: to obey his commands"* and 1 John 3:23 says, *"And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us."* As the Spirit cleanses us from sin, God's command to love Him and our neighbour becomes a reality in our life. Romans 13:10 says that, *"love is the fulfillment of the law."*

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