



Volume 11, No. 10, October, 2023



Blessed Assurance

*Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
O what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.*

*Perfect submission, perfect delight,
Visions of rapture now burst on my sight;
Angels descending bring from above,
Echoes of mercy, whispers of love.*

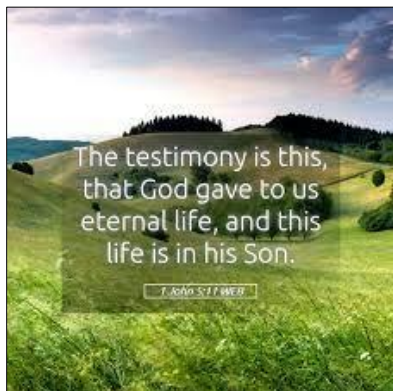
*Perfect submission, all is at rest;
I in my Savior am happy and blest;
Watching and waiting, looking above,
Filled with His goodness, lost in His love.*

Refrain:

*This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Savior all the day long;
This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Savior all the day long.*

WORDS: Fanny J. Crosby (w. 1873)

MUSIC: Mrs. Joseph F. Knapp (w. 1873),
Refrain arranged, Alton Howard (w. 1992)



BLESSED ASSURANCE

The song title above brings back memories of when my daddy used to lead it at church. When I was young, we sang about assurance, but assurance was late in coming to me. I grew up on “hell’s fire and brimstone” preaching. We heard very little about joy and comfort in serving God. There was no assurance in that preaching, and I obeyed the gospel primarily out of the fear of hell.

Nelson’s Illustrated Bible Dictionary defines assurance as the state of being assured: freedom from doubt and uncertainty. Hebrews 11:6 says, “*And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.*” That implies that as our faith grows, so will our assurance.

There are many scriptures that detail the assurance we Christians should have. In Colossians 2:2, Paul wrote “...that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all the riches of **full assurance** of understanding and the knowledge of God’s mystery, which is Christ.”

Hebrews 6:10-12, “*For God is not unjust so as to overlook your work and the love that you have shown for his name in serving the saints, as you still do. And we desire each one of you to show the same earnestness to have the **full assurance** of hope until the end, so that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.*”

It was later in my life when I realized I didn’t have to be “perfect.” A heavy load was lifted from me when I realized Jesus loves me, even though I am far from perfect. He loved me enough to suffer death on the cross so that I, and millions like me, can look forward to heaven for eternity.

Parents assure children who are afraid of the dark and fear there are monsters under their beds. Sometimes adults have their own “Monsters” to deal with. When we do, we have the assurance that God is watching over us and leading us to the best outcome for us.

God sent Jesus to be the perfect sacrifice for our sins. He sent Jesus to light the way for us “... *I am the light of the world.*” John 8:12. John 9:5, “*While I am in the world, I am the Light of the world.*” Hebrews 4:15, “*For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.*”

Assurance helps me to try things I’ve never done before. Hebrews 10:35, “*Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward.*” When Sunrise was in its infancy, I feared no one would be interested in it. Several people encouraged me to keep it going, and it is still going out to about 450 people each month. It is also available on our congregation’s website at seekgrowserveLove.org. Click on the Resources tab and scroll down to [Sunrise Newsletter](#).

Assurance gives us courage in troubled times. It is the love of God and His promises that give us hope and assurance of heaven when we leave this world. “*These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may **know** that you have eternal life. This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him.*” 1 John 5:13-15.

¹⁶“*So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.*” ¹⁷*By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as he is, so also are we in this world.*” 1 John 4:16-17.

As our theme song this month says, “Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!”

Evelyn Waite, Rolla, Missouri



ENCOURAGING WORDS

The two words, assurance and reassurance, are very similar. Assurance meaning anything that inspires confidence or being assured (guaranteed). Reassurance means removing someone’s doubts or fears.

When we read Paul’s first letter to the Thessalonians, he knew they needed both assurance and reassurance. The church in Thessalonica had been established only a couple of years before receiving Paul’s letter. These were young Christians in a large cosmopolitan city. Confusion concerning what happened at death was a problem they were wrestling with.

Apparently, there had been members of their congregation who had died. Many in the church misunderstood and thought all believers would live until the second coming of Christ. When brothers and sisters died, they were not only in grief but were perplexed, thinking they would miss the return of Christ. Grief was compounded by the hopelessness they felt regarding those who had passed away.

Paul writes this letter addressing this issue by assuring them and reassuring them concerning the second coming of Christ. There are 5 chapters in 1 Thessalonians and every one of them ends mentioning the second coming.

-1:9-10 They tell us how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead-Jesus who rescues us from the coming wrath.

-2:19 For what is our hope or joy or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when he comes? Is it not you?

-3:13 May he strengthen your heart so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones.

-4:17 After that, we who are still alive and who are still left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so, we will be with the Lord forever.

-5:23 May God himself, the God of our peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The core of assurance is in chapter 4:13-18. Here, Paul gives three certainties to reassure these young believers and straighten out their confusion. These certainties can give us assurance, too.

Certainty #1 - As believers they don’t have to feel hopeless like those who don’t know Christ (verse 13).

Certainty #2 – Jesus died, rose, and will return (verse 14).

Certainty #3 – We will be with the Lord forever (verse 17b).

The words at the end of each of the five chapters, and the certainties Paul speaks of in 4:13-18 were their hope, their anchor, their assurance. I believe they are our assurance, too.

Paul ends the book with some hopeful words, “Therefore encourage each other with these words.”

Let’s do that! Let’s remind each other as Christians we do not need to be hopeless, Jesus is coming again, and we will live with the Lord forever!

Sally Shank, Edmond, Oklahoma



BLESSED ASSURANCE

Hebrews 10:23 “Let’s hold firmly to the confession of our hope without wavering, **for He who promised is faithful.**” We read that scripture in Hebrews and go about our lives, but at times I wonder if we really believe God is faithful in His promises. I have been guilty of answering a friend when asked if I expected to go to heaven by saying, “I hope so.” The truth is, I truly do hope so, but scripture tells me I can know I will be with God and the faithful.

The Hebrew writer continued to say in verse 35, “Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. ³⁶For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised.” Yes, we do need to endure, and we do need to be faithful unto death; but sometimes I mess up, and I do things for which I know I need forgiveness. What then?

Ephesians 1:7-8 tells us, “In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our wrongdoings, according to the riches of His grace ⁸ which He lavished on us in all wisdom and insight.” 1 John 1:8-10 assures us, “If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. ⁹ If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous, so that He will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰ If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.”

God knows we are going to mess up. The key here is to keep trying our best to do what God expects of us and when we do sin, acknowledge our mistake and do our best not to repeat it, ask for forgiveness, and rest assured God is faithful and will forgive us. We are not perfect, and those mistakes will happen. God is not a liar, for He

knows our very inner being. We do not have to fear God is waiting to zap us if we fail to be perfect. We can, however, expect condemnation if we do not continue to try to be as perfect as possible and fail to ask for forgiveness. If we stay in a constant state of trying and praying, we can be assured we will be in heaven with God and His angels. Not only will we be assured of that reward, but our lives here on earth will be more peaceful. What a blessing that is. When asked if we believe we are going to heaven our answer should be a resounding, “Yes! Yes, I do believe what God has promised.”

By Wilburta Arrowood, Napoleonville, Louisiana



WE ARE ASSURED!

These are wonderful words for the child of God. What are we assured of? When we have obeyed the gospel and have been immersed into Jesus Christ, we are guaranteed salvation that our sins are forgiven. “Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? We were, therefore, buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with Him like this in His death, we will certainly also be united with Him in His resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with Him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.” Romans 6:3-6.

We are assured that the Holy Spirit will dwell in us as long as we are faithful to Him. Ephesians 1:13-14 says, “In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of His glory.” We are assured of daily continual salvation when we walk with Him, that all our sins are covered by the blood of Jesus. When we are covered by Jesus’ blood, God looks at us as clean and pure, not the sinful people we really are. 1 John 1:6-7 says, “If we claim to have fellowship with Him yet walk in darkness, we lie and do not live by 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, His Son, purifies us from all sin.”

We are assured of our constant connection to the Father through the great privilege of prayer. We are assured of our part in His church and the fellowship of other Christians when we obey the gospel, Acts 2:47. He adds us to His church.

Hebrews 11:1 says, “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” What do we hope for and are convicted of? Heaven and the splendor and joy of it! For now, Heaven is unimaginable to us as humans. However, the church is our heaven on earth for a little while. The Lord gives us somewhat of a glimpse of heaven in Revelation. I love the words John wrote in Chapter 22. “Then the angel showed me a river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb (Jesus) down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves are for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and His servants will serve Him. They will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads. There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign forever and ever.”

Remember that Revelation is written in symbolic language. The message to us is that we will be victorious in Jesus. We will regain the tree of life that was lost in the Garden of Eden, Genesis 3:21-24. We will be free from the curse of Satan. We will be healed for eternity, and we will see God face to face. He will know us by our “mark” (the seal of the Holy Spirit), Ephesians 1:13-14. Hallelujah! We won’t need any more lamps or lights of any kind. God will be our light! I can’t think of any better assurances.

We are not assured of another moment in this life. Make the most of the time we have to serve Him in any way we can.

Mary Anna Melton, Rolla, Missouri



ASSURANCE

The state of being assured; freedom from doubt and uncertainty. As a theological concept, assurance is one of the richest doctrines of the Bible. It refers to the believers’ full confidence and conviction that the penalty of their sins has been paid and that heaven has been secured as their eternal destiny by Christ’s death and resurrection.

Assurance means that Christians not only possess salvation—they are assured of this salvation. First John 5:12 speaks of security (“He who has the Son has life”), and the following verse speaks of assurance (“you may know that you have eternal life”).

The basis of assurance must never be our own subjective experience, which can waver with fear, doubt, and

uncertainty. True assurance is founded on the Word of God alone—the Holy Spirit bearing witness to our spirits that the Word of God is true and reliable. When believers, by faith, stand upon the Word of God (such as John 10:27-29 and Romans 8:35-39 which speak clearly of the assurance of our faith), they gain a joyous freedom to live the Christian life. They have been forgiven by God in Christ and are now free to forgive others, to love as they have first been loved by God.

Assurance, then, is not just a “theological” concept but a practical matter. As long as people are uncertain about their own standing before God, they are defensive and self-centered. But fully assured of God’s salvation, the believer can begin to walk in the footsteps of Christ (1 John 4:17-19).

Nelson’s Illustrated Bible Dictionary



Blessed Assurance

The fruit of righteousness will be peace; the effect of righteousness will be quietness and confidence forever. Isaiah 32:17

Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain that is, His body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for He who promised is faithful. Hebrews 10:19-23



Fred Willmon



Sunrise is a monthly newsletter written and/or assembled by members of the Rolla Church of Christ. Sunrise is printed and distributed (primarily via email) to individuals and congregations around the country. All previous issues can be accessed by going to <http://www.seekgrowserveLove.org>. Click on the Resources tab, then on Sunrise Newsletter. You will find the current issue plus all previous issues.

