

Assurance of Salvation
Part 21

Love for God
(#2)

LOVE FOR GOD

- A proof of salvation -

About this love...

1) If we are saved, this love will BE in us.

GENUINE LOVE FOR GOD
(A short review)

- We will NEVER have it on our own; it HAS to come from GOD.
- So if it's there,
 - We know GOD has done it!
 - We KNOW it's genuine!
 - *We know we are saved!*

[And in case you were wondering ...]

- God NEVER forgets to put his love into the heart of a person he saves! *

(NOT THIS) → 

Just a minute. Did I put my love in 358,228 people today, or 358,229?

* (A "god" who could do this would be a FAKE!)

About this love...

2) If we are saved, this love will GROW in us.

If God has begun the work of salvation in us, these things have occurred:

- God has made us spiritually alive.
- We no longer are enemies of God.
- God has poured out his love into our hearts.

Even so, our love has not become 100% perfect and complete.

- We are still growing.
- We still struggle with temptation and sin.

But we WANT our love to be 100% perfect and complete.

- It is our goal, and we will be actively striving* for it!
- There will be effort* on our part, to get where we know we must be.

* (Fakes won't do these things.)

We can be honest about our shortcomings!

- We can admit where we fall short.
- We can boast in what *God* has done in us.

"He who boasts, let him boast in the Lord."

(1 Corinthians 1:31b, WEB)

Why be a fool and LIE about our weakness?



Spiritually, I'm as strong as they come!!

That would suggest our "assurance" was fake!

About this love...

- 3) Our responsibility goes *beyond* ourselves.

Each of us needs to start by examining our own selves.

- If characteristics such as "love for God" are a part of our lives, we are GUARANTEED salvation.
- If such characteristics are NOT a part of our lives, we know what we must do, if we want to be saved. (We must repent.)

We also have an obligation to encourage and warn others.

- But this obligation toward others comes SECOND, *after* we have dealt with our own selves.

First get rid of the log from your own eye; then perhaps you will see well enough to deal with the speck in your friend's eye.

(Matthew 7:5 NLT)

Two more Scripture passages about our obligation toward others:

Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual* should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.

(Galatians 6:1 NIV)

*("Spiritual" = living by the Spirit, as all followers of Jesus are to do.)

For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge? God judges those outside. "Purge the evil person from among you."

(1 Corinthians 5:12-13 WEB)

These verses about encouraging and warning others are COMMANDS!

- They are a fulfillment of the command: "*Love your neighbor as yourself.*"
- If we refuse to obey such commands, we are living in SIN!
- If we choose to live in sin, we have NO BASIS for claiming we are saved.

3 parts to genuine love for God

- **PART 1** – A delight in who God is and what he does.
- **PART 2** – A desire for God to be glorified in all things.
- **PART 3** – Gratitude for what he has done.

* Today we will begin PART 1 *

PART #1 – A delight in who God is and what he does

(as accurately described in the Bible)

We will look at:

- The "love" of the fakes (= an unsaved person)
- The love of a genuine saved person

Fakes can have a "love" for God
– but it's a counterfeit "love."

1) They can have a limited (and normally distorted) knowledge about God.

- They can "love" this god, and even claim they're loving the God of the Bible.
- But their god does not match the God of the Bible. (At best, their god is a "half-truth.") This is **IDOLATRY**.

Fakes can have a counterfeit
"love" for God.

2) They can be happy for what God does, when they benefit from it.

- They can "love" what their god does; but their reason is focused on themselves. This is **SELF-LOVE** in disguise!

The "LOVE" of an UNSAVED PERSON:

By nature, it is *different* from the love God provides.

- Unsaved people (including the fakes) cannot *delight* in the God of the Bible. This is only possible when a person's mind is "renewed" by the Spirit of God.

GENUINE LOVE FOR GOD !

IT WILL INCLUDE:

- NOT JUST the more "pleasing" parts of God's character and what he does.
- BUT EVERYTHING about God, as revealed in Scripture (*whether or not it appeals to us*).

! Any other perspective is IDOLATRY! !

PART #1 – A delight in who God is and what he does

(as accurately described in the Bible)

*** How do we do this? ***

(i.e., how can we know that our love is "genuine"?)

Conforming our views about God to what is revealed in Scripture.

- **Delighting in everything Scripture reveals about God**
 - ALL his nature and being, his actions; everything about him
- **NOT distorting what Scripture reveals**
 - Not emphasizing *some* of God's characteristics (those that please us).
 - Not downplaying *other* characteristics (those that displease us).

This means we need to find out what the Bible says!

- Otherwise we could be *deceiving* ourselves into *thinking* we love the God of the Bible.
 - If this happens, we will receive a terrifying surprise at the Day of Judgment.

Then we need to *change* the way we think – to get renewed minds!

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, ...

(Romans 12:2a NASB)

As you discover the wide range of God's characteristics, consider:

- Do you delight in God's _____ as much as in his _____? (Pick any 2 characteristics.)
- Is there something about God that you *don't* like?

*(Examples could include "holiness and love" or "judgment and mercy.")

What if there IS something about God that we don't like?

This can easily become a problem for any of us.

- **Outside us**, we are constantly being bombarded with a 1-sided emphasis, half-truths, distortions and lies, etc.
- **Inside us**, our old sinful nature (the "flesh") pushes us toward "**the god we like**" (the one that pleases the flesh) instead of "**the God who is.**"

We just need to remember:

- The problem ISN'T God!
- The problem is that *we* are sinners, and sin has distorted our thinking.

**If we ARE following Jesus,
WE WILL WANT TO CHANGE THIS!!!**

YOUR MISSION:

- As you learn what Scripture reveals about God, you will discover a wide range of descriptions about God's character and nature, his will, etc.
- Ask yourself:
 - Do you love "**the God who is,**"
(revealed in Scripture)
 - or "**the god you want to have**"?

There is *much* you can know
(and love) about God.

But if you accept ALL that Scripture says about
God:

– You will discover that the God of the Bible is *so much*
greater than *any* god that people could invent!

How great is God
--beyond our understanding!
(Job 36:26a NIV)

Credits (1)

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