

What Saith the Scripture?

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That Ye May Know That Ye Have Eternal Life

Or, The Biblical Doctrine of the Assurance of Salvation

Or, Only Those Who Abide in Christ May Know That They Have Eternal Life

"These things have I written unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have Eternal Life, and that ye may believe on the Name of the Son of God"

(1John 5:13).

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Preface

The God of All Comfort (2Corinthians 1:3) takes great delight in assuring His children that they belong to Him and He belongs to them. "And he that keepeth His Commandments dwelleth in Him, and He in him. And **hereby we know** that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us" (1John 3:24). In fact, the First Epistle of John is the **only** book of the Bible *written for the express purpose of giving the Children of God the Assurance of Salvation*. "These things have I written unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have Eternal Life, and that ye may believe on the Name of the Son of God" (5:13). **Only those walking in loving obedience to the LORD Jesus Christ are assured of their possession of Eternal Life.** "And hereby we do know that we know Him, **if we keep His Commandments**" (2:3). And, the opposite is also true, that those walking in disobedience, do not know Jesus Christ. "He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His Commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in him" (2:4).

How Can This Be?

The Holy Spirit, Who is the Blessed Comforter (John 14:16), *always and only assures the obedient of possessing Eternal Life-- never* the disobedient. "6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: 7 But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1John 1:6-7). The prized knowledge of the possession of Eternal Life is given by He Who is the "Spirit of Knowledge and of the Fear of the LORD" (Isaiah 11:2). He has chosen to give us that knowledge of the possession of Eternal Life through the Divinely appointed Word of God. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God [literally, God breathed, i.e., by the Spirit of Truth]" (2Timothy 3:16). That the Spirit speaks through the Scriptures, is the universal testimony of the Bible. David, the Psalmist, said, "The Spirit of the LORD spake by me, and His Word was in my tongue" (2Samuel 23:2). The Godly must limit their knowledge of the possession of Eternal Life to only what the Spirit reveals, i.e., our sonship is based upon the Spirit's present testimony to our present abiding in obedience, because that is the method and manner of the Spirit's revelatory work through the Scriptures. "But as many as received Him, to them gave He Power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His Name" (John 1:12).

In our ignorance, it is difficult for us to comprehend that **we cannot know what the Almighty does not reveal to us**. "8 For My Thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My Ways, saith the LORD. 9 For as the Heavens are higher than the Earth, so are My Ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:8-9). In particular, **the knowledge that we have Eternal Life cannot be verified without the witness of the Holy Spirit**-- Who has chosen to reveal this knowledge through His Living Word. "**These things have I written** unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God; **that ye may know that ye have Eternal Life**" (1John 5:13). Only those who are convinced of the Truth of God's Word may comprehend their possession of Eternal Life. "But whoso looketh into the Perfect Law of Liberty [the Word of God], and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed" (James 1:25).

Unfortunately, we have not always evaluated our Christian experience in light of the Word of God; instead, we have often relied upon our faulty recall of events, i.e., "went forward at the invitation", and emotion, i.e., "felt so relieved", to assure ourselves that we possessed the Eternal Life of the Gospel. But, the Doctrine of the Assurance of Salvation **is based upon the Holy Spirit's infallible acknowledgement of our sonship through the testimony of the Word of God**. "**And hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His Commandments**" (1John 2:3). Because the common concept of conversion to Christ is so "event and emotion" oriented, the knowledge of the possession of Eternal Life has become more a function of how well we recall the event or emotion than "what saith the Scripture?" (Romans 4:3).

A real problem of this Laodicean Age is that the disobedient have demanded the same Assurance of Salvation as those who abide in Christ. "He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His Commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in him" (1John 2:4). And, Scripture is absolutely clear about the destiny of **all liars**. "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and **all liars**, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the Second Death" (Revelation 21:8). God's Spirit is unequalled in His Comfort of those that "dwell in Him" (1John 4:13); but, His Distress of disobedient, professing Christians is unrivaled for the condemnation and stress He places on them for their walking apart from Him. "If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the Truth" (1:6).

The Faith That Saves Is More Than A Passive, Intellectual Persuasion

All who have been "born again" (John 3:3) into God's "family in Heaven and Earth" (Ephesians 3:15) by the Incorruptible Seed of the Word of God (1Peter 1:23), are the children of God. "But as many as received Him, to them gave He Power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His Name" (John 1:12). Regardless of any lack of drama in the conversion experience, turning in faith to the Saviour *away from our sins*, is Salvation. "For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the Power of God unto Salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16). Gospel Faith is **alive with works**, i.e., the Works of Faith. "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (James 2:17). "Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, My soul shall have no pleasure in him" (Hebrews 10:38).

However, the Laodicean spirit of the present Church Age has divorced the Works of Faith from the meaning of Evangelical Faith. "They profess that they know God; **but in works they deny Him**, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Titus 1:16). In the name of upholding Salvation By Faith Without Works, they deny the necessity of anything outside of a passive, intellectual persuasion concerning the Truth for Eternal Salvation. "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?" (James 2:14). Laodicea's passive, intellectual definition of faith would satisfy even the demons. "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble" (2:19).

How unlike Laodicea's antinomianism was the Apostle Paul's "obedience of faith" (Romans 16:26)! The same apostle who was inspired by the Spirit to write, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9), finished the thought with the assertion that, "we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus **unto good works**, which God hath before ordained that we should **walk in them**" (2:10). Anyone abiding in Evangelical Faith must be walking in "good works" (2:10), which are the Works of Faith. Without that walking in "good works" (2:10), they do **not** possess Evangelical Faith. "Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and **I will shew thee my faith by my works**" (James 2:18).

Paul asserted that those who are **presently committing sin** shall **not enter Heaven**, i.e., "they which do [literally, are doing-- present tense] such things shall **not** inherit the Kingdom of God" (Galatians 5:21). "19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, 20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, 21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which **do** such things shall **not** inherit the Kingdom of God" (Galatians 5:19-21). The Apostle John agreed with Paul that those who were **presently committing sin** could not enter and defile Heaven. "And there shall **in no wise** enter into It **any thing** that defileth [literally, defiling-- present tense], neither **whatsoever** worketh [literally, practicing-- present tense] abomination, or maketh a lie" (Revelation 21:27).

Can Eternal Life Ever Cease?

No, for Eternal Life to be eternal, it can never cease, for Jesus absolutely promised us, "I give unto them Eternal Life; and they shall **never** perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand" (John 10:28). **But, our right to lay claim to Eternal Life can cease.** Let me explain. The Gospel of John was written by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit for the purpose of promoting Gospel Faith in the reader, i.e., "that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have Life through His Name" (John 20:31). Likewise, the Apostle John's first epistle to his Little Children (1John 2:1) is the Holy Spirit's follow-up to the New Born Believers to give them the Assurance of Salvation, i.e., "that ye may **know** that ye have Eternal Life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God" (5:13). Therefore, the entire epistle is to be read searching for the theme, "that ye may know" (5:13) that you are a Christian.

Again, how can we lose our right to claim that we have Eternal Life? Let us examine a prime example of this concept in the second chapter of the epistle. "He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His Commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in him" (1John 2:4). Or, "He that saith [literally, is saying-- present tense], I know [literally, I have known-- perfect tense] Him, and keepeth not [literally, is not keeping-- present tense] His Commandments, is [present tense] a liar, and the Truth is [present tense] not in him" (2:4). To paraphrase the verse, 'He that is saying that I have known Him, and is not keeping His Commandments, is [presently] a liar, and the Truth is [presently] not in him'. This is the Holy Spirit's Infallible Guide to teaching His people *how He takes away our right to claim that we have known Him, when we are walking in present disobedience*. "6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and **do not the Truth**: 7 But if we **walk in the Light**, as He is in the Light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1:6-7).

Why should the Father give us His gentle assurance of our acceptance and forgiveness, while we are willfully, knowingly disobeying Him? "Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward" (Isaiah 1:4). We would no more reward a dog in obedience training for wrong behavior than the Father would reward us with His loving assurance of our Salvation, *while we abide in stubborn and willful disobedience*. "19 If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: 20 But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it" (1:19-20).

Since our willful sinning is the same as re-crucifying the LORD Jesus afresh, do we think it is unreasonable that the Father would withhold from us His assurance that we are "accepted in the Beloved" (Ephesians 1:6)? "4 For it is impossible... 6 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify [literally, are crucifying] to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put [literally, are exposing] Him to an open shame" (Hebrews 6:6). The impossibility of renewing them "again unto repentance" is that it is **impossible** "to renew them" **while they are presently** crucifying the LORD Jesus, i.e., still unwilling to repent, and unwanting of the Father's forgiveness. But, the Father has promised even the prodigal, "**Return** unto Me, and I will **return** unto you, saith the LORD of Hosts" (Malachi 3:7). "Behold, what manner of Love" (1John 3:1) is this that the Father would faithfully discipline the profligate children! "6 For whom the LORD loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth **every** son whom He receiveth. 7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is He whom the Father chasteneth not?" (Hebrews 12:6-7).

In fact, the "deceitfulness of sin" (Hebrews 3:13) is so great, that many who consider themselves as simply Backslidden, have **never truly** "tasted that the LORD is gracious" (1Peter 2:3) and have never been "born again" (1:23). For this reason, the human memory of events that are supposed to have been our Evangelical Salvation, *cannot be verified without the testimony of the Spirit*. "The Spirit Itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Romans 8:16). On the other hand, the Spirit warns **the Saints** that "if we **sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the Truth**, there remaineth **no more** sacrifice for sins, 27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries" (Hebrews 10:26-27). This is not only withholding assurance, but it is also the **certainty** of Judgment to those walking in disobedience. "Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath **trodden under**

foot the Son of God, and hath counted the Blood of the Covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of Grace?" (10:29). Take care not to **tempt** the Living God, for "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the Living God" (10:31). The reaction of the Righteous to such a warning only causes them to trust the LORD more soberly. "But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul" (10:39). "11 For the grace of God that bringeth Salvation hath appeared to all men, 12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, **we should live soberly, righteously, and Godly**, in this present world; 13 Looking for that Blessed Hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:11-13).

How to Know That You Know

The Holy Spirit has established immutable rules of evidence for the knowledge of sonship that no human court can rightfully overturn. "God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent: hath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?" (Numbers 23:19). Let us examine another verse, which is adjacent to the previous example-- "He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His Commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in him" (1John 2:4)-- of losing the right to claim our sonship; but, this time, the same rules of knowledge and evidence **prove the sonship** of the **obedient** Saint. "And hereby we do know that we know Him, **if we keep His Commandments**" (1John 2:3). Remember, also, that all the good works attributed to the Saints are not only our "reasonable service" (Romans 12:1) to God, but are made possible by the grace of the Spirit of Christ (8:9) working in us. "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure" (Philippians 2:13).

- **Our Sonship is Made Known to Us by the Spirit of Adoption (Romans 8:15) Through Our Obedience.** Just as it is altogether proper for the Holy Spirit to *withhold any kind of Assurance of Salvation to those who are not presently walking in obedience*, it is just as consistent for the Spirit to *bestow upon the obedient, tokens of sonship*. "And hereby we **do know** [literally, we are knowing-- present tense] that we know [literally, we have known-- perfect tense] Him, **if we keep** [present tense] His Commandments" (1John 2:3). Since Gospel Salvation is a **willing** submission in faith to Jesus Christ, then those who **are presently** submitted to Him, are those to whom the Spirit testifies that they "know Him". This same theme is outlined in the Gospel of John, where loving obedience results in further manifestations of the LORD Jesus to His brethren. "He that hath My Commandments, and keepeth Them, he it is that loveth Me: and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will Love him, and will manifest Myself to him" (John 14:21).
- **The Perfection of Love by Our Obedience is How the Spirit of the New Covenant Shows Us That We Are in Him.** "But whoso keepeth His Word, in him verily is the Love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in Him" (1John 2:5). Our **obedience is a sign** that the promised Holy Spirit of the New Covenant **is dwelling within us**. "And I will put My Spirit within you, and **cause you to walk** in My Statutes, and ye **shall keep My Judgments, and do them**" (Ezekiel 36:27). This prophecy should be presently fulfilled in us, for the Apostle Paul has instructed us that we are the temple of God. "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of **the Holy Ghost which is in you**, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?"

(1Corinthians 6:19). And, anyone possessing not the Holy Spirit cannot be Christian. "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His" (Romans 8:9).

- **The Holy Spirit Uses Our Righteous Living to Demonstrate to Us the Knowledge That We Are in Him.** "If ye know that He is Righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of Him" (1John 2:29). God forbid that we take credit for our Righteous Living! "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10). Not only were the good works the LORD's idea in the first place, but the LORD subdued "our iniquities" (Micah 7:19) by the Power of the Gospel. "For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the Power of God unto Salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16). It is egotism for man to think that he accomplishes obedience just because the Moral Agent must will it, for all Power belongs to God. "God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that Power belongeth unto God" (Psalm 62:11). Scripture reveals that whenever good is willed by man, it came from God. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father Of Lights, with Whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (James 1:17). And, all praise to His Name, "He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself" (Philippians 3:21)!
- **Abiding in Christ is Diametrically Opposed to All Sinning, by Which the Spirit of Christ Teaches Us That We Are in Him.** "Whosoever abideth in Him **sinneth not**: whosoever sinneth hath **not seen Him, neither known Him**" (1John 3:6). Charles G. Finney used the expression, the "Unity of Moral Action" to express the idea that "**no man** can serve two masters: for either he WILL hate the one, and love the other; or else he WILL hold to the one, and despise the other. **Ye cannot serve God and mammon**" (Matthew 6:24). [Please read "[Unity of Moral Action](http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Voice/Unity.of.Moral.Action.html)" -- <http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Voice/Unity.of.Moral.Action.html> -- by Charles G. Finney] James graphically illustrated the concept that it is **impossible** for man *to serve God and the devil, to be holy and sinful, to abide in Christ and sin, at the same time.* "11 Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? 12 Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh" (James 3:11-12). Therefore, if we abide in Christ, not only WILL we not be sinning, but we WILL have the testimony of the Spirit through His Word that we are "born of God". "Whosoever is born of God **doth not commit sin**; for His Seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God" (1John 3:9). He cannot sin because he WILL not sin.
- **The Holy Spirit Uses Our Love of the Brethren to Demonstrate to Us the Knowledge That We Have Passed From Death to Life.** "We know that we have passed from death unto Life, because we Love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death" (1John 3:14). This may seem too simplistic of a test, but "knowledge is easy unto him that understandeth" (Proverbs 14:6). "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you" (Matthew 5:44). If the unchanging Moral Law has always required of us supreme Love of God and an equal Love of our neighbour as ourselves (Matthew 24:34-36), then how can anyone truly profess to know God without loving his brother? "If a man say, I Love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar:

for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he Love God Whom he hath not seen?" (1John 4:20).

During our LORD's earthly ministry, He restated the Moral Law-- of loving all men-- with the added perspective that our particular Love of our Christian Brethren would uniquely indicate that we are His disciples. "34 A new Commandment I give unto you, That ye **Love one another**; as I have loved you, that ye also Love one another. 35 By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have Love one to another" (John 13:34-35). At times, rebuking a sinning Christian is an expression of what our LORD commanded in loving one another. "1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. 2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the Law of Christ" (Galatians 6:1-2). [See our article, "How to Deal With Backsliders"-- <http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Fellowship/How.to.Deal.with.Backslide.html> --, for an expression of this thought.]

- **The Comforter Assures the Obedient That the Father Abides in Them.** "And he that **keepeth His Commandments dwelleth in Him**, and He in him. And **hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit** which He hath given us" (1John 3:24). The Apostle Paul closed his epistle to the Romans with the assurance that the readers of his presentation of the mystery of the Gospel would respond with the "**obedience of faith**" (Romans 16:26). *For any modern presentation of the Gospel to give the hearer the impression that their believing does not require their own obedience for their Salvation, leaves the hearer with no better faith than the Intellectual-Only-Faith of devils.* "14 **What doth it profit**, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have **not works**? can faith save him? 15 If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, 16 And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; **what doth it profit?** 17 Even so faith, if it hath **not works, is dead**, being alone. 18 Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and **I will shew thee my faith by my works.** 19 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. 20 But wilt thou know, **O vain man**, that **faith without works is dead?**" (James 2:14-20).

The deception of much of the Professed Church in this Laodicean Age is so great *that faith has become conveniently divorced from obedience in the name of Salvation By Faith Plus Nothing*, while casting a blind eye to the fact that **faith works, and that, by Love**. "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but **faith which worketh by Love**" (Galatians 5:6). Is it any wonder that Laodicea can loudly proclaim that it is "rich, and increased with goods, and [has] need of nothing" (Revelation 3:17), while being morally bankrupt and destitute of loving obedience, i.e., "thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (3:17)? And, the Laodicean method of assuring its own of possessing Eternal Life relies more upon EXPERIENCE and EMOTION than the testimony of the Holy Spirit. "And he that **KEEPETH HIS COMMANDMENTS dwelleth in Him**, and He in him. And **HEREBY we know that He abideth in us, BY THE SPIRIT** which He hath given us" (1John 3:24). Do not feel alone, though Laodicea crowds around you. Instead, rest confidently upon the LORD, Who alone can comfort you. "For this is the **Covenant** that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the LORD; I will put My Laws into their mind, and write them

in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people" (Hebrews 8:10).

- **We Know That We Know the Spirit of Truth Because We Hear Those Who Are of God.** "We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby **know** we the Spirit Of Truth, and the spirit of error" (1John 4:6). But, what about all the "good" people in the churches, couldn't we say that we are Christian because we listen to their teaching, preaching, and counsel? Not necessarily. The LORD Jesus Himself said, "And why call ye me, LORD, LORD, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46); therefore, we know that no professed Christian is truly good who does not consistently show a "pattern of good works" (Titus 2:7). "They profess that they know God; but **in works they deny Him**, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (1:16). Those who **live "by EVERY Word** that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4) *are those we ought to hear*. And, then our hearing of them demonstrates that we are of God. "We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby **know** we the Spirit Of Truth, and the spirit of error" (1John 4:6). Conversely, **not** heeding the teaching of those who instruct contrary to the Word of God, *is also evidence that we are of God*. May we be appropriately encouraged by the former of these Words, and not needing the rebuke of the latter of these Words... "He that is of God heareth God's Words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God" (John 8:47).
- **The Holy Spirit of Promise (Ephesians 1:13) Assures Us That to Truly Love is to Truly Know God.** "7 Beloved, let us Love one another: for Love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. 8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for **God is Love**" (1John 4:7-8). True Love is the theme of many a story or song of this world, but **True Love is plainly that we obey God**. "*For this is the Love of God, that we keep His Commandments*: and His Commandments are not grievous [literally, burdensome]" (1John 5:3). God manifested His Love to us, while we were still sinners. "But God commendeth His Love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). Love is the very essence of God. "And we have known and believed the Love that God hath to us. God is Love; and he that dwelleth in Love dwelleth in God, and God in him" (1John 4:16). His Love was the motivation for sending His Only Begotten Son to die for us, to which we ought to respond in Love, by believing upon Him, i.e., a "faith which worketh by Love" (Galatians 5:6). **The LORD Jesus judges our Love of Him by our obedience to Him.** "15 If ye Love Me, keep My Commandments... 21 He that hath My Commandments, and **keepeth Them, he it is that loveth Me**: and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will Love him, and will manifest Myself to him" (John 14:15,21).

The Love Chapter of the New Testament describes the "nothingness" of any and all Christian service without True Love. "1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not Charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. 2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not Charity, I am NOTHING" (1Corinthians 13:1-2). The faith of Laodicea-- which is not accompanied by love-- is worth NOTHING in the sight of God, while the "little strength" (Revelation 3:8) works of Philadelphia, which is True Love, are acknowledged by the Spirit of Prophecy's (19:10) Promise of a Pre-Tribulational Rapture. "Because **thou hast kept the Word** of My patience, **I also will keep thee** FROM the Hour of

Temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the Earth" (3:10). Be assured that the Spirit of God offers His assurance of our **present possession** of Eternal Life, **if** we Truly Love God and one another. "Every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God" (1John 4:7).

- **Our Possession of the Spirit of Grace (Hebrews 10:29) is Our Acknowledgement That He Dwells in Us.** "Hereby know we that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit" (1John 4:13). Again, obedience in Love is the indicator that the Spirit of God dwells within us. "And we are His witnesses of these things; and so is also **the Holy Ghost, Whom God hath given to them that obey Him**" (Acts 5:32). Whatever compliment paid to our spiritual character, if it is true that we are those in whom the "Spirit of God is" (Genesis 41:38), then we could rejoice with Joseph. What a privilege that we should be chosen by the Living God to be His dwelling place on Earth! "19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? 20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1Corinthians 6:19-20). *If the Spirit of God possesses us, and we Him*, then we have His acknowledgement that He dwells in us. "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me" (Galatians 2:20). The perfect peace of the "full assurance of faith" (Hebrews 10:22) that we "dwell in Him" (1John 4:13) would be ours, because the Holy Spirit has chosen to take up tabernacling within us-- in response to our faith in Him. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee" (Isaiah 26:3).
- **Our Walking Without Sinning is Used by the Spirit of Holiness (Romans 1:4) to Persuade Our Hearts That We Are Born of God.** "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not" (1John 5:18). **If holiness was only a SYMBOLIC declaration of God that contradicts a presently disobedient walk** in the professed Christian, **then it would be of no use** that we claim the following Promises for victory over sinning, e.g.,
 - "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is Faithful, Who **will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able**; but will with the temptation also **make a way to escape**, that ye may be **able to bear it**" (1Corinthians 10:13). Or,
 - "Keep back Thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them **not have dominion over me**: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the Great Transgression" (Psalm 19:13). Or,
 - "9 Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? **by taking heed** thereto according to Thy Word. 10 With my **whole** heart have I sought Thee: O **let me not wander from** Thy Commandments. 11 Thy Word have I hid in mine heart, that I might **not sin** against Thee" (Psalm 119:9-11). Or,
 - "17 ...I was **delivered** out of the mouth of the lion. 18 And the LORD **shall deliver me**

from every evil work, and will preserve me unto His Heavenly Kingdom: to Whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen" (2Timothy 4:17-18). Or,

- o "The LORD knoweth how **to deliver the Godly out of temptations**, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished" (2Peter 2:9). Or,
- o "For whatsoever is born of God **overcometh the world**: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even **our faith**" (1John 5:4).

Conclusion

"Vain is the help of man" (Psalm 108:12), especially in gaining the **assurance** of possessing Eternal Life. Perhaps the plainest statement of Scripture that any may use to determine their possession of Eternal Life, is the Apostle John's letter to his Little Children. "3 And **hereby** we do **know** that we know Him, **if we keep His Commandments**. 4 He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His Commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in him" (1John 2:3-4). **PRESENT OBEDIENCE MEANS YOU TRULY POSSESS ETERNAL LIFE, WHILE PRESENT DISOBEDIENCE MEANS YOU ARE A LIAR.** "And ALL liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the Second Death" (Revelation 21:8).

Possibly, the most important thing about the faith which possesses Eternal Life, is that **faith works, and that, by Love.** "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but **faith which worketh by Love**" (Galatians 5:6). Isaac Watts wrote an hymn with the words:

"'Tis faith that changes all the heart,
'Tis faith that works by love,
That bids all sinful joys depart,
And lifts the thoughts above."

May the same heart be found, even in this Laodicean Age. "For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole Earth, to shew Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is **perfect** toward Him" (2Chronicles 16:9). May you be among those whom the Good LORD **comforts** with the Assurance of Salvation. "Faithful is He that calleth you, Who also will do it" (1Thessalonians 5:24).

And, may the Spirit of God teach you that

- "He which hath begun a good work in you **will perform it** until the day of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:6), that
- "He is able even **to subdue** all things unto Himself" (3:21), that
- "He is able also **to save** [you] to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth **to make intercession** for [you]" (Hebrews 7:25), that

- He has "given **unto us Exceeding Great And Precious Promises**: that by These ye might be **partakers of the Divine Nature**, having **escaped the corruption** that is in the world through lust" (2Peter 1:4), and that
- He "is able **to keep you from falling**, and **to present you faultless** before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy" (Jude 24).

Amen, and Amen.

For additional reading on this topic,
please see our article,

["An Urgent Call to Christian Perfection"](#)

-- <http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Fellowship/Exposition.Perfection.html> --

Also,

Charles G. Finney's "[Systematic Theology](#)"

-- <http://whatsaiththescripture.com/Voice/Systematic.Theology.html> --

is available to develop the subject at length.

For more material related to this topic please see

[WStS TOPICAL LINKS: On Salvation](#)

-- <http://whatsaiththescripture.com/Jehovah/Topical.Links.Salvation.html> --