

Title: Assurance  
Text: Colossians 2: 2  
Date: Aug 6,2020  
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**Our subject is:** Assurance

**Proposition:** Assurance is certainty. A believer's objective assurance is Christ and his finished work, including all the promises of God in him. A believer's subjective assurance involves certainty in the heart given by the Holy Spirit of God.

This week, I heard someone say something I have heard several times over the years. Men and women profess to believe on Christ as their all. They confess their sin and total inability to contribute to their salvation. They have a clear understanding of the gospel of God's grace, believing Christ was triumphant in justifying his particular people by his blood. Some have confessed Christ in baptism, others want too.

Yet, they struggle with assurance. This week a dear lady said to me, "I believe Christ is All. He alone accomplished the redemption of his people. I believe Christ is my only hope of salvation. But I want to know that he did it for me."

I am not going to try to talk any sinner into believing that he or she is saved. Nor do I want to diminish someone's assurance.

There are many who can take you back to the night when they heard the preacher speak of another Jesus—that Jesus who wants to save you if you will let him. So they walked an aisle, said a prayer, gave their heart to Jesus and got saved. I would love for God to use this word to blow that presumption to bits

There are others who claim assurance is not possible for anyone and its dangerous if they had it. That is not scriptural either. The apostle Paul said, "*I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him, against that day*" (2 Ti 1: 12). But it troubles me when I hear someone who believes Christ but struggles with assurance.

Common problems with a lack of assurance involve looking to our sins. But it is just as self-righteous to think we are too sinful for God to save us as it is for the sinner who trusts in his own works. Some lack assurance because they are looking for an experience or comparing themselves with other people's experiences. There are various ways Christ healed sinners and revealed himself as we see throughout the gospels. So never put God in a box. Another problem comes by listening to the many catch phrases they learned in false of religion which are not scriptural. There is but one place assurance is found that is in Christ—look to Christ alone, believe God's word alone.

All believers have unbelief and doubt because we have a sin-nature. No believer has perfect assurance. A believer's sin-nature is nothing but unbelief and doubt. Yet, in the new-nature God gives a measure of assurance and confidence of heart. But having these two natures, sometimes we have more unbelief and doubts than assurance.

For example, when King David's old nature was making him doubt, he prayed to God, "*Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation*" (Psalm 35:3). Another time David had assurance in his new heart so he wrote, "*The Lord is my Shepherd I shall not want...surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever*" (Ps 23: 1, 6).

Three passages speak of full assurance. I want to briefly look at these.

## **THE FULL ASSURANCE OF UNDERSTANDING**

**Colossians 2: 1: For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh; 2: That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all the riches of the FULL ASSURANCE OF UNDERSTANDING, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; 3: In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.**

When we read “the faith of Christ” it means Christ’s faith. Likewise the “*full assurance of understanding*” is assurance that comes with true, spiritual understanding of Christ revealed in the new man. “Full” does not mean that it is perfect assurance. It means it is assurance fully in Christ from a revelation of his person and finished work.

Christ is the full assurance of understanding. This assurance is given through the preaching of the mystery—the mystery of the gospel. It is concerning God the Father and Christ his Son—“*In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*” Christ is the Light. God makes Christ Wisdom unto us. In Christ’s Light we see light. Looking to Christ by faith is how we understand God the Father and his salvation. This is understanding given by the Holy Spirit “in spirit and in truth.”

Now, sinner, you may know the doctrine of the necessity of being born again by the Spirit of God. But do you know the experience of being born again? Has the new birth happened to you? How do I know? The Holy Spirit gives an unction—an anointing—so that we have spiritual understanding in truth.

This understanding is given through the word of God by which the gospel is preached. It is by being born of the incorruptible seed by which the gospel is preached unto you (1 Pet 1: 23, 25). Some speak of wanting God to speak to them audibly from heaven or in dreams. God’s written word is as good as if God spoke out of heaven. It is God speaking out of heaven! Peter saw Christ transformed and heard God speak from heaven. But Peter said,

2 Peter 1: 19: We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

Psalm 19:7: The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.

Psalm 93:5: Thy testimonies are very sure

A common problem people have with assurance is they are looking for a feeling. Martin Luther said,

“Feelings come and feelings go,  
And feelings are deceiving;  
My warrant is the Word of God--  
Naught else is worth believing.

Though all my heart should feel condemned  
For want of some sweet token,  
There is One greater than my heart  
Whose Word cannot be broken.

I'll trust in God's unchanging Word  
Till soul and body sever,  
For, though all things shall pass away,  
HIS WORD SHALL STAND FOREVER!”

But notice this very important detail: this revelation of understanding is united with God-given “love”—“*being knit together in love, and unto all the riches of the full assurance of understanding.*” The apostle Paul said, “Knowledge puffeth up!” But “charity edifieth” (1 Cor 8: 1). A sinner can learn true doctrine yet not have spiritual understanding knit with the love of Christ for that sinner personally. To have this love of Christ in the heart, together with the revelation of understanding, is how the sinner is assured that Christ accomplished redemption for him personally! Pay attention to what the apostle John said in verses 15 & 16:

1 John 4:9: In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. 10: Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins....15: Whosoever shall

confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. 16: And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us.

When the Spirit of God give spiritual understanding, together with the love of Christ for that sinner personally, it gives the sinner the assurance of understanding. It is what the apostle Paul is referring to when he says,

1 Corinthians 13: 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.

The love of Christ for me, personally, is the difference between learning the doctrine that Christ is All and Christ actually being All to me. The first does not include God-given love. Therefore, it puffs up in pride over what I know. The latter partakes of the love of Christ for a sinner like me. Christ's love for me constrains me to speak of only of him.

For example, the woman at the well kept telling Christ doctrine she knew with her natural understanding. After Christ gave her understanding knit together with his love for her, she said, "Come, see A MAN, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this THE CHRIST?" (Jn 4:29).

Sinner, do you have the unction so that you know all things, together with a revelation of the love of Christ for you, personally? It is the love of Christ revealed personally in our heart that constrains us to cease knowing "after the flesh" and makes us worship "in spirit and in truth." His love for us causes us to live for him.

2 Corinthians 5: 16: Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we *him* no more. 17: Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

## THE FULL ASSURANCE OF FAITH

**Hebrews 10: 22: Let us draw near with a true heart in FULL ASSURANCE OF FAITH, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.**

Christ is the full assurance of faith. The Holy Spirit gives faith by washing us from an evil conscience by the blood of Christ.

An evil conscience is a guilty conscience. When we have an evil conscience we think there is something we must do to be saved. It is called "dead works." It is an attempt to soothe a guilty conscience. But the Holy Spirit purges the conscience of sin, making us know our sin has been washed away by the blood of Christ.

Hebrews 9: 14: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Then the believer ceases from dead works and begins serving the true and living God. It is because he has no more conscience of sins—no more condemnation, no more guilt. He has the assurance of faith that Christ is All his acceptance with God. If the old ceremony had purged the conscience the offering would have ceased because "the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins" (Heb 10: 2).

The Spirit of God gives us *the assurance of understanding* through the gospel of Christ. By Christ coming and doing God's will,

Hebrew 10: 10: By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once...14: For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. 15: *Whereof* the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us:

The Holy Ghost bears witness, personally, in our conscience.

Hebrews 10: 14...for after that he had said before, 16: This *is* the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws [the gospel: the full assurance of understanding] into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them;

The Holy Spirit writes the gospel on our hearts—the law of faith, the law of love, the law of righteousness, the law of sanctification, the law of redemption—giving us the full assurance of understanding and the full assurance of faith. When the Holy Spirit purges our conscience, God reveals in our hearts,

Hebrews 10: 17: And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. 18: Now where remission of these *is, there is* no more offering for sin.

We cease from our dead works because when our conscience is purged and God reveals there is no more offering necessary except Christ's completed offering. The result is the full assurance of faith—the assurance that comes with believing Christ perfected me, personally, forever and is my High Priest at God's right hand.

Hebrews 10: 19: Having therefore, brethren, BOLDNESS [assurance] to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20: By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; 21: And *having* an high priest over the house of God; 22: Let us draw near with a true heart in FULL ASSURANCE OF FAITH, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

The full assurance of understanding is discernment of Christ's love for me personally in laying down his life in my stead. It gives me the full assurance of faith that Christ is all my acceptance with God.

## THE FULL ASSURANCE OF HOPE

**Hebrews 6: 11: And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence [persevere] to the FULL ASSURANCE OF HOPE unto the end: 12: That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.**

God-given hope is not "I hope it doesn't rain tomorrow!"—that is wishful thinking. God-given hope is confidence that God shall give me what God both promised and confirmed with an oath. It is a confident expectation of a promised end, which promises are fulfilled in and by Christ. When God writes the everlasting covenant on our hearts by the Holy Spirit, he convinces us, giving us the full assurance of hope in Christ like as God did Abraham.

**Hebrews 6: 13: For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, 14: Saying, Surely [assuredly] blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. 15: And so, after he had patiently endured [in the assurance of hope], he obtained the promise.**

**16: For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation *is* to them an end of all strife. 17: Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed *it* by an oath: 18: That by two immutable things, in which *it was* impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the HOPE set before us:**

God promised and God confirmed his promise by an oath—both are immutable. God's covenant promises are all sure because all the promises of God are in Christ, yes and Amen! Christ is why our hope is a confident expectation that God shall give us the end he promised. God promised and confirmed his promise by an oath in Christ and Christ fulfilled all the promises. Therefore, God-given hope is full of assurance of hope in Christ at God's right hand.

**Hebrews 6: 19: Which HOPE we have as an ANCHOR OF THE SOUL, both SURE AND STEDFAST and which entereth into that within the veil; 20: Whither the FORERUNNER is FOR US entered, *even* JESUS, made an HIGH PRIEST for ever after the order of Melchisedec.**

Again this understanding is made personal to a believer—Christ the Forerunner, for me, entered and is my High Priest forever. That makes my hope an anchor of the soul, a sure and steadfast hope. My hope is in the holiest of holies seated at God's right, Christ Jesus my eternal High Priest.

So, brethren, assurance of understanding is Christ; assurance of faith is Christ and assurance of hope is Christ. Let me end by encouraging those who are seeking assurance to look only to Christ. Look away from your experiences, away from your sins—away from you—and look to Christ. If a sinner wants assurance in Christ it is a good indication of spiritual life. John Newtons wrote,

'Tis a point I long to know,  
Oft it causes anxious thought;  
Do I love the Lord, or no?  
Am I His, or am I not?

Then a friend, Daniel Herbert, wrote an answer to John Newton's song,

What is this point you long to know,  
methinks I hear you say, 'tis this -  
I want to know I'm born of God,  
an heir of everlasting bliss.

Is this the point you long to know?  
The point is settled in my view -  
for if you want to love your God,  
it proves He first loved you.

I want to know Christ died for me,  
I want to feel the seal within;  
I want to know Christ's precious blood,  
was shed to wash away my sin.

I want to feel more love to Christ,  
I want more liberty in prayer;  
but when I looked within my heart,  
it almost drives me to despair.

I want a mind more firmly fixed,  
on Christ, my everlasting Head;  
I want to feel my soul alive,  
and not so barren and so dead.

I want more faith, a stronger faith,  
I want to feel it's power within;  
I want to feel more love to God,  
I want to feel less love to sin.

I want to live above the world,  
and count it all but trash and toys;  
I want more tokens of God's grace,  
some foretaste of eternal joys.

I want - I know not what I want,  
I want that real, special good;  
yet all my wants are summed up here,  
I want to love! I want my God!

Is this the point you long to know?  
The dead can neither feel nor see;

it is the slave that's bound in chains,  
that knows the worth of liberty.

So where a want like this is found,  
I think I may be bold to say:  
that God has fixed within thy heart,  
what hell can never take away.

However small thy grace appears,  
there's plenty in thy Living Head;  
these wants you feel, my Christian friend,  
were never found amongst the dead.

May God be pleased to use this message to give you the full assurance of understanding in Christ, the full assurance of faith in Christ and the full assurance of hope in Christ. Look only to Christ!

**Amen!**