

# Safe and Sure

by George Cutting

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of trusting in Christ and His finished work for eternal salvation, rather than relying on feelings and emotions.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 119:113

**Topics:** "Assurance Of Salvation", "Faith In Christ"

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## Description

George Cutting preaches on the assurance of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, emphasizing the importance of relying on God's Word rather than our feelings or opinions. Using the analogy of the Passover in Egypt, he contrasts the uncertainty of those who doubted with the confidence of those who trusted in the sprinkled blood and the spoken word of God. Believing in Jesus, regardless of the intensity of our faith, is what secures eternal life, not our works or emotions.

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## Transcript

"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." 1 John 5:13

Before you turn to the verse which I shall ask you very carefully to look at, which speaks of how a believer is to know that he has eternal life, let me quote it in the distorted way that man's imagination often puts it. "These happy feelings have I given unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life." Now, open your Bible, and while you compare this with God's blessed and unchanging Word, may He give you from your very heart to say with David, "I hate vain thoughts: but Thy law do I love" (Ps. 119:113). The verse just misquoted is 1 John 5:13, and reads thus: "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."

How did the firstborn sons of the thousands of Israel know for certain that they were safe the night of the Passover and Egypt's judgment? Let's take a visit to two of their houses and hear what they have to say.

We find in the first house we enter that they are all shivering with fear and suspense. What is the reason for this trembling? We inquire, and the firstborn son informs us that the angel of death is coming round the land, and that he is not quite certain how matters will stand with him at that solemn moment.

"When the destroying angel has passed our house," says he, "and the night of judgment is over, I shall then know that I am safe, but I can't see how I can be quite sure of it until then. They say they are sure of

salvation next door, but we think it very presumptuous. All I can do is to spend the long dreary night hoping for the best."

"But," we inquire, "has the God of Israel not provided a way of safety for His people?"

"True," he replies, "and we have availed ourselves of that way of escape. The blood of the unblemished first-year lamb has been sprinkled with the hyssop on the lintel and two side-posts, but still we are not fully assured of shelter."

Let us now leave these doubting, troubled ones, and enter next door. What a striking contrast meets our eye at once! Joy beams on every countenance. There they stand with girded loins and staff in hand, enjoying the roasted lamb. What can be the meaning of all this joy on such a solemn night? "Oh," say they all, "we are only waiting for Jehovah's marching orders and then we shall bid farewell to the taskmaster's cruel lash and all the drudgery of Egypt."

"But have you forgotten that this is the night of Egypt's judgment?"

"Yes, we know it: but our firstborn son is safe, because the blood has been sprinkled according to the wish of our God."

"It has been on the next door, too," we reply, "but they are unhappy because all are uncertain of safety."

"Ah," responds the firstborn, "but we have more than the sprinkled blood; we have the certain Word of God about it. God has said 'When I see the blood I will pass over you.' God rests satisfied with the blood outside, and we rest satisfied with His word inside."

The sprinkled blood makes us safe. The spoken word makes us sure. Could anything make us more safe than the sprinkled blood, or more sure than His spoken word?

Let me ask you a question. Which of those two houses think you was safer? Do you say No. 2, where all were so happy? Then you are wrong. Both are safe alike. Their safety depends on what God thinks about the blood outside, not on their feelings inside.

If you would be sure, don't listen to the unstable testimony of inward emotions, but to the infallible witness of the Word of God. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life."

Let me give you a simple illustration from everyday life. A certain farmer in the country, not having sufficient grass for his cattle, applies for a nice piece of pasture-land which he hears is to be rented near his house. For some time he gets no answer from the landlord. One day a neighbor comes in and says, "I feel quite sure you will get that field. Don't you recollect how last Christmas he sent you a special present, and that he gave you a kind nod of recognition the other day when he drove past?" With such words, the farmer's mind is filled with hope.

Next day another neighbor meets him, and in the course of conversation, he says, "I'm afraid you stand no chance whatever of getting that field. Mr. So-and-so has applied for it, and you must be aware what a favorite he is with the owner." And the poor farmer's bright hopes are dashed to the ground and burst like soap bubbles. One day he is hoping, the next day full of perplexing doubts.

Presently the postman calls, and the farmer's heart beats fast as he breaks the seal of the letter; he sees by the handwriting that it is from the owner. See his countenance change from anxious suspense to

undisguised joy as he reads and re-reads that letter. "It's a settled thing now," he exclaims to his wife; "no more doubts and fears about it. The owner says the field is mine as long as I require it, on the most easy terms. Others' opinions mean nothing to me now. His word settles it."

Now many a poor soul is in a like condition to the poor troubled farmer-tossed and perplexed by the opinions of men, or the thoughts and feelings of his own treacherous heart. It is only upon receiving the Word of God as the Word of God, that certainty takes the place of doubts. When God speaks there must be certainty, whether He pronounces the damnation of the unbeliever, or the salvation of the believer. "Forever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven" (Ps. 119:89): to the simple-hearted believer His Word settles all. "Hath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?" (Num. 23:19).

"But," you ask, "how may I be sure that I have the right kind of faith?" There can be but one answer to that question: Have you confidence in the right person?-in the blessed Son of God? It is not a question of the amount of your faith but the trustworthiness of the person you repose your confidence in. One man takes hold of Christ, as it were, with a drowning man's grip; another but touches the hem of His garment, but the sinner who does the former is not a bit safer than the one who does the latter. They have both made the same discovery, that while all of self is totally untrustworthy, they may safely confide in Christ, calmly rely on His Word, and confidently rest in the eternal efficacy of His finished work. That is what is meant by believing on Him. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life" (Jn. 6:47).

Make sure of it, then, that your confidence is not in your good works, your religious observances, your pious feeling when under religious influences, your moral training from childhood, and the like. You may have the strongest faith in any or all of these, and perish everlastingly. Don't deceive yourself by any "fair show in the flesh." The feeblest faith in Christ eternally saves, while the strongest faith in anything beside is but the offspring of a deceived heart-the leafy twigs of your enemy's arranging over the pit of eternal perdition.

God, in the gospel, simply introduces to you the Lord Jesus Christ, and says, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. You may," He says, "with all confidence trust His heart though you cannot with impunity trust your own."

"I do really believe on Him," said a sad looking soul to me one day, "but, when asked if I am saved, I don't like to say Yes, for fear I should be telling a lie." This young woman was a butcher's daughter, in a small town in the midlands. It happened to be market-day, and her father had not then returned from market.

"Now suppose when your father comes home you ask him how many sheep he bought today, and he answers. 'Ten.' After a while a man comes to the shop and says, 'How many sheep did your father buy today?' and you reply, 'I don't like to say, for fear I should be telling a lie.' "

"But," said the mother (who was standing by at the time), with righteous indignation, "that would be making your father a liar."

Don't you see that this well-meaning young woman was virtually making Christ a liar, saying, "I do believe on the Son of God, but I don't like to say I am saved lest I should be telling a lie," when Christ Himself has said, "He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life"? (Jn. 6:47).

"But," says another, "How may I be sure that I really do believe? I have tried often to believe, and looked within to see if I had got it, but the more I look at my faith, the less I seem to have." You are looking in the wrong direction to find that out, and your trying to believe plainly shows that you are on the wrong track.

Let me give you another illustration to explain. You are sitting at your fireside one evening, when a man comes in and tells you that the station-master has been killed that night at the railway. Now it happens that this man has long borne the character in the place for being a very dishonest man, and the most daring and notorious liar in the neighborhood.

"Do you believe, or even try to believe that man?"

"Of course not," you exclaim.

"Why?"

"Oh, I know him too well for that."

"But tell me how you know that you don't believe him? Is it by looking within at your faith or feelings?"

"No," you reply, "I think of the man that brings me the message."

Soon, a neighbor drops in and says, "The station-master has been run over by a train tonight, and killed on the spot." After he has left I hear you cautiously say, "Well, I partly believe it now for, to my recollection this man only once in his life deceived me, though I have known him from boyhood."

Again I ask, "Is it by looking at your faith this time that you know you partly believe it?"

"No," you repeat: "I am thinking of the character of my informant."

Well, this man has scarcely left your room before a third person enters and brings you the same sad news as the first. But this time you say, "Now, John, since you tell me, I believe it."

Again, I press my question, "How do you know that you so confidently believe your friend John?"

"Because of who and what John is," you reply. "He never has deceived me, and I don't think he ever will."

Well, then, just in the same way I know that I believe the gospel-because of the One who brings me the news. "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which He hath testified of His Son: He that believeth not God hath made Him a liar: because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son" (1 John 5:9-10). "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness" (Rom. 4:3).

An anxious soul once said to a servant of Christ, "Oh, sir, I can't believe!" to which the preacher wisely and quietly replied, "Indeed who is it that you can't believe?" This broke the spell. He had been looking at faith as an indescribable something that he must feel within himself in order to be sure that he was all right for heaven; whereas faith looks outside to a living Person and His finished work, and quietly listens to the testimony of a faithful God about both.

It is the outside look that brings the inside peace. When a man turns his face towards the sun, his own shadow is behind him. You cannot look at self and a glorified Christ in heaven at the same moment.

Thus we have seen that the blessed Person of God's Son wins my confidence-His finished work makes me eternally safe. God's Word about those who believe on Him makes me unalterably sure: I find in Christ and His work the way of salvation, and in the Word of God the knowledge of salvation.

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