

Assurance of Eternal Life

by William MacDonald

The Word of God is the primary means of assurance for believers, providing a sure and dependable foundation for their faith.

Scripture: Psalm 119:105, John 6:47, John 10:28, Romans 8:16, Ephesians 2:8-9, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Hebrews 4:12, 1 Peter 1:23, 1 John 3:14, 1 John 5:13

Topics: "Assurance of Salvation", "The Word of God"

Description

William MacDonald emphasizes that the assurance of eternal life is rooted in the Word of God rather than fluctuating feelings. He highlights that the Bible was written to affirm believers' confidence in their salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. MacDonald cites historical figures like Martin Luther and H. A. Ironside to illustrate that true assurance comes from the Scriptures, which provide a steadfast foundation for faith. He also notes that while other signs of assurance exist, the primary source remains the Word of God, which is the most reliable means of knowing one's salvation. Ultimately, it is through the Scriptures that the Spirit confirms our identity as children of God.

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)

Some of us will be eternally thankful to God for this verse because it taught us that assurance of salvation comes first and foremost through the Word of God and not through feelings. The Bible was written, among other reasons, so that those who believe on the Name of the Son of God can know that they have eternal life.

We can be thankful that assurance does not come through feelings, because they fluctuate with every passing day. “God does not ask the soul to say, ‘Thank God I feel so good,’ but turns the eye another way, to Jesus and His Word.” When someone once asked Martin Luther, “Do you feel that your sins have been forgiven?” he replied, “No, but I’m as sure of it as that there’s a God in heaven. For feelings come and feelings go/ And feelings are deceiving/ My warrant is the Word of God/ Naught else is worth believing.” C. I. Scofield reminds us that “justification takes place in the mind of God and not in the nervous system of the believer.” H. A. Ironside used to say, “I don’t know I am saved because I feel happy, but I feel happy because I know I am saved.” And he knew he was saved by the written Word of God.

When we read that the Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are the sons of God (Rom. 8:16), we must remember that the Spirit witnesses to us primarily through the Scriptures. We read John 6:47, for instance, "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." We know that we have trusted in Christ for our eternal salvation; He is our only hope for heaven. The Spirit of God therefore witnesses to us through this verse that we are sons of God.

Of course, there are other means of assurance. We know we are saved because we love the brethren; because we hate sin and practice righteousness; because we love the Word of God; and because we have the instinct of prayer. But the first and fundamental means of assurance is the surest, most dependable thing in the universe, the Word of God. George Cutting said it well in his memorable tract Safety, Certainty and Enjoyment: "It's the blood that makes us safe; it's the Word that makes us sure."

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