

Why Do You Doubt?

By Pastor John Asquith

The preacher has finished his message. The altar call has been given. The piano plays softly while someone from the pulpit pleads with sinners to receive Jesus Christ. Suddenly that feeling comes again, or is it just a nagging doubt? You begin to wonder if you're really saved.

Does that sound familiar? Chances are it does. Most preachers report an astounding percentage of people who consistently are troubled about their salvation. I have seen a church congregation polled on this very subject. Over two thirds of those in attendance raised their hands that they were plagued with recurring doubts about their salvation.

This little pamphlet was designed to help you personally examine yourself. If you really have salvation this pamphlet will help you to sort through the conflicting attacks that bombard you and steal your peace. If for some reason, you are still lost and have been deceived all of this time, hopefully, this pamphlet will help.

There are a number of reasons listed in the word of God for someone having trouble with assurance of salvation. We shall endeavor to look at these, but first I want to make a couple of observations. We have all heard the stories about the virtues of colonial and frontier Americans. These were people who, even if lost, had a dread and respect for God and the things of God. Most of them were aware of eternal damnation, the law of God, and upcoming judgment.

When the Word of God was preached to such people they trembled. They understood the stakes. What many of them did not possess was the inward faith and assurance given by God that Jesus was the very Christ. When they did receive that assurance through personal repentance they were born again. At that moment, the burden and guilt of sin was lifted.

Society has changed. People have been brainwashed into downplaying the thought of God and trusting the sciences instead. Probably the only vestiges of old-fashioned reverence for God left are the members of Bible believing churches. We should not be expecting the man off the street to tremble, he is like Lot's sons-in-law, and the preacher of righteousness seems as one that mocks. The only people left with good enough sense to tremble are those who Bible believing pastors have trained in the ways of God.

With this in mind, let us examine why doubt is so prevalent in our churches. Evangelists who still preach with an old-fashioned, hard-hitting call for **"...repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ"**, are reporting that only about half of the people in Fundamental Baptist churches are really saved. When churches have been given over to a repentanceless gospel manifesting itself in large numbers, the proportion of lost church members goes up dramatically. Whereas Charismatics use phony gifts of the Spirit to hoodwink sincere and unsuspecting church members into discounting the immorality and fraud all too often hidden in their ministries, fundamentalists hide behind phony and inflated soul-winning statistics.

The results have begun showing up in the pews. People who were once enticed to pray a repentanceless prayer and given a false assurance of salvation now find themselves troubled. Just as a Jehovah Witness will outwardly transform in dress and habit, just as a Mormon will forsake

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alcohol and tobacco, and just as a Muslim will alter his world view, a small percentage of these quasi-believers will make great outward changes and mistake those changes for evidence of saving grace. When the Spirit of God begins to deal with them about their condition, they have been taught to call him the devil.

Increasingly, churches are teaching the culture of fundamental Christianity without the Spirit of God. Increasingly, pastors are being forced to invent baseless and unscriptural explanations to account for the rampant doubt that prevails in their churches and the wholesale unfaithfulness of their supposed converts. Increasingly, church members are afflicted with constant doubts and fears that no person in their church seems able to assuage.

Are you a victim of this watered down and ineffective gospel? Imagine a large population or city awaiting an expected epidemic. Now imagine that there is a perfect and effective immunization available. What would be the effect if overzealous medical workers seeking to provide inflated numbers for their own aggrandizement, inoculated thousands of people with a worthless vaccine? The result would be worse than just leaving them defenseless against the upcoming plague. Not only would these people be unmindful of their inevitable doom, but also, they would now resist the most earnest entreaties of those faithful workers who could and would save them. Those most likely to die are those who were most confident.

Modern fundamentalism has built large fiefdoms, published endless books and has largely muscled its way into the consciousness of America as God's voice. Their most abiding fruit in any community wherein they have worked is to create almost perfect reprobates. For every hundred or so hapless converts they profess, they manage to culturally train one or two. The rest wander about with a false assurance that they have been "saved". They will resist any and all of God's true workers.

It was not liberals or communists who wrought this result. It was not fabled Jesuits seeking to undermine the reformation. It was not the public education system that so destroyed these communities. It was fundamentalism's new face. It was properly dressed, super separated, King James Bible toting and utterly deceived disciples of an anemic gospel who perfectly convinced thousands upon thousands that they had no need of repentance.

This tract cannot help those wandering outside of the local church. The work of hell is probably perfect in their lives. They will probably never again respond to the call of God through the gospel. This tract is designed for church members who may have been culturally trained to be fundamental Christians. If you are someone who now believes the Bible to be true and you also know that there is a judgment and your life has been greatly transformed through the teachings of the Bible, but your assurance of salvation falls apart from time to time, this is written for you.

True saving faith converts an unrighteous person into a righteous person through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross. The Lord says that they **"...shall never thirst again"**. (John 4:14b). When God has made them righteous they will have an inward witness from God that they are saved. **"And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever"**. (Isaiah 32:17). **"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."** (Romans 8:16).

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The question to be settled in this tract is simple: Are you suffering from doubt as a saved person or are you suffering from doubt because you have never been saved? We will examine four scriptural reasons for doubt. Examine yourself. If you doubt or are unsettled it is because you fit into one of these four categories. **Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?** (II Corinthians 13:5).

REASON ONE

“O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?” (Galatians 3:1).

The first reason that should be considered for church members being troubled during an altar call is simple. Whoever preached to them, preached a false gospel. That happened in Galatia. Many blood washed, born again saints of God found themselves wondering if they were truly saved. Men who purported to be heaven sent told the Galatians that because they were not circumcised God would not save them. It took the Apostle Paul reminding them of how they received the Spirit and chiding them for foolishness to bring them back to their senses and restore peace.

Ask yourself, when the preacher preached, did he inject anything of works into the gospel? The Bible standard for salvation is saving faith given to a repentant sinner, without any works of the law. Did the preacher who caused you to doubt in any way subtract from the simplicity in Christ? If he did, it's no wonder you find yourself confused and worried. God is not interested in what you did to get salvation. He is concerned with what he did to bring you salvation. How did you respond?

If this has happened to you, refresh yourself in the Word of God. **“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.”** (Titus 3:5). Find a Bible believing pastor or friend and explain to them what happened. Let them take the Word of God and encourage you in the things of faith. I had a similar thing happen to me in my first week of salvation. It destroyed my joy. Thankfully, my pastor was there with the Word of God to recover me and restore me to fellowship with Christ.

If you have examined yourself and the preaching that caused you to tremble; if you are sure that the preacher who preached spoke the truth; and yet you still have lingering doubts, then look at the next point.

REASON TWO

“Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof”. (Romans 6:12).

Many Christians have committed sins after their salvation that caused them to question their salvation. This trick of the devil is really quite similar to the first deception. It triggers off what you have done. Just as it was for the people in Galatia, these people are not sitting and listening to the

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true gospel and trying to remember if they ever received it scripturally. The Galatians clearly remembered when Jesus Christ was manifested to them and they remembered receiving the Spirit. What they wondered was whether that was good enough. Here again people who remember the day of their salvation now find cause to doubt its validity. They have been confused into thinking that a sin they have committed was so great that no saved person could have done it. Or they might be looking at a particularly vile period in their life and wondering if someone saved could have ever stooped so low.

Unfortunately, the answer is yes. Saved people have committed gross fornication, I Corinthians 5:1. They have denied Jesus Christ, Matthew 26:69-75. The Apostle Paul warned of fornicators, idolaters, covetous, drunkards, and extortioners in the church, I Corinthians 5:10. All of these are disgusting sins, far beneath the dignity of any man. Yet they are all too often practiced by carnal Christians.

If this describes you, first let me say how sorry I am that you have so shamed yourself and God. I am not condemning you or trying to heap shame upon you, I just know from experience that the most miserable person on earth is a carnal Christian. Next, let me welcome you back into fellowship with Christ. God has made marvelous provision for you to restore you to perfect fellowship. **“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”** (1 John 1:9).

If you are truly saved but you haven't been living right, use this very moment to confess your sins. Notice that it does not tell you to say how sorry you are for them. It can be assumed that if you're willing to confess them, you have reached a point where you're sorry for them. Confess what you've been doing. Plainly tell the Lord each of your transgressions. Now look at the verse. You can be sure no matter how rotten and faithless you have been, God is faithful and just to forgive your sins and then to go a step further and to cleanse you from all unrighteousness.

Brother or sister, whoever you are, God has restored you. Thank God for the preaching that restored you to your senses. Now take concrete steps to purge your life of all the evil habits and influences that caused you to so forsake Christ. Get with the church or pastor that gave you this pamphlet and ask for their prayer to keep you out of the temptations and sin that so beset you.

REASON THREE

“But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.” (2 Peter 1:9)

This point is often confused with doubt. It does not speak of doubt it speaks of forgetting. It is entirely possible for a truly born again saved person to live so far beneath God's standards as outlined in 2 Peter 1:5-9 that he completely forgets about his standing with God. A classic example of this would be a Christian standing around at a work site. Day after day, he might stand and listen to the filthy jesting and lewd jokes that are bantered about. It may be that due to circumstances, he has no choice but to be there while such conversation is carried on.

While such a Christian strives to keep his relationship with God fresh and right, he will find

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strength to stand aloof. If he should neglect to read his Bible and to work at being virtuous, he will quickly find himself drawn into his crowd's way of thinking. Sooner or later, the day will come when he will openly laugh at the filth or even contribute a funny line or two. His salvation has become the farthest thing from his mind. If someone in the crowd should turn to him and mock him for his hypocrisy, he will quickly remember and be ashamed.

When Peter denied the Lord, it is not because he doubted whether the Lord had warned him. He became so wrapped up in saving his own hide that he threw out all vestiges of virtue. He just did not think about it. It completely left his mind. He forgot. When the cock finally sounded and the Lord looked at him he did not sit down and wonder. He instantly remembered.

Many times I have seen carnal backslidden Christians sit under the sound of the gospel. As the Spirit of God began to reprove the crowd I have seen these same people melt with the shame of their forgetfulness and worldly living. They did not sit around wondering if they had ever been saved. True saving faith does not doubt. Faith is the opposite of doubt.

I spent three years as a phony Christian. I finally became convinced that there was a salvation that never thirsted and never doubted. ***“He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself.”*** (1 John 5:10a). By yourself, you could never be free from doubt. Saving faith is a miracle given to repentant sinners. ***“By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.”*** (Ephesians 2:8).

If you are someone who is all too often consumed with doubt, nothing could be a greater tragedy than to have someone convince you that it did not matter. The abundant testimony of scripture is that saving faith brings its own assurance. The doubt that you are experiencing is not from the devil. It is from God.

That brings us to our last point.

REASON FOUR

“Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:” (John 10:24-27).

My friend, you may have been told many times that Jesus is the Christ. In fact, if you truly believed that you would be saved. **“Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God:...”** (1 John 5:1a). However, I want to make you stop and think about your belief.

We know that a man must believe in his heart, not his head. **“For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness;...”** (Romans 10:10a). We also know that **“The heart is deceitful above all things, and is desperately wicked: who can know it? I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give unto every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.”** (Jeremiah 17:9,10). You can say all you want that you truly believe in your heart. Your heart is a liar. God searches your heart. Could it be that even now as you read this the Spirit of God

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is searching your heart and is grieved with your unbelief.

You have searched out each of the other reasons for doubting and now you have come to this. Could it be that you are lost? In the law, Moses warned the people that the LORD would raise up another Prophet from among the Jews. They were commanded to believe him. (Deuteronomy 18:18,19). If you break that law in one point, you are guilty of all. (James 2:10).

Could it be that even though you have heard the word of faith many times, you are still judged by God to be in unbelief? If so, that would certainly explain why every time the Word of God begins to flow, and the Spirit of God begins to search hearts, your assurance of salvation falls apart. That's the Spirit of God's job. **“And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me.”** (John 16:8,9)

My friend, if the Word of God is being preached, and you are sure that despite confessing your sins and saying the sinner's prayer all over again, you are still under conviction, give glory to God. He has found you out. You sit in the midst of the assembly, maybe you even have some prominence in it, yet you have never repented. True repentance is never praying to make sure. A person looking for mercy from a judge never says, “if I am guilty, please, show me mercy.” Such a person need not look to that judge for any mercy. It will only anger the judge more that a guilty person who cannot even clearly state whether or not he needs mercy, asks for it. The thief on the cross was very clear about his guilt and the justice of his condemnation. He received what the crowd hanging around Jesus Christ, listening diligently to him speak, did not receive. He received that miracle of the personal revelation from Jesus Christ that he was forgiven, that he would be in his kingdom. He now knew in his heart that Jesus was the Christ.

My friend, when did God work that miracle of saving faith in you? When did the Spirit of God get the victory over your heart and personally convict you of sin? You say you're still not sure? Why not quit sincerely praying the sinner's prayer over and over again? Why not obey that tugging in your heart that clearly agrees with every verse in the Word of God? “Earnestly, tenderly Jesus is calling, calling, oh sinner, come home.” Even now God is grieved with your unbelief and every other dirty sin that burdens your conscience and his. It burdens his conscience because he loves you and your sins separate you from him. What would Jesus do if a person, as mixed up as you are, fell at his feet and told him what a hypocrite you've been, and how many times you quenched the conviction that you were lost? Why not fall at his feet and find out? God the Father sent the Comforter out to find you. **“All that the Father giveth me shall come to me: and him that cometh to me I shall in no wise cast out.”** (John 6:37)

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an eternally burning lake of fire. The corruption of the Word of God and the corruption of the doctrine of salvation is destroying fundamentalist churches throughout America. I have issued this challenge to those who advocate a repentanceless salvation: “You tell me why there is such a massive falling away in our fundamentalists churches in America”. I am still waiting for an answer from them. I know the answer. We have corrupted the seed of the Word of God and the scriptural methods for sowing the seed of the Word of God into the hearts of unbelievers. Brother John Asquith deals very effectively with both heresies in his two books and through his web site promoting the Pure Cambridge Text of the King James Bible. We have included links to his web sites and his email address below:

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