

Facing the Future on Firm Footing

(Part 2)

“Check the Evidence”

Various scriptures

Introduction: God’s plan of salvation is very simple, but the Bible tells us in Matthew 7:13-14 – Jesus said, “...*Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.* I wonder, is there a sadder message in the whole Bible than this one?

Sometimes we observe people, and wonder, are they going to get to heaven despite the way they act? Now I couldn’t answer that question nor can you. You and I do not truly know if a person is saved or not, but sometimes we can get a pretty good idea. However, you and I see only the outward appearance of the person while God alone sees the inward appearance., So, only God knows for sure. What we do know is that the Bible teaches us very clearly that after a person has received salvation through Jesus that a change should take place in their lives. There should be visible evidence of their salvation! As the Apostle Paul told us in II Corinthians 5:17. So, how can I know salvation has taken place in me? Well, one way to be sure is to “check the evidence!” True salvation results in a growing relationship in which we become more and more conscious of God’s words and ways by obedience to Him through the prompting of the Holy Spirit who now lives in us.

Today, I want to give us six evidences to check to reassure us our salvation is real and our relationship between God and us is on track as it should be.

I. A new love for God’s Word: (1 Pe. 2:2)

One of the first evidences of true salvation is the desire we have for the Word of God.

A. We should crave the Word –

- 1. Peter wanted his readers to be as eager for the nourishment of the Word as babies are for milk.**
- 2. Peter wanted his readers to grow** in their relationship with God through a hungering for the “pure” word of God!
 - a. This is actually a command we are commanded to crave the word. (because...)
 - b. Men typically crave many other things in the world – None of those will bring the satisfaction, fulfillment or right relationship between us and the Lord.
 - c. This is the motivation behind Peter’s command that we may grow by it! (Col 3:16-17) *As believers living in this world, we need to feed on wholesome spiritual food that produces spiritual growth.*

II. A new awareness of right and wrong: (Heb. 5:13-14)

A. We have to have the right attitude toward spiritual growth –

1. Some want to stay babies – can you imagine if we all took that attitude?
2. The writer of Hebrews is admonishing his readers for being spiritually sluggish.

B. We all know the difference between right and wrong (*but the truly saved have a different attitude and approach to the matter*).

1. We know there are words, actions, thoughts, and attitudes which are displeasing to the Lord when we say, have or do them.

2. Spiritual maturity says – I want to address those things when they are a part of my life so I can rid myself of them and live pleasing before the Lord.
3. The way I do that is to search the scriptures that address those offenses and use them to combat those things that violate God’s word and ways in my life.

III. A new desire to be like Christ: (Rom.8:29)

It is God’s will and desire for us to be imitators of Christ. One who is truly saved, desires to be more like Jesus every day.

A. We should be imitators of God because of who we are - (Eph. 5:1)

1. *Each Christian should be an imitator of God because he is God's child.*
2. *As a child imitates his parents, so ought a believer to imitate God (cf. Matt 5:48; Luke 6:36).*

There should be no doubt as to who our Father is because the resemblance should be unmistakable!

B. We should desire to be imitators of God so others will know whose we are – When we are truly saved, one of the greatest evidences is, we want to look like, act like and talk like Jesus more and more every day.

IV. A new social pressure from those convicted by your life

change: (1 Pe. 4:3-5) Not everyone is going to be happy you are saved and growing in spiritual maturity...

A. Who we used to be isn’t who we are now.

B. What I used to do isn’t what I do now.

C. Who I used to hang around with may not accept the change.

The closer you get to Jesus, the more like Jesus you are going to become in this world, the more this world is going to be uneasy around you, and is going to be disturbed by you, and the more the devil is going to try to hinder you!

V. A new desire to proclaim Christ to others: (Col. 1:28-29)

A. A faithful follower of Christ will preach Christ – did you know you can preach Christ without being obnoxious and beating people over the head with a Bible?

1. **Jesus said,** “*If you follow me, I make you fishers of men*” (*so if we’re not fishing, we’re not following!*) (Mt. 4:19; Mk. 1:17)
2. **Over and over, we are told** to proclaim Christ to the whole world! (Matt 28:16-20 ; Mark 16:15-18 ; Luke 24:46-49 ; John 20:21-23 ; Acts 1:8)

B. A faithful follower of Christ wants to see their family and friends come into a personal relationship with Christ, so they won’t perish.

The best way to share your faith with others is share how you became a Christian. (Share your testimony)

- a. What your life was like before Christ
- b. How you committed your life to faith in Christ.
- c. What Christ has done in your life since you received Him as your Lord and Savior.

VI. A new love for other Christians: (1 Jn. 3:14)

Love cannot coexist with hatred. If your heart is full of hate – then love cannot live there. If your heart is full of love – hatred cannot live there. (Jn. 13:35)