

BIBLE STUDY NOTES
All Nations Bible Study Groups, Term 2, 2020

Hebrew 6:13-20; John 6:35-40; Romans 8:15-17
How can I know that I will make it to heaven?

For week starting 15 June 2020

Introduction

This past Sunday, we started a new sermon series. In this series, we'll be looking at big questions that many Christians face. We began the series by thinking about the question of assurance. Assurance just means being sure that I am saved. It means being convinced that I really am a Christian, and I really will make it to heaven. On Sunday, we saw that the foundation of our assurance rests not in ourselves, but in the work of God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Today, we will try to think about the issue of assurance in more detail and make some application to our own lives.

To get you thinking...

- Do you think Christians *can* be confident that they will definitely make it to heaven? Do you think that Christians *should* be confident that they are saved? Why or why not?
 - Do you think that most Christians *are* confident of their salvation? Discuss.
 - What are some common reasons Christians might sometimes struggle with assurance? Make a list.

Hebrews 6:13-20

Tonight, we'll look at three separate passages that show us different aspects of assurance.

First, we will read Hebrews 6. In this chapter, the author is focused on the issue of assurance. He begins by giving his readers a strong warning in vv1-8. Then, he shifts to an even stronger encouragement in vv9-20. Tonight, we'll focus in on vv13-20.

Read Hebrews 6:13-20

- V16 introduces the idea of swearing an oath. Can you think of times when we might take an oath? Give some examples.
 - What is the point of an oath? Why do people take an oath?

- According to v18, God Himself has given us an oath. Why has God taken an oath according to this verse?

- Look at vv13-14. What is the content of God’s promise and oath in these two verses?
 - What do you remember from the story of Abraham? Briefly summarize God’s promises to Abraham. (For help, read Genesis 22:15-18.)

 - How do God’s promises to Abraham relate to us as Christians? (For help, read Galatians 3:7-9.)

- What are some of God’s other promises in the Bible? Make a list.
 - How might knowing God’s promises help us to grow in assurance?

 - What are some practical ways we can remind ourselves or other Christians of God’s promises on a regular basis? List as many ways as you can think of.

John 6:35-40

John 6 is Jesus’ famous teaching on the “bread of life.” Verse 35-40 contain some of the strongest words of assurance in all of Scripture.

Read John 6:35-40

- How many times do you see the words “whoever” or “everyone” in these verses? Count them.
 - Why do you think Jesus uses these two words so often here? What point is he making?

- Based on these verses, can anyone who truly believes in Jesus be eternally lost (go to hell)? Discuss.
 - How does understanding this truth help us as we think about assurance?

- Does this mean that we are free to live however we want to? Explain.
- Think about God's promises in Hebrews 6 and John 6. How can a holy God so strongly promise to forgive and save sinners like us?

Romans 8:15-17

Romans 8 is one of the best loved chapters in all of the Bible. In the first half of this chapter, Paul has been talking about life in the Spirit. Now, in vv15-17, he focuses on the Spirit's role in giving us assurance.

Read Romans 8:15-17

- How does the Holy Spirit help grow our assurance, according to vv15-16?
 - V15 suggests that the Spirit witnesses to us by helping us to cry, "Abba! Father!" What do you think it means to cry this? When or how might we cry this? Discuss.
- According to the first half of v17, what is true of all Christians?
 - If we are heirs, what is our inheritance?
- Ephesians 1:13-14 helps to explain this idea a little more. This passage says, "In Christ you also, when you heard the word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation, and when believed in him, you were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the down payment of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it."
 - In our normal lives, what is a down payment? When might you give a down payment?
 - According to Ephesians 1, what down payment has God given to believers?
 - According to these verses, when does God give this down payment to Christians?
 - Both Romans 8 and Ephesians 1 speak about our heavenly inheritance. Based on Ephesians 1, how can we have assurance that this inheritance is really ours? How can we be sure that we will really make it to heaven?

- Today, we've seen that God's promises, Christ's work, and the Spirit's witness all combine to grow our assurance. Can you think of some practical ways that we can focus on God and His work instead of focusing mainly on ourselves? Discuss.

Case Studies

- Rebekah goes to your church and actively serves on the Sunday morning roster. But Rebekah really struggles with assurance. She is worried that her faith in Christ is too weak. Some days, Rebekah feels overwhelmed by the guilt and shame of her sin. Sometimes, she lies awake at night wondering, "How can someone like me really be a Christian?" Based on what we've learned today, how might you help Rebekah?

- Mohammad is a Muslim. He believes that in order to make it to paradise, he needs to pray regularly, give money to the poor, and fast during Ramadan. Mohammad believes that if he does more good things than bad things in his life, he will probably make it to paradise. Mohammad tries hard to be a good Muslim, but he is never quite sure if he has really done enough. How could you use the Christian teaching on assurance to witness to Mohammad?

- Is there anything you want to discuss or ask based on today's study?

Prayer

Spend some time praying together, especially thanking God for the gift of His presence now and the promise of the fullness of His presence in the new creation.