

Do You Feel Saved?

Are you saved? How do you know you are saved? "I know I am saved because I feel it in my heart," many often say. But are the feelings of your heart the proper standard to determine your salvation? We do not use this standard in other matters. No one says of his bank statement, "I know it is right because I feel it in my heart," while they ignore to properly add and subtract from their balance. No carpenter says, "I know the board is 10 feet long because I feel it in my heart" — he checks the board with the proper standard, the measuring tape! But, when it comes to a matter far more important than bank balances and board lengths — salvation — many are willing to trust their eternal welfare to their feelings.

Can you trust the feelings of your heart to tell you whether or not you are saved? The Bible says "No!" "He who trusts in his own heart is a fool" (Prov. 28:26), for "the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps" (Jer. 10:23). "There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death" (Prov. 14:12). Feelings are subjective, they change from person to person and even within the same person. Truth is objective, it remains fixed and does not change, regardless of the person or the year.

The way you feel about salvation does not change God's truth concerning it, just as the way you feel about math, does not change the truth of it. Whether or not you are saved is an objective fact, not subject to the whims of how you feel from moment to moment. So how can they know they are saved? The Scripture says, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding" (Prov. 3:5).

You do not have to rely upon your own faulty and deceptive feelings concerning your salvation. The Lord has given "the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation" (2 Tim. 3:15). The knowledge and confidence of salvation can only come from the objective standard of God's Word. God will judge you by His Word, not by how you feel. Jesus proclaimed, "the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:48). What is your salvation based upon? Many people feel in their heart they are saved because they have "simply believed" in Jesus. While salvation certainly requires faith in Jesus, faith alone does not and cannot save according to God's Word. James wrote, "You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only" (Jas. 2:24). Other people have prayed and "asked Jesus to come into their heart" and now they feel they are saved. But nowhere does the Bible teach one must simply pray to Jesus in order to be saved. God's Word teaches to be saved you must: hear the gospel (Rom. 10:17); believe Jesus is the Son of God (Mk. 16:16); repent of your sins (Acts 2:38); confess Jesus (Rom. 10:9; Acts 8:36-38) and be baptized for the remission of your sins (Acts 2:38; Mk. 16:16). Those who obey God's Word do not have to guess whether or not they are saved based upon the feelings of their heart. They know they are saved because their salvation is based on the unchanging Truth of God's Word.

- by Wayne Greeson

The Power of God to Salvation

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation" (Romans 1:16)

When churches try to lure people to their services by means of gimmicks and big promotions, they make a big mistake. Bingo parties, musical entertainment, films, dinners and such like, only cheapen the gospel in the minds of thinking people. A bigger attendance may be the short-term effect, but less respect for God is the long-term effect. If you gain souls by carnal means, then carnal means will be needed to hold them. The gospel of Jesus Christ is the power of GOD unto salvation, and though fewer may respond to it, salvation is only therein.

- by Whit Sasser

Our Job

We are told that one-half of all the people who have ever lived, from the beginning of time unto the present, are living today. Think about this in view of the command, "Preach the gospel

to every creature." If we preach the gospel to every person of our own generation, we are preaching to half of the people who have ever lived!

World population is now about 6 billion people. Most of them will be lost for eternity (Matthew 7:13-14). "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest" (John 4:35). These billions must be reached one-by-one.

- by James E. Cooper

Serving Your Purpose

All of us have had the experience of buying a new gadget, only to find that it doesn't work nearly as well in reality as it did on that TV info-mercial or in that magazine ad. It's a frustrating thing when an item doesn't serve the purpose for which you bought it. Oh well, just one more thing to be added to the pile of things that are destined for the next garage sale!

Have you ever stopped to consider that God may have these same feelings of disappointment over ineffectual "products." Paul wrote: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 2:10) Do you see it? The Father created us to accomplish "good works." Those of us who are His children are supposed to fulfill His plan and accomplish these things in His service.

How disappointed God must be when we don't serve the purpose for which we were created. Can you imagine how He feels when Christians live immorally, dress immodestly, talk indiscreetly, and act indecently? How it must disgust Him when His own children won't worship faithfully, fail to study regularly, seldom engage in effective prayer, almost never share the gospel with a lost soul, and neglect to show love and concern for their brothers and sisters in Christ. He bought us with the precious blood of His Son, but we don't do what we're supposed to do.

Just as we finally give up on useless products and throw them away or put them in the garage sale pile, God will ultimately give up on those who won't serve Him faithfully. Jesus said: "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away . . . he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned." (John 15:2,6)

Christian, are you serving the purpose for which you were created? Think!

- by Greg Gwin