

ABC of Life Assurance

by Graham Jones - The Church at Gun Hill

People pay huge sums of money for assurance. Cars, houses, valuables and lives are some of the things we insure. What peace of mind people obtain when they know that, if a loss or tragedy occurs, there will at least be some restitution or provision made for dependants. Security is something we all need.

Assurance of Salvation

However, in the most important area of all - that of eternal life - it is chiefly the case that most people have no assurance whatsoever. This present life is brief and transitory; eternal life is the life of the ages lived in the joy of God's presence. Some would even teach that it is impossible, in this life, to have an assurance of eternal life. This was certainly not the experience of John Wesley (founder of the Methodist Church).

On 24th May 1738, he wrote in his diary:

"In the evening I went unwillingly to a Society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's preface to the epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for my salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death."

Having an assurance of salvation from sin and possession now of eternal life is certainly a Biblical promise. John's Gospel points out that "**these (signs) are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you might have life through His Name.**" (John chapter 20 v 31)

The emphasis here is on possessing life NOW. This promise is repeated, but this time to believers, in **1 John Chapter 5 v 13:**

"These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that you may know that you have eternal life..."

Basis of Assurance

Now there must, of necessity, be a sound basis for this assurance. Trying to do one's best in life, good works and so on are not sufficient. We could never have the confidence that we have done enough or lived good enough lives. That is why the Word of God quite clearly teaches that trying to earn eternal life by good works is futile, or worse, does not glorify God. But God has provided a way of salvation. He has made a perfect provision for us in the death of Jesus Christ. He, the perfect, sinless One, died for our sins. That sacrifice has been accepted by God as the perfect atonement and this He demonstrated to us by raising Jesus from the dead.

In **Romans Ch.10 v 9**, the way of salvation is revealed to us:

"that if you shall confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved."

Salvation from sin and life eternal are God's free gift for you to accept in faith, because He loves you.

"For by grace are you saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works lest any man should boast." (Ephesians 2 vv 8,9)

God gave His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, so that "**whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.**" (John 3 v 16).

We can be sure that the work God has done for us in Jesus Christ is perfect and acceptable to Him. To be sure, God gives us the witness in our own lives as we respond to Him. We actually receive that new life which is eternal. We know our sins and the rule of sin have gone. Lives are transformed by the mighty working of God's power in us.

"Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation; old things are passed away; behold all things are become new." (2 Corinthians 5 v 17).

Constant Assurance

If we are built upon the solid foundation of what God has done in Christ Jesus, there can be no wavering in our lives. Nothing can rob us of that assurance of eternal life. What love, what joy, what peace floods our lives as a result. Problems there may be many, but nothing, absolutely nothing can shake us.

"Being justified by faith we have peace with God." (Romans 8 v 1)

Paul lists all sorts of trials which might come our way in **Romans 8 vv 35 - 39**. None of these, he says, shall be able to separate us from the love of Christ; nothing in the present, nor even things to come. You may not know the future but you can be certain that this assurance will last. No wonder the hymnist could say: **"Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine."** Can you?