Answers

*for Those Who Grew up in Conservative, Evangelical Christian Homes Who Are Struggling to Find Assurance of Salvation*.

*by* Roy Daniel

I know a person who grew up in a religious, evangelical home. He read his Bible and longed to know for sure that he was saved. He prayed to accept Christ often, but nothing happened. He went out in meetings and still nothing happened. He was desperate. He could not understand how God could mock him. Why, when he prayed and prayed, and tried and tried, did he still not know? He later started to give up and went into sin. He thought, “What is the use of seeking God if you never find him?” He went into deep sin and said terrible things, like that he wished people would land up in hell. He was totally and utterly on the broad way that leadeth to destruction. So many people struggle with knowing whether they are saved. Many seek and can't find faith. Are you like this? Please, I beg you, don't give up! I know exactly what you are experiencing!

**This booklet is specifically for people who seek God and yet do not know whether they are saved:**

1) It is not specifically for ungodly people who grew up in ungodly homes and hate God, such as those university students in the USA who have thrown satanic signs with their fingers when I tried to witness to them late at night. Nor is it for those who are like the drunken students at a university in South Africa who have shouted at me and told me that I am judging them.

2) Neither is it specifically for religious people who are proud and believe that their good works will get them to heaven.

3) Nor is it specifically for liberal evangelicals who believe that to be saved all you have to do is pray a prayer, and then you can carry on with your life, sinning as before (just remember to sing in church a few times, etc).

4) This booklet is specifically for children who grew up in a conservative environment who are often told they have to be born again. They are told from childhood that if they are born again, a miracle will happen in their heart which leads to biblical fruit in their lives. These children are evangelical home kids, and they have their own sets of problems and struggles.

If you are the fourth type of person and are struggling to know that you are saved, this book is written prayerfully for you.

**Is the following your story too?:**

When I was a small boy I prayed every day to be saved, until my grandfather told me that a person should pray once for past sins and then he is a child of God. I prayed once — but nothing happened. A few years went by, and I felt scared of hell. I prayed again to be saved. Nothing happened on the inside. I tried to be good by reading the Bible and witnessing, but every few years I would be scared of hell because of a meeting or through something someone said, and I would pray again to be saved — and still nothing happened. I hoped I was saved, but I never knew. I once felt joy because I told myself I was saved, but it lasted only for a few hours and then was gone. Looking back I saw again that nothing had happened inside. I started to get angry. I gave up and started to do sins behind my parents’ backs. I so wanted to be saved, but I had tried so many times, and nothing happened. God put me in a situation where I needed him, and I cried out to Him that if He took me out of my troubles, I would serve Him. In an hour or two God solved all my problems. I then tried to follow God in my own strength. Still, I doubted day by day, and could only hope my sins were washed away.

My story is the story of this song:

O how well do I remember

How I doubted day by day,

For I did not know for certain

That my sins were washed away.

When the Spirit tried to tell me,

I would not the truth receive;

I endeavored to be happy

And to make myself believe.

When the truth came close and searching,

All my joys would disappear,

For I did not have the witness

Of the Spirit bright and clear.

If at times the coming judgment

Would appear before my mind,

O it made me so uneasy,

For God’s smile I could not find.

When the Lord sent faithful servants

Who would dare to preach the truth,

How my heart did so condemn me

As the Spirit gave reproof!

Satan said at once, “‘Twill ruin

You now to confess your state;

Keep on working and professing,

And you’ll enter Heaven’s gate.”

But at last I tired of living

Such a life of fear and doubt,

For I wanted God to give me

Something I would know about,

So the truth would make me happy

And the light would clearly shine,

And the Spirit gave assurance

That I’m His and He is mine.

So I prayed to God in earnest,

And not caring what folks said.

I was hungry for the blessing;

My pour soul—it must be fed.

Then at last by faith I touched Him

And, like sparks from smitten steel,

Just so quick salvation reached me.

O bless God, I know it’s real!

Then one day I met with Jesus. I was so happy that I went out and testified to people everywhere, and eventually in many countries of the world and to thousands of youth from evangelical homes. I suddenly found out I was not alone in my experience. Thousands of kids in conservative, evangelical homes everywhere were going through what I had been through. They had prayed for salvation many times in their life and nothing happened. They tried for a while, and then prayed again. This had been going on for years. They were so frustrated. They did not tell anyone much, but when you cornered them, they admitted this was their sad Christian life!

**I saw the following results in such people's lives:**

1) Some started to believe that their sad experience is all there is to Christianity, and they become religious people who go to church and that's about it. They are often on false foundations, believing themselves to be saved because they said a prayer, while they are actually still spiritually dead, religious people!

2) One person I know (and many are like him) got so angry after praying again and again without anything happening, that he blamed God and turned to great sin. He wondered how God could say that He would meet with him, when every time he prayed nothing happened. His frustration led to rebellion in his heart and huge sin in his life.

3) Some people experienced amazing feelings or miracles and thought they were saved when they were not. They carried on in sin and thought they were right with God because of the miracles and feelings they received.

4) Some people just carried on struggling on and on and on.

5) Some, like me, met with God and now know for certain that they are saved. There is biblical fruit in their lives which followed their salvation.

**If you are in the situation that you pray and pray for salvation and nothing seems to happen, I want you to know two things:**

1) You are not alone! You are not a special case that can never know whether you are saved or not. Many thousands are or were like you — and Christ died for every one of you.

2) There is hope. There is no one who cannot know for certain that he is gloriously saved. *You* can know!

There is hope no matter how much you feel there is no hope. The three days before I got saved I longed to know that I was saved, but I felt I could not work up faith. I was depressed and thought I would never be saved, because I could never know whether I had faith. On the third day something happened to me that was not a mere emotional experience. I met with Jesus. I want to take you on a journey specially written from my heart for people who just can't seem to know that they are saved. You try and try and nothing happens. Please pray and ask God now to open up the truth of this booklet to you. The truth sets us free. Remember this, the time when you most despair of ever knowing is very often the time when you are about to know.

**You must have hope.**

The Bible talks of hope deferred which makes the heart sick. You feel this when you get hope to be saved and then nothing happens. The more you get such hope, the harder it is to have true hope again. Let's say that after a meeting you want to pray again to get saved. In your heart you have hope that this time God will hear. You pray — and again nothing happens! It is as if something inside you gives up hoping that you will ever know you are a child of God.

It is wonderful to know that the Bible also talks of another hope that maketh not ashamed. Hope that maketh not ashamed is a hope that works. With this wonderful hope, you hope that you can know you are saved, and then you come to the point when you know that you know that you are saved. That is very possible for every person on earth — unless you don't want it! Paul talked of this hope in Hebrews when he speaks of those who have “. . . fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us.”

By God’s grace, in this booklet I am going to put a hope before you that works; a hope to which any sinner can flee to lay hold of and know that he is saved. Do you still have hope? Do you still believe the promises of God concerning salvation? Do you believe you can know that they are a part of your life and that you are a child of God?

I remember a time when I lost hope in an area of my life. I got sick. I felt like I would die. I called an ambulance. Later I went to three doctors and I even went into hospital. They gave me pills for eight months. I eventually became so weak that if I ran thirty yards my body would collapse. I could do nothing. In the USA someone told me of a natural specialist. I did not want to go, because I thought, “What could he tell me?” I eventually was half forced to go, and I sat there as he tested me. After a while he told me exactly what was wrong with me. Two weeks later I was feeling better and on my way to recovery. I cried before that doctor when he explained the answer to my problems. You know why I cried? Because, for the first time after so many doctors and specialists, I had hope.

**Do I hear Sarah laugh?**

Abraham was told by God that he would father thousands. Sarah his wife knew this, but time went by. She got older and older, and nothing happened. Sadly, Sarah lost hope in the promises of God. She did not believe that God could give her a child. Then God came to visit her tent, and He said that she would bear a child. She heard this and laughed. God rebuked her for laughing. Soon, at an old age she was pregnant and had a child called Isaac! Are you like that? Have you lost faith that God’s promises of salvation can become true in your life? Have you prayed many times to be saved and nothing happened? Now you read this book, and you laugh in your heart. You say, “This is just another person trying to help me. It never worked before why will this work now?” If you are like that, then you have Sarah’s laugh. I want to rebuke you like God rebuked Sarah. God said that Sarah would have a child — and she did! God said that you can know you have eternal life — and you can. You have to run for refuge from God’s wrath over your sin and lay hold of the hope set before you!

**Note:** Before you read on it may be good to read *Are You Ready?* by Roy Daniel, which you can find at [www.prayer­club.net](http://www.prayerclub.net) under booklets (Literature). This booklet is good in light of something I learned from Spurgeon: If you want to get someone wholly saved, then you should teach him the whole gospel! That booklet gives you a good understanding of the different aspects of the gospel.

If you know the gospel well, or have read the booklet, then read on. This booklet is for those who have lost hope, because they pray and pray and nothing happens. They try, and yet they just cannot know they are saved.

**Do you want to know how to know?**

I would like to look at a few reasons why various people struggle to be saved or to know that they are saved. Then I will give you clear steps for how to radically deal with the doubt in your life. This is biblical teaching, and it works.

**First, let us examine your motives:**

As a kid, my friend, Ian Waterson, watched a film on hell. He was so scared. He went to his older sister and asked to pray with her to be saved. She asked him, “Do you want to get saved because you want to get saved or just because you are scared of hell?” He answered that it was because he wanted to be saved, but he knew it was only because he was scared of hell. He later said he was not sorry about his sin, but merely scared of hell. Nothing happened in his heart. You see, God commands that we are to repent and believe the gospel. We have to repent (i.e. sorrow over our sins).

I met a man recently who said he used to be sick of his mother rebuking his sin but now he was sick of his sin, and yet every day he went back and did evil, gross sins with his friends. He was starting to hate his life of sin. That is not good enough. You have to be so sick of your life of sin that you are willing to give it up. You can’t just feel a little bad. You have to decide you are willing to give up the life you once loved for Jesus. He was not ready, and so I did not ask to pray with him. I wanted to see him so sick of his old life that he did not just feel a little bad about it, but would do anything to stop sin and have Jesus.

I met a man once who told me he went to church and prayed often to be saved. He longed to know he was saved. I told him a few things. Later I saw him at a convention, and on the last night he rode away early. The next time I saw him was weeks later. A tear rolled down his face when he saw me. He said, “Roy, it was my fault. There was sin in my life that I did not want to confess and give up. I met with God the moment I was willing to give up my sin. I now know that I am saved.” If you are truly sick of sin, you will want to give it up to have Jesus.

We must be careful now. The devil is hugely clever and evil, and he hates you. One of his greatest weapons is to make you wonder if there is some sin that you haven’t confessed or don’t know about yet. He then tells you that you cannot be saved until you know what that sin is. Isn’t that just like a torturer? He gives you a problem which has no answer. God’s Holy Spirit shows you are a sinner and expects you to be willing to give up all sins of the heart and deed that you KNOW are biblically wrong, and any that He may show you! He doesn’t expect things from you that He will never show you. God doesn’t leave you in torment. God wants to bring you to the point that you know you are His child and if you are humble, He is willing to help you every step of the way.

If you want to know what is sin, look at God’s word. You have broken God’s law. You have lied, or stolen, or disobeyed your parents. You have lusted in your heart. A million years of good works could never buy forgiveness for even one sin! You are helpless.

There are many wrong motives for becoming a Christian. One is simply wanting a better life. Another is responding to pressure to become a Christian by your parents or your friends. These are wrong reasons to seek God. You must be so sick of your life of sin that you want to give up the old life, and secondly you must want to have a relationship with Jesus in which He is the final and highest authority in your life.

**Second, do you realize that you are utterly helpless?**

Another thing that keeps people from salvation is that they do not know that they are helpless. One of my friends was in a meeting. For years he had been living his own life in his own way. In this meeting he started to realize he was a sinner and on his way to hell. The preacher brought an illustration. He asked for a volunteer to came to the front and sit down on a chair. The preacher took ropes and tied the man with many loops around his legs and body. Eventually he knotted the rope tight behind his back. The preacher then asked the volunteer to try to set himself free. He tried and tried but could not! The preacher then asked, “How can this man be set free?” The answer was that someone had to come from the outside to set him free. He was helpless to set himself free. Sin has a power in our lives. That power binds us in such a way that we can never set ourselves free. We are utterly helpless. We have but one hope and none other. That hope is Jesus who said, “If the Son therefore shall make you free, you shall be free indeed.” If Jesus comes and sets you free, then you will be free indeed. He comes from the outside and sets you free through His mighty power. You can do nothing to set yourself free from the powerful chains of a life of sin. You are like a man tied on a chair. Jesus is the only Someone who can come from the outside and set you free. You have to ask Him to do that!

**Third, are you looking for unbiblical proof that you are saved or even unbiblical means to be saved that keeps you from simple faith?**

**1) A girl who did not wear a head covering.**

I read the testimony of salvation of a girl I know. She said that many years ago she prayed to be saved and afterwards remembered that she had prayed without a head covering. She felt that because of this, that God could never have saved her. Not so. God does not have to wait for you to wear a head covering to save you. God has saved people when they cried to Him while half drunk, and He set them free in one moment.

I know a girl whom God saved at a party. She suddenly came under conviction and felt the life she was living was stupid. She felt sick of her sinful life and went to a room and called out to God to save her. God did save her there. She had no head covering on when God saved her. We should come willing to be changed, but we should come just as we are.

**2) The child who randomly opened her Bible.**

A girl in America told me she struggled to be saved. I sat with her for hours explaining how the devil can keep you from knowing. One of the things she said was that she knew she could not be saved. She said she had tested God, and the test failed. She had prayed to God, “God, if I am saved, then when I open the Bible randomly please give me a verse that proves I am saved.“ She said she opened her Bible and nothing happened! This is very dangerous.

Unfortunately, even godly people do this. In the early 1800’s many Methodist lay preachers used to pray to God for guidance and then randomly open their Bible to get an answer. To illustrate how dangerous this is, read this true story: A lady was phoned by a suicide case. The person on the phone told her, “I am about to kill myself.” The lady was terrified and did not know what to do. She took her Bible and prayed, “God tell me what to do. I will open my Bible anywhere, and you give me the answer.” The woman opened her Bible, and the first verse she saw was this, “Go and do thou likewise.” Sad that people do that. Please don’t work out complicated tests of whether you are saved or not. The Bible gives very clear and simple tests of salvation which we shall discuss soon.

Besides being dangerous, opening the Bible at random to discover the will of God is actually going against God’s way. He gave us a method in the Bible by which we can know if we are saved. To look for an answer from Him in some other way defies Him, and is wrong. I once heard of a man who prayed for a sign that he was saved. He then went into a bar, and while he was there, a drunk spoke to him and said something to him that he took as a word from God that he was saved. Of course it was a lie from the devil. He did not show the fruits of salvation. The girl who opens her Bible randomly is no different. She is using the Bible in a way it is not intended to be used. It should be read and studied, not used as a crystal ball.

**3) The person who thought meditating on heaven would prepare him till he could be saved (bring him to a point where he could be saved).**

One person I met struggled to know whether he was saved. Eventually in desperation he decided there must be something he had to do before Jesus would save him. This young man told me that he decided he would meditate (think deeply of heaven). He hoped that eventually this would lead him to meeting with Jesus. This is such an evil lie of Satan. If you are a sinner, then you don’t need to do anything but repent and come to Jesus. If you try to prepare yourself in any way, then you are saying that Jesus is not enough and that the cross was not enough. You are thinking that you need to add to God’s work before He can save you. It is so clear from Scripture that we have to have godly sorrow over our sins and come to Jesus. Nothing more. No head covering, no meditation, no good works need to precede salvation. You must come as you are, willing to be changed.

**4) The lady who wondered if she was predestined.**

Many people feel that they cannot know if they are saved, because they do not know if they are one of the predestined. My great aunt struggled with this for years. Let me ask you a few questions about the following verse, Acts 17:30: “And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent.” Tell me, did Jesus say that God commands all men everywhere to repent — except if you don’t know if you are predestined? Nowhere did anyone ever preach the gospel message and then say, “Before any of you believe this message, just make sure you are predestined.” When I got saved I did not think of whether I was predestined or not. I thought of one thing, and that was that I am a filthy sinner. I saw only one hope, and that was Jesus. And I called out to that Jesus, and He saved me according to His promise that “. . . whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” My great aunt who was bound by Satan’s lie that she needed to know whether she was predestined fortunately was helped to resist the lie, and she came to the point where in simplicity she looked to Jesus to save her. He did as He promised He would! She became a deeply godly person and a soul-winner for God. I remember when she died of cancer knowing she was a child of God. 1 Timothy 2:3-4 states, “For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.” *All men* means *all men* including YOU. God wants you to be saved!

**5) The man who had evil thoughts.**

Charles Spurgeon had a wonderful conversion experience, but after salvation he was attacked by Satan. He experienced evil thoughts. He never before had thought such evil thoughts. He thought, "I cannot be saved because I have these evil thoughts!" He went to His grandfather who wisely told him, “These are the devil's brats, not your evil thoughts. Don't own them to yourself.” You see, the devil can often tempt you with evil thoughts and then make you feel miserable, because he tells you the thoughts are sin and you are a deep sinner. Of course we must resist these thoughts, but the fact that they come does not mean we are sinners. It just means we are normal Christians, tempted by an evil foe.

I once prayed with someone to be saved and immediately felt led to take an hour to tell him how the devil can attack after salvation. He told me later, "Roy, soon after you told me all that, I started to have the most evil thoughts I ever had in my life. I thought I could not have been saved when I prayed with you because I had these thoughts, but then I reminded myself again and again of the truth of what you said." Praise God, he had victory. I knew him for years after he prayed with me, and he is going on with God and has become a wonderful Christian. Before he prayed with me for salvation he did not even have a Bible with him.

**6) The man who was angry with his wife.**

Recently I met a man who seemed on fire for God. He held many meetings for people to hear the word of God each week. He had done this for years. He came to me after a meeting and said, "Roy, I pray every day for God to save me. I never know if I am saved, because I often get angry with my wife. I try so hard not to, and then suddenly I am angry again." I asked, “Do you ever rest, sir?” He said, "Never, I work hard seven days a week and in the nights I ride buses to bring people to church." I said to him, "Brother, that's your problem." I told him that often when I start to get irritated about small things it is because I haven't rested or exercised. It is not a spiritual problem always. I told him of how I started to get irritated at college about many things and couldn't understand why. I got more and more angry at people. Then I suddenly realized I had not exercised for two weeks or so. I did not pray for hours to be made right. I simply went and ran round the block a few times. Immediately I didn't feel irritated by things anymore.

Someone came to my dad and said, "Keith I am failing, but I don't know why. I pray for hours and read my Bible, but still I fail." My dad said, "When last did you exercise?" He looked puzzled and said that it was not since long ago. My dad sent him for a jog round the block. He went, and when he was back he said, "Keith, I feel so much better. I don't feel like failing every second second." John Wesley wrote that he had seen thousands saved from sin, but all of them still had problems with anger after salvation that had to be dealt with. The problem led to damage to their testimony and Christian life, and it had to be dealt with, but it did not make them unsaved.

I know many people used of God who still get angry sometimes. This anger can do great damage, but it does not make them unsaved.

**I will tell you three things that helped me with my anger after being saved.**

* One: I realized that it was often not a spiritual failure so much as that I needed exercise or rest. I learned to listen to my body and take breaks and eat right, when it told me to slow down.
* Two: I learned to yield rights. For one whole year I worked with two missionaries. I bought a newspaper, and I used to sit at a coffee shop with them for a break to read it. I was hugely irritated when they took a part of the newspaper that I wanted to read before I had read it. I argued with myself that I had paid for the newspaper, and so I should read it first. I expressed irritation and anger at times because of this. Then one day I realized that this was an area where I was holding on to a supposed right. I prayed to God for forgiveness and told him that I give up the right to read the newspaper first. The next time I was at the table I asked them what portion they would like to read and gave it to them first. I felt great peace at this simple yielding of a right. So many anger moments would be cancelled out if we looked for areas that we are holding as our rights! When you get angry, think of this.
* Three: we have to realize that there is forgiveness when we fail. Many people hate themselves for failing. They feel so bad that it makes them feel there is no use in trying to be victorious. They get more and more angry and fail for a long time. This is true of failure in any kind of sin and failure in anger. I realized one day that all I have to do if I fail is ask God for forgiveness. He said we must forgive seventy times seven, and He will do the same for us if we ask. After a failure, I have learned to say to God that I am sorry and then get up and seek God victoriously from then on. This helps to keep one failure from leading to many failures. Often I feel nothing when I pray to God for forgiveness. But then I say to God, “I feel nothing, God, but thank you for forgiving me because Thy Word says that if we confess our sins You are faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” I then make a deliberate choice to forget about that failure and carry on with serving God.

Do not look for tests like feelings of peace to prove God has forgiven you. Thank God for forgiving you and choose to trust him and carry on. I have been so blessed by God in doing this. On one occasion, soon after I got angry and asked God for forgiveness, God did a miracle in a smashed up life. He had forgiven me so much that He chose to use me mightily soon after I asked for forgiveness. God really does forgive when we choose to trust him, ignoring our feelings! He said he would!

**7) Some people think they do not have enough knowledge to be saved:**

There is a boy I read of yesterday in the newspaper. A young boy in America, a genius, could read at the age of two years. At age four he was reading medium-sized, complicated novels. At age thirteen he was finished with school and now is in university, mid-way working towards a few bachelor's degrees and ultimately his master's. You would think that at age thirteen he would have such a knowledge that he would know how to know God. Well, he is an avid evolutionist! He is studying evolution. The Bible states clearly, “The world by wisdom knew not God.” This is the world's wisdom. It means you can know how to make a space rocket or an atom bomb. You can be a brilliant scientist, and all this wisdom will not in and of itself equal knowing God. You don't have to be clever to know God. Jesus said in Matthew 11:25 “. . . I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.” God can save and use wise people. Paul was a learned Roman Jew and Luke was a qualified physician, but He loves to save the fishermen like Peter who don't have much education at all and use them mightily. 1 Corinthians 1:26-28 states, “For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised . . . .” These are wonderful words. God has chosen the base things. Hallelujah!

**8) Some feel that God is biased.**

Some people think God would save the good-looking, the sporty, the good public speakers, the men above the women, etc, but they themselves feel so worthless that they think they could never be saved. Well, God has chosen the base, as we read above! By the way, God has saved lame people and thin people and fat people. He died for all of them. He has wonderfully saved people who are pathetic at maths. He does save people who are good-looking and rich and sporty, but he does not love them any more than the base and not-so-clever ones. God is not even slightly biased. He sees all as sinners and all as needing salvation in Jesus Christ. No one has an easier or harder road to salvation. You come as a sinner and you come to Jesus. Interestingly, Psalms 147:10 states that God, “. . . taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man.” In other words, God does not favour the Olympic athlete above the fat farm worker. God is not biased towards men above women. God loves women. Some say that God only talks of his sons and not of his daughters, but 2 Corinthians 6:18 states: “And I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” Although Jesus chose twelve male disciples, yet some of his best friends in life were Mary and Martha. He loved them and their brother Lazarus deeply. Mary Magdalene had been demon-possessed and as such probably did sin with men. Jesus forgave her and set her free from her sinful life. He chose her to be the first one to see the empty grave and take the news to the disciples. God is not biased against women at all. He loves them and died for their sins. God is not biased towards any nation. Black people are very dear to God. In the New Testament in Acts we read of how God sent Philip to help the Ethiopian eunuch to be saved. The only time we read of an apostle being sent way out of his way for just one soul was when God sent Philip to tell a black person of Jesus. God is not biased towards anyone. His wrath is equal towards any person's sin and his love and forgiveness is also readily available to all who repent and come to Jesus!

**9) Some men try the law.**

~ Jan Harem

I know a person who was deep in sins and drugs. He distrusted everyone. One day he read Psalm 22 which talked of Jesus’ death 2000 years before it happened. He realized that the Bible must be true. He heard of the knew birth, but he thought that after you pray to be saved you have to keep all the law in the Bible to keep God pleased. He tried to keep all the law. He kept Sabbath days and fasted much. One day he sat in house church and heard a sermon. The speaker stood up and said, “You all have to realize one thing. We can lay off all our sins and do everything that is right, and that is fine, . . . but after doing all that, you are still unsaved. There has to come a point where God saves you. You have to stand still, and let God do everything.” He sat there and realized that that was his problem. In one moment he stood back and stopped trying and just looked to God to save him. In one moment he was saved!

~Charles Spurgeon

Spurgeon at a young age realized that he was a great sinner. He longed to know that God had forgiven his sins. He started to try anything. For 10 years he tried holding the laws of the Old Testament. He kept thousands of laws, but he was miserable, because he never knew if he was saved. Then one day he was sitting in a meeting, and the preacher preached from the text, Isaiah 45:22: “Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God and there is none else.” The lay preacher did not pronounce the words rightly, but that didn’t matter. He said, “Now lookin’ don’t take a deal of pains. It ain’t liftin’ your foot or your finger; it is just, ‘Look.’ Well, a man needn’t go to College to learn to look. You may be the biggest fool, and yet you can look. A man needn’t be worth a thousand a year to be able to look. Anyone can look.”[[1]](#footnote-1) Spurgeon sat there and said that it was as if God was speaking to him. Anyone can look. So he looked and was saved. Salvation is not a huge thing you have to work up over years of law keeping. Salvation is something that Jesus payed for fully on the cross, and so all we have to do is look to Jesus to be saved.

~Angela and Brandon

There is a little church in Rhinelander Wisconsin, and some of the people in it really believed in keeping the law to get to heaven. They believed that one is saved by grace, but that you have to continually keep the law to stay right with God. They once spoke to an itinerant preacher, and in a normal everyday conversation he said these simple words; "Don't be so hard on yourselves." When he said this, something clicked in one of the girls in the church. Her name is Angela.

Brandon says “I, to this day, don't know what all happened in Angela, but I do know that that was the beginnings of something mighty in her life. She said she felt peace and joy like she never had before. She felt happy and free. ‘. . . and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty’ — 2 Corinthians 3:17. She knew that God loved her and many other things. She said she no longer felt condemned by God. “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit.” — Romans 8: 2. She had to use the same old religious jargon that preachers have used for hundreds of years, but now she knew what it meant. When Brandon saw the amazing change in her life and that she now did not serve God out of fear, but out of love, he started to pray much for the same experience. He said “I prayed this prayer all summer, yearning to have what Angie had and not willing to give up until I found it.”

Brandon also said, “At that time in my life, I was a baptized member of the fellowship here in Rhinelander and had been for a few years. I had outwardly quit all of my grosser sins and was reading my Bible and praying. I would say I was a pretty good Christian.”

Jesus said in John 5:39, 40, “Search the scriptures for in them ye think that ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come unto me that ye might have eternal life.”

“One of the troubles I had was that, especially when I was down and depressed, I would remember back to my past and the sins I had engaged in, and those pictures would just fill my mind and my heart. I would want so bad to go back to that old life. Jesus states in Luke 11:39, ‘. . . now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness.’ Sometimes in my heart I would take up those old sins again just for an hour or two until I would realize how sinful that was, and then I would repent again. After a bout of this sort of backsliding in my heart, I would feel that God had turned his back on me. I would feel like He was disgusted with me for wanting to sin like that. I felt that He was disappointed at my failure and inability. I felt like I had to prove myself all over again to God, that I had to again show Him that I really did want to serve Him. I felt like God would turn His back on me for a couple of days until I could prove that I would be faithful to Him again.” Brandon was truly in bondage to fear. 2 Tim 1:7 states, “ For God has not given us a spirit of bondage again to fear; but of power , and of love, and of a sound mind.”

He goes on to say, “During my trip to Asia, I got to meet some of the Tibetan people. The Tibetans are some of the most devout Buddhist people on the earth. I believe they are the most devout, because they are the most afraid. The Tibetans have huge, beautiful lamaseries, temples and shrines in every city and town. They fly prayer flags from all the high points in a vicinity. They walk down the streets spinning prayer wheels in one hand and fingering prayer beads in their other hand. Any time they sit idle they are still spinning their prayer wheels and touching their prayer beads. They put prayer wheels in the streams that never stop spinning. They put prayer wheels in the wind, so that they turn even when they are sleeping. They make expensive offerings to the temples and make excruciating pilgrimages to Lhasa. I was told that when it is time to plant barley in the springtime, they pray for a day or two before they even start plowing to atone for all the worms and bugs that get killed in the plowing. Then, as they plow, they have the women and children sit nearby with prayer wheels continuing to make atonement for all the bugs that get killed. The Tibetans believe in reincarnation. If they lead an evil life on the earth, they may return to earth as a bug or a ghost. If they lead a good life, they may return as a king or the Dalai Llama. In each of their successive lives they try to get closer to nirvana. Nirvana is a state of bliss where you have finally broken free from all desire. When you reach Nirvana, you also break free from the cycle of reincarnation. As I walked the streets with these people and looked at the fear deep in their eyes, I suddenly asked myself, ‘What is the difference between my religion and Tibetan Buddhism? I'm trying to please God to get to heaven and they're trying to please a great Something to get to their state of bliss.’ I saw a similarity between me and them — of living in a state of constant condemnation and trying to somehow appease an impossible God. It made me very sober. It made me think. Paul writes of the Jews in Romans 10: 2, 3: ‘For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness of God.’

“The preacher whom God used in Angie’s life came to preach in Rhinelander. He was just chatting away about how the meetings had gone that year in another town. He was saying how they had a nice variety of people show up, and that some people from a movement that kept the Jewish Sabbath (Saturday) had come. Turning to me in my living room, he said something like, ‘You know, Brandon, that movement sounds like they preach the gospel, but if you listen carefully you will realize that they are preaching salvation by the blood of Christ AND by good works.’ By Christ's sacrifice AND by keeping the Sabbath or not eating meat.’ He just went on to say that that is not the true gospel. At that moment it hit me that I believed a gospel just like that. I believed that I was saved by the blood of Christ AND by being a good boy . He just kept chatting, neither one of us aware of what God's Holy Spirit had just begun in my life. We went to bed.

“This fleeting revelation that I had been trying to be accepted by God by Christ's sacrifice AND by being good grew in me. As I reflected on what had happened in the last three days, a light started to go on inside of me. I don't remember exactly when in that day it finally came into being. Whether it was that morning or when I woke up that afternoon or even if it had started the day before. But suddenly I understood. I wish by my words that somehow I could explain what happened. But I can only just use the same words that we Christians have heard our whole lives. I suddenly KNEW that I, personally, was accepted by God, merely by faith and purely by faith. That God loved ME. That God was tickled pink with ME! That I was precious and dear to God, and that he loved me immensely. I suddenly felt FREE! I didn't have to perform for God. I didn't have to be good enough for God. I was accepted by God by my faith only and His grace only! It wasn't my works or performance. I knew I was accepted by God. I knew I was no longer condemned. I was His precious child.” John 3:18 states, “He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”

“Remembering back, that was one of the most heavenly days of my life. My feet lifted off the ground and I was on cloud nine and the neat thing is they haven't hit the ground since. I, too, felt like there wasn't a single sin in my body. I felt like my whole being wasn't even capable of sinning. I felt like an angel. I just loved loving and helping and serving others. I just loved God's people, but most of all I just loved MY Lord Jesus Christ-MY Saviour.” 1 John 3: 14 states, “We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosover hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.” 1 Cor 8:3 states, “But if any man love God, the same is known of him.”

“Suddenly I realized He died for ME. He died because He loved ME. Christ was the most precious thing on earth to me. There was nothing I wouldn't do for Him because of what He had done for me, and there was nobody or nothing that could convince me to turn from Him.

“As the months went on, I found out that it was still possible to sin, and that there are still hard times in life, but none of these troubles compare to the troubles I had before I got this assurance of faith. Romans 8:16 states, ‘The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.’ I can truly say that sin is POWERLESS over me thanks to Christ's blood. When sin approaches me now, I am not in bondage to it, but I now see it as a choice — one that is relatively easy to make with Christ's help. John 8:36 states, ‘If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.’ My whole being, for the most part, wants what is good and right and just. I am still shocked daily at my desire to do good. I am truly a new creature. 2 Corinthians 5:17 states: ‘Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new.’ Most of all, I have never, since that day, doubted if I was accepted by God. I know I am accepted by God. I know He loves me. I know I'll be in Heaven the moment I die. 2 timothy 1:12 states, ‘. . . for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.’ One of the most thrilling things for me would be to die for my Saviour who died for me. I feel it would in a small way somehow show appreciation for what He has done for me.” Revelation 12:11 states, “. . . and they loved not their lives unto death.”

1 John gives about 11 proofs to show whether one truly knows Jesus or not, including the love of the brethren (1 John 3:14) and the keeping of Christ's commandments (see 1 John 2:3, 4). John then states in 1 John 5:13, “These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the son of God that ye might know that ye have eternal life . . . .” I can truly say from watching Brandon’s life that he passes all the tests of 1 John since he was saved through faith in Jesus. We can truly “. . . behold, all things have become new.” — 2 Corinthians 5:17

**10) Some feel their sin is too great.**

Let me ask you: When God’s word states that Jesus “. . . tasted death for every man,” what does *every* mean?

It means Jesus died for the gays and murderers and rapists and liars and rude kids and thieves and YOU! 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 speaks of sinners such as gays and thieves, and then speaks to the Christians in 6:11 with these amazing words: “and such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified , but ye are justified in the name of our Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” Wow! these gays and thieves were totally forgiven. They were washed clean of their sins. They were sanctified, which means they were separated to serve God. They were justified, which means God will never ever even remember their sins. They are right with God as much as Jesus is right with God, because God sees them as one with Christ who has washed them white in His blood and given them new life in Him. Even the worst of sinners can know that they are utterly forgiven! God states in Isaiah 1:18, “. . . though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they be red as crimson they shall be as wool.” If you believe your sins are too great to be forgiven, think of this verse, Ezekiel 33: 11, “. . . As I live saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn form his way and live: turn ye, turn from your evil ways, for why will ye die?” “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

Proverbs 28:13 states, “He that covereth his sins shall not proper, but he that confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.”

God sates in Isaiah 43:25-26, “I, even I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins. Put me in remembrance: let us plead together, declare thou that thou mayest be justified.” Remind God of the cross and His promises. Declare your sins, and He (not you) will justify you (make you as if you never ever sinned! Forgive you totally and remember the sins no more!) Hebrews 10:17 states, “And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.”

**11) Some feel it is too late for them.**

I know a man whom I met in his old age. He was shivering in fear. I asked him if he was saved. He looked at me with great fear in his eyes. His whole body was pitiful to watch. He told me his story. He said that years back he had been in a series of meetings where an evangelist brought the gospel. He wanted to come out and be saved, but was too shy. In the last meeting the preacher quoted the verse “Quench not the Spirit.” He said that the Holy Spirit is like a dove. He will come to you through meetings and people. Eventually He will leave you, if you don't respond. The preacher cried out that if a sinner was sitting in his meetings and did not respond by the last meeting, then that sinner had committed the unforgivable sin and God could never ever forgive him. God would leave him and never speak to him to be saved again. Sadly, this poor man had believed this lie, and almost 50 years later he sat in shivering fear of dying, because he believed God could never forgive him and make him a child of God.

Many people believe they have committed the unforgivable sin because they have cursed God. They now want to be saved but feel God will never forgive them, because they have sinned a sin God will not forgive. We have to realise that when Jesus said “the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men” he was speaking of what the Pharisees had just done. The Pharisees had just said and believed that Jesus’ working and miracles were through the power of Satan. If you have not said and believed that Jesus’ miracles are through Satan’s power, then you have not committed this sin.

Also, these Pharisees where so hardened, that they had come to the point where they had no desire for forgiveness. If you have any desire for forgiveness and a relationship with God, it proves you have not committed the unforgivable sin. The Bible states that “no man seeketh after God, no not one.” If you have any seeking in your heart or longing to be forgiven, then it is not of you, but God. This should be a huge ray of hope in a sinner’s heart. God is working in your heart if you have any desire to be forgiven and cleansed or to know Jesus! If you experience any desire to know you are saved, then know that God is working in your heart. Know that God does this because He loves you. Jeremiah 31:03 states, “. . . Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.” If you experience God's drawing in your heart, it is because he loves you with an everlasting love!

**12) Some people look for a feeling before they can know whether they are saved.**

Some godly men have said that if you do not know you are saved, it proves you are not saved. Other godly men such as R. A. Torrey (D. L. Moody’s best preacher) wrote that most people who do not have assurance of salvation are not saved, but not all. The great revivalist, John Wesley, at the early part of his preaching emphasised the "witness of the Holy Spirit” (defined as a voice inside which tells you that you are saved.) He said that if you do not know you are saved with such assurance that you can never doubt, then you are not saved. After many years of preaching, he realised that doubt can arise in true Christians due to attacks and lies of the devil. Spurgeon said he did not always feel saved, and yet that great preacher knew he was saved based on God's word. John Macarthur states that we should never look for a feeling that tells us every few minutes we are saved. D. L. Moody stated that we should not look to our feelings, since Satan can change our feelings 70 times a day, but he cannot change God's word!

Is a feeling inside called "the witness of the Holy Spirit" the main test of whether we are truly Christians or not? Some would have us think so. The problem is that many drunkards have testified to feeling God's presence inside, and they say this proves they know God. A person who lied daily to his parents told me God gave him an amazing feeling of peace, and he believed this proved he was saved. He said, “If I am not saved, then why did God give me the peace?” My answer: *That peace was not of God.* If what we are looking for as proof of salvation comes in the form of a strange peace inside, then we will easily be deceived. Countless unsaved people have had amazing feelings of peace, and it was not God's peace, because it did not lead to godly fruit. After looking at the history books, it seems the godly of the last 400 years have differed greatly in their views concerning the biblical term "witness of the Holy Spirit."

Stereotyping of Experiences:

Some of the most famous people on earth have testified to experiencing amazing peace at the point of salvation. When I got saved, I had so much peace flowing through my body that it felt like someone could stick me in the back with a knife right now, and I knew I would go to heaven. I believed this to be the witness of the Holy Spirit preached by John Wesley and others. I heard great preachers preach that if you do not know you are saved, then you are not saved. I started to preach this soon after my conversion along with repentance, faith, and the new birth. The problem was that people I preached to often said they could not find the peace. I sometimes worried that they were not seeking Jesus, but seeking a peace inside! I saw people saved under my messages. A drunkard got saved. Radical conversions happened here and there under my ministry. What puzzled me was that other people who heard me preach searched and searched and could not find peace. They eventually seemed to give up on ever being saved, because no peace came. I solidly believed that if a person ever doubted their salvation they were not saved. This I preached with conviction! Then it happened . . . . I was in the deserts of Namibia, and a thought entered my brain: " Roy are you saved?" I knew the answer. I knew I had met with God! But the fact that I had even doubted for one second told me that saved people can doubt. This was a huge revelation to poor me. I was shocked! It went against what I believed, had been taught, and what I had experienced!

I based the belief that the witness of the Spirit was a never-ending knowing without one doubt ever upon the following scriptures:

1) Phil 4:7: "And the peace of God, which passes all under­standing, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." I took this peace to be the proof of being saved!

2) Romans 8:16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the Children of God" I took this witness to be the same as the peace in Phil. 4:7.

I also based my belief upon my experience at salvation and the preaching of many godly men.

I preached this until a day that changed my ministry forever. I was sitting at the airport in London, and I read a small book called, *My Conversion,* by Charles Spurgeon. Spurgeon wrote of how he had experienced radical salvation through faith in a Methodist meeting. He then went on to say how he had started to doubt after his salvation. Spurgeon doubted!? He truly believed he could not be saved. This was until the lies that lead him to believe he could not be saved were destroyed by the words of his godly grandfather. The truth set him free. The part that amazed me was this: "Spurgeon, the prince of preachers." This was the man who was used more than most other Christians in the 1800's through his mighty preaching and text sermons. He was used to bring 1000's to a saving knowledge of Christ. Spurgeon was definitely saved, and yet he doubted. I trembled as I realised that what I preached was wrong.

I had a choice: Change my message, or carry on knowing I was wrong. It was a huge choice, but praise God, I made the right one. I decided that in the future no matter how many godly people believed or experienced something like "If you ever doubt your salvation, you are not saved," I would first study the context of scripture carefully before preaching such a thing!

I then preached a sermon called *Faith*, in which I emphasised the fact that faith is simply trusting in the faithfulness of God, and is not a feeling you could work up by saying: "I believe , I believe, I believe” a million times until faith suddenly happened inside you. I preached this two hour sermon for Christians, but I was amazed when a father came to me later and said, "Roy, thank you so much for that sermon. My son could never believe that he was saved. He was always looking for a feeling, but now he says he knows he is saved.” He was excited. I preached another sermon called, "Faith and feelings." It was such a simple sermon that I could not believe it would have much effect. I have never made an appeal after that sermon. Even so, I am amazed at how many people have testified to being saved through this sermon. A small boy told me in a car after a service in Africa that he had for years doubted he was saved, but now after this sermon he knew he was saved. Another man who was a druggy and longed to be saved but could not find a feeling was so shocked by the truth that he met with God through that simple message, and for the first time he knew that he was saved! He went on to memorise much of Scripture and testify in many churches. Years later he is still on fire and is still radically saved. I also received a letter from a girl saying she was writing in tears, because she had a victory in Jesus that never leaves her since she saw the truth that faith and not feelings (which change all the time) is our source of victory and spiritual life. We should link our faith to God's word and not feelings. Our feelings change all the time, but Jesus is always the same, always near, and always faithful to His word.

This was an encouragement. I started to study the conversions of great men, and I saw that many of them were saved without any peace at the point of salvation. I experienced flowing peace when I got saved. My dad, however, did not feel anything when he prayed in desperation for salvation. However, when reading the Bible, he did experience God opening the word to him. Before he prayed, it had been a dry, dead book to him. I realized that if peace at the point of salvation was the proof you are saved, then many godly people were never saved, and many unsaved people who experienced strange peace when praying or singing are saved. We cannot stereotype the salvation experience. No matter how many godly people have experienced strange peace at salvation, we can only expect what God says must be there to be there at the point of salvation. The fruit of salvation that God's word says must be there must be there, not the fruit we see in individual godly people from history. If we tell people to seek even godly peoples’ experiences, they may not seek Jesus!

WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN?

Christianity is not something that is gained by climbing a mountain of religious works and experiences to make you a Christian! Christianity is receiving a person. It is knowing a person. It is having a person. The Bible states, “He that hath the Son hath life.” If you have Jesus, then you are a Christian! The Pharisees tried to follow God by keeping a million rules and reading scriptures for hours. Even reading the Bible cannot make you a Christian. Jesus said, “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come unto me that ye may have eternal life.” The way for a sinner to receive eternal life is by coming unto Jesus. You can read your Bible for years and years and yet never come unto Jesus. You can try to honor your parents and yet never come unto Jesus. You can keep all the Old Testament law and yet never come unto Jesus. You see, to be a Christian you have to have met and experienced and know Jesus! If you have Jesus, you are a Christian.

Some people make salvation so complicated! They feel in their hearts, “I know all I have to do is come to Jesus in prayer or by looking to Him to save me, but surely there is something more!” “I need a feeling of faith first,” “I need to feel worse over my sins,” or “I need someone in a church to pray with me, else Jesus will not hear me!” I have heard one preacher say, “There are nine steps in salvation, and if you go through these nine steps you will be saved. If you miss one of the steps, you are not saved.” I don't read that in the Bible.

**The USA Army Bully Beef Recipe:**

Did you know that about 20 years ago the USA army wrote a cooking manual in which it gave instructions for how to provide bully beef for it's troops? You can imagine it should just be a few lines. You know, — Step one: Open the can; Step 2: Put bully beef on plate You know what they did? The US Army wrote over 20 pages on how to serve the bully beef to its troops. Twenty pages instead of a few words! You see, people make the gospel so complicated.

The truth is, if you have Jesus, you have eternal life, and you are a child of God. You don’t have to follow 20 pages of instructions or read your Bible for years before you can know Jesus. I hadn’t even read through the Bible once when I met Him. If a sinner is repentant, all he/she has to do is come to Jesus to find eternal life!

On the cross the thief who looked at Jesus and realised who He was (the non-sinful Son of God), recognised his own sin and simply asked, “Remember me” was told that he would be with Jesus in paradise that same night. Notice, the thief did not know much. All he knew was that he was a sinner and that the man hanging next to him could forgive his sins. His prayer was not a perfect one paragraph sinner’s prayer. No, it was just the words, “Remember me.” How simple was this man’s salvation, and how complicated Satan would have us make ours!

One day a Pharisee and a sinner prayed in the temple. The Pharisee, who was proud of the mountain of law-keeping and good works he was climbing, looked down at the sinner and talked of how much better he was than him. The sinner did not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but in a simple prayer cried out, “God be merciful to me a sinner.” He did not say much. He did not pray some perfect doctrinal prayer. He simply cried out to God for mercy for the sinner he was and the sins he had done! Some might say it could not be that simple, but look at the result: Jesus said he left “justified.” That means God will never ever remember one of his sins! Sadly, the Pharisee, who was keeping a million laws, went away unforgiven for all the sins he had ever done. Still written in the books to be opened on Judgment Day were the times he was rude to his parents as a child, the times he lusted after women, the small lies he had told. Nothing was forgiven, because he did not seek God, but was focusing on his worthless good works. The sinner was not climbing any mountain to become good. He realised that he was in a pit and needed mercy, and he cried out as a sinner for this. He found mercy for his sins. If you want forgiveness, you must come to God for mercy for you sins. But some say, “I try to believe and I cannot. I try and try and try and try and try and try . . . .” You are making a simple, yet deadly mistake. You do not realise that unbelief is not something you can fill by trying and trying to have it. Unbelief is a sin which you have to confess.

Rom 14:23 sates, “. . . whatsoever is not of faith is sin.”

Heb 11:6: “But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”

1 John 5: 10b: “. . . he that believeth not God hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that he gave of his Son.”

On the one hand, this should make you fear because it adds the greatest sin to the long list of sins you have already committed; but on the other hand, it should give you hope, because sin is something you can deal with in a moment. In fact Jesus dealt with all sin 2,000 years back on the cruel tree of Calvary. He became all your sin and was punished for your sins, and He arose and is now ever living to intercede for sinners who come to God for mercy through Him. That means He is waiting every moment of every day. His whole life is consumed. He is ever living for you to come and confess your sins, so he can intercede to God, and you can be forgiven. We know that the blood of Jesus Christ was taken into the sanctuary of heaven. When we come with our sins to God to be forgiven in Jesus’ name, then Jesus stands there in love and reminds God the Father of the cross where he died for your sins, and in a moment you are forgiven. God the Father also loves you and wants to forgive your sins. That is why it is such a wonderful thing to know that faith is not a lack of feeling that you work up, but rather a sin to be confessed. It means you can deal with unbelief now simply by confessing it as a sin and being forgiven. When we confess our sins, Jesus does not only forgive them, but sets us free from the power of them. In this case, God will give you faith!

**Let me repeat:** Many believe that unbelief is a void to be filled. They do not realise it is not an empty space to be filled, but a sin to be confessed.

I would like to give some practical examples:

**Man in Polokwane:**

Erenst Loderyk, a friend of mine in Polokwane, South Africa, is a married man with four daughters. He knows he is saved! In 1985 before he had a stomach operation, he prayed for salvation, repenting of his sins. He had grown up in a terrible house, and so struggled hugely to beleive that God would accept him. He was comparing God to his own parents and situation. After this repentance, it was still a hard path. He was enslaved to “calming pills.” He could not function one day without them. He was enslaved with fear. He feared he would die early, and he feared Satan and his power, and he feared sicknesses and germs, and he feared that God would not really accept him, and much more.

A great preacher in South Africa's history who is anointed and who knows the entire Bible off by heart (Dr. Willie Marais) held a series of meetings at a church nearby. He made an invitation that those who wanted to receive Christ for the first time or make a new dedication should put up their hands. My friend was one of those who raised his hands. After the prayer, Dr. Willie Marais said that anyone who wanted to see him to ask more questions could, if they made an appointment through that church’s minister. He said he would be at the minister’s house for people to speak to. Our friend decided to go for this interview. He made an appointment and arrived the next day.

Dr. Willie took him to a room and closed the door. He asked him to tell him about himself. He started to talk about the house he grew up in, and Dr. Willie asked very dryly and seemingly with little compassion, “Did you grow up in a broken house?” As he said this, a huge sorrow welled up in him and our friend Erenst started to cry and cry and cry. God in a strange way was healing years of bitterness while he cried. Erenst was a little angry. He was expecting a kind old man who would encourage him, but instead the man looked at him dryly. He did not realise that this was God's kindness. He said later, “The more sympathy Dr. Willie would have given me, the more I would have used the situation, telling him stories to get more sympathy. I would have received sympathy, and yet never faced my sin of unbelief! When I had eventually finished crying, Dr. Willie asked, ‘So why have you really come?’” Erenst then answered and said the real reason was that he did not know if he was going to heaven! Dr. Willie quoted a few verses such as, “As many as received him to them gave he power to become sons of God.” “As many as received Christ . . . believed . . . .”

Erenst said he knew those verses but still doubted that God would save him. He just could not work up faith for God to save him as a person. Dr. Willie looked at him with no sympathy and said, “It is simple,” and then he quoted the Bible at 1 John 5:10: “He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in Himself: he that believeth not, God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.” Dr. Willie looked at him gravely and said, “If you do not accept the witness of God, you make God a liar. In fact you are calling God a liar.” Suddenly, Erenst felt he was before a cross road. He realised that if he carried on not believing the witness of God, he made God a liar. The game was past. He did not need sympathy. He needed to bring the sin of unbelief to God for forgiveness. Dr. Willie had seemed unloving, but in His heart he longed for this man to know Jesus had forgiven him. Dr. Willie knew that simply giving him sympathy for his past or unbelief would not help him find faith. Dr. Willie knew that Erenst had to be confronted with his sin as a serious matter and not just make him feel better about the situation by sympathising with him. When Erenst realised that his unbelief was a sin and that he was calling God a liar, he brought this sin to Jesus, and in choosing to believe, knew he was forgiven. Years later I know him. He has no pills, and he follows God with all His heart!

You see you will never deal with your unbelief by trying to work up faith. Many people split unbelief from their sins. They know they have broken God's law and need faith for God to forgive them, but they don’t believe God will forgive them. The sad thing is that they are splitting unbelief form their sins. they feel sorry for themselves, because they cant believe. They don’t realise that they are feeling sorry for themselves for sinning. Unbelief is a sin. You will never be able to work up faith. Faith is a gift from God. Instead of trying to work up faith for years and years and wonder where it is, you can deal with your unbelief in a moment by going to your knees and confessing it as sin. 1 John: “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." We make God a liar by not believing he will do His part if we do our part. If we confess our sins, and don’t believe he has forgiven us, then we should confess one last sin and trust Him to forgive and cleanse us from it. This simple truth has led people to stop years of seeking for faith in their own strength. They simply dealt with their unbelief through confessing it as a sin and asking God to forgive them for Christ’s sake. Instead of trying to fill the gap, confess the sin! It is as simple as this: Instead of trying to fill the gap, — confess the sin!

One thing you have to realise is that God is incapable of lying. “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things.” — Romans 8:32. You see, God gave his Son to die for you. Why would He lie when He said that if we confess, He will forgive and cleanse, if we want to be saved from our sins and forsake them? If we want to know Jesus and serve him, then we know that all we have to do is come to Jesus!

**Pilgrim’s Progress:**

Are you in the slough of despond? In The famous book *The Pilgrim’s Progress* by John Bunyan, we read of Pilgrim who had a burden on his back. He received the burden by reading the Bible. When we read the Bible as a sinner, then God can show us our sin through his holy law. As we read more, it is possible this sin becomes a burden we long to loose. We long to know we are children of God and forgiven of all our sins. We long to know that we are on our way to heaven. In Pilgrim’s Progress we read on and find Pilgrim is told by Evangelist he must follow the light and come to a narrow gate and eventually the cross. He is told to follow the light. That light is Jesus. He walked towards the light, but on the way he got to talking to someone else. They were so busy with this, that he did not see a swamp (the slough of despond). He fell into this swamp and was stuck. He did not know what to do. This swamp is a picture of people who want to be forgiven and become children of God but fall into a pit of doubts. They cannot believe they can have faith. They cannot believe they personally will be saved. They don't know where to find faith. They pray again and again and nothing seems to happen. They don't expect anything really to happen, but they hope and so try. They have made one mistake, though. They have taken their eyes off the light! They are not coming to Jesus, but trying in their own strength to work up faith. They are failing and failing and failing! The story goes on, and Evangelist comes along . He looks at Pilgrim and after talking to him, he does two things. He firstly helps pilgrim out with his hand and then tells him again to walk toward the light!

Just as evangelist helped him out, so this booklet can help you out, by giving you hope again. Also, just as Evangelist pointed to the light, so I would like to now point you to the light — Jesus Christ!

John 8:12: “Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”

John 12:46: “I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth in me should not abide in darkness.”

Oh uncertain soul, look and go to the light — Jesus Christ and you shall have life!

Jesus is all you need. Read this simple poem I wrote:

If I could paint a picture of Jesus’ love so fair,

If you could feel the nail prints in Jesus’ hands right here,

If you knew why He did it,

For the sins that you have done,

He said, It is finished,

The price is paid my son!

It is finished.

What blessed words of glory. He has done all to pay for my sins. I don't have to keep the law or experience some strange experience. All I have to do is come to Jesus! Don’t go the way of the law. Dont look for the something that is missing! There is nothing missing from what Jesus did on the cross.

When you come to Jesus, it is not what you pray that counts. I know many fear they will say the wrong words or that they do not know enough. All you have to know is that you are a sinner, and all you have to do is come to Jesus. There is an amazing verse in the Old testament — Isaiah 53:11: “. . . by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; . . .”  
Wow, what a verse of hope! You see this portion is a famous chapter on Calvary. It talks of how Jesus would die for our sins, and how after He rising from the dead, He shall justify many by His knowledge. This means that He will make many as if they had never sinned (children of God) by His knowledge. You may be confused as to why I am so excited. Well it does not say “by OUR KNOWLEDGE.” When I was saved, I did not know doctrinally every point of the new birth as I do now. I had not read through the whole Bible. I believed a lot of lies. I knew one thing, and that was that I am a sinner, and only Jesus can help me. I cried out to Jesus for mercy. I said all the wrong words, but it didn’t matter. God did not say, “Hey, I want to you to understand what is about to happen to you before I do it. No, God saved me, (I still don't fully understand how.) and he did it after I said a pretty normal prayer without any fancy words. I just came and looked to Jesus, and he saved me.

**Indian girl:**

Do you know in India there was a little girl of five years old . She felt she was a sinner, but had no answer. She had never read the Bible or heard of Jesus Christ. Then one day a missionary sat in a room next door. She listened through the door, but only heard one word. It was *Jesus*. Some how in her heart she realised that Jesus could help her. She prayed and said to God in effect, “Please, Jesus, forgive my sins.” Jesus saved her right then and there. She was only 5, but refused to worship any of the idols. For 15 years she never met another Christian. Her family threw her out of the house because she refused to follow any gods but Jesus. She was wonderfully saved. Did you notice something? She did not know much. She did not know the story of the cross. All she knew was that she was a sinner, and she knew a name, “Jesus Christ.” God knew what Jesus had done on the cross. Jesus knew that her sins where paid for, and by God's knowledge He justified her freely. He made her a child of God and made her as if she had never sinned. In the Bible, a deep sinner who had slept with men came to Jesus. She did not say a word, but simply cried and cried at Jesus feet. Jesus told people her sins were forgiven her. Notice she did not say a long prayer. She did not say any words, in fact. All she did was realise she was a sinner, and she came to Jesus, and he forgave her.

**My uncle and my father:**

When my uncle, who was a drinker and a rebel, got saved, he confessed every sin he ever did, and afterwards he went and made right with everyone. My father, who was a druggy, did not mention any of his sins by name. He simply knew of his sins, and in sorrow over them, came to God and asked God to forgive him and make him a child of God in Jesus’ name. God did not say to my father, “Hey, you did not confess for hours like your brother, so I won’t save you.” God saw a sinner broken over his sins, coming to Jesus with a few words, and in a moment He saved him. My uncle felt peace when he was saved. My dad felt nothing, until later when he read his Bible and saw that God in him was making the Bible alive for the first time.

You know I preach that people really need to come to God for the right reason, or else He will not save you. You can’t just come because you are scared of hell or because you want a better, more enjoyable life. You have to come sick and tired of your sin and wanting a relationship with God in which He is your Father. You have to seek Him for forgiveness and surrender to Him. You can't just receive forgiveness and then go your own way. You have to come to Jesus willing to surrender and follow Him from the moment He forgives you. This truth can be used by Satan to make people believe they can never be saved, because they never will know if they are repentant or not. At this point I would like to mention my mother’s testimony of Salvation.

**My mother:**

My mother grew up in a conservative home. Every day they read the Bible. She was told of Jesus’ death and the necessity of the new birth. When she was 6 years old, she heard the Christmas story. She heard how God gave His Son to die for our sins. She felt in her little heart that God gave His Son, but she was just living her own little life for herself. She thought, “I have never given anything to God.” She knelt down and said, “God, I want to give myself to you to, live for you, forgive me for living for myself.” She did not feel a huge burden for her sins. She just made a choice to give herself to God, because He had given His Son. At that moment, God saved her. She did not feel much, but from that time to now she has grown into one of the deepest Christians I know. Everything that the Bible says must be in a Christian is in her life. She is truly saved. Notice she did not come for the wrong reason. She did not come simply because she did not want to go to hell. She did not come because she wanted a better life or more money or because she felt pressurised by friends. She did not come because she had a huge feeling of sin. She simply made a choice. She wanted to know Jesus and follow him. She was sorry she had been going her own way. She simply made the choice that she wanted God to forgive her and wanted to follow Him when He forgave her. She simply gave her life to God. She did repent, even if she did not have a huge burden for sin. Some people can have a huge burden, but not be willing to give up their sins. They can feel very sorry, and yet not be willing to follow God. Don't worry about whether you feel bad enough about your sins. The main thing is simply that you are not coming merely to escape hell or to gain a better life, and secondly that you realise you have gone your own way and you are now making the choice to follow Jesus. Then, as a sinner all you have to do is come to Jesus for Him to save you. It is as simple as that.

D. L. Moody talked of a ship. It was full of hateful people who cared nothing for God and swore and sinned daily. One day there was a storm, and it got very bad. They started being driven towards rocks, and the sailors were sacred as they would surely die soon. They went on their knees and prayed to God in tears for forgiveness of their sins, and the storm suddenly blew in another direction and they were saved. Sadly, the next day they were back to swearing and drinking and sinning. You see, repentance is not a certain level of crying and feeling sorry. Far more important than how sorry you feel is that you know and realise that your sin is wrong and that you have made the choice to turn from sin because you want to know and follow Jesus with all of your heart.

My mother did not feel a deep burden. She was very serious about the fact that she had gone her own way and now she wanted to give her life to God. She was repentant without a tear. She chose to follow Jesus and He saved her that moment.

When Jesus walked past Peter, He said, “Follow me and I will make you fishers of men.” Peter stood up and left all and followed Him. That was how simple his salvation was. Jesus walked by. Jesus said, “Follow me.” He had a choice. He could carry on with his own life or he couldsurrender to Jesus and follow Him. In one moment he made the right choice and followed Jesus. He was saved. Salvation is that simple.

Before we come to the last, practical section that should finally help anyone still struggling to know if he is saved, I would like you to read this poem!

**There Is a Love**

There is a love much greater

Than a mother’s for its child.

It is the love that drove

Our Lord to be crucified.

A thorn crown on his head,

A sinner by each side,

Our Saviour cried, “Forgive,”

Just before he died!

One day a woman came to him

And kissed the Saviour’s feet.

She knew that she had met

The one who a sinner’s need could meet.

A thorn crown on his head,

A sinner by each side,

Our Saviour cried, “Forgive,”

Just before he died!

He said, “If you knew the gift of God

And who is speaking to you,

Then you would ask him living streams to

Make your whole life new.

A thorn crown on his head,

A sinner by each side,

Our Saviour cried, “Forgive,”

Just before he died!

Did you ever wonder

If He would say the same to you?

If you came to Him with all your sin to

Make your whole life new?

A thorn crown on his head,

A sinner by each side,

Our Saviour cried, “Forgive,”

Just before he died!

**Note:** Do you know, whoever you are that are reading this booklet, that God loves you so much that even if you were the only sinner on earth, He would have sent his Son to die for you — just to give you as an individual the chance to make right with him?

**The Dreaded Cycle**

Are you in the dreaded cycle? I am coming to the end of this booklet, and I would like to mention an answer to that cycle. It is simple and has helped many to come to the point were they know that they are saved. I fell into the dreaded cycle for many years. It is very common. Many are in it who yet think they are alone. The cycle is as follows: When I was young, I prayed to be saved. I was a little worried because I had said the right words and nothing much happened. I read my Bible and tried to be a good boy. Then later I felt I might not be saved. I wanted to pray to become a Christian, but I had one problem. The problem was a question: ”How can I pray to become a Christian if I am one already?” What do you pray when you don’t know whether you are saved or not? You may have been saved last time you prayed! I knew that if I came as a sinner, God could save me, but I did not know if I was sinner any more. So I would pray, “Lord I am a sinner (but know I didn’t know if I was one) and then ask for forgiveness and then I didn’t know if He had forgiven me because of this thought: “Can God forgive me if I don’t know if I am a sinner, since I may actually have been saved the last time I prayed?”

My grandpa had a farm in Africa and I remember riding to that farm. I was thinking in my head, “Am I saved or not?” I remember so clearly the point on the road where I suddenly realised the problem I was in. “I will never know I am saved,” I thought, “because God can only save people who know they are sinners, and I will never know whether I am a sinner, because I have prayed when younger to be saved — and maybe God saved me.” Wow, I was confused. I did not realise that God did not want me to be in this dreaded cycle of never being able to know whether I was saved or whether I was a sinner. I also did not realise that secretly thousands of other kids in evangelical homes were going through the same problem. Satan wants to wear them out until eventually they give up and either live a religious life or in anger turn to deep sin. Williams Fourie, who is friend of mine, grew up with wonderful evangelical parents, and he had the same problem. He never could come to God to be saved, because every time he prayed he never really knew if he was a sinner or not, because he did not know if God had saved him in a previous time he prayed. One day he sat in a meeting and God showed him that he was really unsaved. He was so excited. He testified afterwards that he had so much joy, because he now he knew he was a sinner and he could be saved.

There is huge hope for someone in this position. I have helped many with a simple illustration:

You have to realise who God is. One of the most wonderful things about Jesus is that He is the “Great Physician.” That is what the Bible calls Him. He is the greatest doctor ever. There is no soul sickness He cannot heal. There is no problem He can’t solve. Now, let me ask a question: “What do you do when you feel sick, and you go to a doctor?” Well, you tell him what you know!

The doctor’s job is to find the problem and fix it. People don’t realise that they can come to Jesus as people come to a doctor. You can tell Jesus what you do know, and He can answer. Let’s make this practical. Let’s say you are in the dreaded cycle. What do you know? Well, you don’t know if you are a sinner or not. Well, come to Jesus in prayer and tell Him what you know. You may not know if you are a sinner or not, but you do know that when you were born, you came out a sinner. You also know that you have done enough sin to go to hell many times over in your life. You know that even one of your lies is deserving of hell. You know that you are uncertain and you know that you don't know if God saved you the last times you prayed. You can freely pray a prayer like this, “Dear Jesus, I really don't know if I am sinner or not, because I don’t know if you saved me or not the many times I have prayed before. I do know I am born a sinner, and I know I have done sins (you could mention those that come to mind). Dear God, I do not know if I am saved or not, but I know that Jesus died for the sins I committed. I am sorry for the sins I have committed. I want to come to you now to make certain. I want to look to Jesus for all the sins I have done, and if I am not saved, I want to follow you from now on. Please, dear Jesus, come into my life and take full control. Wash away any unforgiven sin. Forgive me, God, for the sin of unbelief. It is a sin.

Your see, you don't have to know whether you where saved last time. God is not cruel, and as a doctor you can come to Him and tell Him your struggle. Tell him how you have doubted through the years, tell him in prayer you don’t know if you where saved the times you prayed, tell Him that you know you were born a sinner and have done sins worthy of hell — and then come to JESUS with all your doubts and sin (whether you know they are forgiven or not) and lay them at His feet. He has never turned a repentant sinner away from mercy and life, if that sinner comes to HIM.

You don’t even have to say any words. You can just come as a confused person and come to Jesus for Him to forgive the sins you have done from childhood and make you His child.

WHERE IS JESUS?

You may say, “But Roy, you have told me that all I have to do if I am a repentant sinner or a confused person who doesn't know if I am saved is come to Jesus, but WHERE IS HE?” You say, “Roy, I have sat in my room and longed to meet Him, but I cannot feel Him or see Him. I try and try, and I cannot see or believe that I know He is there. WHERE IS HE?” Well, you will definitely never find Him in your feelings! He is not anywhere in you before you are saved. So, Where is Jesus? you ask so you can come to Him? The answer is simple:

In John chapter 4 we read of a women by the well. She was a deep sinner. She had slept with many men. She was confused about where she could find God. The Jews claimed that you had to go to the temple to worship and experience forgiveness of sins and know God. The Samaritans (She was one.) worshipped in that mountain. Jesus looked at her and said, “The time cometh, when ye shall neither at this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem worship the father.” We then read how God says He seeks people to worship Him in spirit and in truth, not in the temple. Jesus told her of living water and said, “If you knew the gift of God and who it is that speaketh unto you then you would ask and he would give you living water.” There, far away from the temple, this woman asked for living water, and she was made alive. It's that simple. If you are a sinner and know the gift of God, — in other words that God gave Jesus to die for our sins, and you know that Jesus is speaking to you even while you read this booklet, then you would ask AND HE WOULD GIVE YOU LIVING WATER!

I know a man in Africa who saw another man who was a Christian. He realised that man had something he did not have. He was alive. He longed in his heart to know that he too was a child of God. He tried to work up faith, but nothing came. He started reading, and one day in his bed he read John 4. He came to the words: “If you knew the gift of God and who was speaking to you, then you would ask and he would give you living waters.” He thought, “All I have to do is ask. The old man with tears in his eyes looked at me while telling this story and said, “Then I asked, and He gave.”

One young lady was in a big, worldly party with drink, and in that party God's Holy Spirit worked in her life, and she felt she was going her own way. She longed to meet with Jesus. She had nowhere to go to pray, and so she went to a bathroom. There she knelt on her knees and prayed. She met with Jesus in a bathroom! You want to know where Jesus is? You don't have to go to the temple in Jerusalem to meet with Jesus.

Paul preached to sinners and said: (Acts 17:27) “That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us.

Paul longed for them to feel to seek the Lord to forgive their sins, and then he says something amazing. Remember he is speaking to Greeks over 1,000 miles from the Jewish temple. He says “though he be not far from every one of us.” You see, Jesus is not far from every one of us. He is everywhere! He was in the bathroom at a party. He was in the bedroom of that religious old man, and He is standing by you while you read this book. He is the great physician. His hands were pierced for you. Will you not right now bow before Him whom your sins pierced and confess your sins, including the sin of unbelief? Won't you bow down and surrender to the great Physician now? If you could but see the love in His eyes, as you read the last lines of this book. He is right there now. Will you not “come to him”?

John 5:40 “And ye will not come to me that ye might have life.”

1. *C. H. Spurgeon’s Autobiography*, London: Passmore and Alabaster, 1897: Vol. 1, pg. 106. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)