

## **Grace to You :: esp Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time**

### **Strength for Today**

**“Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves!” (2 Corinthians 13:5).**

*True believers will see the glory of Christ reflected in their lives when they examine the genuineness of their salvation.*

Assurance of one's salvation has been a key issue throughout the history of the church, especially the Reformers' reaction to the Roman Catholic Church's assertion that since salvation is a joint effort between man and God, the outcome is in doubt until the end. John Calvin, the leading sixteenth-century Reformer, taught that believers can and should be assured of their salvation. He made the grounds for assurance objective, urging believers to look to the promises in God's Word to gain a sense of personal assurance.

Later Reformed theologians (including the seventeenth-century English Reformers known as Puritans), however, recognized that genuine Christians often lacked assurance. So they emphasized the need for practical evidences of salvation in a believer's life. Thus they tended to emphasize a subjective means of establishing assurance, counseling people to examine their attitudes and actions for evidence of their election.

The question is: Should Christians derive assurance through the objective promises of Scripture or through subjective self-examination? The Bible teaches that both will lead to assurance. The objective basis for salvation is the finished work of Christ on our behalf, including the promises of Scripture (2 Cor. 1:20). The subjective support is the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of Christians, including His convicting and sanctifying ministries. Romans 15:4 refers to both aspects of assurance: “Whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, that through perseverance [subjective] and the encouragement of the Scriptures [objective] we might have hope.”

The Holy Spirit applies both grounds of assurance to believers: He “bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God” (Rom. 8:16). Are you sure of your salvation? Ask yourself the objective question: “Do I believe?” If you truly believe, you can be sure you are saved (John 3:16; Acts 16:31). The subjective question is: “Is my faith real?” That's why Paul said, “Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves!” (2 Cor 13:5). Use the remaining days of this month as an opportunity to take the test.

### ***Suggestions for Prayer***

Ask God to reveal your true heart attitude toward Him. Make Psalm 139:23-24 your prayer.

### ***For Further Study***

Read 2 Corinthians 3:18.

- How might this be considered part of Paul's test?
- What should true believers be looking for in their lives?

Available online at: <http://www.gty.org>

COPYRIGHT (C) 2024 Grace to You

You may reproduce this Grace to You content for non-commercial purposes in accordance with Grace to You's Copyright Policy (<https://www.gty.org/about#copyright>).