

CHRISTIAN FOUNDATIONS – Part 2

A QUESTIONS AND SOME ANSWERS

When I get linked up with Jesus (receive him, come to him, commit my life to him – it doesn't matter which image we use) can I really be sure of him? Is the relationship permanent? It is common to have some doubts, especially at the beginning of our Christian lives. God wants us to be sure about him, and the Bible has answers to these questions.

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| *Can I be sure I am accepted? | John 6:37 |
| *Will God hold my past failures against me? | Romans 8:1 |
| *When I fail, am I thrown out of the family? | 1 John 1:9 |
| *Can I keep it up? | 2 Corinthians 12:9 |
| *How can I overcome temptation? | 1 Corinthians 10:13 |
| *Can I really be sure that God accepts me? | |
| What the Father promised us. | 1 John 5:10-12 |
| What the Son achieved for us. | 1 John 4:10 |
| What the Spirit does in us. | 1 John 4:13 |

*What changes will I gradually notice the Spirit making in me?

John's first letter (1 John) is full of confidence. "*We know*" is a theme in the letter. John tells us about:

- a new desire to please God 2:4,5
- a new assurance about being forgiven 1:9, 2:1,2
- a new willingness to face opposition 3:13
- a new delight in being with other Christians 3:14
- a new generosity of spirit 3:17
- a new experience of overcoming temptation 4:4, 5:4
- a new discovery of God Answering prayer 3:22
- a new understanding, set of priorities 5:20,21

We are not meant to guess whether we belong.

We are meant to be confident about it. 1 John 5:11, 12

B A VERSE TO LEARN

1 John 5:12. "He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son does not have life."

C **BIBLE STUDY SECTION** - 1 John 1.1-2.6

1. What does 1:1-3 suggest about the confidence we can have in John's message?
2. Three times we read "If we claim" (1:6, 8, 10)? What were his opponents claiming and how does John answer them?
3. Together read v. 8, 9 in the first person singular and out loud, "If I claim to be without sin I deceive myself..." (but deceive nobody else!)
4. What can Christians do when they fall into sin, as we assuredly will from time to time? (1.9).
On what grounds can we be confident that God will forgive us? (2:1, 2)
5. What are we to understand by "an atoning sacrifice?" (2:2)
6. How can we 'know we have come to know him' and be sure about it? (2:3-5)

Prayer might major on thanksgiving:

for Jesus' coming to bring us life (1:1-3)
for the cross (2:1,2)
for God's forgiveness (1:8-10)
and prayer that we may increasingly 'walk as Jesus did' (2:6)

D **TIME TO PRAY**

Choose from today:

- One thing you have learned
- One verse that particularly struck you

Can you make a prayer about each of them?

We have read about being in God's family. God has no dumb children and he wants us to talk to him as naturally as we talk with one another. In family life, all the members usually join in conversation together. Praying aloud is no more valuable than praying silently, but it helps us to concentrate in our praying and all can join in "Amen." Try a one sentence prayer of thanks, a request or a thought from our Bible study. Think of the things that people shared at the beginning, and pray about them as well.

It is also helpful to pray aloud when we are alone. Not only does it help us to concentrate, but it gets us used to putting our prayers into words and to hearing our voice aloud when we pray.