

**I. Introduction and review**

- A. God wants Christians to have assurance that they are saved. I John 5:13
- B. The subject of assurance has to be handled carefully.
  - 1. There are some who would give assurance to all professing Christians, regardless of their fruit (or lack thereof).
  - 2. Some react against this false assurance by focusing so much on the fruit of love and obedience, that they lose sight of God's grace to us in Christ.
  - 3. It is our desire to maintain a biblical balance.

**II. We know we are united to God because He has given us the Holy Spirit. v. 13**

- A. In what sense do we abide in God and God in us? v. 13a,15b,16b 2:24 3:24  
John 15:1-11 14:20
  - 1. John is not talking about a material or spatial abiding.
  - 2. We enjoy intimate fellowship with God. 1:3
  - 3. The Holy Spirit actually and powerfully enters our lives. John 14:17 II Pe. 1:4
- B. God has given His Spirit to every believer. Ro. 8:9 I Co. 12:13 Acts 2:38-39 Eph. 1:14
- C. How can you know God has given you the Holy Spirit?
  - 1. The possession of the Spirit is not a feeling.
  - 2. God promises His Spirit to all who believe. Acts 2:38-39
  - 3. You know you have received the Holy Spirit because of His work in your life.
- D. How does the Holy Spirit assure you that you are in fellowship with God?
  - 1. He bears witness in your heart that God is your Father. Rom. 8:15-16
  - 2. He convinces you of the truth. I Co. 12:3 2:14 John 15:26-27 14:26 Rom. 8:14
  - 3. He convicts you of your sin. John 16:8
  - 4. He produces fruit (including love!). 3:23-24 Gal. 5:22-23 Rom. 5:5

**III. We know we are united to God because we confessed Jesus, the Son of God. v. 14-15**

- A. The test of your fellowship with God is your response to the apostolic testimony. v. 14
  - 1. Your salvation is the work of the Triune God.
    - a. The Father, the author of salvation, has sent His Son. 4:9-10,14 Eph. 1:3-6
    - b. The Son has accomplished our salvation. 1:7 2:1-2 3:16 4:10,14 Eph. 1:7-12
    - c. The Spirit has given us life and sight. 4:2,13 5:1
  - 2. In what sense is Jesus Savior of the world? v. 14b 2:2 John 3:16-17 1:29 Acts 5:31
    - a. The world, because of sin, needs a Savior! 1:8,10
    - b. He is not the Savior of every person without exception. 4:17 Mt. 25:31f
    - c. He is the Savior of everyone without distinction -- Jews and Gentiles. John 4:42
    - d. He is the only Savior the world has. John 14:6 12:32 Acts 4:12
    - e. In love, He paid the ultimate price for a world which hates Him. Ro. 5:8,10
    - f. *Whoever* turns to Him will be saved. 4:15a John 6:37 Rom. 10:9-13
    - g. Because of Him the world will not perish.
    - h. He is Savior, not merely an example, a helper, or an instructor. Ro. 3:10,23
  - 3. Jesus is the unique Son of God. 4:15,9 John 1:1f Heb. 1:5

- B. You have acknowledged Jesus as the Son of God. v. 15**
1. Of what kind of confession is John speaking?
  2. John is probably speaking of a decisive initial public confession of faith.
  3. What is the biblical method for making a public profession of faith? Acts 2:37-42 8:12,36-38 9:18 10:47 16:30-33
  4. What is the significance of making a public profession of faith through baptism?
    - a. Baptism itself does not save you. Eph. 2:8-9 Acts 16:30-31
    - b. Baptism symbolically portrays your union with Christ. Ro. 6:3-7 .
    - c. Your confession of faith through baptism builds your assurance.
    - d. Why would any true believer refuse to publicly confess Christ? Mt. 10:32-33
- C. Your confession of Jesus requires both the objective apostolic truth and the subjective work of the Spirit.**
1. The apostles bear witness to the historic gospel events. 1:1-3 II Pe. 1:16 John 1:14
  2. The Spirit enables you to recognize the truth of their testimony. Jo. 15:26-27 14:26 Acts 5:32 16:14 Mt. 16:17 Gal. 4:4-6
  3. If you have truly confessed Jesus is the Son of God and Savior, you can be assured you are in fellowship with God! I Co. 12:3 1:18 2:14

**IV. We know we are united to God because we abide in His love. v. 16**

- A. We know and believe God loves us. v. 16a**
1. God wants you to be absolutely certain of His love for you. Isa. 49:15-16
  2. How can we be certain? 4:10-11 Rom. 8:31-32,38-39
  3. Real believers are sure of the reality of God's love and rely upon it.
- B. As a result, the principle of love controls our lives. v. 16b Ro. 5:5**
1. Since God is love, it follows that the person who lives in God, loves. v. 16b, 11-12
  2. We love both God and our brothers.
  3. This transformation proves we are united with God.
- C. The way to grow in love is to meditate upon the love of God for you. 4:19 II Co. 5:14**

**V. Concluding applications.**

- A. God wants His people to be certain they are securely in relationship to Him.**
- B. How can you know?**
1. Are you concerned about spiritual things and have you a desire to have them?
  2. Are you aware of your sin? Ro. 7:18,24 John 16:8 Gal. 5:17
  3. Have you confessed your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ? 4:2 I Co. 2:8,10,14 12:3
  4. Are you aware of the fact that God is working in you? Phil. 2:12-13 Gal. 5:22-23
  5. Do you love the brethren?

**Discussion questions**

1. What does it mean for God to abide in us and us to abide in God?
2. How does the Holy Spirit assure us we are in fellowship with God?
3. What doctrine must you believe in order to have fellowship with God?
4. How does our confession of Christ assure us we are in fellowship with God?
5. Is John speaking of a particular kind of confession?
6. In what sense is Jesus the Savior of the world?  
Is He the Savior of all without exception, or of all without distinction?
7. How can you be sure of God's love for you?
8. What is the inevitable effect of God's love upon a believer?