

WHY I AM A BELIEVER IN JESUS CHRIST

During my childhood, I was taught Scripture and was encouraged to memorize verses of Scripture. Out of that experience, God graciously used the Scripture to convict me of my sin, my need of right standing with God, and the fact of judgment for my sin. Gradually I began to respond to this conviction and God continued to bring me to the realization that I needed a Savior from sin and that one and only Savior is Jesus Christ who left Heaven, became a man, lived a sinless life, died sinless for my sin removal, and arose to give me new life in Him.

Individuals of my church set good examples of cooperation with the Spirit of God and I followed this example of cooperation. The Spirit of God led me to an understanding of believing in Jesus as the only Way, the only Truth, and the only way to Life in relationship with God.

I am a believer in Christ because God initiated His work in me through His church and through the conviction of the Holy Spirit and I cooperated with His work which brought me to saving faith.

My spiritual birth and my new life in Christ began after I came under the conviction of the Holy Spirit and after I understood the simple Gospel of Jesus Christ.

God has predetermined to save all those who cooperate. When we believe, we are “in Christ.” Believers become the “elect of God” after they believe.

Matthew 23:37b Jesus said, “I have longed to gather you to Myself but you were not willing.”

Ephesians 1:13b After that you believed, you were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise.

For God chose us (those who are “in Christ”) before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight. He predestined us (who are “in Christ”) to be adopted as His sons through Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 1:4

Election is never to “salvation.” Election is for those “in Christ” and they are all elected to holiness, blamelessness, and service. Assurance of salvation must come from the Holy Spirit. No teacher can

give us assurance of our salvation. Assurance comes by way of the Spirit through the Scriptures. The following is my experience with assurance.

ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

It is always the work of the Holy Spirit to give a person assurance of their salvation. It is never the work of a pastor or teacher to give a person assurance that they are going to heaven. Romans 8:15-16 A person can have many false motives for choosing to be a follower of Jesus Christ. False motives always leave out the necessary intent to become a new creation in Christ by which we become bearers of God's glory in righteous actions and intent on ceasing personal sin. Intent means to be determined to do something. Romans 10:13 suggests that calling on the Lord is based on repentance toward God and faith in Jesus Christ. Repentance toward God means our intent to turn to a lifestyle of holiness in character as we are continually convicted by the Spirit and continually respond in obedience to God's commands. The following is a list of false motives which do not merit the calling upon God that yields salvation from sin. A lost sinner may call upon God because he wants to resolve some problem in his life. A lost sinner may call upon God because he wants to go to heaven when he dies and yet has no intent to be holy and serve God with his life. A lost sinner may simply want to please his teacher by calling upon God and get out from under the stress of the moment. A teacher cannot know the true motives of the student and should not give the student assurance just because the student called upon God for salvation. A truly saved person can have assurance of salvation but that assurance can only come from the Holy Spirit accomplished through God's Word. 1 John 2:3-6

THE BELIEVER'S STRUGGLE AGAINST SIN

Salvation comes to cooperating souls who have a readiness of mind to hear the good news from Jesus. Salvation is a call to holiness and service empowered by the Holy Spirit. After the cooperating soul has been born again, Satan is still active in conveying lies which harm. When the temptation to sin is greater than the conviction to not sin, a believer is failing to exercise faith in Christ due to a lie of Satan. Only the Holy Spirit can convict us of our faithlessness which is leading to our sinful behavior. Our lack of conviction often comes from a lie that Satan has caused us to consider concerning the cross of Jesus. The lie is that Jesus was punished at the cross for our sins in our place, and that Jesus has paid the debt that we owe to sin. The fact is that we continue to pay our debt to sin in this life and

in eternity due to loss of reward that our sins prohibited. When we think that Jesus was being punished in our place, which is a lie of Satan, we tend to lose focus on our intent to cease personal sin. The lie tends to make us think that our sin is unavoidable and even excusable because we are human. Believers can fall into moral failure because of the lies of Satan. Proper conviction of the Holy Spirit can only come upon us out of truth found in God's Word. Our sin is properly condemned when we realize that our sin laid upon Jesus and against Jesus led to His death. Sin condemned itself by killing the sinless and holy Son of God. God says that this greatest condemnation of sin sentences sin to removal from all creation. Jesus has been shown to have all power and authority to judge and remove all sin from creation. John 5:22 Matthew 28:18

When we see our sin in the proper context, we are convicted of our responsibility to cease sin and live righteous lives empowered by the Spirit. When our personal sin is viewed properly with truth from God's Word, our conviction to not sin becomes more powerful than our temptation to sin.