

PERSISTENT ASSURANCE

Peter presents faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as transformative. You are saved, you know it, and you show it. Not because of your works, but because of Christ's work. You trust only in what He has done for you. 2Peter 1:10 says, *"be all the more diligent to make your calling and election sure, for if you practice these qualities, you will never fall."* This relates to what theologians call the preservation of the saints, as you grow in experience of assurance of salvation. Peter says be aware, be persistent, be sure, be stirred up.

1- BE AWARE. Your works are the fruit of faith, not the root. Assurance of salvation is the "flower of the Holy Spirit" that accompanies the fruit of the Spirit, which gives outward evidence of salvation as inward reality. Both follow your election and calling, and point to the progressive sanctification of the believer. God's Word shows how becoming a Christian and living as a Christian is all about trusting and obeying. As Hebrews 10 says, *"we have confidence"* by the blood of Jesus, and draw near to God *"with a true heart in full assurance of faith"* as we *"hold fast the confession without wavering, for He who promised is faithful."* Such assurance is a ministry of the Holy Spirit, as Hebrews 6 calls the *"anchor of the soul."*

2- BE PERSISTENT. Believers are safe in Jesus, *"having escaped the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire."* Your life is being transformed as you trust and obey. This keeps you from falling prey to false teaching. The apostle Paul agrees in Philippians 1:6, *"God who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Christ Jesus"* v11 *"filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ to the glory of God."* In 2:12 he says, *"work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure."* He pictures a faithful servant striving to please the master who has rescued him from a hopeless life, as God gives the want to and the how to. As Titus 3 says to those God has regenerated to faith, *"He saved us, not because of works done by us" so "be careful to devote themselves to good works."*

3- BE SURE. When Peter says *"be all the more diligent to make your calling and election sure"* he tells his readers to live out what God has done for you. Know it and show it. Believe it and live it. Trust and obey. This strengthens your faith because you see God at work, transforming your life. 2Peter 1:11 *"for in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."* Paul echoes this in Colossians 1, *"because of your love in the Spirit...we pray that you walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to Him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in knowledge... because He has delivered us from darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son."* Acts 14:22, *"strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God."* Romans 5 points to peace with God even in trials, rejoicing because God's love is poured out by the Holy Spirit. Galatians 4 says that believers in the Lord Jesus Christ know God as Father because of the Holy Spirit within. That's "real life living" as you put all your trust in Jesus. Because you've been reborn by the Holy Spirit to trust and obey, midst every life situation, with a growing everyday reality of being transformed by Him.

4- BE STIRRED UP. Assurance of salvation is great motivation in sanctification. Peter says *"I stir you up by way of reminder"* since his time on earth is short. He wants his readers to have the same assurance that he does. *"I will make every effort so that after my departure you may be able at any time to recall these things."* Peter writes it down, as he completes his apostolic mission, producing the New Testament. This brings the assurance that comes with objective truth, rather than subjective experience which can be misconstrued. Paul agrees in 2Corinthians 5, *"He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee...so we are always of good courage...as we walk by faith, not by sight... We would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord...we make it our aim to please Him... knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade others."* And as 1John 5 says *"whoever believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself, because whoever has the Son has life... and I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life."*

Assurance of salvation comes from the Holy Spirit. It's contrary to false spirits and false teachers who ply false assurance based on mystical revelations or spiritual experiences or religious rituals, the teachings of the father of lies who twists the truth. Counterfeit assurance can never carry you through trials. That's why God wrote it down, for every believer in every time and every place, to trust His Word. Peter says if only you would read the Bible, believe it, and live it, all by the power of the Holy Spirit, then you would know the truth, and the truth will transform your life, as you trust and obey the Lord Jesus Christ! □