

THE CHRISTIAN'S WARRANT FOR ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

May 28, 2017

Romans 8:1-39

“Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.” Romans 8:33, 34

ōThese things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of Godö (I John 5:13). With this purpose, the Apostle John wrote his first epistle. This certainty of personal salvation is affirmed repeatedly in Scripture. Paul wrote, öWe are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lordö (II Corinthians 5:8). He expressed his ödesire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far betterö (Philippians 1:23). He testified, öI know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that dayö (II Timothy 1:12).

Paul and John had no more claim to assurance than any other redeemed soul. Their warrant is identical to that possessed by every believer. Their warrant is affirmed in a series of questions and answers provided in Romans 8. öIf God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? . . . Who is he that condemneth? . . . Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?ö (33-38). Consider two of these questions and their answers:

Question: öWho shall lay any thing to the charge of God's Elect?ö

Answer: öIt is God that justifieth.ö

It is not man who justifies ó that would give every reason for insecurity. It is God who justifies ó who completes perfectly everything He begins. Justification is a declaration that He makes, not an assessment of the sinner's goodness, not an infusion of goodness into the sinner, not a process for the sinner to work through. Nor is it a measurement of the strength of one's faith. Rather, God declares the sinner to be righteous ó justified ó on the basis of Christ's own righteousness.

God gave the law that renders every man guilty. He knows every thought and action. He is the one against whom every offence is made. He öspared not his own son, but delivered him up for us allö (8:32). With His word He spoke creation into existence. With these credentials and with this power in His Word, He can declare the sinner to be just.

Question: öWho is he that condemneth?ö

Answer: öIt is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.ö

This succession of Christ's work provides full warrant for our assurance. God justifies because Christ died, rose again, and is at His right hand interceding for us. By this truth, öthe Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christö (8:16, 17).