



John 14:19-24

“How Can You Be Sure You Are Saved”

19 " A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also.

20 "At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.

21 "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."

22 Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, "Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?"

23 Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.

24 "He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me.

Last week we saw Jesus teaching that the thing that really sets the believer and the unbeliever apart is the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit in the believer, and thus someone who is really a Christian is not merely someone who was baptized and goes to church, but someone who has been regenerated, or born again, and now has the Holy Spirit living and abiding within them forever.

But how does someone know if they really are one of those people? How can you know if you really are a Christian, and not just a Christian in name only? How can someone know that they if they are saved or not? So many people struggle with that question, and unfortunately quite a few people who should be struggling with it do not. But how can we tell we've been saved and are not simply carnally presuming that we have been? Jesus answers that question in these verses, and that's what I really want to discuss with you today.

Now He taught some other wonderful things here too, and I don't want to entirely pass over them. First we see in verse 19 that he reminds them that in just a little while he will be going to the cross and promises them that while the world will see Him no more, because His earthly ministry is coming to an end, they will. They will see Him die on the cross, but they will see Him resurrected three days later. And on that joyous Sunday, that first Lord's Day, they will know two things:

FIRST - Because He lives they will live also, because He has been resurrected and they are united to Him, then someday they will live. His dying for their sins and rising again for their justification, will make it certain that someday they too will be resurrected. Jesus as the firstfruits then all His Sheep after Him.

SECOND – On the day of Christ’s resurrection they will know for certain that everything that Christ was telling them and promising them was true. How could they know that what Jesus said about the Holy Spirit dwelling in them and Him being with them and they with Him forever was true? How could they know that He and the Father really were one? They would have the incontrovertible evidence of His resurrection. God the Father would by that amazing miracle set His own Royal Seal on everything that His Son Jesus had said in His Name.

And incidentally, I hope as we go through John together you are seeing that all of the things that Jesus is saying are utterly impossible *unless* He himself is God. Moses, you may recall, as he was dying told the people of Israel, I’m going away but don’t worry, God will be with you. Jesus on the other hand as He is about to die on the cross says, I’m going away, but don’t worry I will not leave you as Orphans, I will always be with you, I will never leave you alone.

Wonderful promises of Christ! But here’s the rub, those promises aren’t being to everyone are they? He’s already said they’ll see him, but the world won’t. There’s two classes of people here, worldlings and Christians. So how can you know which group we are in?

Well Jesus says that it is only when you have the Spirit indwelling you will you have the fellowship that Christ, the Love for Him, that he speaks of, and the desire to obey His commandments. He says In verse 21 ***"He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."***

So there’s the first question to ask yourself *do you have have Christ’s commandments and do you keep them?* Now maybe your thinking, *sure I do I’m holding the bible in my hand, Christ’s commandments are in here, I HAVE His Commandments and I’m not giving this bible away so I’m keeping them!* But that’s not what He means is it? He means to have them in your heart, and to truly “keep them” is so much more even than mere outward tick box obedience. **“Do not murder, check, did not murder today.”** Even in the Old Testament that was never what God meant by **“keep my commandments”**

Joshua 22:5 ***"But take careful heed to do the commandment and the law which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, to love the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways, to keep His commandments, to hold fast to Him, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul."***

And this is one of the reasons that the world just cannot understand God’s commandments. They see them as a written list of do’s and don’ts the likes of which you might see in a correctional institution. ***Stay behind the yellow line, do not speak with the officer unless spoken to,*** and so on. And what prisoner would say “What joy I have in not crossing the yellow line!?” So when the Psalmist says **“Oh, how I love Your law! It is my meditation all the day.”** (Psalm 119:96) it is just incomprehensible to them. Because they don’t know the author of those commandments and they don’t love Him.

Because you do see don’t you that Jesus is saying that to really Love Him is not a thing seen in words, it is a thing seen in deeds. **We don’t gain or earn His Love because we do these deeds.** This is no crass legalism or works based salvation. **We do these deeds because we love Him,** and “We love Him because He first loved us.” As 1 John 4:19 tells us. These deeds don’t save us, but If we’ve been saved, we will do these deeds:

Eph. 2:8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast. 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Now Judas, this is the other Judas, John wants us to know that Judas Iscariot did not come back to ask a question, asks a question about why Jesus isn't going to manifest Himself to the world? I mean it's not a bad question. Why is it that the Messiah, rising again from the dead would not manifest Himself to the world?

And the answer is that although they saw Him for a while, they never did know Him. Now physically he will be removed from them, he will ascend to the Father and they will have no communion with Him. Take Christ's answer here to heart - unless someone is changed spiritually, born again, they will never truly know Him. To this day, the world does not know or see Christ. They may make bogus images of him, or terrible shows on the history channel searching for the "real Christ", but they are searching as blind men. They don't love Him and consequently they don't love his words are keep them.

But what about you. What are the things that *you love*? You know the things that you think about all the time, the things that you want to be doing? Is Christ and His Word what you are thinking about all the time. If I slapped a bumpersticker on your car would it be telling the truth if it said "I'd rather be worshipping Jesus?" or "I'd rather be fishing?"

Can you honestly say, that the things of Christ and heaven are what moves you most, or do they come after a long, long list of other things? Do they make the list?

Isn't it astounding that countless people think they are going to heaven but they have they no interest at all in the things of heaven. Heaven the word tells us is a place where are worship and communion with God will be perfect and eternal. No more struggles in the faith, no more seeing through a glass darkly, but face to face. Forever in the presence of Jesus.

Rev. 21:2 Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

3 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.

4 "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

But if someone has no desire for communion or worship of him, and spends all their time pursuing the things of the world, the flesh, and the devil and associating with people who do likewise, why would they think that will change when they step into eternity? Oscar Wilde was at least honest when he said ***"I don't want to go to heaven. None of my friends are there."***

Please believe me friends the bible nowhere teaches that salvation is by death alone. It teaches that salvation is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. And as Charles Ross aptly summed it up ***"None shall dwell with God in heaven, with whom God does not first dwell on earth."***

So you've received enough information that you should know whether Christ is in you, do you love Him? Do you have and keep his word? Have you seen the evidence of salvation in you that only the Holy Spirit can produce?

You see the theory but what does that look like practically? Let me give you an example of what it looks like in the life of a man you've probably never heard of, John Gifford. Gifford was a Cavalier, a soldier from Kent, and a major in the army of King Charles during the English Civil war. Gifford was what older authors would have called a "profane man" he drank too much, and was constantly gambling and womanizing and felt comfortable in the presence of those who did the same. He couldn't stand Christ's people, and hated the Puritans with a passion. Well after the King's forces were defeated in the civil war, Gifford was one of the ring-leaders of an attempted uprising against the new government. The rebellion went badly and Gifford was captured and sentenced to hang with eleven other ring-leaders. That would have been the end of his life, but amazingly the day before his execution his sister came to visit him and found the guards asleep and all the other prisoners hopelessly drunk. She merely opened her brother's cell door and they walked out of the prison, in a manner that reminds you of the way Peter was miraculously delivered from jail in Acts 12. He hid in a ditch for several days and then made his way to the quiet town of Bedford, where he took up the job of a physician and even got married.

Now he'd said of course, *"I'll make a new start of it, I'll turn over a new leaf"* but the natural man can no more change his own heart than the Leopard can change his spots. He returned to all his old habits with a vengeance and was soon gambling away what little he earned. His rage and bitterness was frequently vented against the Puritans of the town whom he saw as the cause of all his misfortune. Finally after losing 15 pounds gambling one night (keep in mind that in that day a laborer could expect to earn 5 pounds a year) he resolved to kill one of the leading Christians in the town. But amazingly on reaching home, he picked up one of his wife's books, by a Puritan by the name of Robert Bolton, on the subject of the "Four Last Things: Death, Judgment, Hell and Heaven" and as he read through it one question pierced his soul: *"Consider that to die is but to be done once and if we err in that one action we are undone everlastingly. What manner of man ought you to be in the mean time... to give up your account with comfort at that dreadful hour?"* Gifford was convicted and as he continued to read in Bolton's book night after night, he found that the only answer to that question was to be found in Christ, that through his blood even the vilest of sinners might find forgiveness and that through the righteousness of Christ given to that sinner, he might find acceptance with God and the joy of salvation. He came to faith, but like Paul had great difficulty convincing the Christians he had persecuted that he was a new man and desired to meet and worship with them. Eventually it was not his words, but his manifestly new life and spirit that convinced them. **Everything that Gifford had once loved he now hated, and everything that he hated he now loved.** He studied the Word with such diligence that the small group of Baptist believers whom he had once despised called him to be their pastor. His character and life were so thoroughly changed that he came to be known as "Holy Mr. Gifford." Gifford only lived for seven years after that, but the Lord used him to change the world, because one of the converts under his ministry was another man who had been known for his great immorality, *John Bunyan.*

Application: I know I love Jesus and I want to keep his commandments, but *Sometimes I still struggle*

Well unfortunately Satan is in the business of robbing believers of assurance...

Q81: Are all true believers at all times assured of their present being in the estate of grace, and that they shall be saved?

A81: Assurance of grace and salvation not being of the essence of faith,[1] true believers may wait long before they obtain it;[2] and, after the enjoyment thereof, may have it weakened and intermitted, through manifold distempers, sins, temptations, and desertions;[3] yet are they never left without such a presence and support of the Spirit of God as keeps them from sinking into utter despair.[4]

Deut. 31:6 "Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them; for the LORD your God, He is the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you."

Finally, I want to speak from the heart to those of you who having heard all this may have come under conviction. Some of you may have heard what I have been saying about loving Christ and keeping his word and have realized I am not doing that. My life is loaded down with all sorts of open or secret and beloved sins I will not part with.

Matthew 7:13 " Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to **destruction, and there are many who go in by it.**

14 "Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.

The gateway to heaven is Narrow, and only those clad only in the righteousness of the son can get through it. You cannot take all your beloved sins with you to heaven, any more than a camel can get through the eye of a needle.

But understand, there is no sin so great that Christ's grace is not greater still. The cross was as Iain Murray puts it so well, "The Pulpit of God's Love" and He doesn't love us because we've earned it, He loves us because He loves us.