



## SPECIAL LESSON: “JESUS SAVED ME – NOW I HAVE SOME QUESTIONS,” PART 4

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SUNDAY, April 12, 2026, 11AM  
Taught at: Ridgeview Classical Schools  
1800 S. Lemay Ave., Fort Collins, CO  
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### Review:

- Today is our fourth lesson in a special short series I’ve called, “**Jesus Saved Me – Now I Have Some Questions.**”
- This special series comes out of our larger study in **1 and 2 Thessalonians**. We’ve worked our way through the first chapter of **1 Thessalonians** so far.
- We saw in that chapter that Paul is thankful for this new body of believers, and he was confident that they were truly saved. We’ve learned why he felt as he did.

**NOTE:** But, as we worked through that first chapter of **1 Thessalonians**, the things we encountered there raised some probing questions for us. We’ve laid out five of them:

1. How should we properly define the Gospel?
2. Does God choose us, or do we choose Him?
3. Do we have eternal security as Christians?
4. Why do we struggle with doubts about our salvation?
5. What can we know about the issue of ‘backsliding?’

**NOTE:** In **Parts 1, 2, and 3**, we’ve addressed the first three of those questions. Those videos and lesson notes are on our website and our YouTube channel now.

Today, I want to deal with the next question on that list. Next week, I’ll tackle the last one.

### **A. Why do we struggle with doubts about our salvation?**

**NOTE:** Let me begin by saying everyone has probably had some doubts concerning their salvation from time to time. Here are some of the reasons for that:

- We find ourselves dealing with some unrepented sin in our lives.
- We compare our Christian walk with others we know.
- We cannot seem to turn away from our bad habits and choices.

- We depend on our own rituals or strength for reassurance.
- We think our pasts are too hard or too dark for God to overcome.
- We're not talking, acting, or living like other 'Christians' we know.
- We go with our feelings too much, and we don't 'feel saved.'

**NOTE:** There are many reasons why we might struggle with doubts about our salvation, and as I said, these are some of them. We can experience valid doubts, and we can experience invalid doubts – some reasons for our doubts are warranted, while others - - not so much....

I want to break this outline down into THREE parts as we address this question, "Why do we struggle with doubts about our salvation?" Those three points are:

- We can **discover** reassurance,
- We can **dispel** the doubts, and
- We can **depend** on the promises of God.

### 1. We can discover reassurance.

- **FIRST**, whether or not we experience doubt, our doubt does NOT determine our salvation.
  - ✓ I believe some **believers** who are TRULY saved struggle with doubt from time to time.
  - ✓ I also believe that some **unbelievers** who are NOT truly saved (but they think they are) have never really had a doubting moment.
  - ✓ So, it is not legitimate to assume that 'doubt' as a solo matter indicates a **lack** of salvation, or that having no doubt means we **have** salvation.
  - ✓ As a very general comment here, I don't think it's a bad thing to feel a little doubt occasionally – if we are experiencing the appropriate concern and accountability that goes with that.

**NOTE:** The fact that we may honestly – and even tearfully - process these concerns within ourselves is evidence of the work of God in our hearts. It is evidence of our desire FOR God, FOR salvation, and FOR our wish to know Him better.

- **SECOND**, we must not seek reassurance of our salvation in the **wrong** things.
  - ✓ We've learned – in some past lessons – that it is important for our faith to show 'works.' That means, it's important for our faith to '**show up.**'
  - ✓ I cannot overstate this – our faith is NOT dependent on our works, because there is NOTHING we can do to **earn** our salvation.
  - ✓ The Bible is crystal clear. Our salvation is by the grace and gift of God alone (**Cf. Eph. 2:8-9**).
  - ✓ But I believe one of the 'works' (if you will) that demonstrates our faith is the **real deal** is our DESIRE to be in a right relationship with God.
  - ✓ We should always DESIRE this right relationship with God. It should consume us; it should be TOP OF MIND for us.

- ✓ This is, in fact, a Godly desire, and we should feel some distress if this is NOT our desire. That's not a good sign.
- ✓ Let me partly illustrate what I mean by looking at the opposite of this Godly DESIRE (**Cf. Matt. 7:21-23**):

*“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?’ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’*

- This – as I’ve shared before - is one of the scariest passages in all the Bible. I think one of the implications we see in it is these folks didn’t care enough while they had the chance to. They didn’t have the right DESIRE.
  - ✓ Had they had some honest doubts, and had they evidenced the right desire, they may not have ended up like this - - in this irreversible and calamitous position.
  - ✓ But while they were alive and on earth, they didn’t have any healthy doubts. They didn’t show any proper desire.
  - ✓ While they were breathing this air and being in this body, they were confident they were in a good standing with God.
  - ✓ While they were paying their taxes and driving the speed limit, they assumed they already had their ticket to heaven.
  - ✓ And so, what I see implied here in **Matthew** is these folks didn’t doubt when they should have. They didn’t desire what was most important.
  - ✓ They never honestly looked into the mirror and asked the tough questions of themselves. They never cared enough to really CARE.
- **Why were they like this?** This passage shows they had trusted in the wrong things for their salvation. They assumed things that were not correct.
  - ✓ They trusted in their works and their activities.
  - ✓ They trusted in their ability to ‘sound right’ and say the right things.
  - ✓ They trusted in being part of the ‘right crowd’ and meeting the expectations of others.
  - ✓ They trusted in things, rituals, resumes, and performances that were not Biblically based.
  - ✓ They trusted in an emotion-based ‘Christian’ experience and not in a truth-based Christian experience.

**NOTE:** It’s concerning to me that these folks in **Matt. Ch. 7** are described by the very things that the charismatic / pentecostal / apostolic denominations obsessively talk about and pursue: *“signs, healings, prophecies, and casting out demons.”*

- I would add that this delusion is sweeping through many people today and preventing them from seeing the truth about salvation and about their own standing in the faith.

- It's preventing them from embracing the FULL COUNSEL OF GOD'S WORD. It's keeping them from seeing and understanding things they ought to.
- Satan wants more than anything to make us to believe we are OK even when we are not, and so he'll use '**doctrines of demons**' (1 Tim. 4:1) to lull us into thinking we're good-to-go. He'll even give us a tiny bit of the truth to keep us from wanting ALL of it.
- He wants us to relax in the crowd that we're already comfortable in, he wants us to stay in the patterns of things that earn others' favor and esteem, and he wants us to keep doing the empty rituals we perform to look good in the eyes of others.
- One thing Satan does NOT want is this: he does not want us to experience any well-intentioned doubts about our salvation.
  - He doesn't want us taking an honest look in the mirror. That may lead to genuinely caring about our standing in Christ, and Satan doesn't want that.
  - He wants us to be fully deluded, fully confident, and fully arrogant in our 'self-righteousness.'
  - He wants us to NOT CARE AT ALL about our salvation - - to never 'give it a second thought.'
- Satan definitely does NOT want us desiring a right relationship with God. One way to truly know you are saved is by your desire.
- Here are some questions that help us to understand our desire - - and if we have it in the first place:
  - Do you desire to know God? **Yes.**
  - Do you desire that God would know you and love you? **Yes.**
  - Do you desire to love God? **Yes.**
  - Do you desire to honor Him? **Yes.**
  - Do you desire to obey His Word? **Yes.**
- Being able to answer these questions in the affirmative (as I have rhetorically done here) are GOOD indications that your heart is Holy Spirit-led and that you have true salvation.
- One who does not naturally feel some concerns that are borne out of a proper reverence for God, and / or one that has no genuine desire to know, love, and obey God - - - is not showing a heart that is controlled and occupied by the Holy Spirit.

**NOTE:** So that was our first point: "**We can discover reassurance.**"

## 2. We can dispel the doubts.

**NOTE:** In *Philippians 2:12-13*, Paul writes, "*Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed – not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence – continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his purpose.*"

- This verse is sometimes misused by others to teach that we can lose our salvation. We've already learned in our last lesson that we have 'eternal security.' If we are truly saved – we cannot lose our salvation.

- But there are two things from this passage in **Philippians** that I want to point out. These two things are relevant to this larger question, ‘Why do we struggle with doubts about our salvation?’
  - **#1, there is the instruction to “work out” our salvation.**
    - ✓ This means we need "to continually strive to bring something to completion or fruition." We do this by pursuing obedience.
    - ✓ Paul explains in the very next chapter of **Philippians** that he is pursuing this obedience all the time.
    - ✓ He says he is “straining” and “pressing on” toward the goal of Christlikeness (**Cf. Philippians 3:13-14**):

*“Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.”*

- ✓ In light of our operative question about doubting our salvation - I could paraphrase this passage in **Philippians** this way:

*“If you are dealing with doubt, then get busy. Roll up your sleeves and strive for being obedient to God. Don’t worry about the past or the things you don’t know; focus on the future and the things you DO know. You’re on a journey of faith, so set ‘Christlikeness’ as your main goal. Preserve an eternal perspective and pursue your ultimate prize with full resolve.”*

- ✓ One who is not TRULY saved will care nothing about any of what I just said there.
- ✓ Instead, they will remain content in their rituals, routines, and relationships that affirm the things they most want to feel and believe.
- ✓ Their lives will be controlled by the values and priorities of earth, and they will resist any challenges to this.

**NOTE:** I want to comment on Paul’s statement, “*Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead.*” This is a very important discipline that helps us to **dispel our doubts**. Let me briefly say a few things here:

**a. We ALL have a ‘past’ that we wish we didn’t have.**

- Some of us had little or no choice in the matter. Our circumstances were given to us. We grew up with them, and we simply had to deal with them.
- For some of us, that was a hyper-legalistic, rigid, black and white, and religiously abusive upbringing. We came out of that SO scarred and scared that it was tough to trust and believe in a loving heavenly Father.
- It was tough to have REAL faith because we’d been given such a bad example. We’ve had to make our faith our own – and that’s been a very difficult journey.

- For some of us, we grew up dirt poor. We experienced every challenge and humility that went with that. Now we've turned things around a bit, and we have difficulty NOT making money and material acquisitions our top goal.
- For some of us, we've only ever known profound abuse and mistreatment. Those we should have trusted and depended on the most were exactly those that hurt us the most.
- Our scars are deep, and they are still tender. We've retreated into a shell of our own making. We're acting 99% in a self-protective mode, but it's keeping us from properly connecting with others. We fear being hurt again.
- Some of us have walked on the wrong side of the tracks for too long. Our lives maybe nudged us there at one point, but we also chose to STAY there. We've experienced a lot of drugs, alcohol, and other lifestyle vices.
- We know we've dropped our standards more times than we can count. We carry those pains and humiliations with us now. Those things are hard to overcome, and sometimes we wonder if we ever will.
- Some of us feel like we're still making wrong choices that add to our problems. We've compounded our struggles by coming to a crossroads and turning left when we should have turned right. We done that a few times now, and so things have become rough for us.
- **But here's the bottom line** - it doesn't matter what your PAST has been: marriage problems, the occult, sexual misconduct, catastrophic financial decisions, extreme pride or anger, or whatever. It doesn't matter.
- I don't know anybody that has not had some challenges in their PAST life, and I've only scratched the surface here of what those can be.
- But, if we are not careful, our past can become our prison. If we don't resolve to become victors, then we will always force others to see us through the lens we have chosen to see ourselves.

**b. Put yourself in Paul's shoes – he was divinely inspired here in *Philippians Ch. 3* to speak from his OWN personal experience.**

- He had plenty of past issues to regret; he had plenty of bad choices he'd made. And I'm betting HIS past was worse than most of ours.
- To say that Paul had a bad past is a gross understatement. Paul once lived the worst kind of sinful life you could imagine—persecuting and killing the saints of God.
- Think about that: Paul had not only been a religious bigot, an arrogant elitist, and a total snob, but he was a murderer before he came to faith in Jesus Christ.
- Do you think he ever laid awake at night and fretted about his past? Do you think his past ever made him wonder if he could be good enough in God's eyes? Do you think he ever had spiritual doubts because of his past?
- I'm pretty sure the answer is, "Yes." I think that's the reason he wrote, "*Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead.*" I think Paul had the normal human struggles with dealing with his past. I think he doubted.

- Paul is like us. We all have regrets about our past mistakes and sins, and we all have a spiritual enemy – Satan - that the Bible calls “the accuser” (**Cf. Revelation 12:10**).
  - Between the combination of our regrets and Satan’s accusations, this dynamic can spur much doubt.
  - But Paul’s solution was to consciously / willfully / deliberately put his past behind him. Those scars – humanly speaking – would always be there.
  - He had something greater than his past pains and his present doubts to focus on - - and that was his future in Christ.
  - (OK, all that is under this ‘*working out*’ our salvation....) Moving on to the next:
- **#2**, we see this “trembling” aspect.
- ✓ This is talking about the attitude we need to have as we pursue this goal of Christlikeness.
  - ✓ We need to have a healthy and proper fear of offending God through our disobedience. We need to cultivate an awe for His holiness.
  - ✓ "Trembling" is the weakness we feel in our pursuit of a higher purpose.
  - ✓ It is our weakness that causes us to be **continually dependent on God**. It is our weakness that results in looking to God for our strength rather than looking to ourselves or to others
  - ✓ **Psalm 2:11** says it perfectly, “*Serve the LORD with fear and rejoice with trembling.*”
  - ✓ Our reverence and awe of God is vitally important. It is an integral part of validating the sincerity of our faith.
  - ✓ And it is our weaknesses (even doubts which may come from our past) that keep us sincere in this process of becoming complete.

**NOTE:** So, experiencing doubts about our salvation is NOT what determines our salvation.

In fact, some personal doubts may be a sign that our heart is soft, and we CARE. We can **discover reassurance**, we can **dispel the doubts**, and now let’s look at the last point:

### 3. We can depend on the promises of God.

**NOTE:** It’s here that I want to say something very important to this larger issue that is framed by the question, ‘Why do we struggle with doubts about our salvation?’

- Having some doubts on these matters is normal, but we cannot permit those doubts to be levied against the person and work of Jesus Christ.
- We’ve learned that God has promised us eternal security if we are TRULY saved to begin with. That’s a condition that depends on HIM – on HIS promises!
- Consider what **1 John 5:11–13** says: “*And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. 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***”

- This is not about ‘doubting.’ It’s about ‘knowing.’ And what do we KNOW? We KNOW we have eternal life – we have salvation – if we have believed in Jesus Christ and have put our faith and trust in him completely.
- God doesn’t want us to have doubt. He wants us to know. He wants you and me to have assurance of our salvation.
- It’s not good, and it’s not productive, to live our Christian lives wondering and worrying each day whether or not we are truly saved.
- That is why the Bible lays out the good news of our salvation so clearly.
  - Do you believe in Jesus Christ alone for your salvation (**Cf. John 3:16; Acts 16:31; Et al**)?
  - Do you believe that Jesus Christ died to pay the penalty for your sins and that He rose again from the dead (**John 3:16; Romans 5:8, 10:9; 2 Corinthians 5:21 Et al**)?
  - Do you believe that Jesus Christ is the only way to eternal life (**Cf. John 14:6, Et al**)?
  - If your answer to these questions is an honest “yes,” if you are actively living with these convictions – with these promises of God - then you are saved!
  - We don’t need to struggle with doubt – we can have assurance instead.

**NOTE:** We need to take joy in what God’s Word is saying to us: instead of doubting, we can have confidence! That confidence is not contingent on us in any way. If it was, we’d never have that confidence. We can depend on the promises of God for our salvation, because those promises are based on the perfect person and work of Jesus Christ.

**NEXT WEEK:** “What can we know about the issue of ‘backsliding?’”

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Solid Bread Community was started with a passion to teach the truth of God’s Word – every part of it, as it was divinely inspired to be understood.

The rules are simple. First, teach what IS there. Don’t pretend the Bible is not saying what it is saying.

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Second, don’t teach what is NOT there. Don’t force a passage to mean something it really doesn’t.

And – number three, if the Bible states it plainly, we should too.

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