

Deposit On Salvation
September 2, 2018

If you needed a new washing machine, but did not have the money in the bank to buy one, what could you do? Well if you have a credit card with a high enough borrowing limit on it, you could purchase a washing machine with your credit card. Then you pay a little bit of the cost, with interest, each month until you get it paid for.

You can do that with most things you buy these days. It used to be that you had to spend a certain amount before stores would let you charge something. It was around 25 or 30 dollars. Now you can charge even small purchases, like a pack of gum. In many instances you can pay the plumber or electrician with a charge card. We recently paid our homeowners insurance with a credit card. You can buy almost anything these days with a credit card.

But for really big purchases the seller wants some money from you up front. This is called a deposit or a down payment. When you are shopping for a car, you give the seller a deposit to hold the car for you while you then work on getting a loan from the bank to pay the rest.

If you want to buy a particular house you give the seller a deposit, say a thousand dollars. The seller, accepting your deposit, promises not to sell the house to someone else while you arrange a loan for the rest of the money. Let's look at a definition.

deposit = a sum of money paid as a first installment on the purchase of something or as a pledge for a contract, the balance being payable later.

Did you know that the Christian faith involves a deposit? It is not a deposit of money. But it IS a pledge to fulfill a promise later. God makes a deposit to us as a guarantee that He will fulfill all the promises He has made to us in Jesus.

If you prayed to receive Jesus as Savior and Lord, God began to give you his salvation package of blessings. Salvation consists of a number of different parts, some of which you received right away. Others you receive as you live the Christian life. And the rest you will receive when Jesus returns.

We speak of our salvation this way: **We were saved. We are being saved. We will be saved.**

There are different blessings associated with all of these stages of our salvation.

The first stage took place all at one time, in the moment after you prayed to receive Jesus as Savior and Lord. This assumes your prayer was genuine. In that moment God regenerated you, adopted you, forgave you, credited you with the righteousness of Jesus, justified you, and put the Holy Spirit in you. All of these happened in the time it takes to snap your fingers.

But how do you know they happened? They were invisible. You did not see these blessings occur, did not smell them or hear them. So how do you know they took

occurred? How do you know they took place? To put it another way, how do you know whether or not you are truly saved?

Did God supernaturally place a certificate of salvation in your pocket? Did an angel appear and teach you a secret handshake? Did you get an email or text with a personal prayer password? I didn't. I don't know of anyone who did. So how are we to know that we are saved? That is what today's sermon is about.

There was a time that I was not familiar with the truths I am sharing with you today about the evidence of salvation. And because I continued to struggle with sin, I doubted that I was a Christian. You may be at such a place today.

So hear this, if you prayed to receive Jesus as Savior and Lord, repenting of your sin, beginning to know and obey Jesus, these things DID happen to you. One of these things was that God put His Spirit in you.

The Holy Spirit came to live in you, to indwell you. The Holy Spirit is called a deposit in the book of Ephesians. Paul, the missionary, in his letter to the church at Ephesus writes the following in speaking of the blessings they have received as Christians.

Ephesians 1:13-14 (NIV) And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession--to the praise of his glory.

The phrase until the redemption refers to the return of Jesus. The Holy Spirit in us is God's deposit on the rest of our salvation that will be fulfilled when Jesus returns.

Now learn with me several... **Key truths about the Holy Spirit:**

You received the Holy Spirit at conversion.

Do not be misled by those who teach a second baptism, a baptism with the Holy Spirit, that you must ask for separate from receiving Jesus as Savior and Lord. In the moment after you prayed yourself into the hands of Jesus, you received the Holy Spirit. It occurred just as your rebirth occurred. You did not have to ask for Him anymore than you had to ask God to adopt you, to redeem you, or to regenerate you.

You can't live any of the Christian life without the Holy Spirit. There is not a person anywhere who can be a Christian without the Holy Spirit. There is not a person who can follow Christ without the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is not an it, but is a person. The Bible says that He is not some thing, He is some one. He is God.

The Holy Spirit works to change us. He doesn't rest in you. He is actively working to change you. The Holy Spirit is transforming us to live the Christian life.

So what would we look for as evidence of the Holy Spirit living in us?

The Holy Spirit continues to convict us of Sin.

I say he continues this, because He did it before you were saved. You first experienced this before you put your faith in Jesus. In John 16, Jesus said...

John 16:8 (NIV) When he (the Holy Spirit) comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment...

What that means is that when you heard the good news of Jesus, the Spirit sent a message to you that you are a sinner. The Spirit spoke to your mind, your heart, your soul. The Spirit convicted you of your sinfulness.

Secondly, the Spirit affirmed the death and resurrection of Jesus as God's remedy for your sin and the provision for righteousness, a right relationship with God.

And third, the Spirit warned your heart of a coming judgment upon your sin.

We see an example of this convicting work of the Spirit in Luke's gospel. This took place after the resurrection of Jesus. The resurrected Jesus appeared to two disciples as they walked along the road, though they did not recognize him. As they walked along, Jesus engaged them in conversation, pretending not to know why they were so depressed. They told him of the crucifixion of their teacher, Jesus. And then it says this...

Luke 24:25-27 (NIV) He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?" And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

A bit later Jesus disappears from their sight and in that moment they realized it was Jesus they were talking to and said to each other...

Luke 24:32 (NIV) "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?"

Now, their hearts were not literally on fire. Nor does it mean they had reflux or indigestion. But they felt something real in their chest. They understood something real in their minds. They felt in their souls that what Jesus had said was absolutely true.

And because they were already disciples of Jesus, it filled them with excitement. They were like, "WOW!" They saw that these prophecies had been fulfilled in Jesus. They understood things that had been a mystery to them before. And they were astounded.

Before you put your faith in Jesus, this same thing happened to you. It may not have been as sudden and dramatic to you as it was to them, but that is what the Holy Spirit does. The Spirit convicts us of the truth of our sin, of the truth of the gift of righteousness available in Jesus, and the truth of judgment awaits on sin.

And now that you are a Christian, the Holy Spirit continues to convict you of sin. It is what the Spirit does. It is evidence of your salvation.

The Holy Spirit produces joy in us.

1 Peter 1:8-9 (NIV) Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Robyn Rixse used to be a member of our church. She got saved after 9/11. Some of you will remember how bubbly Robyn Rixse became when she got saved. She walked around here for weeks with a huge smile on her face. Her enthusiasm for Christ was unbounded. Some of us did not know quite how to respond, for our experience was not the same.

But there are times when I am reading the Bible that I am suddenly overwhelmed by God's love for me and I tear up in absolute joy. This is what the Spirit does. It isn't something you drum up. It comes from the Holy Spirit. It is evidence of your salvation.

The Holy Spirit produces a changed heart in us.

There are different manifestations of this. But they all have to do with the work of the Holy Spirit changing us, giving us the desire to obey God.

Philippians 2:13 (NLT2) For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.

As you hear Biblical preaching and teaching, engage in Bible study with others or read it on your own, the Holy Spirit gives reveals the will of God for us. The Spirit leads us to obey that will if we are willing. This work takes different forms. The following are examples.

The Holy Spirit moves us from worldliness.

One teenager who became a Christian tore down all the secular music posters from her walls. I didn't tell her to do that. Her parents did not tell her to do that. She now felt that they were the wrong kind of message to be putting in her mind and heart. The Holy Spirit did that.

The Holy Spirit moves us from sinful people.

Christians find themselves spending more time with other Christians and less time with non-Christian friends especially if their previous friends encourage them to sin. One young woman gathered with a group of girlfriends each year for a weekend of catching up and drinking. She wanted to visit with her friends, but had lost all desire for the drunkenness. The Spirit had changed her desires associated with this group of friends.

The Holy Spirit creates a hunger for spiritual truth.

New Christians are drawn into the Bible. The Spirit creates a great hunger for more of the spiritual truth that revealed the gospel to them. And so they become regular attendees at worship, in Bible study groups, and reading on their own. When Frankie Forsythe was in his twenties, the gospel became real to him and he exhibited a great hunger for God's word. He couldn't get enough of it.

The Holy Spirit gives us understanding of the Bible.

The Bible is full of spiritual truth. There is only so much of it that will make sense to a non-Christian. The truths of why and how to live out the will of God is not understood by non-Christians. We are coming to understand these things because the Spirit gives us to understand them.

I often enjoy this experience as the Holy Spirit helps me to understand, at the needed time, Biblical truths I need to preach. The Holy Spirit gives you too understanding of spiritual truth.

The Holy Spirit convicts of sin, gives us joy, changes our heart, and...

The Holy Spirit suggests we minister to others.

A few years ago one of our members told me she had an urge to reach out to another woman in the church, one who was going through a troubled time. She shared that it was unlike anything she had experienced before. I explained that this was the Holy Spirit, moving her to minister with Christ's love to another Christian. That's what the Spirit does.

These are all things the Holy Spirit does in Christians. The presence of the Spirit in your life is evidence of your salvation, and a guarantee that God will finish your salvation when Jesus returns.

You need to be aware, though, that you can resist the work of the Spirit in you. The Spirit can suggest, and you may refuse to heed his leading. That is not a habit you want to be in. Instead, you should expect the Spirit to lead and be ready to obey.

The presence of the Spirit is real evidence. A financial deposit is not just a promise. It is something tangible. It is something real. When someone pays a deposit, real money has switched hands. The receiver has the money as CONCRETE EVIDENCE of the other person's commitment to pay the rest.

In the same way God had Paul use the word deposit intentionally. The experience of the Holy Spirit by those early Christians was the evidence they could look to for the reality of their salvation. It was evidence of God's faithfulness to complete the rest of what He has promised them, and us in Jesus.

Our experience, too, of the Holy Spirit is evidence of our salvation. Some Christians experience the Spirit immediately and others gradually. With some there is a dramatic experience of the Spirit and others a more subtle experience. One of the mistakes of the charismatic movement is assuming that what some experience is what all are supposed to experience. God doesn't work that way, even in the NT. But all will experience the Spirit if they are truly saved.

If you were genuine in your prayer to receive Jesus and genuine in your commitment to repent of your sin, to start living in obedience to Him, then there will be evidence of your salvation. And if there is not, then you have good reason to doubt you are saved.

So what evidence have you experienced affirms that you are saved?