

Is It Real?

Salvation is a life changing event that only God Himself can accomplish through His power. By God's free gift of grace, Jesus saves everyone who believes (not just in their head but also in their heart) that He died on the cross, was buried in a tomb, and resurrected to life (1 Corinthians 15:3-4). Jesus gives eternal life to all who trust Him as Savior and Lord.

Since this is the most important decision anyone can make, let us be certain and assured that we are true children of God and followers of Jesus.

Are **YOU** certain and assured that you are a true children of God and follower of Jesus Christ? Is there enough evidence in your life to give you certainty and assurance?

2 Corinthians 13:5 ~ Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? -- unless indeed you are disqualified.

Matthew 7:22-23 ~ "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 perform many miracles?'" "Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'"

Some people's Christianity is based on faulty information, so they will get faulty results. For example, many believe that if they are good people or believe in God or join a church they are Christians. Some even believe they are Christians because they were raised in a Christian family. Others believe they are Christians simply because they have respect for the teachings of the Bible. All of these are **FALSE!**

Question: What's wrong with being a good person? Why can't being a good person make you a child of God? 🤔

Romans 3:10-12 ~ As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one."

Question: What's wrong with believing in God? Why can't believing in God make you a child of God? 🤔

James 2:19 ~ You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that--and shudder.

Question: What's wrong with joining a church? Why can't joining a church make you a child of God? 🤔

Ephesians 2:8-9 ~ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God-- not by works, so that no one can boast.

Question: What's wrong with being raised in a Christian family? Why can't this make you a child of God? 🤔

John 3:3 ~ In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again."

5 WAYS TO TEST WHETHER YOU ARE IN THE FAITH

1. DO YOU BELIEVE THE NECESSARY THINGS?

- You must believe there is a God. You must believe in the one true God and that there are no other gods besides Him.

Hebrews 11:6 ~ And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

Isaiah 45:18 ~ For thus says the LORD, Who created the heavens, Who is God, Who formed the earth and made it, Who has established it, Who did not create it in vain, Who formed it to be inhabited: "I am the LORD, and there is no other.

- You must believe you are a sinner in need of a Savior.

Romans 3:23 ~ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

1 John 1:8-10 ~ If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives.

- You must believe Jesus is the Savior you need. And that your efforts cannot and will not assist Him.

Matthew 16:13-16 ~ When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets." "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

John 6:65-68 ~ And [Jesus] said, "Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father." From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?" But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."

If you believe you need good works, religious rituals and routines in addition to what Christ has already done, then you don't actually believe Jesus is capable of saving you. You believe He needs help.

Ephesians 2:8-9 ~ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God-- not by works, so that no one can boast.

2. HAS YOUR CHRISTIANITY LEAD TO A CHANGE IN YOUR LIFE?

2 Corinthians 5:17 ~ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

If the old you has "passed away" and you are now a "new creation" there should be a decreasing pattern of sin in your life, a lessening of desire for the sins of your past. If not, either God's Word is not true... or the old you is still alive and well.

1 John 3:6-10 ~ So if we stay close to him, obedient to him, we won't be sinning either; but as for those who keep on sinning, they should realize this: They sin because they have never really known him or become his. Oh, dear children, don't let anyone deceive you about this: if you are constantly doing what is good, it is because you are good, even as he is. But if you keep on sinning, it shows that you belong to Satan, who since he first began to sin has kept steadily at it. But the Son of God came to destroy these works of the devil. The person who has been born into God's family does not make a practice of sinning because now God's life is in him; so he can't keep on sinning, for this new life has been born into him and controls him—he has been born again. So now we can tell who is a child of God and who belongs to Satan. Whoever is living a life of sin and doesn't love his brother shows that he is not in God's family. (TLB)

So many people from your past know
a version of you that doesn't exist
anymore.

3. DO YOU HAVE A HUNGER AND A THIRST FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS?

Matthew 5:6 ~ “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.”

1 John 2:3-6 ~ Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.

One of the changes that occurs in the life of a true Christian is an increased hunger for God, for His Word and for the things He values. In other words, you will start to hate what God hates. The Bible refers to this as hungering for righteousness. If you are truly born again, your desire to live like Jesus should be growing. You should be experiencing the progressive work of the Holy Spirit working on your thoughts, desires, motives, affections, and perspective. Your whole world view should be changing to match His.

4. IS YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LORD YOUR GREATEST TREASURE?

Philippians 3:8 ~ Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ.

You should ask yourself if that is true of you. Is there anything more important to you than your relationship to the Lord?

Matthew 10:37-38 ~ “Anyone who loves his father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me; and anyone who does not take his cross and follow Me is not worthy of Me.”

Do you have deep joy, not just in God’s blessings, but in God himself? Does your heart cry out to God, “In your presence there is fullness of joy” (Psalm. 16:11)? Is there a sense of emptiness when you haven’t spent time with Him?

5. DO YOU LOVE OTHER CHRISTIANS?

1 John 2:9-11 ~ The one who says he is in the Light and yet hates his brother is in the darkness until now. The one who loves his brother abides in the Light and there is no cause for stumbling in him. But the one who hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

1 John 4:20-21 ~ If someone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also.

The final evidence is your love for your fellow believers. There is a very special connection - a bond between those who are in the family of God that goes deeper than our personality differences. How you treat your brothers and sisters in the faith is a direct window into the state of your soul.

Conclusion:

Give God the glory for seeing you safely through 2020, but don’t you waste another minute neglecting your spiritual condition. Examine yourself as to whether you are truly, truly in the faith. **Test Yourself!** Step confidently into 2021 with the full assurance that Jesus Christ is in you. When you say you are a Christian may Holy Scripture confirm it. Don’t delay lest you wait too late and find yourself disqualified.