

**This Is How We Know: Assurance**  
**April 8, 2018**  
**Lynn Haven UMC**

**Introduction**

And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever 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. (1 John 5:11-13 NIV)

The founder of our denomination, John Wesley, contended that assurance of salvation is “the privilege of every believer”. It is indeed a privilege to be saved through our belief. But as you’ve probably heard, salvation may be free, but it isn’t cheap. After all, it cost Jesus His life and it will certainly require something of us while we are here; albeit temporarily. We don’t have the luxury of proclaiming our faith and then keeping it to ourselves as if nothing has changed. We must not only be confident of our status as a co-heir with Christ, our lives must be lived in such a way that they serve as an example of what that distinction means in order to lead others to the same truth. As any believer can testify, a search for such an assurance always leads back to the promises revealed in God’s Word. Just like that famous pre-school song reminds us, how do we know Jesus loves us? The Bible tells us so!

**Digging Deeper**

**Assurance is given through...**

**The Testimony of GOD’S Spirit.**

- You may be familiar with the hymn “Blessed Assurance” written by a woman named Fanny Crosby who was blinded as an infant due to an eye infection. While Fanny was never able to see anything in her lifetime, she had a grandmother who impressed upon her the importance of prayer and spent hours helping her visualize the Bible and all of creation in a vivid, expressive manner. As a result, Fanny was able to speak of how “visions of rapture now burst in my sight” and how she was “watching and waiting, looking above; filled with His goodness, lost in His love.” Now that is a faith that is certain of what it cannot see. Aren’t we all blinded from infancy in a way? Blessed assurance comes upon us in a way that transcends sight. It’s a feeling of certainty that inhabits the soul. And when we have it, we know it. However, once we know it, we must claim it every day, even when our feelings lead us astray. Lack of assurance is a common problem among those who call themselves Christians. So do you know that you are saved? Since accepting Jesus as Lord of your life, have there been times where confusion or doubt have caused you to question what God’s Word has promised for your future? How would you counsel a Christian who said that he or she doesn’t experience close fellowship with the Lord? Where would you start?
- Read Romans 8:31-39. Paul poses several questions (and answers) here that should wipe away any doubt of salvation for those who believe. Is there a particular verse that helps you when circumstances around you cause doubt to start creeping in to your spirit?

### **The Testimony of OUR Spirit.**

- The assurance we have of our eternal destination is based on God's love and what His Son did for us, not the other way around. It's pretty simple: we just need to believe to receive! But being chosen for eternal life isn't the end; it is only the beginning. Our faith must be demonstrated by our obedience to God's will. This is how others will know whose we are. It's our birthmark, if you will. What are some characteristics or habits of a person who bears the mark of one who is living for Christ? Do you carefully consider before speaking or acting how every bit of what you do can be used as an opportunity to witness to others? Or do you more commonly find yourself looking back with regret because of how you could have reacted differently as a means of expanding God's kingdom? Of course, God can use either circumstance as a mechanism for personal refinement and kingdom growth. But when you instinctively approach situations without stopping to ask, "What's in it for me?," that is how you will know whose you are.

### **Conclusion**

This is how we know assurance: it is the testimony of God's Spirit (inward conviction), combined with the testimony of our spirit (knowing based on faith and obedience).

There are all kinds of people in this world. Those who are not saved (and don't care either way), those who are saved and don't know it (yet!) and those who are saved and know without a doubt where they are going. Doubters may ask, "Is all of this true or even worth it?" Believers answer, "You bet your life it is!" How sure are you?