

## Knowing and Following Christ – Grace and Assurance

### What Are the Questions?:

Ephesians 2:1-10 and 1 John 5:9-15

#### LAUNCH

On a scale of 1-100, how sure are you that you will go to heaven when you die? Why?

Everyone experiences uncertainties in their relationship with God at one time or another. Some people aren't sure if they'll go to heaven when they die, or they wonder what God really wants from them. Others who have come to faith in Christ aren't sure what's even happened to them. In today's study, we want to look at the basis for our relationship with Christ and the confidence that gives us to follow him.

Think about uncertainty in general life. Have there been times when uncertainty has got in the way of you enjoying yourself?

#### EXPLORE

Read Ephesians 2:1-10

- 1) How does this passage describe our spiritual state before Christ came into our lives?
- 2) What do verses 4-6 have to say about God and how he changed our spiritual state?
- 3) What can we learn about the role we play in becoming a Christian from this passage?
- 4) Grace is mentioned twice in this passage. What does it mean to be saved by grace?
- 5) According to verse 10, what do we learn about God's purpose in saving us?
- 6) Think about your own life story. What would your life be like right now if you hadn't responded to Christ?

Read 1 John 5:9-15

- 7) This passage talks about God's testimony.
  - I. What is God's testimony? (v11)
  - II. What does this passage say is true of those who believe God's testimony and those who don't believe it?
- 8) Answer the following questions in relation to this passage:
  - I. Is it possible to have the Son and not have the life?
  - II. Is it possible to not have the Son and still have life?
  - III. Is it possible to think you have new life and don't?
  - IV. Is it possible to have the life and not be sure?
- 9) Read v13. Does John believe we can know we have eternal life?

Have we received Christ by faith into our lives? If someone has not, read Rev 3:20 and ask them if they would like to invite Christ into their lives right now.

#### APPLY

- 13) What have we done to earn a relationship with God?
- 14) How certain can we be, of having eternal life?
- 15) How might the things you have learnt today impact your relationship with Christ?

**For the Leader:**

- The aim of this study is to give students confidence in their faith in Christ based upon God's grace rather than our works.
- The first passage deals with God's grace. It is only by God's grace that we can have a relationship with him. No amount of being a good person will ever do anything to improve our spiritual state. We access God's grace through faith, not through good works of our own.
- The second passage shows that we can be confident of our standing with God. The questions in this passage are more straightforward and are designed to lead people to a place of assurance in their salvation. It should, in theory, take less time to deal with this passage than the first one.

**What are the Answers?:**

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| 1) Dead in our transgressions and sins, following the ways of the world and of Satan, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature, objects of God's wrath | 7) I "God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son"  |
|  | II. If we believe, we have God's testimony in our heart. If we don't believe we make God out to be a liar. |
| 2) God made us alive through Christ, because of his love, his mercy, and his grace.  | 8) I No  |
|  | II. No   |
| 3) It's all about what God did, and not about what we do.  | III. Yes   |
|  | IV. Yes  |
| 4) We are made right with God not because we deserve to be, but because God in his love and mercy for us, sent Christ to die in our place                  | 9) Yes   |
| 5) God saved us in order that we might do good works for God. We no longer live for ourselves, but we live for Christ                                      |  |
| 6) Let the group share   |  |

**What's the Big Idea?**

The Bible says that believers can know, and that God wants us to know, that we are saved by grace and therefore will be saved and going to heaven. The basis of our assurance is the certainty of God's promise to give us eternal life when we place our faith in Jesus. This assurance is bolstered as we see our lives being changed by Jesus.

**What's the Problem?**

Many Christians are unsure if they will really go to heaven when they die. Some think it is presumptuous or arrogant to claim that you are going to heaven. Others may think that they are saved, when they really aren't. This lack of assurance, or false assurance, can keep us from loving and obeying Jesus.

**What's Our Response?**

Knowing that heaven is a gift that we cannot earn or lose motivates us to obey God out of gratitude rather than out of fear. The point of the study is to give the members of the group who have placed their faith in Christ that assurance. The study might cause some to question if they have made a decision to trust Christ. You may close by passing out a *Four Spiritual Laws* booklet and encouraging anyone who cannot remember a time when they trusted Christ, or might be unsure if they ever have, to read through the booklet and commit to surrendering their life to Christ.