

We must learn to love each other into lovability. In order to do that, we must first learn to accept the love of Christ that turns us into someone lovable, and gives us the power to truly love others. This week, we will focus on how to have confidence and assurance of salvation, knowing that God will complete the work of sanctification in our lives, making us glorious and lovable, just as he will all our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Day 1

Confidence in the Truth of God's Word

The assurance of our salvation comes from trust in God's word.

1 John 5:¹¹ And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹²Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. ¹³I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life.

Hebrews 10:¹⁹ Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, ²¹and since we have a great priest over the house of God, ²²let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. ²³Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.

Philippians 1:6 And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

You have been saved, you are being sanctified, you will share in God's glory.

Verses: Titus 3:4-7, Acts 4:12, Romans 10:9

Prayer Topics: Assurance, Certainty, Completeness

Day 2

Address Worry

Many people struggle with worry in many aspects of their life. They fear that they will get sick and suffer in their old age, or that they will be let go from their job, or that a loved one will leave them or be taken from them by death. Many people spend a considerable amount of mental resources going over these scenarios, trying to come up with remedies, and finding their joy and peace being sapped by their never ending worry about future scenarios they cannot control. This difficulty with worry can have a couple of different sources, that both lead eventually to the same place. The first source is a feeling of inadequacy. The observant among us will sooner or later catch on to the fact that we are very weak people with little ability to control our future. We cannot keep ourselves healthy if the wrong disease should enter our bodies, nor can we control the actions of others, should they choose to betray us. Because we have little control over many aspects of our future, worry seems the logical outcome. The next factor in our worry is our lack of trust in the love of God, who has the power to protect our future. Although we have been told that God loves us, and that all things will work to our good, we have a difficult time trusting in this truth, and the result of this lack of faith is a worry that kills our joy, disturbs our peace, and saps our strength. The antidote to worry is the track record of God. Has he been faithful? In any of the trauma that you have experienced in life, is it possible to see any blessing or possible blessing in it? Can you imagine any number of trauma's that you have been spared from? Has God blessed you in your life to

this point? Do you know of any number of people who have experienced more trauma than you have? Trust in the faithfulness of God, and you will not worry.

Verses: Matthew 6:25-34, 1 Peter 5:6-11, Proverbs 12:25

Prayer Topics: Comfort, Peace, Love, Faithfulness

Day 3

Accept Love

One major impediment to trusting in the faithfulness of God is the inability to accept love. I have known many people in my life who have grown up with such an overpowering knowledge of their faults that they cannot hope to feel worthy of love. The message of God's love for them does not create a sense of joy in them, because they cannot bring themselves to truly believe in it. When they read the bible, the parts of scripture that really stick with them are the messages of judgment, and these they repeat to themselves again and again, feeling worthy of every punishment possible. For these people, community is difficult. Since they have a hard time accepting love, they also have a hard time giving it. They believe that anything they offer is of little value, and so they tend not to offer it. They may also have a hard time not judging others as harshly as they judge themselves. The key to being able to participate in the love and joy of community for them is to be able to accept the love of Christ. Does the Father love the Son? Then He loves you as well, because the glory of the Son and his righteousness is imputed to you through the covenant. Did the cross happen? Then the son loves you, and loves you into a glory that is deserving of love, not because of your righteousness and good works, but because of His grace. Accept the love that God has for you, and you will be able to love others.

Verses: John 15:13, 1 John 4:19, Proverbs 10:12

Prayer Topics: Cooperation, Agreement, Understanding

Day 4

Cooperate with the Spirit

We know that we will be with God in heaven because he has given us the down payment of His Spirit. The Spirit works in our lives to sanctify us, transforming us into the image of Christ Jesus. When we cooperate with the Spirit, we start to see that transformation at work in our lives, and we gain confidence of the ultimate fulfillment of God's salvation in our Glory with Him in heaven. When we cooperate with the Spirit, we are being drawn into the eternal love and glory of the trinity, sharing in the unspeakable way they glorify one another, as well as the love that flows between them that is the motivation for the glorifying of each other. To walk in the Spirit is more than just to walk in obedience, although that is part of the journey. It is also to participate in the motivation for that obedience, the rooting in love and the desire to see God glorified, just as He loves us and is working for our glory. Let the Spirit lead you, and it will be natural to exist in community with other Christians, because you are existing in community with God himself.

Verses: John 14:15-17, Romans 8:26, Galatians 5:22-23

Prayer Topics: Willingness, Attitude, Cohesion

Day 5

Practice Disciplined Rejoicing

It can be very difficult to live in the future, in our assurance of salvation, in confidence of the glory we will have in eternity. It is very easy to look at ourselves now, with all our faults, flaws, and sins, and to despair of being lovable, making it difficult or impossible to love others. One solution to this problem is to rejoice, to live as if that future is already here. Because most of us have difficulty conjuring up the emotions for this, we must do it in little pieces, in what I call disciplined rejoicing. Disciplined rejoicing is simply basing your choice to rejoice not on the current condition of your emotions, but on the certainty of the word of God. We are commanded to rejoice always, and since we are commanded, it must be possible. But since most of us are not there yet, we must accomplish the obedience to this command a little bit at a time, rejoicing at times we choose whether our emotions are compliant or not. Can you rejoice over your salvation today? Can you involve someone else in this rejoicing? If so, you are practicing community.

Verses: Psalm 5:11, Philippians 4:4, Romans 5:3-4

Prayer Topics: Celebration, Joy, Reward