

## STUDY 8

---

# Can I be sure?

READ: John 10:27-30, 1 John 2:1-6

*“How can I be sure that I am a Christian? I have asked God to forgive my past sins. I have invited Jesus to come into my life. But I am not sure whether that has happened or not. Perhaps I wasn’t sincere enough when I prayed. Maybe He didn’t come in at all! Can I be sure God has really forgiven and accepted me? Am I really a part of His family? And if I am, is it possible to be welcomed in, then later kicked out for doing the wrong thing?”*

## 1. Expect doubts

The first thing to realize is that doubts will come. This is normal. Nearly all new Christians (and even older Christians too) have doubts at different times. So don’t be surprised when doubts come to you. But you must be ready. You must know how to deal with these doubts.

You must realize that you now have an enemy. Before you became a Christian, you belonged to Satan’s kingdom. But now that God has rescued you from Satan’s control and brought you into the Kingdom of light, Satan is against you. His first way of attack is to shoot arrows of doubt into your mind. He will try to make you doubt the work God has done in your heart. He will put thoughts in your mind: *“You don’t really think your sins are forgiven just by believing and receiving Christ, do you? Surely that is not enough! And look! You still make mistakes and do wrong things! You are really no different to before. You only think you have changed. But nothing really has happened!”*



What will your answer be to these kinds of doubts? The only way to overcome such attacks is to know clearly what God says in the Bible about this matter. You **can** be sure you belong to Christ. You do not need to live with uncertainty and doubt.

## 2. Believe God, not your feelings

What God says doesn’t change. God’s promises are true. The Bible says: *“For those who receive Him and believe in His name, to them He gave the right to become God’s children” (John 1:12)*. Have you believed in Christ and asked Him into your life? Then, God’s promise is that you are accepted into His family. You are His child. This is true whether you feel like it or not. It is true because God says so. So you must rest your faith on God’s Word, the Bible, and not depend on your feelings alone. Your feelings can change. Today you may feel happy, and believe that you are a Christian. But tomorrow you may not feel so good. If your faith depends on how you feel, you may even doubt that you are a Christian. But does that make any difference to what has really happened to you? Not at all!

### 3. You are accepted because of Jesus

Many Christians make the mistake of thinking God accepts them because of something good in them. When they fail, or sin, or make a mistake, they think God will change His mind about them and throw them out. But God's promises don't change. Jesus said, "*He who comes to Me, I will never throw out.*" (John 6:37). When you commit your life to Christ, your life is put in God's hands. And no one can take you from that place of safety (John 10:27-28).

You are accepted by God because of what Jesus has done for you, not because you are good enough in yourself. And because what Jesus has done for you doesn't change, so your place in His family doesn't change either. All God requires of you is to '*repent and believe*' in Jesus. God then does the rest. If you have done your part by believing, receiving and following Him, you can be sure He will do His part in forgiving, accepting and keeping you. His Holy Spirit within you will keep reminding you that this is true (Romans 8:15-17).

### 4. The signs of the new life within

The first Epistle of John has been called 'a letter for doubters'. It is written to those who are not sure about their relationship with Christ. In this letter, John gives four tests or signs to show that you belong to the family of God.



- **The first sign - Obedience** (1 John 2:3-6)  
Before you became a Christian, you lived the way you liked. You followed your natural desires. But the sign that you have now become God's child is that you want to obey God. Do you have a growing desire to please God and do what He wants you to do?
- **The second sign - A changed life** (1 John 3:4-10)  
Before you became a Christian, you were a slave to sin. This means you were controlled by certain attitudes and habits. But what about now? Do you see changes taking place? You won't be perfect, but you don't like doing wrong things any more. You have a new desire to live the way God wants you to live. Is this true of you?
- **The third sign - Belief about Jesus** (1 John 2:18-25; 4:1-3)  
Before you became a Christian, Jesus meant nothing to you personally. But now, what do you think of Jesus? Do you believe Him to be the Son of God? Can you confess with your mouth and believe with your heart that Jesus is Lord (Romans 10:9)? Do you have a new respect and love for Jesus? Your attitude towards Jesus Christ is the third test of whether you belong to God's family or not.
- **The fourth sign - Love** (1 John 2:9-11; 3:14-18)  
Do you have a new desire to be with other Christians? If God is your Father, this shows itself by the love you have for His children. For you now belong to His family. This does not mean you will never have problems living with other Christians. You almost certainly will! But it does mean you now prefer sharing with other Christians more than sharing with those outside the family of God. Love for other Christians is a clear sign that you are one of Jesus' followers (John 13:34-35).

If all that we have said above is starting to happen in your life, then you can be sure you are now a child of God. When doubts come, put your trust again in the promises of God's Word. Ask Jesus again to be the Lord and Master of your life. Stand against the devil's accusations. There is no reason to live in doubt. You can be sure you are a Christian. If God is for you, who can be against you?

# Questions:

1. Have you had any doubts since becoming a Christian?

often; occasionally; rarely; never.

What kind of doubts have you had? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Look at the promise of God in John 1:12. What is God's promise for those who 'receive Jesus and believe in His name'?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What is God's promise in John 5:24 for those who hear Christ's words and believe in Him?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Is it possible to be welcomed into God's family and then later kicked out? What do the following references tell us? What has God promised?

John 6:37 \_\_\_\_\_

John 10:27-29 \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 8:31-39 \_\_\_\_\_

5. **God's Promises:** In questions 2-4 above, you have been looking at some of the promises of God. Does God ever break His promises, or change His mind about what He has said? (See James 1:17)

perhaps; sometimes; never; not sure.

**Our Feelings:** Do your feelings ever change? \_\_\_\_\_ What kind of things can make your feelings change?

\_\_\_\_\_

**Your Faith:** If you put your faith in your feelings, and your feelings change, what will happen to your faith?

\_\_\_\_\_

But if you put your faith in God's promises that don't change, what will your faith be like?

\_\_\_\_\_

What then does this mean for you personally? When you have doubts, what should you put your trust in - your feelings or God's promises?

My feelings; God's promises.

6. In the first Epistle of John, we have four signs or tests to show us that we belong to God's family. What are the first two tests?

1 John 2:3-6 \_\_\_\_\_

1 John 3:4-10 \_\_\_\_\_

- Do these first two tests mean you will never disobey or sin once you become a Christian? What do they mean for you? (See 1 John 2:1-2; 3:5-8)

\_\_\_\_\_

7. What are the third and fourth tests that John gives?

1 John 4:1-3 \_\_\_\_\_

1 John 4:7-8 \_\_\_\_\_

8. Now think about these four signs of the new life within you. Tick any changes you have noticed in the areas below. Then write down any changes you have noticed.

*Desire to obey:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Changes in my life:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Attitude towards Jesus:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Relationship with Christians:* \_\_\_\_\_

9. Are we meant to know for sure that we are God's children? (See 1 John 5:13)

yes;                      no;                      not sure.

- What is the testimony that God wants us to have in our hearts? (See 1 John 5:11-12)

\_\_\_\_\_

10. Now on a separate sheet of paper write down your testimony why you know you are God's child. Start like this: *'I know I am God's child because . . . . (complete)*

*Now memorize the verse below. Tick    when memorized.*

## MEMORY VERSE

### Assurance of salvation

### John 5:24

"I am telling you the truth: whoever hears my words and believes in Him who sent me has eternal life. He will not be judged, but has already passed from death to life."