

BIBLICAL ASSURANCE

In terms of assurance, there is both an internal dynamic and an external dynamic. In other words, there is both internal/subjective evidence and also external/objective evidence. Both are important because merely external evidence can be deceptive. In other words, people can be very outwardly religious or moralistic and yet, not have their hearts changed.

The key thing is the internal condition of our HEARTS, and then out of that comes FRUIT in the life. BEING leads to DOING (cf. Lk. 8:15). The root is faith, and the fruit is works. We are not saved by fruit, but if we have a saving faith, then the expectation is that we will bear good fruit – at least to some degree.

a. Internal/Subjective Indicators

1) The Internal Witness of the Spirit

Romans 8:16 (NKJV)

16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,

1 John 5:10 (NKJV)

10 He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son.

(Compare: John 14:22, Gal. 4:6, 1 Jn. 2:27, 4:13, 15, 16).

2) An Internal Obedience to the Faith

The book of Romans presents the most systematic presentation of the gospel found in the NT. The book begins and ends by emphasizing “***obedience to the faith***” in both 1:5 and 16:26. After Paul says we are saved by believing the gospel in Romans 1:16, he immediately goes on to say that this faith is then REVEALED.

Romans 1:16–17 (NKJV)

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “The just shall live by faith.”

When the gospel is truly believed, it ***“is revealed from faith to faith.”*** We are saved by faith, but then saving faith reveals itself in the life. This is invariably true in the life of each person who has faith – “from faith to faith”.

The just all live by faith (cf. 1:7, 6:17, 15:18, 16:19, Gal. 2:20).

In view throughout the book of Romans is the issue of obedience to the faith. For Paul, to come to a saving faith was to come to the place of internal obedience to the truth of Christ (cf. 2 Thess. 1:8). It starts in the HEART (cf. Rom. 10:9-10). It is this obedience of faith that is the ultimate issue in Romans!

3) An Internal “True Worshiper”

The very first thing that a person ever does to please God is to believe in Him (cf. Heb. 11:6). It’s not simply a matter of believing ABOUT Christ (cf. Lk. 8:13, 1 Cor. 15:2, Ja. 2:19); but rather, a matter of believing IN or ON Him as SAVING LORD (cf. Jn. 1:12, 29, 3:15, 16, 18...).

That little preposition (in/on) indicates the position of commitment! It indicates ALLEGIANCE to the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Perhaps the best word that defines the nature of this saving faith allegiance is **WORSHIP**.

In an evangelistic context, Jesus told a Samaritan woman that God is looking for ***“true worshipers”***, and they are those who worship ***“in spirit and in truth”*** (cf. Jn. 4:23-24). To **worship** means *“to bow down before”*. It is to reverence a superior and acknowledge His sovereign authority over you. A heart disposition of WORSHIP towards the Lord Jesus Christ is inherently involved in the act of SAVING FAITH.

Philippians 3:3 (NKJV)

3 For we are the circumcision, who **worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus**, and have **no confidence in the flesh**,

The true circumcision refers to those that truly bear the mark of a covenant relationship with God. Phil. 3:3 is Paul’s definition of a saving faith! To truly be in covenant relationship with God is to be a ***true worshiper***. True worship defines true faith. It’s the very nature of a saving faith!

The resurrection made a statement, declaring Jesus to be the “Son of God with power” (cf. Rom. 1:4). All believers believe in the resurrection, which is to say they acknowledge Jesus as God. And, it is PERSONAL. “Doubting Thomas” (cf. Jn. 20:28-29) came to a NT saving faith when, upon seeing

the risen Christ, he confessed, **“My Lord and my God!”** That is believing!
That is worship!

With the mouth, true believers confess from their HEART that Jesus is the risen LORD (cf. Rom. 10:9-10). It’s a HEART commitment, not merely head knowledge. **“Whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved”** (cf. Rom. 10:13), which in effect is to worship Him as the resurrected Son of God (cf. 1 Cor. 12:3, Matt. 7:21-23, 2 Cor. 4:4-6, Phil. 2:9-11).

4) An Internal Love for Jesus

Many say they believe in Jesus, but they don’t really LOVE Him. In John 14:15, Jesus said, **“If you love Me, keep My commandments.”** This is the fruit of true faith (cf. Gal. 5:6). We love Him, which is displayed in the keeping of His commandments. To really know Jesus as Lord and Savior is to love Him.

1 Corinthians 8:3 (NKJV)

3 But if anyone loves God, this one is known by Him.

1 Corinthians 16:22 (NKJV)

22 If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed.
O Lord, come!

Ephesians 6:24 (NKJV)

24 Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.
Amen.

1 Peter 1:8 (NKJV)

8 whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory,

1 Peter 2:7 (NKJV)

7 Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious;...

1 John 4:19 (NKJV)

19 We love Him because He first loved us.

The affections of the heart tell on a person. It’s not that true believers never fail. They do (cf. Ja. 3:2); but when they do, they characteristically hate it, as seen in Rom. 7:18-22. True believers characteristically love Jesus and hate sin. In fact, this struggle becomes evidence that one truly has a new nature living inside that desires and longs for holiness (cf. 1 Jn. 3:9).

It's not about the PERFECTION of our lives, but it is about the DIRECTION. The new nature in us, which is wed with the Holy Spirit (cf. 1 Cor. 6:17), always wants to do what is right, and of course, the flesh always wants to do what is wrong. The reality of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life does affect his or her orientation (cf. Gal. 5:16-17). ***“He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ”*** (cf. Phil. 1:6).