

**Selected
PEARLS
From the
Word**



Barbara White Hege



BLADENSBURG,
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Selected Pearls from the Word

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Chapter 1

ASSURANCE

Occasionally, I meet Christians who have no assurance of their salvation. That may seem like a strange statement. How can you be a Christian and not be assured that you are God's child and will be with Him eternally when you die? I believe it is because we mix works with grace. I did that for several years. If we look honestly at ourselves, we realize we fall short of being all God wants us to be. Because of this, we are fearful. How can we be sure? How can we not be afraid that, somehow, we will miss the boat?

We are going to examine some scriptures and see what God has to say. This should settle the issue, as God's Word is truth. It is where we should always go to seek the truth and for any questions we may have concerning God and His provision for our salvation, who is Jesus Christ. The Bible tells us that faith comes by hearing the Word. Therefore, if we want more faith and less fear, where should we go? We should go to His Word, reading and praying, trusting God to teach us and increase our faith.

We need to keep our eyes on Jesus and not on ourselves. Hebrews 12:2 reads, "Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down on the right hand of the throne of God." This tells us very plainly that Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith. He began it, and He finished it. He planned for our salvation before we were born (Ti-

tus 1:2). Jesus carried out that plan on the cross of Calvary and then rose from the grave on the third day and later ascended to heaven. As He died on the cross, He said, "It is finished." In other words, He did not leave anything undone. He did everything that was or is necessary for our salvation. He did not do half the job. He did it all, leaving nothing for us to do but to believe and receive this free gift.

When I was growing up, we had a saying: 'once and for all.' That meant something was over – finished. Nothing else was to be done. Hebrews 10:10 uses that similar illustration: "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." It is done. Verse 12: "But this man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God." Jesus' work was finished, and He sat down on the right hand of God. Verse 14: "For by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." How long does this say we are perfected? Forever! And how are we sanctified? "... through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ". Did He say we are sanctified by how we live or what we do? No! We are perfected and sanctified by His offering. It is all of Him. Can we give Him praise?

Ephesians 2:8-9 says, "For by grace are you saved through faith, and that not of yourselves. It is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast." Could it be any plainer? We are not saved by works or how we live. It is only by the grace of God through faith in Him. It is a free gift. It is given because "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:18 says, "He that believeth on Him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." This does not mean how we live is not important. How we live is very important, but it is not how we are saved. It should be the result of our salvation. There will be more on this later.

Titus 3:4-5 reads, "But after the kindness and love of God our Savior, toward men appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit, which He shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ, our Savior, that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Notice it says, "not by works of righteousness which we have done." How then? "According to his mercy, He saved us." It is not by something we have done, but what He has done for us. Regeneration is to be renewed, restored. We are renewed by the Holy Spirit He has given us. We are justified by His grace. This is all of Him and nothing of us.

John 10:28-29 says, "And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." We are so very safe and secure with God and Jesus. No one can ever take us out of His hands. There is no safer place we could be than with them and in their hands.

If we could live righteous enough to go to heaven, Christ need not have come. If we could be good enough on our own, Christ died in vain. But we cannot. We are born sinners, and there is nothing we can do about that. But a loving God did something about it for us. He provided a way for us to escape hell and judgment. That way, and the only way, is Jesus Christ. He bore our sin, paid our penalty, and freely gave us eternal life. We, who believe, are the redeemed, bought and paid for by the precious Son of God; by His blood; His death, burial, and resurrection. Romans 4:16 reads, "Therefore, it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end that the promise might be sure..." For the promise to be sure, it must be of God. If it depends on us, it would not be sure because we are unholy on our own and often fail.

The Bible tells us that Abraham staggered not at the prom-

ises of God through unbelief, but that he was strong in faith, giving glory to God, and it was imputed to Him for righteousness. Imputed means to ascribe goodness to a person as coming from another. This same righteousness that was imputed to Abraham is imputed to us through Jesus Christ. The Bible teaches that we are righteous only in and through Him, and not in ourselves.

Romans 3:21-22 explains, "But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets, even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe."

We are given the righteousness of God through Jesus Christ. It is imputed to us just as it was imputed to Abraham.

Second Corinthians 5:21 says, "For He has made Him, who knew no sin, to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

How are we made the righteousness of God? We are made the righteousness of God through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ bearing our sin on the cross of Calvary.

Romans 3:20 "Therefore by the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified in His sight."

He tells us plainly in this verse that we are not and never will be justified by how we live or by keeping the law. Verse 24 tells us exactly how we are or can be justified:

"Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

We are justified by His grace through Christ Jesus. It is all of Him and nothing of us. Allow me to say it again: it is God's plan, God's doing, and nothing of us. He did it all, and it is finished. All the praise, honor, and glory belong to Him and Him alone.

He continues to tell us in the fifth chapter of Romans that sin came upon us by one man, Adam, and then judgment.

"...Even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one, many shall be made righteous" (Romans 5:18b-19).

How does it say we are made righteous? By the obedience of Jesus Christ. He shed His blood on the cross that we might be made righteous. He lived a perfect life, one that we cannot live. He did it for you, for me, and for all who repent and believe in Him.

"If his children forsake my law, and walk not in mine ordinances; if they break my statutes and keep not my commandments; then I will visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless, my loving-kindness I will not utterly take from him; nor allow my faithfulness to fail" (Psalms 89:30-34).

There are consequences to sin; to our disobedience of God. Chastisement will come when we stray, just as we punish our children when they disobey. We do this to teach them the best way to live and because we love them. But they are still our children.

In the book of Exodus, when Moses and the Israelites were in Egypt, God told Moses to instruct the Israelites to take a lamb and kill it. They were to strike the lintels and side posts of their home with the blood of the lamb.

Exodus 12:12-13 says, "For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast. I will execute judgment. I am the Lord. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you."

This is called the Passover, mentioned in Exodus 27, and points to Jesus Christ. 1 Corinthians 5:7b also refers to the Passover, saying, "For even Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us." When judgment came to the Egyptians, how did the Israelites escape that judgment? They escaped only if the blood had been applied. It is the same with you and me today. When we accept Jesus and put our faith in Him, the precious blood of the Lamb, Jesus Christ, is applied and covers our sins. Colossians 1:14 says, "In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sin."

"These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life" (1 John 5:13).

We know because we believe God and believe His Word. A popular children's song is "Jesus Loves Me." According to this song, how did we know Jesus loved us? *For the Bible tells me so.* We believe what His Word tells us. That is part of our faith—trusting Him and His Word.

Ephesians 1:13: "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth; the gospel of your salvation; in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise...."

Ephesians 4:30: "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed until the day of redemption."

We are sealed by the Holy Spirit, who lives within us. We are safe and secure, now and forever more. We are sealed by the Holy Spirit, and no one can ever break what God Himself has sealed.

Psalms 32:1-2: "Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputes not iniquity."

Again in Romans 4:3-5:

“For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believes on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.”

Verses 7-8 “Saying blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.”

Hear what the Word says. If salvation comes by works, it is not grace. But it comes only by grace, freely given through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Our sins are covered by the precious blood of the Lamb.

Colossians 2:13: “And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He made alive together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses.”

How many trespasses has He forgiven? It says ALL trespasses. That includes past, present, and future. All means there *ain't* no more. Excuse the bad English, but it gets the point across. Does this give us a license to sin? No!

Romans 6:11-12, 15 “Likewise, reckon ye also yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Let not sin, therefore, reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in its lusts.... What, then, shall we sin because we are not under the law? God forbid.”

We are to walk in obedience to God, but when we sin, we confess it in repentance (1 John 1:9) and receive forgiveness.

Acts 13:38-39 “Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this man (Je-

sus) is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."

How are we justified? Through Jesus. And from how many things are we justified? All things. By the shedding of His blood, He covers it all. Always and forever, salvation; forgiveness of our sins is all of Him and nothing of us. Blessed be His holy name.

Romans 11:29: *"For the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable (or without repentance)."*

God does not take away what He has freely given. What would you think of a friend that gives you a gift and then takes it back? Not a lot, I suspect. *Irrevocable* means it cannot be taken back; it cannot be undone. God is much greater, holier, and more loving than any friend we could ever have. So why would we ever think He would take away what He has freely given?

2 Corinthians 9:15: *"Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift" (Some translations use "His indescribable gift").*

John 10:28-29 (Jesus speaking): *"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."*

We see again that eternal life is given to us as we believe in Him. No one can ever take us out of our Father's care.

Romans 8:38-39 *"For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creation,*

shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord."

Oh, hear, and believe what He is saying. NOTHING will ever separate us from the love of God, which we have received through Jesus Christ. What a Savior!

On that high note, I feel I must go a step further and make something clear. When we believe in Him and receive Him into our hearts and lives, we become His children. That is position. Our walk is a different matter. I do not mean to imply that we are secure and should walk in disobedience to Him and His Word. The Bible says in Galatians 5:25:

"If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit."

2 Corinthians 5:15: "... that they who live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them, and rose again."

We are now to live our lives for Jesus Christ. In walking in obedience to Him, we can have joyous fellowship with Him. When we disobey, the fellowship is broken until we repent and confess. We can live victorious lives through the power of the Holy Spirit if we submit ourselves, our lives and hearts to Him, His Word, and His Spirit. He saved us to make us free and no longer bound by sin. He says in John 10:10 that He came that we might have life and have it more abundantly. May we live free and abundantly!

Chapter 2

HIS PEACE

How can we know the peace of God? How can we have peace that passes all understanding? Here are some scriptures that will help us do just that.

Romans 15:13: "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Spirit."

As we walk in obedience to God and submit to the Holy Spirit, He works in us and grants us this peace. We cannot and will not know this peace if we walk in disobedience to Him and His Word.

Philippians 4:6-7: "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your heart and minds through Christ Jesus."

When we walk in sweet fellowship with Him, we experience His peace, which is so great, it is beyond our understanding.

Do we realize that worry is sin? The above verse tells us not to worry - "Be anxious for nothing." How do we keep from worrying about a loved one that is ill; one that is facing difficulties of some kind; one who has not accepted Jesus Christ into their heart and life; or one who has, but is walking in disobedience to Him? How do we keep from worrying about situations

in our own lives? He tells us in this verse. As we pray for them and whatever situation they (or we) are facing, we then leave the results to God. We can thank Him that we can trust our loved ones with Him. We can trust Him with any situation that comes. He loves them even more than we do. He loves us more than we can imagine. As we pray and yield our worries to God, we can know His peace. God will work it out in His time and His way. It is all part of trusting Him. He is ever trustworthy. He is able to do more than we could ever ask or think.

Do you know that in the midst of whatever calamity may come, God is undisturbed? Do you wonder how that can be? That can be because of who He is. He is the master of any storm, calamity, or whatever befalls us. We need to remember that. Sometimes we just need to take the time to sit before Him with whatever our problem is; just sit there before Him, for however long it takes, and receive His peace, His calmness. He knows; we are His, and we are not alone. He is for us and with us.

Philippians 4:8 "Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are honest, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

We are to think on these things rather than the things we cannot change while praying and trusting God with the results. We should think of things for which we can be thankful. We should praise God for His love, His mercy, His grace, and so many other things. Just look for God's goodness all around us and in our hearts and lives.

1 Peter 5:7: "Casting all your care on Him, for He cares for you."

What an invitation and a blessing! Almighty God invites us to cast all our cares upon Him. We don't have to carry these burdens. We can leave them with Him. Could they ever be in

better hands? Absolutely not! We are to look beyond our circumstances. We are to keep our eyes on Him and trust Him with our loved ones. We should trust Him with any and all cares of this life. Why? Again, He tells us in this verse “because He cares for us.” We can trust Him in all these things. We can trust the one Who gave His only Son for us. We can trust the one who says in Jeremiah 31:3b, “‘Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love...’” It is a glorious statement of fact. His love for us is eternal. This is another gem from His word that causes our heart to swell with thanksgiving and praise.

Isaiah 26:3: “Thou will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee.”

This reminds me of Peter when he walked on the water. As long as his eyes were on Jesus, he was fine. But when he looked at the situation instead of Jesus, he began to sink. We are to focus our minds, thoughts, and eyes on God. Then we can rest in Him and know His perfect peace. Think on Him. Think on His Word. There is comfort, strength, help, peace, guidance, and so much more to be found there. He knows all about our troubles and cares. He cares. He will work it out or lead us in doing so. When assailed with doubts or worry, remember Peter. Don't look at the situation. Look at our God and Father who is far greater than any situation or worry we could ever experience.

Isaiah 48:18 “Oh that you had hearkened to my commandments. Then had your peace been like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea.”

Hear God's heart in this scripture. He desires for us to obey Him. He desires for us to experience this peace. We experience this peace as we walk with Him in obedience to Him and His Word.

Job 22:21 “Acquaint yourself with Him, and be at peace.”

This is telling us to get to know God. We do this much the same way we get to know another person. We get to know them by spending time with them, by talking to them, and by doing things with them. So, it is with God. We need to spend time with Him by praying (talking) to Him and reading His Word. We should yield ourselves to Him and His Holy Spirit, who comes to live in us when we become His children. We walk with Him in obedience to Him and His Word. The more we do this, the better we know Him, and the more we know Him, the more we know beyond a shadow of a doubt that we can trust Him.

Ephesians 2:14: "He (Jesus) is our peace."

We have that inner peace of knowing Him; that He is ours and we are His. We are assured that someday, we will live with Him throughout eternity. We have fulfillment that can only come from knowing Him.

Before coming to Him, I always had a longing for something more in my life, for something I could not quite figure out. But after coming to know Him and yielding my heart and life to Him, I realized that He was that something for which I had always longed. In Him, I found that fulfillment and peace I had never known before.