Lifestyle Evangelism Part 5

 **Things That Accompany Salvation**

**Introduction**

I have followed a pattern for many, many years when I have the opportunity to share the Gospel with someone and especially when they have prayed and asked God to save them. We do not see the heart, only God does, so we must say, "If what has just happened is true, genuine saving faith, your life will never be the same." I also go on to share some things that I will be looking for to back up that expectation.

Illustration

A wonderful Biblical illustration of this is the Church in Thessalonica. Paul and Silas had planted this church prior to going on to Beria and Athens. Thessalonica was in Macedonia in northern Greece. Now Paul was in Corinth and writing to them a letter of encouragement. Let's note his words in 1 Thessalonians 1:2–10 (ESV),

*2 We give thanks to God always for all of you, constantly mentioning you in our prayers, 3 remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. 4 For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, 5 because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction. You know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake. 6 And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you received the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy Spirit, 7 so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. 8 For not only has the word of the Lord sounded forth from you in Macedonia and Achaia, but your faith in God has gone forth everywhere, so that we need not say anything. 9 For they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, 10 and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.*

Did you notice all the things that evidenced God's choice of them to be saved? They became disciples of the Paul, Silas and probably Timothy. More important they showed themselves to be disciples of the Lord Jesus. In doing so they became examples to other believers. They became known as evangelists. Their lives were testimonies of repentance; and they lived looking forward to the coming of the Lord (which in the New Testament means that because of this hope they purified themselves).

**Things That Belong To Salvation**

In Hebrews, chapter 6, the writer is warning Jewish Christians not to give in to the persecution and return to Judaism. The author provides dire warnings in this Book. But in verse 9 his tone changes and he says something that is important to this message today. Notice Hebrews 6:9 (ESV),

*9 Though we speak in this way, yet in your case, beloved, we feel sure of better things—things that belong to salvation.*

**We need to understand that there are things that do not *cause* salvation and yet they *belong* to salvation.** The Greek text uses a word ἐχόμενα, which from the root of it suggests "things that belong", or "property, furniture, utensils" that belong to a house; or it can mean to "hold by the hand" etc. We need to affirm that in God's plan there are things that "belong to salvation." We should expect them. We should look for them. The author eludes to such things such as persevering in your faith (that belongs to saving grace); love and service to the Body of Christ; and discipleship – all accompany salvation.

In fact we could meditate for quite a months on the things that accompany salvation. I would take you to places like Jeremiah 31:31ff and 32:38ff to show you evidences of the New Birth. Romans 5-8 exhaustively treat such things that go along with salvation. A key text is the First Letter of John. It was actually written for that purpose, as it states “*I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life.*” (1 John 5:13, ESV). There are several very clear statements in 1 John to help the reader see what is part and parcel of saving faith. Let's just take an overview of a few things John says accompany salvation. I have found 4:

1. 1 John 2:29

*29 If you know that he is righteous, you may be sure that everyone who practices righteousness has been born of him.*

The context is that John is exposing false teachers. But his premise is that if you know that Jesus is the Son of God and is righteous and that you have been born of him, you too will seek to live out that same righteousness. It is important to note first that the word "practice" (ποιῶν) is progressive present in the original; this means that John is not talking about a person who performs one or two righteous acts, but about a person whose conduct can be characterized as righteous.

One who has been truly born of God lives a pattern of life that is recognized as holy. The next verse is similar.

1. 1 John 3:9

9 No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God’s seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God.

This verse makes it uncomfortably clear. Because of the New Birth and because of the abiding presence of God's Spirit, a believer cannot continue to live a pattern of continual sin. This is not teaching a doctrine of sinless perfection. John already covered that in chapter 1 (“*If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.*” (1 John 1:8, ESV). John is teaching us that one of things that we can expect in the life of a new Christian is that the Spirit will produce a repentant lifestyle and a pattern holy living in this child of God.

On this side of Heaven the reality is a pattern of living, not perfect living. John is going to emphasize that again in Chapter 5: “*We know that everyone who has been born of God does not keep on sinning . . .*” (1 John 5:18, ESV).

1. 1 John 4:7

7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God.

This is actually pretty profound. We are reminded of a truth that we all know: God is the source of love. And one of the evidences of being born-again is to love the Church – love our brothers and sisters. The negative is pretty clear. When someone says they are a Christian and know God but they show no affection for His Body, there is something wrong. It is possible they are not saved.

John repeats that principle in Chapter 5: “*Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him.*” (1 John 5:1, ESV).

There is another in Chapter 5….

1. 1 John 5:4–5

4 For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. 5 Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

This is actually pretty stunning. John is teaching, that for the Believer, victory over the world's schemes and temptations is normal and natural to the New Birth. In Chapter 2 John taught that the world offers sinful cravings[[1]](#footnote-1) and here he presents to us this amazing truth: "Those who have been born of God are enabled to overcome the worldly tendency to satisfy their own sinful cravings (cf. 2: 15– 17) and to resist the pressure that comes from those of the world."[[2]](#footnote-2)

Our faith is the key to seeing this happen. Faith is the instrumental cause of our salvation and it is the key to spiritual victory. By faith we now have access to the sin-conquering, resurrecting power o Christ Jesus.

**Summary**

The Important Point 🡪 All these things: A pattern of holy living; love for the Church; and victory over the world are part and parcel of salvation; they are the expected effects of the New Birth.

**Conclusion**

As we go, making disciples – allowing them to see and to hear the Gospel; and as they come to Christ, believing in Him, we can be well aware that if this work of grace is genuine that there will be evident fruit, things that accompany salvation. As I look over Elk Point Baptist Church I see example after example of men and women, young and older, who by faith have trusted our Lord and show to us and the world a pattern of living that is produced by the Spirit.

If you are here this morning and would say that you believe in God or believe in Jesus and you see no spiritual effect of that the Bible teaches comes with saving faith, I encourage you to be concerned. We are called to “*Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves . . .*” (2 Corinthians 13:5, ESV). You do that by considering carefully this tests that John presents in his letter.

A Word to the Uncertain

As you consider whether or not you have saving faith, I encourage you to avoid thinking: *Did I use the right words when I prayer? Was I sincere enough? Did I have enough faith? Etc.* The good news is that God wants you to know – to know for sure – that you have eternal life. He is not playing games with you. He is not playing catch-Me-if-you-can! Salvation is not based upon *magical words* or *magnanimous faith*. God calls you to repent and believe the Gospel. Repentance is not a separate act on our part. Repentance is acting out what you believe. Those that truly believe, repent; and vice versa. Have you understood that based upon the resurrection of Christ, He is Lord and God is commanding you to obey Him – in all areas of your life.

If you are not living a repentant life, you are living in treason to the true King. You are a rebel to the God of all Creation. He is commanding you to turn from your mutiny and obey Him; and you can know that His life; His death; and His resurrection free you and empower you, to do that.

Repent and believe and you will be saved.

1. “*Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.*” (1 John 2:15–17, ESV) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Zondervan. The NIV Zondervan Study Bible, eBook: Built on the Truth of Scripture and Centered on the Gospel Message (Kindle Locations 291074-291076). Zondervan. Kindle Edition. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)