

ASSURANCE OF SALVATION NOTES

Teacher Helps

Lesson 3

Page 3--1 John 1:9

Our object is to illustrate to the students that we normally receive the word of men. We normally believe what men tell us. And thus, if we believe what men tell us, how much more should we believe what God says!

Give illustrations of how we normally believe what men tell us:

- a) You could begin the class by saying, "Today we are going to start the class by having a test. I'm going to test you on what we learned the last two S.S. classes and I'm going to give the results of this test to your parents, etc." After leading them on for a bit you can say, "Did you really believe me when I said that we were going to have a test? Did you really take me at my word? We are not really going to have a test, but I told you that we were in order to help you to understand a Bible verse found in 1 John 5:9. Let's turn there together...etc."
- b) On TV the newsman says, "There was a terrible earthquake in California last night and many people were killed." Would you believe this?
- c) If someone knocks on your front door and says, "There's a fire down the other end of the street!" Would you believe him and go out and see? Or would you say, "I don't believe you, you liar!"

The teacher can think of other illustrations, showing that we normally and usually believe what men tell us.

Read 1 John 5:9. The testimony (witness) of God is greater! In other words, if we believe what men tell us, HOW MUCH MORE should we believe what God tells us because His testimony is greater!

Why is God's Word more dependable than the words of men? Why is it safer to believe what God tells us than to believe what men tell us? Do men sometimes lie? Are men sometimes wrong in what they say? Does God ever lie? Is He ever wrong? Should you believe

what He says? See verses given at bottom of page 3 but also see 23:19 which is even more helpful in light of 1 John 5:9.

A person is saved when he believes what God says! (FAITH)
 A person is saved when he believes what God says about HIS SON (see 1 John 5:10-12)! What has God told us about His Son? (see 1 John 5:10-12) The person who does not believe God is calling God a _____ (v.10). Instead of receiving God's Word as true (by faith), he rejects God's Word as a lie (by unbelief). See verse 11. Is eternal life something that we earn or is it a gift (something that we receive)? Where is eternal life found (v.9). Who has eternal life (verse 12)? Who does not have eternal life (verse 12)? How does a person get the Son? (must personally receive Him)

This introduces the way to page 4 and John 1:12 and the illustration about Sally that is found on this page.

Have the students read 1 John 1:12. Ask them, what must a person do to become a child of God? (believe) What does it mean to believe? Does it just mean to believe about someone?

SALLY ILLUSTRATION: To be more effective this illustration can actually be acted out in class. (Just get a cot, a blanket, a pillow, etc. and a bottle of pretend pills) The teacher could be the sick person (or perhaps a student, though the teacher might have to tell the student what to do before class starts). Give background: The person is very ill. The doctor has given the right medicine and if the person takes the medicine all will be well. The person who is sick can groan and act terribly sick and say, "Why don't I feel better?" "You didn't take your medicine!" "Yes, but I believe in that medicine. I believe that those pills are just what I need. I believe those pills are the answer! Why aren't I getting better?" "You are not taking them!"

You see, it's not enough to just believe about the pills, you must personally believe in the pills enough to personally receive them and take them. Many people believe about Jesus (Catholics, for example), but they have never personally received him as their Saviour.

Another similar illustration might be helpful (this can also be acted out). It has to do with eating (the Lord also used eating as an illustration of faith--see John 6:35 etc.). Have a person

sit down at the table before a wonderful meal, with silverware all ready, etc. The person says, "This food is wonderful. It looks good. I know it's good for me. There is meat and potatoes and vegetables, and salad, etc. I know that this food is nourishing. I know that this food is just what I need." (but the person does not eat any of it). Ask the class: If this food doing the person any good? The person believes the food is good, why then isn't the food helping him? Of course, you want the students to see that the food must be personally received and appropriated and made part of the body. So also, the Lord Jesus Christ and what He did on the cross must be made personal (HE DIED FOR ME!) and must be personally received by faith (Lord, I believe in You and by faith I receive You as MY personal Saviour and Lord).

While on these illustrations, it may be helpful to remind the students of the principle of Luke 5:30-32 (those who are healthy do not need a doctor). This fits in with the medicine illustration with Sally. We don't take medicine unless we are sick. Many people are not saved because they don't think that they are sinful. This is like a person who is healthy will not take pills. He does not need them! People who think they are doing OK will think that they do not need a Saviour. They don't see any need for a Saviour! They don't see how sinful they really are. Many people are not saved because they don't see that they need to be saved. (Most people don't want to have surgery. But if a person knew that there was a deadly cancer in his body and that this cancer would soon kill him, do you think that he would let the doctor operate?). Do you have a disease that is far worse than cancer? (sin--Jer. 17:9). Everyone is sick with sin (see page 4 bottom).

When you think of the word BELIEVE, think also of the word RECEIVE! Can you find both these words in 1 John 1:12? (Review: when you think of the word ASSURANCE, what do you think of?)

Do the exercise on the top of page 5. This will take some time because the students will need to look up 8 passages.

The bottom of page 5 gives us the devil's lies. This is in contrast to what we taught the students in 1 John 5:9 (God never lies and thus we can believe what He says). The devil lies and

deceives and is called the father of liars (John 8:44 etc.).

Let's think about some of the devil's lies:

(see page 5 bottom)

There is no God. See Psalm 14:1 and 53:1.

Everybody is going to heaven. See Matt. 7:13-14

There is no hell (Rev. 20:15 and Matt. 25:41)

Do the best you can and everything will be fine (John 3:3,7).

If you feel good, etc. all must be OK (Prov. 14:12).

What is false assurance? (when people think they are OK, or they think they are going to heaven, when they are really not) The people who were on the Titanic really thought they were safe (many believed that this was an unsinkable ship). They had a false assurance.

JUSTIFICATION (page 6 and following)

The class must be introduced to this subject by getting to know the JUDGE.

What is God perfectly qualified to be the perfect Judge?

Ask the class to think about this and to come up with a list, perhaps such as this:

1. Sees all
2. Knows all, knows all the facts
3. Understands all
4. Always does what is right
5. Never is unfair
6. Never is wrong
7. Never makes a mistake
8. Does not respect persons (see picture on page 6 of "blindfolded justice", things such as rich/poor, black/white, etc. do not make a difference.
9. God never changes His mind--the verdict and penalty cannot be changed.
10. God is always present (He's everywhere and hence He is always the perfect witness. He has witnessed every crime and every sin.
11. God's Word is always true--His verdict must be true.

(Human judges or juries may say GUILTY when a person is not guilty or may say NOT GUILTY when a person is really guilty--not so with God).

(This is just an introduction to justification, to be continued next week)

Note: Here is another illustration which may help in connection with what it means to believe (it does not just mean to believe about someone but it means to personally entrust oneself to a person):

The man then turns to the crowd and makes a thrilling proposal. He offers to recross the falls with a man on his back! But who is to be the man?

"Do you believe I am able to carry you across?" asks the ropewalker turning to a likely individual.

"I certainly do," at once responds the one addressed.

"Will you let me?" inquires the waiting hero.

"Will I let you? Well, hardly. You don't think I am going to risk my life like that, do you?" and he turns away.

"And what about you?" as he asks another man who was standing by.

"I believe. In fact, I have no doubt about it at all."

"Will you trust me?"

"I will!"

Breathlessly the people watch as he climbs onto the tightrope walker's back and they begin step by step. At last they are over; their final step is taken and they stand once more on firm ground!

Bridging the gulf between time and eternity is the great rope of salvation. Jesus Christ alone is able to cross it. You may have heard all about it, and, like the first man, you may even believe that Jesus can carry you across. But not until you take the final step and commit yourself to Him will you ever get over. God wants you to trust yourself completely to His Son.

There is only one problem with this illustration. It gives the idea that trusting the Lord Jesus is something very dangerous and risky. Nothing could be further from the truth. Indeed, trusting Jesus for one's eternal salvation is the safest thing a person can do! Human tightrope walkers sometimes fail and some have even plunged to their death. The Lord Jesus Christ has never failed and never will. Those who come to Him for salvation will never be disappointed! Have you done this?

What does it mean to believe on the Lord? Another illustration might help. The story is told of an expert tightrope walker whose tightrope was extended across Niagara Falls. Of course, to fall from this rope would mean instant destruction. Balancing his long pole lightly, he steps upon the rope and starts across. The crowd is silent. Finally he triumphantly places his foot on the farther bank and a great cheer rises even above the noise of the falls.