

## Do you have Assurance of Salvation?

September 2, 2016

I read a story this past week of a tragedy that took place a few years ago. A hurricane storm warning had been given over the air waves and people had been encouraged to evacuate the area because there was danger ahead. A young girl and her boyfriend worked for a company and she asked their supervisor to give them a ride to her apartment so they could bunker down before the storm hit. The man owned a rugged jeep type vehicle that under most conditions would take them where they needed to go even in a bad storm. At first he refused saying that he wasn't sure about the timing of the storm and he didn't want to take a chance that they would be caught in a downpour that might be dangerous. However the girl persisted and begged until he relented and against his better judgment, decided that perhaps he could get them to the apartment before the worst of the storm hit. He had just settled into his jeep started the engine and buckled his seat belt when the torrential rains started to pour down on the area. He drove cautiously and at one point considered turning back but decided that moving forward was as good as trying to return to the worksite for it was about the same distance either way. The water began to surround his vehicle and soon it covered his tires. He began to worry that his jeep would stall and then what? The realization of his predicament hit him and he began to panic. The jeep sputtered and stalled and fear gripped him and his two passengers. He tried to restart the vehicle, but to no avail. Water had risen so fast that his vehicle was now floating down a stream. The only thing the driver could think to do was to roll down the windows and climb out into the water and swim with hopes that someone would rescue them.

All three of them went through the opening of the jeep and the two men began swimming but the young woman didn't follow. She got lost in the torrents and drowned. Only after the men had been rescued by emergency responders, was the driver aware that the young lady didn't know how to swim. Her boyfriend broke down in tears as he stated that she was scared of water and had never learned to swim. The driver who listened to the pleas of the young girl has never forgotten the incident nor forgiven himself for allowing her pleas to convince him to take a risk that he really didn't want to be involved in.

The true story reminds me of the risk people take every day with eternity.

God, in his mercy, has sent prophets, judges, evangelists, teachers, and disciples to warn of a judgement day that is coming to this earth sometime in the future. These faithful followers have sounded the warning, spread the word, risked their lives to document the Scriptures that the Holy Spirit revealed to them, in an attempt to save people from eternal separation from God, the Father, and Jesus Christ the only begotten Son of God.

However, there are those who refuse to believe in a Reckoning Day, who refuses to believe in God and who refuses to listen and heed the warnings of the gospel message that is proclaimed from one generation to the next. The word of God is ignored, rejected, and many have replaced the teachings that have been passed down of the return of Jesus Christ

with fables and philosophy that mock the truth of the Bible and proclaim that God is dead. There are educators, theologians, politicians, lay people rich and poor who have turned their backs on the simplicity of the gospel and are among those who call evil "good" and good "evil". Look at Isaiah 5:20. How terrible it will be for people who call good things bad and bad things good, who think darkness is light and light is darkness, who think sour is sweet and sweet is sour. How terrible it will be for people who think they are wise and believe they are clever. It goes on to warn those who are famous for drinking wine and are experts at mixing drinks. Those who take money to set the guilty free and don't allow good people to be judged fairly. The Bible says that they will be destroyed just as fire burns straw or dry grass. They have refused to obey the teachings of the LORD All-Powerful and have hated the message from the Holy God of Israel. They are in danger of God's wrath being poured out on them.

Psalms 14:1 and Psalms 53:1 both say that fools say in their hearts that there is no God. If you continue reading, you learn that God looks down and there was none righteous, they all had strayed. That is why Jesus came to die for our sins so that we could have eternal life by accepting his sacrifice that he gave so we could enter the kingdom of God.

In Romans 1:18-22, it says that God's anger is shown from heaven against all the evil and wrong things people do. By their own evil lives they hide the truth. God shows his anger because some knowledge of him has been made clear to them. There are things about God that people cannot see- his eternal power and all the things that make him God. But since the beginning of the world these things have been easy to understand by what God has made. So people have no excuse for the bad things they do. They know God, but they did not give glory to God or thank him. Their thinking became useless. Their foolish minds were filled with darkness. They said they were wise; but they became fools. They traded the glory of God who lives forever for the worship of idols made to look like earthly people, birds, animals and snakes.

In 1 Corinthians 1:18-20, Paul states that the teaching of the cross is foolishness to those who are lost, but to us who are being saved, it is the power of God. It is written in the Scriptures: "I will cause the wise men to lose their wisdom: I will make the wise men unable to understand." See Isaiah 29:14. Paul continues by asking some questions such as "Where is the wise person? Where is the educated person? Where is the skilled talker of this world? God has made the wisdom of the world foolish. God chose to use the message that sounds foolish to save those who believe. Paul said that Jews asked for miracles and the Greeks want wisdom, but he preached a crucified Christ. Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God to those people God has called both Jews and Greeks. Even the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength. Paul continues by telling his audience to look at themselves and think about where they were called from. Not many of them were considered wise in the world's eyes; not many of them had great influence, and not many of them came from important

families. But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise and he chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. He chose that which the world thinks is unimportant and what the world looks down on and thinks is nothing in order to destroy what the world thinks is important. The reason he did this is so no one can boast in his presence. Because of Jesus Christ, we can be right with God and have been made holy and have been set free from sin. If anyone desires to brag, let him brag only about the Lord.

The Scriptures declare in Philippians 2:10-11 that there will come a day when everyone who has ever lived will bow before Jesus Christ and declare him to be God. God has exalted Jesus and given him a name above every name. At his name every knee shall bow of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

James 2:19 states that people do well to believe in one God, but the devils also believe and tremble. In Matthew 8:20, demons cried out, "What have we to do with you, Jesus, thou Son of God? Are you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God."

In Mark 3:11, declare that those with unclean spirits fell before him and cried saying, "You are the Son of God." Jesus wouldn't allow them to confess that he is God. He told them to be quiet. There is a group of "intellects" who are atheists and declare that people need to rid their minds of the notion that there is a God who loves and protects them. They call it "child abuse" when parents bring up children to believe in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

It frustrates them that people believe in the Genesis account of creation and refuse to embrace the theory of evolution. God's word will not return to him void.

We have an opportunity to share in the inheritance that God promised to the prophet, Abraham in the Old Testament. By Jesus death on the cross, he has offered salvation to anyone who believes on his name. By believing, we obey the commandments that he has set before us so we can grow in knowledge of holiness and make straight paths for our feet. Not all people will come to the cross and accept God's provisions. In 2 Timothy 3, you will find that in the last days troublesome times will come. People will love themselves, love money, brag and be proud. They will say evil things against others and will be disobedient to parents. They will not be thankful or be the kind of people God wants. They will not love others, will refuse to forgive, will gossip and will not control themselves. They will be cruel, will hate what is good and will turn against their friends. They will do foolish things without thinking. They will be conceited, will love pleasure instead of God and will act like they serve God but will not have his power. Stay away from these people. If you continue reading, you learn that these people are against the truth, their thinking has been ruined and they have failed in trying to follow the faith. But they will not succeed in what they are doing because everyone will see that they are foolish.

The Bible says that the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord. Psalms 37:23. The Lord delights in those who put their trust in him. He tells us not to lean on our own understanding, but to trust in him. This world will be deceived because it refuses to

acknowledge and embrace truth. They turn a deaf ear to the wisdom of God. The Bible says that even the very elect would be deceived if it was possible. However those who love the truth and seek after the wisdom and understanding of Jesus Christ will be guided to the path of righteousness and into the kingdom of God. What direction are you headed in? May we have a desire to share the gospel with those who are ignorant of the message of salvation.