

The Assurance Compass

Chapter 12 New Testament Audio Lesson #84



Objective: To introduce John's epistles and the assurance compass



God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin...If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

—1 John 1:5b-7, 9

We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands. The man who says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

—1 John 2:3-4

John wrote three epistles as well as the gospel of John and the book of Revelation. He wrote this first epistle so that his readers would know if they have eternal life. He wanted those who believe intellectually to believe with their heart and have assurance of their salvation.



John gives eight points for assurance of salvation, somewhat like a compass. The first point of the assurance compass is facts. Faith is based on facts or evidence. The second point is faith in the gospel facts of the death and resurrection of Jesus. The third point is forgiveness. If we confess our sins, we have the promise that He forgives us.

The fourth point of the assurance compass is fellowship. Christ's resurrection means we can know Him and have fellowship with Him. Along with Peter, we can say, "I cannot but He can and He is with me. I am not but He is and He is with me." We share all He has and we, in turn, should share all we have with Him.

The next point on the assurance compass is following. If we follow Jesus, He will make us sure of our salvation, give us assurance as well as make us more like Himself. The sixth point is freedom. If we believe and follow His Word, we will know the truth by experience, and the truth will set us free.

The seventh point is fullness. John wrote these words so our joy may be full. The eighth and last point of the assurance compass is fruitfulness. Jesus is the vine. Are we willing to be His fruitful branches? Fruitfulness is a sign of assurance that God is doing His work in us.



1. **True or False:** We can be in Jesus without walking with Him.
2. **True or False:** If you are truly a Christian, you will never doubt that you are saved.
3. **True or False:** John's purpose in writing 1 John was to help believers be sure that they are saved.
4. **True or False:** Having the facts is not necessary to have faith in Jesus.

Choose all answers that apply.

5. What are the facts of the gospel?
 - a. **Christ died on the cross for our sins and rose from the dead.**
 - b. Christ was born in Bethlehem of a virgin.
 - c. Christ performed many miracles and had 12 disciples.
 - d. Christ is coming again and will rule and reign over all the earth
6. What are some ways we can have assurance of our salvation?
 - a. Through fellowship
 - b. Through following Jesus
 - c. Through fruitfulness
 - d. **All of the above**

7. What does 1 John 1 say about sin and assurance of our salvation?

- a. **If we know Him, we will not walk in darkness.**
- b. If we sin, it is okay because God knows we are not perfect.
- c. God overlooks sin in Christians.
- d. Christians do not have to confess their sins other than the first time.

8. Why is forgiveness important for assurance of our salvation?

- a. We do not have to believe that Jesus died for our sins in order for God to forgive us.
- b. If we confess our sin to Him, we can trust that He will forgive us.**
- c. Forgiving others is required so that we can be saved.
- d. Forgiving ourselves is all we need for God's salvation.

9. What does fellowship with Jesus imply?

- a. He is my partner.
- b. He shares everything with me.
- c. I am to offer everything to Him.
- d. All the above**

10. Why is it important for us to follow Jesus?

- a. So that we might enjoy prosperity and success
- b. So that we too can have disciples and many followers
- c. So we can impress others with our godly lives
- d. To enjoy fellowship with our Savior as we walk in obedience.**

11. Why do you think John included freedom in his points about assurance?

- a. It is not possible to be free of sin, even if we are saved.
- b. Jesus sets His people free from the penalty and power of sin.**
- c. We can never be totally free from the power of sin.
- d. People are not really in bondage to sin.

12. Why is obedience another sign of salvation?

- a. If we love Jesus, we do not have to obey Him.
- b. If we obey Jesus' commands, we are sure that we know Him.**
- c. God already loves us, so it does not matter if we obey Him.
- d. We do not have to obey any commands because we live under grace, not the law.



As you think through the assurance compass, these questions might help: Do I believe in the facts of the Gospel? Have I confessed my sins to God and received His forgiveness? Do I have fellowship with Him and with other believers? Am I following Jesus? Am I experiencing His freedom? Am I experiencing the fullness of joy in Him? Am I being fruitful for Him?

Jesus said, “*I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.*” (John 15:5) Fruitfulness can help us with assurance of salvation. In what areas do I need to be more fruitful? Who do I need to share the good news with?



Thank God for His Word. Ask God to open your eyes to what He wants you to learn from it. Thank Him for the assurance of salvation. Ask Him to help you to live in the reality of who you are in Christ and to be bold in sharing Jesus Christ with others.

NOTES



Going Deeper

1. How would you apply and explain to others the differences between the reasons John gives us for writing his Gospel and this Epistle of 1 John? (Consider 1 John 5:13 and the last two verses of John chapter 20). _____

2. In what ways do the first 16 verses of 1 John compare to the first 18 verses of the Gospel of John? _____

3. How would you personally apply and explain to others the eight points of The Assurance Compass? _____

4. What are the two Gospel facts that form the foundation of The Assurance Compass? (Consider 1 Corinthians 15:1-4) _____

5. How would you personally apply and explain to others the way that placing your faith in those two facts brings you assurance of your salvation? _____

6. How would you explain to others and personally apply the way the concept I labeled as “follow-ship” is a critical point on The Assurance Compass? (Consider John 17:17 and 7:17) _____

7. How would you personally apply and explain to others the last three points on the spiritual compass: freedom, fullness and fruitfulness? _____
