

# Three Great Assurances

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Date: 15 January 2025

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[ 0 : 00 ] Let's look at Matthew chapter 1. Brand new Bible and the same words, but it's staying together. Matthew chapter 1, verse 21. She shall bring forth a son, that shall call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins.

All this was done, that my field was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall with child, shall bring forth a son, they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted, is God with us.

Because of that Christmas, that first Christmas, the child of God is recipient of three great assurances, more, but just three tonight, that provide comfort and strength throughout our life. First of all, he was God's own son. Luke 2.19 says, But Mary kept all those things and pondered them in his heart.

Can you imagine the thoughts that Mary was actually pondering on that night? A young woman. I can think as Mary was rocking her baby boy, she might have been filled with sadness, or with a new birth, filled with joy.

[ 1 : 28 ] She looks upon that tiny face and sees the hope of every race. Her heart is filled with a mother's glow, and she never wants to let him go.

She'll see him run and laugh and play, and longs to keep him safe each day. His life won't be an easy one, his destiny hard.

As God's own son Mary sees, the miracles he'll perform. The lepers healed and free from scorn, the lame will walk, the blind will see.

She sees his love will set us free, and then she sees him on a cross. She feels his pain and feels our loss.

She knows his life must come to this. She sheds a tear and gives a kiss. His life won't be easy, won't be an easy one.

[ 2 : 39 ] His destiny hard. As God's own son, each year when Christmas time draws near, and people are all so busy here with shopping, baking, trees of green, let's ask, what does this really mean?

Each year, let us take a moment from this fuss and think of all their gifts to us. A mother's love, a baby boy, peace and comfort, love and joy.

He was born for everyone. In a book that Chuck Lindell, Chuck Swindoll, wrote, The Grace Awakening.

If our greatest need had been information, God would have sent us an educator. If our greatest need was technology, God would have sent us a scientist.

If our greatest need had been money, God would have sent us an economist. If our greatest need had been pleasure, God would have sent us an entertainer.

[ 4 : 00 ] But our greatest need was forgiveness. So God sent us a Savior. Now we can look at these three great assertions that provide comfort and strength throughout our life.

number one is God with us. Matthew 1.23 says, And they shall call His name Emmanuel, which interpreted is God's with us.

Matthew 28.20 says, And lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world, always with us. Deuteronomy 31.8 says, And the Lord, He is that doeth, that doth go before thee.

He will be with thee. He will not fail thee. Neither forsake thee. Fear not. Neither be dismayed. Always and forever.

[ 5 : 07 ] And He goes with us in depth. Last week, a friend of mine that was younger than me passed away unexpectedly. She was a Christian and her husband was not dealing so well with her death.

But of course, in Psalm 23, verse 4, it says, Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.

For thou art with me. Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me. Pastor's message just a little while ago was about the beggar Lazarus who died.

All he had to eat was crumbs from somebody's table. But now he is comforted. Hebrews 13.5 said, For he hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.

A newspaper held a competition to find out how people would describe friendship. The winning answer was, a friend is someone who's walking in when everybody else is walking out.

[6:16] You and I have a friend that will do just that. A friend who will stick closer than a brother. And that's Jesus. When Sam Walton was in his mid-90s, was named one of the richest men in America.

Does everybody know who Sam Walton was? His company's not like it was when he was running it. You'd never know it because he drove an old pickup and lived like a regular person.

He was asked one time why he didn't drive a Rolls Royce. He replied, Where would I put my dogs? He was successful, at least in part, because he connected with the common man.

I had a boss that was a millionaire when I worked with our ex-song leader in Omaha. And he just drove an old Dodge Polaro.

Probably a 10-year-old Polaro. He didn't care. It didn't bother him. There's a few people I've known, had known of, I should say, that have money but don't flaunt it.

[7:32] But he was successful because he treated the common man with dignity. That's why Jesus came as a man to earth. God with us to connect with the common man because he is an uncommon God.

Number two, God in us. Colossians 1.27 says, Which is Christ in you? The hope of glory.

The Holy Spirit, which is the Spirit of His Son, is in us to seal us until the day of redemption. And that's one of the reasons is to guide.

Luke 1.79 says, To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death to guide our feet into the way of peace.

In Acts 9.31, Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria and were edified and working, walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost were multiplied.

[8:50] What happened? What divine intervention occurred that gave the churches rest? What? Yeah. God knocked Paul off his horse.

Got his attention. But Paul, not doing what you're supposed to be. Get away from your pharisaical training and learn what Isaiah had to say about me.

All that. Paul got saved. He was doing really mean things to the church. So, by divine intervention, Paul got saved.

He's also to teach and empower us for Christian service. Next time you're in an airport, notice the difference between passengers who have confirmed tickets and those on standby.

Those who have confirmed tickets are relaxed. They're confident and expectant. Those on standby hang around the ticket counter.

[9:58] They pace and smoke, pace and smoke, pace and smoke, all because of uncertainty. God offers us freedom from the burden of uncertainty so we can know for sure where we stand with God.

1 John 5.13 says, These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that you have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

Number three, God is for us. Romans 8.31 and 32 says, What shall we then say to these things?

If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

You know, Napoleon was a great general, but an extremely poor theologian. One of his declarations was that God is on the side with the army, with the largest battalion.

[11:17] Well, Wellington proved him wrong. Now let's look at Joshua chapter 5. Rather interesting time in Joshua's life. Moses is gone, he's off the scene now.

He's in charge. Let's look at verse 13 to the end of the chapter. And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, there stood a man over against

him with his sword drawn in his hand.

And Joshua went unto him and said unto him, art thou for us or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay, but as the captain of the host of the Lord, I am now come.

And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and did worship and said unto him, What saith my Lord unto his servant? And the captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy.

And Joshua did so. Joshua was expecting him to say, Okay, you're on my side, yay. But the angel said, Wait a minute here. I'm not here to be on your side or their side.

[ 12 : 43 ] I want to find out if you're on my side. So Joshua got it right. He bowed down. You know, Balaam just about got whacked off until he listened to his donkey.

And that, if he'd have pursued that a little bit more, I think he'd lost his head. That angel wasn't going to mess with him. Joshua dropped to the ground and bowed.

And he took his shoes off. We are to be reminded that the wonderful promise of Romans 8. 8.31 follows that great passage of Romans 8.28 and 30.

Which clearly sets forth that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to his purpose.

The called according to his purpose are further characterized for whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son.

[ 13 : 50 ] Conformed to his image. Joshua found out that he needed to be not so arrogant. He didn't know what that was. He had a sword. Looked like a soldier.

He was more than that. But he made the right move. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called. And whom he called, them he also justified.

And whom he justified, them he also glorified. Romans 8, 28, and 30. The dedicated Christian who walks daily in the will of God can take courage in knowing that no weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper.

And every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. this is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and the righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.

Isaiah 54, 17. It is said that Billy Graham, an evangelist, tells of driving through a small southern town and being stopped by a policeman and being charged with speeding.

[ 15 : 12 ] Graham admitted his guilt, but was told by the officer that he would have to appear in court. The judge asked, guilty or not guilty?

When Graham pleaded guilty, the judge replied, that'll be ten dollars, a dollar for every mile you went over the limit. But then suddenly the judge recognized the famous minister.

You have violated the law, he said. The fine must be paid, but I am going to pay it for you. The judge took a ten dollar bill from his own wallet, attached it to the ticket, and then took Graham out and bought him a steak dinner.

I want to go to that town. Of course, I'm not a famous evangelist. And Billy Graham used that illustration in his sermons for a long time to explain God's grace.

grace. That is how God treats us as repentant sinners. He paid for our sins with his son, and now we get to dine with him in heaven.

[ 16 : 24 ] Now in 2 Kings chapter 19, starting in verse 1,■■■!

and the elders of the priests covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amos. And they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah, This day is a day of trouble and rebuke and blasphemy, for the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth.

It may be the Lord thy God will hear all the words of Rabshakim, whom the king of Assyria, his master, hath sent to reproach the living God, and will reprove the words which the Lord thy God hath heard.

Wherefore lift up thy prayer for the remnant that are left. So the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah.

And Isaiah said unto them, Thus shall ye say to your master, Thus saith the Lord, Be not afraid of the words which thou hast heard, with which the servant of the king of Assyria hath blasphemed me.

[ 18 : 00 ] Behold, I will send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumor, and shall return to his own land, and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.

So Rabshakim returned, and found the king of Assyria, warring against Libna, for he had heard that he had departed from Lachish.

And when he heard, say of king Terhaka, king of Ethiopia, Behold, he has come out to fight against thee.

He sent messengers again unto Hezekiah, saying, Thus shall ye speak to Hezekiah, king of Judah, saying, Let not thy God, in whom thou trustest, deceive thee, saying, Jerusalem shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria.

Behold, thou hast heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all the lands by destroying them utterly, and thou shalt be delivered.

[ 19 : 15 ] Have the gods of the nations delivered them which my fathers have destroyed, as Gozan and Haran and Respa, and the children of Eden, which were in Thilassar, where is the king of Hama, and the king of Arpad, and the king of the city of Setharvan, of Hena, and Iva.

And Hezekiah received the letter of the hand of the messengers, and read it. And Hezekiah went up to the house of the Lord, and spread it up before the floor, and spread it before the Lord.

And Hezekiah prayed before the Lord, and said, O Lord God of Israel, which dwelleth between the cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth.

Thou hast made heaven and earth. Lord, bow down thine ear, and hear. Open, Lord, thine eyes, and see, and hear the words of Sennacherib, which has sent him to reproach the living God.

Of a truth, Lord, the kings of Assyria have destroyed the nations and their lands, and have cast their gods into the fire, for they were no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone.

[ 20 : 47 ] Therefore, they have destroyed them. Now therefore, O Lord our God, I beseech thee, save thou us out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the Lord God, even thou only.

How many things did Hezekiah do right in this passage? Number one, he humbled himself. Number two, he got counsel from the man of God, Isaiah.

And number three, he prayed to God. Now let's look at verse 32, in the same chapter. Therefore, thus saith the Lord concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shield, nor cast a bank against it.

By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the Lord. For I will defend this city, to save it, for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.

And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the Lord went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians, and hundred fourscore and five thousand.

[ 22 : 14 ] And when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses. So Sennacherib, king of Assyria, departed, and went, and returned, and dwelt in Nineveh.

And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch, his God, that Aramelech, and Shearizar, his son, smote him with the sword, and they escaped into the land of Armenia, and Eschar Haddon, his son, reigned in his stead.

What did Sennacherib do wrong? Number one, he mocked God. Number two, like Napoleon had confidence in his many battalions, he thought his 185,000 men were going to do him some good. Number three, he thought his crown was secured. These two sons had another thought. But God saved Jerusalem that day because Hezekiah humbled himself, sought counsel with a man of God, and prayed to God, and God rescued Judah.

Hezekiah has been called the king whose heart was closest to God other than David. That's not bad, being number two on the list.

[ 23 : 45 ] Let's think of how Hezekiah and the church because of it got rest because God intervened and Saul of Tarsus got saved and learned that he was wrong and Jesus was right.