

Are You In God's Covenant of Grace?

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[0 : 0 0] As you're turning to Hebrews chapter 10, starting at verse 11, I'll share for our visitors and those who are maybe jumping in the middle that we're in a series called Covenant Theology.

A helpful definition of a covenant is that a covenant is it's more committed and more binding than a mere relationship. And it's also more loving and more personal than a contract.

And we've seen that anytime that it's God who is covenanting with people, it's it's a covenant that's not among equals. It is God, the creator, covenanting, covenanting with his creatures.

And so God stoops down. He condescends to make a covenant with people. We've seen the covenant of works between God and Adam with no mediator.

We've seen the covenant of redemption among Father, Son and Holy Spirit to save a people. And last week we saw the covenant of grace, part one, in which Jesus Christ is the mediator.

[1 : 0 2] And this this future work of Christ was promised throughout all of the scripture. So today is part two of two for the covenant of grace. I'm going to read Hebrews chapter 10, verse 11 through 23.

As we read this, remember, we receive it as God's inspired, inerrant, infallible, clear and sufficient word. What that means is that's when you and I go home and we're reading our copies of God's word and different English translations.

The Holy Spirit inside of true believers, the same Holy Spirit will inspire the Bible. He makes it clear so you can understand it. And we get to work that out together. So as I read this, receive it that way.

And then I'll say this is the word of God and you can respond. Thanks be to God. Hebrews chapter 10, starting at verse 11. Every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.

But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet.

[2 : 1 7] Verse 14. For by a single offering, he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified. And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us for after saying this is the covenant that I will make with them.

After those days, declares the Lord, I will put my laws in their hearts and write them on their minds. Then he adds, I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more.

Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin. Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy place, the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain that is his flesh.

And since we have a great high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith. With our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

Father, let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering for he who promised is faithful. This is the word of the Lord.

[3 : 35] Thanks be to God. Indeed, you may be seated. The Bible says that the grass withers and the flower fades, but the word of the Lord endures forever.

Let's pray. Oh, Lord, thank you for this glorious promise that Jesus Christ is our high priest at the right hand of God the Father.

And he is ministering and ruling over his church. Help us to behold you in your glory, Lord. We pray that your Holy Spirit will open our eyes to see you and behold you in your glory.

Help us to receive the promise we just heard from your word with faith, because you who promised are faithful. And help us to have a full assurance of the faith because of who you are.

We ask this for Christ's sake. Amen. Amen. Well, beloved congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ. The question I'm inviting you to reflect on for yourself today is this.

[4 : 50] Are you in God's covenant of grace? Are you in God's covenant of grace? There's not a more important question for you to ponder.

And there's not a more important answer for you to walk away with in confidence. That you can approach God in confidence, knowing whether you are in his covenant of grace.

I think the Bible itself gives us a powerful illustration of our own weariness and weakness to believe that, as well as the glory of the grace of God to us, the covenant faithfulness.

I think you'll pick up on what this illustration is. This story begins with a baby in the palace. And his caretaker is rushing away.

I picture it being a dark scene with maybe stone slab steps going down. And this little boy is dropped in the haste. And this little boy, from that moment on, is lame in both of his legs, unable to walk.

[6 : 04] He was rushed away because his grandfather was the wicked king. And in their nation, when one king dies, the replacement king is going to come in and wipe out the whole bloodline of that king to make sure there's no threats for the throne.

So here is this young man now as he grows up and becomes an adult. He has a death warrant on his life, according to the custom of the land.

And he's lame in both feet. If there's ever a man who has every natural right to be paranoid and feel insecure and have no assurance of safety, it would be this man.

You know his name? Do you remember? Mephibosheth. We read his story in 1st and 2nd Samuel. I'll get back to him in a bit. But for now, let's connect that illustration to covenant theology.

Mephibosheth, that lame man who has a death warrant on his head, he's like you and me. He stands in need of grace. King Saul is like Adam.

[7 : 12] And the sin of Adam, it puts the death penalty on all of Adam's line. That's how we're born naturally. We are paranoid.

We are insecure. We have no reason to have assurance that God, the ruler, the creator of all, would truly accept us.

But if you'll notice in our sermon text for today, Hebrews chapter 10, let your eyes go down to verse 22. The author of Hebrews is giving the church these promises.

He's putting a pageant on in front of them. It's the gospel message. It's the work accomplished by Christ. And for what purpose? You see that in verse 22? It's so that you can enter with confidence the holy places.

You can be in the presence of God. In the words of verse 22, with full assurance of faith. Faith, you are to be secure, fully assured if you are in the covenant of grace.

[8 : 15] That's the purpose of our text today. Now, there is such a thing as false assurance as well. And that's one of the favorite weapons of the enemy.

A preacher in Old Princeton in America in the 1800s named Archibald Alexander Hodge. He wrote, there is nothing in the world that works such satanic, profound, God defiant pride as false assurance.

False assurance is scary and it's wicked. He went on to write, there's also nothing that works such utter humility.

Utter self emptiness as the childlike spirit of true assurance. So do you see what's at stake? If we have a false assurance of being saved, it's deadly.

But if we can have a true, a full assurance that I am in the covenant of grace, it will work a childlike spirit of joy, self emptiness and true security.

[9 : 24] What is your faith? I'm going to try to give you 10 tests. If someone were to give you a fancy piece of jewelry, you're going to want to take it to a jeweler that can help you see.

Here's how you know the quality of the gold. So here are 10 tests for you to know. Are you in the covenant of grace? Number one, you are in the covenant of grace.

According to this passage. If God, the father has already poured out his wrath upon your sins. Those are the only two options.

If you are under the curse of Adam, then there is sin that God needs to deal with because God is holy and God is just. But the good news is if you are in the covenant of grace.

Look at verse 12. Hebrews 10, 12. That means that this man, God, the son who took on flesh, he has offered forever for all time.

[10 : 25] One single sacrifice covering all your sin. That means God, the father has already poured out his wrath against your sin and my sin.

And after he did this, we're told that he sat down at the right hand of God. So you see the contrast. The priests would go and they would minister these sacrifices.

And it was giving the people a picture of substitutionary blood offerings for sin. And imagine if we're sitting in that congregation. I'm just I'm so guilty, so accused in my conscience.

And I'm watching the priests in there and they're they're working hard. They're busy bodies, always on the move. And I even imagine like what if you're in a day and it's raining all day long and the fire won't stay lit and your sacrifice is half burnt.

I'm sure that happened. Am I going to be forgiven or not? As tormenting. You're always wondering. John Gill pointed out the priests under the law were many.

[11 : 32] And Christ was one. They offered many sacrifices, but Christ offered one sacrifice. They offered sacrifices every single day. But Christ once.

They stood and walked around. Christ sat. His sacrifice was effectual to take away sins. Theirs was not.

This is the good news that God entered human history. It's how first Peter 3 18 explains it. Christ suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God and put.

He was put to death in the flesh. He was made alive in the spirit. To become that perfect mediator. To bless you in your spirit and bring you to God.

Our confession of faith. Chapter 8 paragraph 3 says, Our Lord Jesus Christ, being holy, blameless, undefiled, full of grace and truth.

[12 : 38] Our Lord Jesus Christ was thoroughly furnished to execute the office of mediator and guarantee of the covenant of grace.

It had to be Christ. There is no one else who could atone for your sins. But if Christ has paid for your sins, your sins are paid for.

The father has already poured out his wrath upon your sins. And that's why you and I can have assurance. But assurance is high stakes.

There's a warfare going on over your assurance of faith. Because assurance, it is the energizing hope that wakes up the army of Christ to take up our cross daily and march following King Jesus.

Puritan Thomas Brooks, he wrote, Satan is just as studious and industrious to keep souls like yours and mine off from assurance as he was to cast Adam out of paradise.

[13 : 44] It's a spiritual warfare for your soul and for your assurance. But you are in the covenant of grace. You can have assurance that you are pardoned.

If God the father has already poured out his wrath upon your sins. The second test for your assurance and mine is this. You are in God's covenant of grace.

If God the son has already fulfilled his work to redeem you. You are in the covenant of grace. If God the son has already fulfilled his work to redeem you.

This is what's so glorious about those simple words in verse 12. God the son. After living a life of righteousness in your place and mine.

Paying for our sin. Being buried and raised to life. He then ascended. In the heavenly throne room.

[14 : 48] He is seated at the right hand of God. The reason this gives us assurance. Paul points it out in Romans 8 34.

Who is there to condemn you anymore? Christ Jesus is the one who died. More than that. Who was raised. And who is at the right hand of God. Who indeed is interceding for us.

Who is there to condemn you anymore? But our own flesh. Our own thinking. We want to. We want to make it dependent on our own works. We constantly think that way.

Don't we? Even Sinclair Ferguson confessed that. He said any way of salvation that depends on something I must contribute. Can never bring assurance.

For we can never be sure that we have done enough to help God save us. But our Lord Jesus Christ. We're told he sat down.

[15 : 50] With God. The father. Well, priests. They never sat down. Many of you have probably done something hard. Physical labor this week.

You know. Raking up pine needles. Or. You know. Maybe shoveling snow. Or breaking up ice. Or something like that. Doesn't it feel so good. When you can finally take your shoes off. Put those feet up.

And just sit down. And rest from working hard. Our Lord Jesus Christ. He is tireless. But he sits down.

Not because he needs to rest. He sits down. In the context. Of this passage. As the ruling. King of all. This is a rule. Of the new creation.

God the father. God the son. God the holy spirit. And the first creation. Rested. The whole earth was their footstool. Ruling over the world. Now Jesus Christ. Seated.

[16 : 44] At the right hand of God the father. Resting. Ruling. Over the second. The new creation. And there we are. Like that.

Lame man. Who's afraid of dying. And being. Being stabbed. In the middle of the night. I love how this one musician. Leland. Put this story.

From the perspective. Of that lame man. That's you and me. Wounded. And forsaken. I was shattered. By the fall. Broken. And forgotten.

Feeling lost. And all alone. But we read in our text. That our Lord Jesus Christ. Is interceding. He is praying for his people.

And as he prays. The Holy Spirit. Applies. His salvation. To believers. He causes you. To respond. He regenerates you. Who were dead. Back to the song.

[17 : 39] That's what it's like. To be summoned. By the king. Invited. Into the master's courts. It's like you're being. Lifted. By the savior. And then cradled. In his arms.

I'm carried. To the table. I'm seated. Where I don't belong. I'm carried. To the table. And I'm swept away. By his love.

David had made. A covenant. With Jonathan. The son of wicked king Saul. And when Jonathan. Died in battle. David was faithful. To keep that covenant promise.

And he poured out. The blessings. Of his love for Jonathan. On this lame man. Mephibosheth. And that's what it's like. For us. There is nothing in us. That should make God.

Like us. Or love us. But the father. Father. Promised. A reward to the son. Based on obedience. And because the son. Has accomplished that. The blessings.

[18 : 37] All pass through now. To us. The objects. Of his grace. Jesus. Is the only mediator. Between God. And man.

And in the covenant. Of grace. He stands. As the Lord. As the ruler. On the throne. And we are. His. His willing army. His servants. Who follow him. And obey his commands.

We agree with. How the Westminster. Larger catechism. Answers this question. The question is. With whom did God make. The covenant of grace. And the answer is. The covenant of grace.

Was made with. Jesus Christ. As the second. Adam. And. With all. The chosen ones. In him. As his seed. We are.

The seed. We are the offspring. Of Jesus Christ. In the new covenant. Because God. The son. Has already fulfilled. His work. To redeem you. And that means.

[19 : 36] That you can have assurance. That his work. For you. Is finished. The third test. Of assurance. Is this. You can have assurance. That you are. In God's covenant.

Of grace. If God. The Holy Spirit. Is. Sanctifying you. You can have assurance. If you're. You're aware. That the Holy Spirit. Is sanctifying me.

I'm not perfect. I got. A whole lifetime. To go. But it's a work. In progress. And I know. The Spirit. Is working on me. Look with me. At verse 13. Our Lord Jesus.

Sits on that throne. And he is waiting. From that time. Henceforth. Expecting. God. To make. His enemies. A footstool. For his feet.

Verse 14. For by a single offering. He has perfected. For all time. Forever. Those who are being sanctified. Those who he says.

[20 : 29] Are holding. So who is it that God. Is sanctifying. Jude 1. 1. He says.

It's you. It's you. Whom God has called. Who are sanctified. By God the Father. And preserved. In Jesus Christ. God the Father.

Has said. You are set apart. You are mine. God the Holy Spirit. Is the one who. Effectually draws you. To God. And here's your comfort. You.

Are preserved. By Jesus Christ. It's his ministry. As your high priest. To preserve you. In fellowship with God. What does that mean? What is sanctification? Benjamin Keech's catechism.

Question 39. Answers it this way. Sanctification. Is a work. Of God's. Free grace. Whereby. We are renewed. In the whole man. After the image of God.

[21 : 26] And we are enabled. More and more. To die. Unto sin. And live. Unto righteousness. Are you being sanctified? We will be in this.

Walk. Following Christ. Letting him. Sanctify us. And working with him. In that joyfully. Gratefully surrender. Whatever he exposes. Each day. And as.

As he's doing that work. In us. He is subduing. His enemies. The father. Is bringing all the enemies. Under the feet. Of King Jesus. I was thinking. What is the connection.

Between the enemies. Being brought under his feet. And what that means for us. The promise. That we are being sanctified. Well the enemies. Of God. Are sin.

Satan. Worldliness. Wolves. And death. The father is bringing. All of those. In their turn. Under his feet. Listen now. This is good news.

[22 : 20] For you and me. That remaining sin. In your flesh. And in mine. It is being put. Under the feet. Of Christ. The wicked.

God hating. World. Do you see evidence. Of that. In the headlines. It is being brought. Under the feet. Of King Jesus. The demon. Influenced.

Tempters. Accusers. And fear. Inducing. Wolves. They are being made. Christ's. Footstool. Satan.

Is looking. Whom he may devour. And he wants to attack. Your assurance. Of salvation. Because he can only. Manipulate you. On principle. Of fear.

But Satan. Has had his head. Crushed. By the feet. Of King Jesus. And the last enemy. That our living savior.

[23 : 11] Will destroy. Is death. All of these enemies. Will perish. This world. Is fading away. So you can have assurance.

That you belong. To Christ. In the covenant. Of grace. If the Holy Spirit. Is sanctifying you. Slowly. But surely. Surely. Because Christ.

Is praying for you. The fourth test. Is this. You can have assurance. That you are in God's covenant. Of grace. If the Holy Spirit. Ministers to you.

Through the Bible. You can have assurance. That you belong to God. If his Holy Spirit. Ministers to you. As you study. His word. Look at verse 15.

The Holy Spirit. Also bears witness. Or testifies. To us. He's writing. To the church. After saying. This is the covenant.

[24 : 07] That I will make with them. After those days. Declares the Lord. See the covenant. That God made. The Spirit. Applies. And the Spirit.

Reassures you. By his word. This is for you. This is talking about you. Belonging to Christ. Have you ever wondered.

If you have enough. Faith. To be saved. We sing of waves. Of doubt. And suffering. It just exposes. How weak we are. There was a missionary.

Named George Muller. And he confessed this. He said. Faith. Is not a matter. Of impressions. Nor of probabilities. Faith.

Is the assurance. That the thing. Which God. Has said. In his word. Is true. And that God. Will act. According. To what he. Has said. In his word.

[25 : 04] How do you know. You can trust. The word of God. It's because the Holy Spirit. Bears witness to you. That this. Is trustworthy. This is the word of God. For you. Brooks.

Again. Wrote. That Satan. That Satan. Want to attack. Your salvation. And your assurance. Because he knows. Christians. Who have an assurance. Of salvation. They are strong.

And they obey. Boldly. And that's the army. Of Christ. Being raised up. That's why. Your assurance. Is such a. Spiritual battle. But you can. Have.

Assurance. That you belong. To God. Through his covenant. Of grace. In the language. Of our confession. Chapter eight. paragraph eight, if God has revealed the mystery of salvation in Jesus Christ to you by his word.

That's a test you need to practice this week. Open up your Bible. We read Psalm 25. Read those first 14 verses or so very slowly. Is God's spirit bearing witness to you?

[26 : 09] That your guilt is great, but God saves you for his namesake and he applies his covenant to you.

That's how you can have assurance that you were in the covenant of grace. The Holy Spirit ministers to you through the Bible. The fifth test is this. The Holy Spirit has also written God's law inside of you.

Has the Holy Spirit written God's law inside of you in your heart and in your mind? Then you can have assurance that you are in the covenant of grace. Mark Dever had pointed out that false evangelism, it leads worldly people to have a false assurance because they have, quote, made a decision one time.

There's no such thing as a worldly pagan Christian. If your salvation is based on something you did one time, that's a false assurance. But look at what God's word says in verse 16.

He says, I will put my laws into their hearts and write them on their minds. God himself will put his law in the heart of his people in the covenant of grace.

[27 : 29] God himself will write his law on your mind. This is a quotation from Jeremiah 31. And so to understand the meaning here and make sure we're applying this correctly, one of our hermeneutical tools, one of our ways of interpreting the Bible the way we believe the Holy Spirit wants us to, it's to understand how would that audience in the time of Jeremiah receive that?

When they hear the law of God written by God, what would they have thought of? They would have thought of God writing the Ten Commandments with his own finger on the stone tablets.

They would not have necessarily thought of all the ceremonial laws or civil laws. When we talk about God writing his law, they would have thought of the Ten Commandments. So now in the new covenant, the promise fulfilling Jeremiah 31, interpreted by Hebrews 10, it's that same connotation for us.

God will write his law. He will put his moral law, what pleases you. And it won't contradict what he codified in the Ten Commandments. It'll show its ultimate fulfillment in Christ.

But the Ten Commandments are now on your mind. Not as a master that drives you only to, you know, to be aware of your sin. But it's like from the hand of your great king.

[28 : 54] Every king has a law. We don't need to guess what is the law of King Jesus. He writes it in our minds. And he confirms it with scripture. Now, I want to clarify that there's a difference between knowing the law of God and then working it out in my own life.

When you become a Christian, the Holy Spirit, your conscience, he enables you and he gives you a desire to obey. But we're also caught in that Romans 7 battle, right?

The spirit is willing, but my flesh is still weak. And so don't let your assurance get confused with fulfilling your desire. I'm so encouraged.

Also, Joel Beeky, one of my heroes, a godly man. He wrote, The primary ground of assurance is rooted in the promises of God. And those promises must become increasingly real in the believer through the internal witness of the Holy Spirit.

Well, how do I know if that's happening? You will see evidences of grace, though you won't be a perfect law keeper. Quoting Thomas Manton, another Puritan, he said, Comfort may be increased by the sight of good works in your life, but your salvation is not built upon your good works.

[30 : 11] Those works are seeds of hope, not props of confidence. Those works are sweet evidences of your election, not causes of being elect. Works are not a ground of confidence, nor the foundations of your faith, but good works that the Spirit's bearing out in us.

They are growing graces and encouragements of assurance. And so when we read passages like Colossians 3, 12 to 14, we're told, Therefore, as God's chosen people, that's who you are.

You are chosen. You are elect. You are grafted in already. Clothe yourselves with compassion. What should I imagine with compassion? Look to Christ.

Put on Christ's righteousness. Put on his compassion, his kindness, his humility, his gentleness, his patience. Bear with one another the way Christ bore with his disciples, the way he bears with you.

So you see how we take the law from the hand of our loving Savior, Jesus Christ. Those whom Christ redeemed, our confession says, he also persuades to believe and to obey him.

[31 : 32] Jesus Christ lovingly governs your heart by his word and by his spirit in you. We can know that we are in the covenant of grace if we have his law inside of us and he's growing into us.

I can illustrate that the way one pastor put it is, you know, you picture a boy and it's like God's holding the crown just a couple inches above that boy's head and then inviting him, persuading him, encouraging him as God himself gives that boy energy and life to grow into that crown he's holding.

That's what it's like for us as we grow into all that Christ has merited for us. Well, the sixth test is this. You are in the covenant of grace if the Holy Spirit causes you more and more to trust God's promises.

Look at verse 17. Quoting Jeremiah 31 still, he says, I will remember their sins no more. I will remember their lawless deeds no more.

Verse 18, where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin. Receive this promise that God remembers your sins no more.

[32 : 54] You can have assurance that God, without foreseeing in you or me any good condition that would make us deserve his grace. Rather, it was Christ who certainly and effectually has applied to you the eternal redemption that he has already obtained for you.

And so you trust this promise that God, the Holy God who is just, he remembers your sins no more. And if you can trust that promise, you can have more and more assurance that you are in his covenant of grace.

The seventh test is this. You can have assurance that you are in the covenant of grace through the work of Christ because Jesus has brought you into the presence of the Holy God.

Has Jesus brought you into the presence of the Holy God? What more assurance could you want? Look at verse 19, 20 and 21.

The pastor preacher here in Hebrews is now applying this to the congregation. He says, therefore, brothers, since we have boldness, we have confidence to enter the holy places.

[34 : 12] How? By the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened, that he inaugurated, he has consecrated for us through the curtain or the veil that is his body, through his own flesh.

Since we have a great high priest over the house of God. When did this covenant of grace happen in human history?

When the Lord Jesus gave up his spirit, we're told that in the temple. The great veil, the great curtain that would separate sinners from the presence of the Holy God, it was torn from the top to the bottom.

It's an act of God. The old covenant is done. The new covenant, the covenant of grace is in effect. It's been effected by the death of the testator.

The one who is promising this very thing. His last will and testament is now finalized and is made applied to you by the power of his Holy Spirit.

[35 : 22] See, it was his own body being torn on the cross. It was the work that a just God requires so that sinners can be approaching into the presence of the Holy God righteous.

Their sins are fully paid and his righteousness covers them now. And Jesus rules over his church, the house of God, as the high priest.

And what's more, as the high priest, he says, come on in. My whole church, come with me into the Holy of Holies. That's the work of Christ. It's to bring everyone he saves into the presence of the Holy, Holy, Holy God.

Every time we gather in the name of Jesus, every Sunday morning like this, it's the Lord's day. And it's not about how I did this week. It's about how Christ has saved me.

John Newton, who composed Amazing Grace. He wrote, assurance grows by repeated conflict, by our repeated experimental proof of the Lord's power and goodness to save.

[36 : 34] When we have been brought very low and helped, sorely wounded and healed, cast down and raised again. We have given up all hope, but we have been suddenly snatched from the danger and placed in safety.

And that's what we experience every time we gather. And every morning, his mercies are new. Thinking of Romans 7 again, we can relate to this feeling of testing his goodness over and over and over again.

We can pray, oh Lord, I have sinned again. My flesh is so weak. But I hate my sin. Because you have made my spirit willing to obey you.

You say that you remember my sins no more. So please cause me to believe this and to trust you. Because the more I do, the more your love replaces my own flesh.

And that's why you and I can have assurance that his spirit has caused you to repent and believe in Christ as your Lord.

[37 : 45] You can be secure because God himself has united you to Christ. And everything that's Christ, he says, is yours.

He's the one who leads you into the communion and the presence of God. Can you imagine if we truly believe this? We are in the presence of our holy God, communing with him.

When we leave these doors back into the world, it would not be the same. And what a threat that is to the enemy. The kingdom of Christ advancing through his church.

Thomas Brooks wrote, Satan attacks your assurance of salvation because he knows that assurance is a pearl of such a price that it will make your soul happy forever.

Satan does not want you to be happy. But that's why Jesus came to save you. It's that you could have joy forevermore in the presence of God himself. So you can have assurance that you are in God's covenant of grace every time Jesus brings you into the presence of the holy God.

[38 : 57] The eighth test is this. You can have assurance if you draw near to God with his people, trusting by faith in what he promises. See, he says to the gathered congregation now in verse 22, those who have been saved, let us in the plural as a congregation, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith.

This is the same passage where he goes on to say, stir one another up in the faith. Do not quit meeting together. We have to help each other out. We can't do the work of the Holy Spirit, but we can encourage one another.

We can see a brother whose whose flame is barely there, but the Lord will not put that that smoking flax out. Instead, he brings the church together and we help flame fan it into flame.

Blow the wind of the spirit. Preach the gospel to one another. Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith.

Thomas Brooks again said, Satan wants to attack assurance of salvation because he knows that true assurance stirs up a generous disposition.

[40 : 14] We don't do good things or show generosity to one another, to those who don't, who would never, you know, we'd never choose to do it by our own flesh. We don't do that to make ourselves feel good.

We do it if it's the love that we first receive from Christ. It simply overflows. And he says in verse 22. With our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

I see two things here. First is the inner being. God purifies the inner being. Your heart is sprinkled clean from an evil conscience.

The role of the priest was to sprinkle blood over the representatives of the tribes of Israel. And it's reminding to them the blood that covers the doorposts that the angel of death can now pass over.

So where there is a sprinkling with blood. There is a passing over. Everybody deserves sin and death. But the blood sprinkles you and it covers you.

[41 : 22] And in the covenant of grace, our hearts on the inside, the inner being is sprinkled clean from an evil conscience.

Your conscience no longer says you deserve death. Because you're growing in your assurance that my sins have been paid for. The Lord has passed over my sin by pouring it out on his son in Seter.

The Christian faith is not just on the inner being. It's the whole person. See, next I see the second thing, which is the outer being. He also says our bodies are washed with pure water.

He regenerates your soul. We celebrate that with the baptism of your body. In the old covenant, there were a couple categories that had to be washed with water.

One were the priests. In order to be near God, you have to be washed, purified with water. The other one was foreigners. Foreigners had to be purified and washed with water. Before they could be considered part of the covenant community.

[42 : 23] So we agree with the Westminster Larger Catechism number 162 again. What we have in the new covenant is the sacraments. It's baptism in the Lord's Supper.

And it says a sacrament is a holy ordinance instituted by Jesus Christ in his church to signify, seal and exhibit the benefits of his mediation to those who are within the covenant of grace.

To distinguish them from those who are outside of the covenant of grace. Who is in the covenant of grace? Those who are belonging to Christ.

Those who are united to Christ. The seed of Jesus. That's who we baptize. So you can draw near to God with his people, trusting by faith in his promises that you have been made clean, body and soul.

Your whole person can be in his presence by the work of Christ. The ninth test is this. You can have assurance if you are holding fast by faith to the hope of our confession.

[43 : 30] That's what he says in verse 23. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith, the confession of our hope without wavering. In this world, we'll be tempted to waver.

We'll be pulled in all directions. There's so much that can distract us from what matters most. Who are we in Jesus Christ? Christ. My own wavering scares me.

Does that happen for you? My own wavering, my wondering heart. That's a scary thought. And even that I have to trust. It's not my faithfulness. It's Christ who preserves me.

Hebrews 9 24 says, So in the presence of God in heaven, Christ is there on your behalf, on my behalf.

You hold fast to that faith, that profession, that I have a God who is my mediator. He has covenanted God's grace to me.

[44 : 48] I can trust him because my Lord Jesus Christ, being the eternal son of God, of one substance, equal with the father. He became man in the fullness of time.

And he continues to be God and man in two wholly distinct natures. One person forever ministering for me, preserving me and bringing me into the glorious presence of God.

The final test is this. You will hold fast to your faith in the hope of our confession. If your assurance is based on God's covenant faithfulness.

So you can have assurance that you are in the covenant of grace if it is based not on your works, but on God's covenant faithfulness.

Look at the last few words in verse 23. What he brings to the church and leaves them with in this section is this.

[45 : 53] He who promised is faithful. You can have assurance because God who promised. Who God is? He is the creator.

It's his eternal decree and his providence that has brought you to this point. And by that same power and providence, he will preserve you to the very end. Not because of who you are, but because that's who he is.

He is faithful. So we hold fast to God's faithfulness. We anchor our assurance on who God is.

Your assurance could not be more secure than in the hands of God, the son. I am saved for Christ's sake alone.

It's the spirit of God by his work that dwells inside of me. We need to preach this to ourselves because remember Mephibosheth.

[46 : 56] We're under the curses of Adam's fall. So Adam is like King Saul. David is like the Lord.

And Jonathan is that self-sacrificing, humble prince. And our salvation is because God, the father, pictured by David, promised to the humble prince, God, the son, pictured in Jonathan.

All the blessings of a covenant bond that cannot be broken between the two of them. So our lameness, it leaves us hopeless.

It leaves us thinking there is nothing that would lead God to choose me. Leland Song says, fighting thoughts of fear, wondering why he called my name. Am I good enough to share his cup?

This world has left me lame. But even in my weakness, the Savior called my name. And in his holy presence, I am healed and unashamed.

[48 : 02] He carries me to the table. He seats me where I don't belong. And he sweeps me over with his gracious love. We read in 2 Samuel 9, 13, that Mephibosheth, though lame in both feet, ate always at the king's table.

And this was for Jonathan's sake. He was secure. Brothers and sisters, God is faithful for Christ's sake.

In Christ, you are secure. You can have full assurance that if you are united to Christ, you belong to him in a covenant of grace that cannot be broken.

All glory be to God. Let's pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you for this good news, Lord.

Thank you for your word that you press onto our hearts. You wash over us. Thank you for the assurance that we can enjoy in the finished work of Christ alone. We pray that you'll apply that to our lives in such a powerful way that we will be stronger this afternoon than we were this morning.

[49 : 26] And we pray, Lord, that over time, however many days and weeks and years you give us, you will assure us more and more and more that we belong to you by the finished work of Jesus Christ.

We ask this in his precious name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.