

## “How Do You Know?”

It is not uncommon for many Christians to doubt their walk with God at times. So often, we fall victim to feelings of either unworthiness or distance from Jesus due to an imperfect walk. I would submit to you that this can occur from the most freshmen of new believers to elders in the faith. I have heard from many believers over time that they question whether they are truly walking right with God. We all want to (and should) hold ourselves to a higher standard of holy living for such is the repeated exhortation throughout Scripture summarized in 1 Peter 1:16, “Be holy because I am holy.” The pursuit of perfection in holy living, however noble the attempt, will always be met with obstruction called human frailty. No one can be, or will ever be, perfect in their attainment of righteous and blameless living. In fact, the Bible states that... “all of our righteous acts are like filthy rags” (Isa 64:6). This being recognized, we must then further acknowledge that no amount of good works will ever supercede or replace the need for the shed blood of Christ as our Savior. His shed blood on the cross has paid the price and paved the way for sinners to come to salvation. So, why do so many believers still question the legitimacy of their decision to accept Christ and their inheritance of the Holy Spirit just because they fumble in their Christian walk at times? If no one is perfect and missteps will occur along the way, naturally the question arises... “then how do you know that Christ is in you?” The answer is what I believe is one of the underlying themes of the New Testament by all the writers – *you don’t continue to do what you use to*. In other words, if you continue to do or enjoy the very things that know you ought not to, then you have a legitimate reason to question whether or not Christ is truly in you.

The Word of God is very clear on this topic. I believe that it is not a complicated matter. There are things that I used to do as a non-believer that I no longer do or have an appetite for, because not only is it directly against God’s Word, but I no longer feel right doing it. There is something that changes in you that causes a loss of interest or even, disdain for the very things you would have done in the past. This is the Holy Spirit working in you. Probably the best (and simplest) method of knowing that Christ is in you is by turning away from the activities, behaviors, and thought life that serve only to keep you in worldly bondage, and hence make it difficult for God to “complete the good work that He has begun in you” (Phil 1:6). For example, the drunk no longer drinks, the adulterer no longer cheats on his wife, the liar no longer habitually lies, the party animal/clubbing freak no longer parties, the porn addict no longer watches porn, the pot smoker no longer smokes pot, the deceiver no longer deceives, the curser now watches his mouth, the anger/bad attitude in a person now becomes patience and compassion, the argumentative type now shows restraint and seeks peaceful resolution instead of flying off the handle, the practitioner of strange cultish practices no longer worships other gods or beliefs, the sexually immoral no longer engages in sexually immoral behaviors, the one who ponders the destruction of others ceases to entertain those thoughts. These actions and behaviors which now... “have been nailed to His cross and have been crucified there”, have been replaced with the actions of those who belong to Christ: love, self control, peace, joy, patience, kindness, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness (Galatians 5:16-25).

There is one more way to know that Christ is in you and that is when the lure of the very things that you no longer want to do or should not do become almost a daily and intense struggle within you. By the way, the closer you get to God the harder the battle will get. The more you reach for Jesus the higher the degree of temptation that you will face. This is a guarantee! So, consider these things as leading indicators that will help answer the next time you begin to ask “how do I know?”

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