TRANQUILITY BASE = KNOWING THAT WE'RE SAVED!

Text: I John 5:12-15

Fifty-six years ago today, Niel Armstrong uttered these historic words, 'Houston, Tranquility Base here; the Eagle has landed." Although the Sea of Tranquility was named in 1621, when the Eagle landed there, it did depict the peace and accompanying calmness of the first successful manned moon landing. However, nothing compares to the peace and calmness that accompanies the assurance of your own salvation. The epistle of First John was written that God's children might know that they have eternal life. "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God" (I John 5:13). Let's examine First John and see how we may know we are saved.

1. <u>WE KNOW WE'RE SAVED BECAUSE GOD KEEPS HIS WORD.</u>

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:9). God said He would save us if we believe and call upon Him for salvation (Acts 16:31; Romans 10:13). No less than three times in the Scriptures God declares He cannot lie.

Numbers 23:19: "God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?"

Titus 1:2: "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began."

Hebrews 6:18: "That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us."

God has, will and shall forevermore keep His word. Our Lord said He would save us if we called upon Him; therefore we should gladly take Him at His word. Salvation is based upon God's faithfulness, not ours: "…Great is thy faithfulness" (Lamentations 3:23b).

2. <u>WE KNOW WE'RE SAVED BECAUSE WE CONSISTENTLY OBEY GOD.</u>

I John 2:3-5: “And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep His commandments. He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in Him.” These three verses are not teaching that a Christian will never sin, otherwise I John 2:1 would not have said, “…And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” What is it saying? It is saying the same thing I John 3:9 is saying, “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.” The Greek verb *poiei*, is translated “commit.” As used in verse 9, *poiei* is a third person, singular, present tense form of the verb *poieo,* which means: “to do”, generally, i.e., habitually, to perform, to execute, to exercise, to practice, i.e., to pursue a course of action, to be active, to work…” (Berry, Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, p. 81). The Word of God is called the seed and it is this seed, that provides the restraining force for perpetual good in our life. I Peter 1:23: “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.”

If we as Christians try to live disobediently God will discipline us back into fellowship with Him and obedience to Him. He says in Hebrews 12:7, “If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?” God does it according to Hebrews 12:10b: “…for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness.” Hebrews 12:14 emphatically states: “Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.”

3. <u>WE KNOW THAT WE’RE SAVED BECAUSE WE LOVE GOD’S PEOPLE.</u>

I John 3:14: “We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.” Contemplating this biblical truth, where do you belong or fit in?

I Corinthians 6:9-11: “Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves

with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."

If you really and truly prefer the company of drunkards, fornicators, adulterers, blasphemers and God haters, the chances are very strong that you belong with them. If, on the other hand, you would rather be with God's people, emulators of good and imitators Jesus, then we have Scriptural cause to believe that you have been saved.

My dad made a decision for Christ when he was thirteen. He lived a sheltered life having been reared by a God-fearing preacher's daughter. During the depression, times were hard and he joined the CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps). This was an organization for young men formed by FDR's New Deal. Dad got involved with the wrong crowd and did things he had never done before, things not pleasing to God. While on leave, he was attending a homecoming at Liberty Baptist Church in Hawkins, Texas. He found his old Sunday School teacher and Dad told him he doubted his salvation after having been involved with the world and the things of this world. His wise teacher asked, "Julian, do you feel at home in the world and those people who don't love the Lord? Or do you feel at home here at old Liberty with God's people?" Dad replied he felt at home at church and with God's people. The teacher proffered his hand and said, "Congratulations, Julian; you are saved!" and then he quoted I John 3:14: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren…."

4. <u>WE KNOW THAT WE'RE SAVED BECAUSE OF THE WITNESS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.</u>

I John 3:24: "And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in Him, and he in Him. And hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us." I John 4:13: "Hereby know we that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit." I John 5:10a: "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself…."

I love the story of Will Rogers preparing to go overseas and was told he must provide his birth certificate. When inquiring why, he

was told, “We have to see that you were born.” Rogers replied, “Well, I’m here, ain’t I?”

When Jesus saved us, the third person of the Holy Trinity moved into our bodies. God cannot come into our life without His presence being known! Romans 8:16: “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.”

5. <u>WE KNOW WE’RE SAVED BECAUSE OF A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE WITH CHRIST.</u>

I John 5:12-15: “He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God. And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask any thing according to His will, He heareth us: And if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him.” Salvation is not real until it’s personal. God has no grandchildren. No one is saved because mom and dad are Christians. We can influence our loved ones and friends to be saved, but it doesn’t count until they accept Christ for themselves.

If we have made salvation personal, nothing can separate us from God. Romans 8:38, 39: “For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Please notice I John 5:14: “And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask any thing according to His will, He heareth us.” According to the Bible it is God’s will to save people: II Peter 3:9: “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” We, therefore have the assurance that if we have asked Christ to save us that He will. Romans 10:9, 10, 13. There is an old song that says, “I can tell you ‘bout the time; I can take you to the place, where the Lord saved me by His marvelous grace!” It is neither the time nor the place that saves us; it is the grace of God through Christ’s atoning blood. And the moment we trust Christ, we personally experience Him and all the salvation He has provided through His death, burial and resurrection. He has “…called you out of darkness

into His marvellous light” (I Peter 2:9b). It would be difficult to come from one extreme to the other without knowing to some degree when the light came on!

-Johnny Pope-