

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

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You know, God does not owe us explanations. They wouldn't do us any good anyway, because if He explained, we still wouldn't understand. So don't ask Him to explain; that would be like asking Einstein to explain something to your dog. You're not going to understand the ways of God. His ways are above our ways. We trust and obey. We do not live by explanations; we live by promises, Amen?

And one of the great promises, however, is that we can know that we know that we know that we're saved, Heaven-born and Heaven-bound. And if you are not saved, you need to be saved so you can know it. And if you are saved, you ought to know it. Somebody said, "If you could be saved and not know it, you could lose it and not miss it." The truth of the matter is that you can know, beyond the shadow of any doubt, that you are saved.

Now we sang a song, "Saved by His Power Divine." There're only two classes in the world. Now we divide people by upper class, middle class, lower class. But God doesn't do that. There're only two classes: the saved and the lost, the saints and the aints. And you are in one category or you are in another.

Well, you say, "Well, I'm not entirely saved, Pastor Rogers." No, no. Nobody is half-saved. To be half-saved is to be altogether, entirely lost. Either you are saved or you are lost. Well, you say, "Only God can say who's saved." Well, you're right about that, and that's what we're going to talk about today, and we're going to find out what God says. And then when we find out what God says, then you can say what God says and you can be sure.

Now, let's see what God says. First John chapter 5 verses 5 through 13, "*Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? This is He that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. For there are three that bear record in Heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth: the Spirit, and the water, and the blood; and these three agree in one. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God which He hath testified of His Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.*" Now here's the climatic verse, verse 13, "*These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know,*" K-N-O-W, "*that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.*"

Now are Christians fools? Are we mere sentimentalists, or do we have a basis for our belief? Now, the Gospel of John, John's previous book, the Gospel, was written to tell us how to be saved; and this First John was written, the epistle of John, to tell us how to know that we're saved.

If you take the epistle of John when you get home sometime and read it, circle the word know, K-N-O-W. Just circle it. Maybe take a red pen and just circle it. By the way, don't mind writing in your Bible. When you wear it out, get a new one, Amen? Just circle it. If you have a Bible falling apart, you have a life that's not falling apart. Just circle it, every time you find the word K-N-O-W, know, just circle it; and you will find that over forty times in these five chapters he uses the word know. It is the gospel of certainty. It is not a hope so, maybe so; it is a know-so salvation. And he says, "These things," verse 13, "*have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life.*" Wouldn't it be wonderful for you to say, "Praise God, I know that I know that I know, that no matter what happens, I am Heaven-born and I am Heaven-bound."

Now, there's another key word, and it is used some ten times in these verses that I've just read to you; First John chapter 5 verses 5 through 13. And that key word is the same word. It is translated different ways. It is translated witness, record, testimony, and testify. It's the same word, that it's just translated different ways.

So, God is giving us a witness so we can know. He is giving us a testimony so that we can know. And that's what we're going to be talking about today: the source of our certainty, the basis of our belief and remember last week we told you that a three-fold cord is not easily broken? We told you three ways that you could test false spirits. Now we're going to tell you today three ways that you can know, K-N-O-W, that you are saved, and that you're on the way to Heaven, and that you can be absolutely sure.

Now, the first way, **there is the certainty that comes from the atoning work of Christ.** Write down the atoning work of Christ, the atoning work of Christ. Now, where, how does that certainty come? Well, look if you will in First John 5 verse 6, "*This is He that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood.*" Now, what does that mean? Well, it speaks of what Jesus Christ did to redeem us, and it said that He came by water and blood. What is the meaning of that? What is the meaning of water and blood?

Put in your margin John, that is, this time the Gospel of John, John chapter 19 verses 33 and 34. The setting for this verse is that Jesus Christ is on the cross. He is dying in agony and blood upon that cross, and the Roman soldiers, in order to make certain that those who had been crucified were dead, the Jews wanted them dead before the Sabbath, they were coming along to break the legs of those who'd been crucified to hasten death. But when they came to Jesus, He was already dead. Now listen to the Scripture. John 19 verses 33 and 34, "*But when they came to Jesus, and saw that He was dead already, they break not His legs; but one of the soldiers, with a spear, pierced His side, and forthwith came out blood and water.*" Out of the wounded side of the Lord Jesus there poured out blood and water.

And now the apostle John tells us over here in the epistle that we're reading in First John chapter 5 and verse 6, "*This is He that came by water and blood, even Jesus*

Christ.” The pericardial pleural fluid that encases the heart is a watery substance; and, of course, it’s the heart that pumps the blood. But sometimes in great duress, medical people tell us, that plasma, it separates and that fluid is there around the heart, that pleural fluid that shows something of the agony that Jesus had.

You see, why did Jesus die first and the thieves not die, the other two? Because Jesus died of a broken heart. Jesus literally died of a broken heart. There was no agony like the agony of Jesus.

You cannot understand the pressure that was upon the Lord Jesus Christ. We saw the beginning of that, in Luke chapter 22 verses 39 through 46, when Jesus, in the Garden of Gethsemane, His perspiration became as blood. Water and blood, water and blood. Jesus died in agony. The eternities were compressed upon the Lord Jesus. The sins of the world were distilled upon the Lord Jesus. He died of a broken heart. And when that soldier took that spear and rammed it into the side of the Lord Jesus, there poured out water and blood. That’s the meaning of John speaking of water and blood.

But what is the message of it? Well, you see, it is the blood that cleanses from sin. It is the blood that removes the penalty of sin. The wages of sin is death and without shedding of blood there’s no remission. And Jesus took my sin and your sin to that cross, and with His blood He paid sin’s penalty.

But there’s also the water. The water speaks of that which continues to cleanse. It speaks not only of salvation, but sanctification. Remember in the Gospel of John chapter 1 and verse 14, the Bible says, “*And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us?*” The Word is Jesus, the logos, was made flesh and dwelt among us. The word dwelt is the word tabernacled. Jesus tabernacled among us.

Did you know that in the Old Testament God had a tabernacle? And that tabernacle in the Old Testament was a prophecy of Jesus. And had you gone into that tabernacle to worship, first of all, there would have been a brazen altar, and that’s where the blood would have been shed. That spoke of the blood of Jesus. And then right past that altar, you would come to a great basin called a laver. And, the blood is here at the altar, but at the laver is water. And so, they would come, first of all, through the blood to the water. The blood deals with the penalty of sin; the water deals with the pollution of sin. Jesus tabernacled among us. Jesus came by blood and water. And it’s significant that when they put that spear in His side, out came blood and water.

Now what does that have to do with the assurance of my salvation? Friend, my hope is built on nothing less than the blood and the water. And you know, we sing that song, “Rock of Ages.” Have you ever thought about that phrase that you’ve sung so many times, “Let the water and the blood, from Thy wounded side which flowed, be of sin the double cure, save from wrath and make me pure?” That’s the water and the blood. He saves from wrath. He makes us pure. I wouldn’t give half a hallelujah of

your hope of Heaven, apart from the water and the blood, apart from the death of the Lord Jesus Christ upon that cross. That's the solid rock on which we stand.

Friend, that's the first cord in our three-fold cord that gives us assurance. There is certainty from the atoning work of Christ. Did you write that down?

All right, now write this down: **there is certainty from the abiding witness of the Spirit.** The atoning work of the Son, the abiding witness of the Spirit. Now, continue to read the last part of verse 6 on through verse 10, "*And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. For there are three that bear record in Heaven: the Father, and the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth: the Spirit, and the water, and the blood.*" Now you see, where the Spirit takes the water and the blood, the Holy Spirit to bear witness. "*And these three agree in one.*"

Now notice John's argument here, "If," and that word, if, can be translated since, "*Since we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God which He hath testified of His Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself.*" Now, that is the abiding witness. You see, you have the atoning work, but the Holy Spirit takes the atoning work and He testifies of it. He gives witness to you on the inside.

Now, let me tell you how the Holy Spirit of God witnesses. This is the way that you can know that you have blessed assurance. First of all, **the Holy Spirit witnesses to you.** The Holy Spirit witnesses to us. That is, before we're even saved, the Holy Spirit is telling us about Jesus. Notice again, if you will, verse 6, "*And this is He that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood.*" You say, "Well, Adrian, how do I know that's true? Just because you say it?" No, listen, "*And it is the Spirit that beareth witness.*" Do you think that I'm up here trying to persuade you of something? Oh, no, no. You see, it is the Holy Spirit of God that will tell you whether this is true or whether it's not. "*It is the Spirit that beareth witness because the Spirit is truth.*"

What is the ministry of the Holy Spirit? Jesus said in John 16 verse 14, "*He will take the things of Mine and He will show them to you.*" And notice what He says there in First John 5 verse 9, "*If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater.*"

You believe men. You receive the witness of men all the time. You go out to a restaurant. You trust people, to eat; takes more faith every day. You're sitting in this building. You've trusted the engineers that figured this roof that it'll not fall in. I've often thought about it. You get on an airplane to fly overseas. You sit down; you've never seen that pilot, you've never met him, you've never examined that airplane. And he cracks that throttle open, going to fly you all across that puddle. That's faith. You go to the doctor; he writes a prescription neither he nor the pharmacist can read. And that man goes back there and takes all that stuff from the shelf and mixes something up and you take it. Listen, we receive the witness of men every day, don't we? Surely, we do.

You say, “Well, it’s difficult to live by faith.” You live by faith every day of your life, and you put your faith in two-legged men whose breath is in their nostrils. *“If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater.”* Men can lie. The Holy Spirit is truth.

And so, first of all, the Holy Spirit witnesses to us. That’s the reason why I’m never moved when a man says, “Well, I can’t believe.” He’s a liar. If you want to believe, the Holy Spirit will enable you to believe. Jesus did not say, “You cannot come unto me.” Jesus said, “Ye will not come unto me.” You see, it is because the Holy Spirit of God, when the Word of God is preached, the Holy Spirit of God witnesses with the Word. First of all, He witnesses to you.

And then, not only does He witness to you, then **He witnesses in you**. Look in verse 10, if you will, in First John chapter 5, *“He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself.”* Now, when He witnesses to you, and you receive Christ, then He comes into you, and you have the witness in you.

Now, suppose Brother Bob and Brother Jim are arguing with me about apple pie. And I have an apple pie over here, and I’ve just eaten a big slice of it. And Jim says, “I don’t believe there is any apple pie. It doesn’t even exist.” And Bob says, “Well, I believe it exists, but it’s no good.” And Adrian is over here, having wrapped himself around a piece of apple pie. Now, you think those two guys are going to disturb me? See, I have the witness in myself. I have the witness in myself. And that is the reason that a Christian with an experience is never at the mercy of an infidel with an argument. You see, He witnesses to you. And then He witnesses in you. That’s the reason the Bible says in Psalm 34 verse 8, *“Taste and see that the Lord is good.”* One way to find out whether apple pie is good or not is to taste and see.

Now, you say, “Well, that’s brings up a real question, Adrian. What is the witness of the Holy Spirit?” Now I want you to be very careful here. The witness of the Holy Spirit is not an emotional feeling. Now if you don’t get this, you’re going to miss the whole thing. Most people think that the witness of the Holy Spirit is some emotional feeling: goose bumps, liver shivers. Oh, you say, “I know I’m saved because I feel it.” Oh, boy. Then your assurance of your salvation’s going to go up and down with the condition of your liver. If you live by emotions, you’re going to be on a roller coaster. No, no, no, no. The witness of the Spirit is far deeper than emotions.

How does God know anything? Does He know something because somebody tells Him? Does He know something because He has learned it? Does He know something because He feels it? No, spiritual knowledge goes beyond those things.

Now, very frankly, I’m not really an emotional person, except when I preach. I get emotional when I preach. But I’m more emotional when I preach than at other times. Sometimes Joyce will say to me, “Hey, why don’t you get excited like you do when you preach?” I don’t get all that high; I don’t get all that low. Well, I can’t take credit for that, one way or the other. That’s just the way I’m wired. That is my

psychology. I'd be that way if I were not saved. That's my emotional band. I don't get all that high; I don't get all that low. I'm more in a narrow band.

Now, the assurance of your salvation can show up in your emotions. You know, when it dawns on you that you know that you're saved, you may get very excited about it. Nothing wrong with that. One man said, "Man, when, when I got saved, I was plowing. I got saved in the cornfield, tore up a half an acre of corn." It's kind of hard on the corn, but that's okay. But that man who got saved, plowing, and tore up a half an acre of corn, is no more saved than a ten year old girl who comes down this aisle this morning, and sweetly gives her heart to Jesus Christ. No more saved. The emotions are fine. That is not the witness of the Spirit. Your emotions may play on the witness of the Spirit.

You say, "Pastor, then what is the witness of the Spirit? Explain it." You don't explain it; you receive it. God's Spirit speaks to you that you belong to Him. "*He that hath the Son hath the witness in himself.*"

And, you know, so many times we're trying to make everybody else have the same kind of an emotional experience that we have. You know, in some churches they used to have altars, where you came to the altar to kneel and get saved. Now, nothing wrong with that. It's not necessary. You can be saved back there. You can be saved up here. You can be saved in an airplane. You can be saved in a submarine. You can be saved anywhere, but this man came to one of those old-fashioned prayer benches to get saved. And there were some of the brothers in this country church and sisters who came to help him to get through.

One knelt down alongside of him while he was praying and said, "Brother, hold on. You'll never get saved if you don't hold on." Another well-meaning person came up right after that and said, "Brother, let go! I never did get saved till I finally let go." And somebody else came right after that and said, "Oh, man, look for a bright light." He said, "When you see that bright light, you'll know you're saved." And this man, later on, who finally did get saved, he said, "You know, between trying to hold on and let go and look for that light, I almost didn't make it."

Listen. Don't you impose your emotions on me. I won't impose my emotions on you. We are different emotionally. The witness of the Spirit is not an emotional experience. It is a certainty. When God's Spirit speaks to your spirit, and He tells you, "You are Mine." *He that hath the Spirit, hath the witness in himself.*

The Holy Spirit of God witnesses to you. And then the Holy Spirit of God witnesses in you. And that, my friend, is when **the Holy Spirit of God can witness through you**. You remember what our Lord said in Acts 1:8, "*Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; ye shall be witnesses unto Me.*"

Man, when you have the assurance of your salvation, a know-so salvation, it's so much easier to be a witness because as the apostle said in Acts 5 verse 32, "*We are witnesses of these things, and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them*"

that obey Him.” I’m not dependent upon eloquence, I’m not dependent upon logic, I’m not dependent upon those things in order to persuade you. And that’s the reason, before I came out here, I got on my knees and said, ‘O God, O God, You’re the witness. You witness through me.’ It’s the Holy Spirit of God.

Who is the witness? How do we have this assurance? The atoning work of the Savior; the water and the blood. The abiding witness of the Spirit. Here’s the third cord. Remember now, a three-fold cord is not easily broken. The work of the Savior, the witness of the Spirit, and here’s the third cord: **the Word of the Father**, the Word of the Father. There you see this three-fold cord; Father, Son, and Holy Ghost together to bring this certainty.

Now, what is the Word of the Father? I want you to listen to it here, beginning in verse 10 and going through verse 13, *“He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself; and he that believeth not God,”* now, here it is, the Father, *“he that believeth not God hath made Him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.”* Now, underscore this next phrase, *“These things have I written unto you,”* that’s the written Word, friend, *“that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may,”* K-N O-W, *“know that you have eternal life.”*

Now, God gave us a record. God gave us the Bible. This is the record. *“These things have I written unto you.”* Aren’t you glad for the Bible? Say, Amen. Because where do we learn about the water and the blood? Where do we learn about the witness of the Spirit? We learned about that from the Word of God. This is the three-fold cord, again, that is not easily broken. God gave us His Word.

Now, it’s so very important that you believe the Word of God, because the Word of God has one central message from Genesis to Revelation. You can put it in two words. You ready for it? Jesus saves. That’s it. This book was not written to tell you how the Heavens go; it was written to tell you how to go to Heaven. The message of the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, is one message: Jesus saves, Jesus saves.

Now, God gave us His Word that we might have that assurance, that we might be absolutely sure. Now, if you don’t believe the Bible, do you know what you’re doing? You’re calling God a liar. Look in verse 10, look in verse 10, *“He that believeth not God hath made Him a liar.”*

Now, sometimes a person will say to me, “Well, you know, Pastor Rogers, I am trying to believe the Bible.” Oh, you are? How nice. Suppose you came to me and asked me for some information; and I said, “Here’s the way it is: one, two, three, four,” and I’d tell you some things. And you look at me and you say, “Well, Adrian, I’m trying to believe you.” What does that say about me? “I’m trying to believe you.” You know what that means? Now, “Adrian, you must be a liar part of the time.” or, “Adrian, you’re not trustworthy. I’m trying to believe you, Adrian.”

Friend, listen, when you say, “Oh, I’m trying to have faith,” “*He that believeth not God hath made Him a liar.*” God’s no liar. You see, listen, “*This is the record. God hath given to us eternal life.*” There is the divine, inspired Word of God, and it is settled in Heaven. Psalm 119:89, “*Forever, O Lord, Thy Word is settled in Heaven.*”

The atoning work of Christ, the abiding work, witness of the Spirit, and the affirming Word of God. You take those three, put them together, and then you can say, “I know that I have eternal life.”

Now let’s break it down a little bit, and let’s just see what John did say in the Word. First of all, he tells us **the source of this life**. Notice the record, First John 5 verse 11, “*And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.*” Now that’s the source. You don’t have life if you don’t have the Lord Jesus. Apart from Jesus, there is no eternal life. Say, Amen. Apart from Jesus, there is no eternal life. Well, you say, “I have life.” No, you have existence. Jesus said in John 10:10, “*I’ve come that you might have life, and have it abundantly.*” The source of the life is Jesus.

Now, not only is Jesus the source of the life, but He’s also **the substance of the life**. Look in First John 5 verse 12, “*He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.*” Now, Christianity is Christ. It’s not a creed, not a code, not a cause, it is Christ. Jesus Christ is to your spirit what blood is to your body. It is not a religion about Him. It is not simply following His precepts. It is Christ in you, the hope of glory. Other teachers may point to life; Jesus says, “*I am the life.*” John 14:6.

Now, listen to me, the source of your life is Jesus; the substance of your life is Jesus. And, therefore, **the surety of your life is Jesus**. Notice First John 5 verse 13, “*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.*” Now, notice, He says, “*These things have I written that you might know.*” So the surety of your life is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now suppose you and your wife filed a joint income tax return. And the tax man came to you and said, “You filed a wrong return. You have not proven that you’re married.” You say, “Well, I know I’m married.” “No, I want some proof that you’re married.” And you say, “Well, man, it was like yesterday. I stood there at the marriage altar with Joyce. Oh, you should’ve seen her. You should’ve seen when she came down there in that white dress. She was radiant. Oh, I remember when the pastor said, ‘Adrian, do you take Joyce. Wilt thou?’ And I just wilted. I remember the emotion I had. I remember the feelings that I had. Sir, oh, I can tell you all about the joy, the commitment in my heart.”

He says, “Well, son, I’m glad that you had that experience and you feel that way, but for our records that won’t count, no matter how you felt. You have something better?” I said, “Yes, I have something better. Come back tomorrow and I’ll have it.” And I go down to the courthouse, and I get the record where Adrian Pierce Rogers was married to Joyce Louise Gentry, and it is signed and attested to. And a

seal is put upon it. I say, “Now, you want something better than emotion? There’s the record, there’s the record.”

God has given to us a record. God has given to us His Word! It goes beyond emotion. Thank God for emotion. You ought to have some when you get married, but it’s not the emotion that makes you married. Oh no, no, no. Don’t get married without it. But, friend, let me tell you something. There is a three-fold cord: the atoning work of Christ, the abiding witness of the Spirit, the affirming Word of the Father. Put them together. Put them together! *“These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God,”* listen, *“that you may know that you have eternal life.”* First John chapter 5 and verse 13.

A little boy was in a revival meeting. The pastor preached from John 5 verse 24, *“Verily, verily I say unto you, he that heareth My Word and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath eternal life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life.”* That was the message. He believed it, was saved. And you know, the devil always counter attacks, doesn’t he?

On the way home, the little fellow said the devil began to whisper to him, said, “You’re not saved. You don’t feel just right. You don’t deserve it. You’re not good enough.” And all the way home, the devil was just dogging the footsteps of that little boy.

He sat on the couch, trying to get it all sorted out because he wanted the absolute assurance that he was saved. He remembered the verse. Where was it? John 5:24, *“Verily, verily I say unto you.”* Verily, verily? That means truly, truly. *“I say unto you,”* Jesus says, *“He that heareth My Word,”* he said, “I heard it.” *“And believeth on Him that sent Me,”* he said, “I believe.” *“Hath everlasting life,”* he said, “I have everlasting life. I’ve done it. The Word says so.”

He said by then, it seemed like Satan was under the couch. He said, “I took the Bible and stuck it under the couch and I said ‘Devil, read it for yourself.’” Said, “From there on the doubt left.” Listen, when the devil gets on your trail, don’t argue with him. He’s not worth it. Point him to the Word of God and step out of the argument. Let him argue with God Himself. *“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.”* “Pastor, only God can say who’s saved.” That’s exactly right, and He has. *“He that hath the Son,”* verse 12, *“hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.”*

Do you have Him? The Holy Spirit of God is here today, telling you there was one who came by water and blood, who died for you. And as I’m preaching to you, He’s saying, “That is right. That is true.” He is witnessing to you right now.

Bow your heads in prayer and close your eyes. While heads are bowed and eyes are closed, now remember, you can receive the witness of God. *“If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater.”* It is more than what Adrian is telling you today. It is what God is telling you.

Would you pray this prayer if you want to be saved? “Dear God, I know that You love me, and I know that You want to save me. Jesus, thank You for paying for my sin with Your blood on the cross. I believe You’re the Son of God. I believe that God raised You from the dead, and I now receive You as my Lord and Savior and Master forever. Save me, Lord Jesus, and help me never to be ashamed of You. Save me by Your grace and keep me for Your glory. Save me, Jesus. And, Lord Jesus, I thank You for doing it. I will make it public. I will not be ashamed of You. And I will live for You the rest of my life as You give me strength.”

Father God, I just pray that many will say this today and mean it. In Your holy name, Amen.