

Am I predestined for heaven?

By

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Christian basics › Life after death

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The Bible says God has predestined and called people. How can you know whether you are among those who will make it to the new creation?

If you believe in the Son of God, then God wants you to know for certain that you have eternal life (1 John 5:13)! The wonderful Bible truth of “predestination” (Ephesians 1:11) shows us why we can have this confidence. Before the creation of the world, God, in love, chose whom He would save (Ephesians 1:4) and wrote their names in the Lamb’s “book of life” (Revelation 13:8; 17:8; 21:27). Then, in history, God sent His Son to save His people from their sins by laying down His life for them (Matthew 1:21, John 10:11), and by sending the Holy Spirit to give new birth to God’s chosen people as we hear the gospel (John 15:26, John 3:5-8, 1 Peter 2:9, 1 Peter 1:22). God is now holding on to us until the day Jesus returns (John 6:37-40; 44-45), and nobody can snatch us from His hand (John 10:28-29): whatever the world, our own sinful heart

or the devil throw at us, nothing in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:35-39)! Salvation, therefore, is 100% God's work, from first to last (Romans 8:29-30), entirely by His grace (Ephesians 2:8-9) and to His glory alone (Romans 11:33-36).

Judgment day

On judgment day, everybody will find out whether or not their names are written in the “ book of life ” (Revelation 20:15). However, is it possible to know before then ? Yes it is! Our main assurance of salvation should come from remembering what Jesus has already done for us (Hebrews 6:18-29) and resting in God's promise that He will finish the good work that He has begun in us (Philippians 1:6). However, there is also a place in the Christian life for asking ourselves searching questions (2 Corinthians 13:5).

Test the genuineness of your faith

Jesus tells us that we can test the genuineness of a person's faith based on the evidence of their life (Matthew

7:20). Here are some questions to help you do this.

Am I obeying Jesus' commands?

If we obey Jesus' commands , then we know that we love Him (1 John 2:3); and if we love Him, it's because He loved us first (1 John 4:19)! If your Christian obedience isn't perfect, don't despair: true obedience to Jesus includes confessing to Him when we sin (1 John 1:8-2:2). However, if we claim we're Christians but never submit to Christ's moral commands, we are self-deceived (1 John 2:4).

It is important to keep in mind that our eternal destiny is not a matter of “ earning points. ” The first thing God asks of us is “that you believe in Him whom He has sent” —the Lord Jesus (John 6:29). Only after we have obeyed that command and have sincerely repented can we also obey Jesus' other commandments, out of our love for Him.

Am I bearing fruit for Jesus?

Jesus' parable of the sower describes true Christians as “good soil” who bear a big crop for Jesus (Mark 4:20).

Jesus makes a similar point in His metaphor of the vine: if you are bearing much fruit , especially in answer to prayer (John 15:5; 15:7; 15:16), then you can be sure that you are truly in the vine (cf. Hebrews 6:7). Don't be discouraged if you seem to achieve less for God than some other Christians do (Mark 4:20); we need only be faithful with what God has given to us (Matthew 25:21; 21:23). However, if our lives are so driven by worldly desires, worries or success that we bear no fruit for Jesus at all (Mark 4:18-19; John 15:6), then we are in great danger (Hebrews 6:8).

Am I growing in faith and knowledge of God?

A sign that we have truly “ tasted that the Lord is good ” is that we want to keep growing in our faith and in our knowledge of God through studying His word (1 Peter 2:2-3; 2 Peter 3:18; Psalm 1; 2 Timothy 3:14-15). Don't expect to understand everything in the Bible straight away: even Timothy, in whom Paul saw sincere faith (2 Timothy 1:5), needed to spend time thinking about the scriptures (2 Timothy 2:7); and even Barnabas was once

briefly led astray (Galatians 2:13)! However, when confused, true Christians will listen humbly and carefully to God's word (Isaiah 66:2; Luke 8:18), and will ask God to increase their faith and understanding (Mark 9:24; Luke 17:5; Luke 8:9-10). In this way, we will not finally succumb to false teaching and Satanic deception (Ephesians 4:14; Matthew 24:24).

Am I growing in Christ-like love?

Genuine Christians love one another like Jesus loved us (John 13:34-15; 1 John 4:7). If your love isn't perfect yet, don't despair: the Philippians sometimes quarreled among themselves, but their names were still in the book of life (Philippians 4:2-3)! However, the love we have for one another should be growing (Ephesians 4:16; 2 Thessalonians 1:3). If we hate another Christian, our offerings to God are worthless (Matthew 6:23-24), and we do not yet know God, for God is love (1 John 2:11; 4:8).

Am I persevering through persecution?

How did Paul know that God had chosen the Thessalonians (1 Thessalonians 1:4)? Because the Holy

Spirit had given them a joyful faith in the gospel that endured even through persecution (1 Thessalonians 1:5-6; 2:14-16; 3:3-4; cf. Acts 17:1-9; 2 Thessalonians 1:4-5)! Sadly, some people who once seemed to be real Christians have not kept following Jesus; this shows that they were never really chosen in the first place (1 John 2:19). However, if you are persecuted for Jesus' sake and stand firm, rejoice and be glad: your faith has been proven genuine, and you have a great reward in heaven (1 Peter 1:6-9, Luke 6:22-23)!

Pride or despair

When asking ourselves questions like these, we must guard against two opposite dangers: pride , if we think we have “passed” the test; or despair, if we think we have failed . Remember that our salvation belongs entirely to God, and He is the one who works in us “ to will and to act according to His good purpose ” (Philippians 2:13). All of these five questions are things that we can pray for (e.g. Colossians 1:10-12). If, by God's grace, you are doing well, rejoice that your name is written in heaven,

and press on with good works (Luke 10:20; 2 Peter 1:3-11). If not, recognize this moment as God's gracious call to you to repent where you have fallen short, and be purified from all unrighteousness by the blood of Christ (2 Corinthians 7:10; 1 John 1:7-9).

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