

EVERY TRACK EVERY WEEK
WEEK 8: Leader Study Guide

Assurance

-Welcome!

-Intro: Thanks for being here! Revisit last week's points

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INTRO:

Hi, and welcome to Every Track Every Week. My name is _____ and I am involved with Texas FCA Motocross through _____. I've been involved with FCA MX for ____ years and my favorite thing about the ministry is_____.

This week's discussion is based upon episode #98 of our podcast "The Gospel Driven Athlete" titled, "Assurance." Assurance is having confidence and certainty about something. To have assurance of something, you know that it is true and trustworthy. Having assurance of God's Grace and your salvation is having confidence that in Christ, God's Grace is sufficient, and our Salvation is sealed. The enemy loves to cause us to question and doubt but we can be confident in our salvation, not because of anything we have or haven't done, but because of Christ's perfect obedience on our behalf and His sacrificial death in our place.

-Ice Breaker Question: Have you ever approached an obstacle (whether in life or on the track) with more doubt than confidence? How did you handle it? How did it work out?

-Question 1: What does the word assurance mean?

***Answer:** Assurance is having confidence and certainty about something. To have assurance of something, you know that it is true and trustworthy. For example, I have assurance that if I hit a freestyle ramp set at 75 feet in second gear and go Brap, Braaaaaap. I will make it just fine.

-Question 2: What do you think it means to have assurance of grace and salvation?



***ANSWER:**

1. Having assurance of Grace and Salvation is having confidence that in Christ, God's Grace is sufficient, and our Salvation is sealed. We don't trust in our works or even how "holy" we are. We have Confidence that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is true and Trustworthy, and we are children of God for eternity. Having assurance gives us confidence that though we still sin, though we will never be perfect, we are in Christ and our Salvation is sealed.
2. This is a tough concept for all of us and I think that depending on your background in the church it might change how you view this. We can all admit that at times we don't **Feel** like a Christian. We mess up and we struggle, and we question. Plus, the enemy loves to cause us to question and doubt. Look at Adam in the Garden, "is that really what God said"?
3. As we have talked about in prior weeks, Christianity is the only religion that doesn't base our salvation on our works. The bible says, in **Ephesians 2:8-9** *"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast."* This is the Gift of God! Having assurance of grace and salvation being sure of this. That God saves us, based upon His own grace and goodness, not our own. And that what God requires (perfection), He also provides, through His son Jesus Christ.
4. Now honestly, I think a lot of churches still push works on their congregation to the point that people are burdened by the law and focus inwardly all the time. This causes the congregation to keep coming back and builds a reliance on the church....an unhealthy reliance that was never intended. People are scared to lose their salvation, so they have to come back for confession and other things. If we focus inwardly we will never be good enough and we will always question our salvation and we will always worry. But Assurance isn't found focusing inwardly, it is only found focusing on the Gospel, focusing on Christ.

Question 3: Where should our assurance come from? Should it come from our actions? How much good we are doing? How much we have changed? How we



look in comparison to our neighbor? Or should it come from something else altogether?

***ANSWER:**

1. Our salvation is a gift that is anchored in Christ. Our assurance of our Salvation is also anchored in Christ. We cannot look at ourselves to find the assurance of our salvation, we can only look to Christ.
2. What can we do to give ourselves assurance? How about this, what can we do to save ourselves? Isn't belief in Christ a gift? Isn't the fact that we believe because we heard the Gospel and the Holy Spirit stirred in us and we responded in Faith....with a faith that was put in us because of the hearing of the Gospel?
3. Ultimately you have to look outside of yourself to find assurance of Salvation. If we look inside, we will only question it. If you're looking for assurance based upon what you do or what you don't do, it will never be enough. I think we all understand that on some level... especially as we have the law of God preached to us often (which we need). God's requirement is *"be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect."* **Matt5:48**, not "try real hard to do your best." As we have the weight of the law pressed down on us, we are forced to either lie to ourselves and pretend that we are actually pulling it off... or we can rest in the accomplished work of Jesus Christ that is counted to us as if it were our own, by grace, through faith.

Question 4: What should we do when we doubt God's grace and the salvation that He gives us?

1. I think that if someone is worried about their salvation, this could actually be a good sign. It shows that they recognize that God is a Holy God and we are sinful and cannot please God by our own actions. God requires perfection and we are on the opposite end of the spectrum from perfection.



2. Second, we should look back to the Gospel. Are we really understanding the gospel for what it is (Pure promise. Pure good news. Pure grace.) or are we mixing/ confusing it with the law. If we were raised in a church or religion that told us we had to be “good enough” to earn God’s favor, there could be something deep down still lingering from all the years of this false truth. The opposite of this false doctrine is the truth of the Gospel....
3. We need to evaluate if we are comparing ourselves to others. If we are, we are not focused on what is most important. Christ is most important....just stay focused on Him and His Gospel. Persevere in the faith you have been given, with the measure it has been given to you, as you go through life. If sin doesn’t break your heart and you have no problem with it, then maybe you ought to pray that God would give you his perspective. When you lack faith and confidence, pray like the dad who asks Jesus to heal his son in **Mark 9:24**, “*Lord I believe, help my unbelief.*” Remind yourself of the truth and rest in the finished work of the Cross.
4. We have to make sure and remember that we will struggle with sin, even as true regenerate Christians. As a matter of fact, the biblical picture is that we WILL struggle for our entire life. That is the picture that Paul paints in Romans 7, like we talked about earlier. The good news of Romans 7 is that it is followed by Romans 8. Listen to what **Romans 8** says,

Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God



dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

Heirs with Christ

So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

-Question 5: We have established that our struggles and sins don't take away our salvation. So, should we even worry about them? Or should we just go on sinning and not even care?

ANSWER:

- 1. Romans 6:1-3** *"What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? 2 By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? 3 Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4 We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life."*
2. We know that we cannot lose our salvation and that we cannot sin God away....His grace is sufficient. We just continue to do what Christians do, we repent. As we go, we live anchored in Salvation because of Christ, we share our hope with the world...the hope only found in the Gospel, and we repent along the way.
3. We don't heap on the law to try to get people to fall in line, so they work harder to look like a Christian. We focus on the Gospel and let it sink it and take root so deep that we live out a life in response to the Gift of Salvation



that we have been given. We continue to go back to the Gospel to remind ourselves to stay focused on what matters and to remind ourselves what life is about and what is important. Then we war against our flesh and we live in the Spirit so that we don't satisfy the desires of the flesh. Always going back to the Gospel and focusing on what Christ did for us.

4. A true and right understanding of God's grace and goodness on our behalf, will never lead to a life full of sin and rebellion. It just won't happen. Scripture tells us that plainly. We can't be united with Christ, buried with Him in baptism, clothed in Christ, and not desire a life that is a reflection of, and response to, that grace and goodness. Will it perfectly reflect that all the time? Not this side of eternity. But, when we have been united with Christ, when we have been justified... we ARE being sanctified, as **2 Cor 3:18** tells us. We will continue to drag around this body of flesh and death on this side of eternity, but we recognize that struggle and we have the promise of the New Covenant (a new heart and new spirit, and its accompanying new desires.

-Question 6: How should these realities and truths drive our attitudes, actions, and lives?

1. The Christian Life is a journey and we struggle along as we go. Our dead flesh fighting our living heart and living spirit that has been given us by God because of His Grace. We live this life out in Faith, the faith that God put in us when we heard the Gospel and believed
2. We have assurance of salvation because of Christ. This truth brings freedom and in this freedom we desire and choose to obey. We do not focus on the law and try to obey in order to show that we have faith and create assurance. We don't do works so that we can create our own faith. We believe in the Gospel and God gives us true faith that brings about obedience. But no matter how we stumble or what we do, our assurance is outside of us....our assurance is in the Perfect life and death of our savior, Jesus Christ.

