

## CONFIDENT IN CHRIST COLOSSIANS 2:10–15

### INTRODUCTION

There are few doctrines that we **consider more practical** than that of **assurance of salvation**.

The apostle John understood that as he wrote his epistle, intending to **help his readers find assurance**, as he said in **1 John 5:13**—

**<sup>13</sup> These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.**

As much as we recognise the importance of assurance, we often struggle to find the **joyful confidence in our salvation** that the Bible speaks about.

**The single biggest reason** why so many believers lack the assurance that God wants them to enjoy is that they are **looking for it in the wrong place**.

We look for assurance **internally**, trying to find confidence in what we have done.

Instead, we ought to be looking **externally**.

Assurance of salvation is found by fixing our hearts on **the God who saves**.

As both the **apostle John** and the **apostle Paul** would affirm, assurance can only be found in **the triune God who saves**.

As much as it was John's intention to help his readers find assurance, it was also Paul's as he wrote to the Colossian church.

In his magnificent epistle, **Paul focusses on Jesus Christ**, the Son of God.

Through his letter to the Colossians, he aimed to address their pastoral needs by pointing them to **the supremacy and sufficiency of Christ**.

As Paul wrote, Christ is the **all-supreme Lord** which makes Him also the **all-supreme Saviour**.

Paul **magnified the supremacy and sufficiency of Christ** because he understood that the **saving work of the triune God** is accomplished and applied to us as individuals **through our union with Christ**.

Therefore, Paul highlighted **our vital union** with Christ **through which we receive** the salvation that He accomplished.

In fact, Paul's entire epistle of Colossians is summed up by what he wrote in **chapter two, verse 6**—

**<sup>6</sup> Therefore as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him.**

As we **understand and live in light of our union** with Christ, we will find assurance of our salvation.

That is because our **union with Christ** is our union with the triune God who saves.

To put it differently, our **union with Christ** is the **means** by which God saves us.

Therefore, as we **consider our vital union** and **gaze upon the glorious sufficiency** of Christ, we will **grow in our joyful confidence** of all that God does for us in Him.

In the simple expression of faith that **John Newton** expressed on his deathbed—

*“Although my memory's fading, I remember two things very clearly: I am a great sinner and Christ is a great Saviour.”*

That sufficiency of Christ as our great Saviour is precisely what Paul meant when he wrote in **Colossians 2:10**—

**<sup>10</sup> in Him you have been filled, who is the head over all rule and authority.**

We can sum up the message of **verse 10** in this way—

those who are united to Christ find a **fully sufficient salvation** in Him.

Those who are united to Christ find their vital connection to the glorious salvation **planned, accomplished, and applied** by the **triune Father, Son, and Spirit**.

From **verses 11–15**, Paul is going to elaborate on what he means by Christ making believers **full/ complete/ sufficient** by going into the details of **Christ's work on behalf** of those who are united to Him by faith.

In other words, Paul intends to provide every believer with **assurance of salvation**, or as he would put it, with **confidence in Christ**.

In fact, Paul has already **introduced this concept** earlier in the chapter as he wrote in **verse 2** of the encouragement of heart that we receive from “**all the wealth of the full assurance of understanding**” which comes to us through “**the full knowledge of God's mystery, that is, Christ Himself.**”

Paul clearly wants you to have the **rich experience of full assurance** that comes from **comprehending the gospel** that centres on **the person and work of Christ**.

Paul wants you to find your assurance or confidence in all that the gospel promises.

As Paul discusses assurance, he points us as believers **NOT to ourselves and our own experiences**, but **to the triune God**.

This **Godward focus on the Trinity** is essential for true assurance.

Paul is laying down the framework by which we should understand assurance as our confidence in all that the Father promises to give us through the all-supreme and all-sufficient Son, that makes us **settled, sure, and filled with joy**—the rich experience that we all long for when we speak of assurance!

When we rightly grasp assurance of salvation, it has less to do with us and more to do with the nature and character of the **triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.**

Confidence in our salvation is **not found by looking inward,** but in **looking Godward** to who God is and what God does to save us.

That is why we should think of assurance as confidence in Christ.

If you find **all that you need for salvation** in your union with Christ then you will be joyfully assured of your salvation.

In other words, as you understand and live in light of your union with Christ, you will find assurance of salvation.

**Before we examine the text,** let's first consider the ways in which we **typically search for assurance.**

We often ask, **“How can I know that I am saved?”**

Indeed, it is probably one of the most Googled questions for Christians and it is also one of the most frequent matters that is addressed in Biblical counselling and general discipleship.

As we've already noted, many struggle with the question because they look in all the wrong places.

As the Scottish minister **Robert Murray McCheyne** counselled, **for every look at self, there should be ten looks at Christ.**

But even as we take that **one look at self**, as McCheyne puts it, we search for answers with wrong-thinking.

Your assurance of salvation is **NOT found** in a **past decision or experience.**

Jesus clearly and vividly taught this with His **parable of the soils.**

**Decisions and experiences** are no basis for assurance as Jesus describes the soils of rock and thorns in **Luke 8:13–14**—

**13 “And those on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy, and these have no root; they believe for a while, and in time of temptation fall away.**

**14 “And the seed which fell among the thorns, these are the ones who have heard, and as they go on their way they are choked with worries and riches and pleasures of life, and do not bear ripe fruit.”**

Yet countless Christians base all their confidence on **a prayer that they prayed**, on a **decision** they made when they raised a hand, or walked to the front, or signed a commitment card.

**Despite the popularity** of this approach, the Bible never tells you to base your assurance of salvation on a past decision or experience.

In fact, the reality is that by looking inward for our assurance, we actually **demonstrate our doubts about God** and the salvation He provides His elect.

Our doubts and lack of assurance betray our **disastrous lack of confidence** in **the Father, the Son, and the Spirit** and the **triumphant salvation** that God plans and provides for His chosen people.

Those who lack assurance can **lack confidence in God the Father** when they do not believe **His willingness to save them**.

Though often **couched in false humility**, the reality is a plain denial of what the Bible teaches, such as in **John 3:16**—

**For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.**

Similarly, those who lack assurance can **lack confidence in the Son of God** when they do not believe **His ability to accomplish their salvation**.

Again, it may be **couched in false humility**, the reality is a plain denial of what the Bible teaches, such as in **1 Peter 3:18**

**For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, so that He might bring you to God...**

Finally, and most commonly, those who lack assurance can **lack confidence in the Spirit of God** when they do not believe **His ability to apply their salvation**, or the **legitimacy of His assurance** of their salvation.

We cannot deny that though it may be **couched in false humility**, the reality is a plain denial of what the Bible teaches, such as in **Galatians 4:6**—

**And because you are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!”**

Since the gospel is the **good news of a Trinity-shaped salvation** planned and provided for by the Father, Son, and Spirit, we should not be surprised that our lack of assurance **betrays doubts about one or more Persons of the Trinity.**

We must, therefore, **believe what the Bible says** about the **triune God who saves** His chosen people.

As **one author** wrote—

*“Those who have had the most abiding assurance of God’s love, are those who have been most in meditation on the written assurances of that love.”<sup>1</sup>*

Therefore, it is both **good and necessary** for born-again believers to have assurance of their salvation in Christ.

There are, of course, those who lack assurance because they do not simply doubt God but **flatly deny Him in unbelief.**

These have **no legitimate assurance** of salvation because they **lack genuine salvation.**

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<sup>1</sup> Whitney, *How Can I Be Sure I’m a Christian?*

**For the genuine believer in Christ**, however, assurance of salvation is not only a blessing but **a means of glorifying God** by worshipping the Father, Son, and Spirit for the great salvation we receive in Christ.

The Puritan **Thomas Brooks** described assurance as one of the most precious blessings available in the Christian life.

Therefore, we must **find true assurance** of salvation not by conjuring up confidence in self, but by looking to Christ and finding confidence in Him.

The **1563 Heidelberg Catechism** asks its very first question—**What is your only comfort in life and in death?**

In warm pastoral tone, the answer provided is—

*“That I am not my own, but belong—body and soul, in life and in death—to my faithful Savior, Jesus Christ...*

*Because I belong to Him, Christ, by His Holy Spirit, assures me of eternal life and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready from now on to live for Him.”*

This is what Paul had in mind as he introduced the concept in **Colossians 2:2** and now, in **verses 10–15**, elaborates on where to find assurance.

You will experience **assurance of salvation** when you find **your confidence in Christ**.

## PROPOSITION

In **Colossians 2:10–15**, Paul points us to our great Saviour and our great salvation we receive in Him.

In other words, Paul wants us to **find confidence in Christ** by pointing us, **firstly**, to the **sufficiency of Christ** and, **secondly**, to **the vital union** we have with Christ.

### 1. OUR GREAT SAVIOUR (10)

As Paul writes **verse 10**, it has **clear implications** for those who are united to Christ, but **the significance** of these implications is found in **the sufficiency and the supremacy** of Christ to whom we are joined.

In other words, **verse 10** tells us what **a great Saviour** we are united to—

**<sup>10</sup> in Him you have been filled, who is the head over all rule and authority**

In this opening phrase, “**in Him you have been filled**,” Paul provides us with a **definitive statement** on the **sufficiency of Christ**.

To be “**filled**” is a work of sufficiency—you find all that you need from this source.

To find all that you need for your salvation, you need to find it in Christ.

That is, to be made **“full”** or sufficient yourself, you need to be connected to the One who is all-sufficient.

Paul is referring to the one-time, fully completed act of receiving access to all that you need from your great Saviour.

That is clear when we consider the word **“filled.”**

The Greek word **πληρόω** is a common word in the New Testament and carries a range of meanings—  
to fill up, complete, fulfil, accomplish.

The **NASB** chooses to translate it as **“complete”**—  
**“and in Him you have been made complete.”**

This actually makes Paul’s intention clearer to us.

God the Father grants us permanent access to all that Jesus Christ has accomplished on our behalf so we receive access to all that we will ever need in salvation.

That is what it means for us to be considered **“filled”** or **“complete.”**

As **John MacArthur** states in his excellent book  
***Our Sufficiency in Christ***—

*“To possess the Lord Jesus Christ is to have every spiritual resource. All strength, wisdom, comfort, joy, peace, meaning, value, purpose, hope, and fulfilment in life now and forever is bound up in Him.*

*Christianity is an all-sufficient relationship with an all-sufficient Christ.”*

So as Paul says here in **verse 10**, because we are united to our great Saviour, we lack nothing in salvation.

It's true that our understanding of salvation may grow, and that we may come, in time, to appreciate and enjoy more of the blessings of salvation, but in Christ, we have full and complete access to God's work of salvation.

Paul continues pointing us to the greatness of our Saviour as he describes Christ as the One, "**who is the head over all rule and authority.**"

If the work of "**completing**" is a reminder of the **Son's sufficiency**, then this work of "**conquering**" is a reminder of the **Son's supremacy**.

Where do we get the idea, though, of Christ's work of conquering?

To answer that, let's look at the word "**head**" that Paul uses.

This metaphor of the "**head**" points to **Christ's supremacy and authority**.

Moreover, the word "**head**" implies subjection, as some translate this phrase—"**Every power and authority in the universe is subject to him as head**" (REB).

As the hymn of **Colossians 1:15–20** affirms, there are **two reasons** for **Christ's supremacy over spiritual powers of evil**—creation and conquest.

Here in **chapter two**, we see that Paul's emphasis is on the **conquest of Christ** over the evil powers as he states in **verse 15**.

As Paul will state later in **verse 15**, the enemies of Christ have already been **decisively defeated** by Him on the cross.

Peter makes a similar point in **1 Peter 3:22**—

**<sup>22</sup> [Christ] is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him.**

Because Christ has conquered, so those who are united to Him by faith and filled to completion with His sufficiency are also able to conquer their enemies of sin and Satan, as Paul states in **Romans 8:37**—

**<sup>37</sup> But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.**

In this sense, **Christ's work of conquering** is more than a work of **supremacy**—it is also a work of **sufficiency**.

Not only does Christ offer us **complete salvation** but also **complete victory** over our enemies.

So as we consider **the sufficiency and the supremacy** of Christ together, we must surely see that Paul is **pointing us to our great Saviour**.

This would be enough to make us **confident in Christ**, but the **greatness of our Saviour** is seen even more magnificently as we consider the **greatness of our salvation** that we receive **through Him**.

## 2. OUR GREAT SALVATION (11–15)

As Paul wrote in **verse 10**, we receive a **complete salvation from God through Jesus Christ**.

He elaborates now in **verses 11–15** on what that means.

As Paul describes our great salvation that we receive from our great Saviour, he writes of **three provisions**—

- a. **New life in Christ**
- b. **Forgiveness in Christ**
- c. **Victory in Christ**

### A. NEW LIFE IN CHRIST (11–12)

As Paul begins describing **our great salvation**, he refers to the **first provision** of **new life in Christ**—

<sup>11</sup> **in whom you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh, in the circumcision of Christ,**

<sup>12</sup> **having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.**

In order to make sense of what Paul is saying here, we need to recognise that Paul is using **two metaphors** to describe the **saving work of God through Jesus Christ**.

**The first metaphor is that of circumcision.**

As we've previously learnt, the physical mark of circumcision was intended originally in **Genesis 17** to be an external sign of a relationship of faith with God for Abraham and his descendants.

However, it quickly became an **empty external ritual** for the people of Israel.

It was, however, used even in the Old Testament as a powerful **analogy** of the spiritual state of God's people.

In **Leviticus 26:41**, God refers to the proud, sinful state of the Israelite hearts by calling them **uncircumcised of heart**.

In **Deuteronomy 10:16**, the rebellious nation was told—  
**So circumcise your heart, and stiffen your neck no longer.**

The promise of God's saving work was also communicated in terms of this analogy, as in **Deuteronomy 30:6**—

**Moreover Yahweh your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your seed, to love Yahweh your God with all your heart and with all your soul, so that you may live.**

As a former Pharisee who **emphasised the external rituals** of religion, Paul certainly seems to have embraced this metaphor since he used it frequently to refer to the state of the human heart.

In **Philippians 3:2–3**, Paul contrasted those who focused on external actions with those who are genuine believers in Christ

**2 Beware of the dogs! Beware of the evil workers!**

**Beware of the mutilation!**

**3 For we are the circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and boast in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh**

In fact, Paul makes an **important point** there that we should not miss.

**The true circumcision**—those who possess and enjoy salvation in Christ—are those who put their **confidence in Him** and not in the external human efforts of ritual.

So Paul uses the metaphor of circumcision to point to what God accomplishes for us in Christ.

Paul is pointing to the work of salvation that we call **“regeneration.”**

It is the work of God to make sinners who are **spiritually dead**—who have no desire or ability to love Him or obey Him—**spiritually alive in order to receive** His salvation through faith.

This is the work of God in giving us a new nature, causing us to be born again.

This process involves both the removal of the old sinful nature and the gift of a new nature that loves God.

This is what Jesus referred to in **John 3:3**—

**“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.”**

Paul referred to this act of renewal and regeneration in **2 Corinthians 5:17**—

**Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.**

This is the glorious work of God in Christ that establishes our union with our Saviour.

It is through regeneration, through being made new, that we are able to place our faith in Him—the very faith that unites us to Him.

We know that Paul is referring to this work of God in our hearts not only because of the circumcision analogy, but because he uses a second metaphor to clarify.

**The second metaphor is that of baptism.**

As with circumcision, the external act is meant to represent an internal reality.

So baptism also became an analogy that was used especially by Paul.

Jesus himself set this association up when he declared in **Acts 1:5**—

**John baptised with water, but you will be baptised with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.**

Paul continued with this analogy and used it to refer to the **work of the Holy Spirit** to join believers to the body of Christ as he wrote in **1 Corinthians 12:13**—

**For also by one Spirit we were all baptised into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.**

Paul would also further the analogy to refer to a believer's union with Christ, especially their **participation** in the events of his **saving work** as we read in **Romans 6:4**—

**Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.**

Paul is using the metaphor in a similar way here in **Colossians 2:12** when he writes that believers have **“been buried with Him in baptism.”**

Paul wants us to understand that **through the work of the Holy Spirit**, we are **united to Christ** in a process that he likens to baptism.

Through this **union**, this **“baptism,”** we **participate** in the events of Christ's saving work.

By participation we mean that our union with Christ involves our participation in the events of Christ's life and work, including His death and burial, resurrection, ascension, and glorification.

We have died with Christ and so have also, spiritually speaking, been raised with Him.

As **one author** wrote—

*His death, bearing judgement, becomes ours. His resurrection life, showing that the penalty of death no longer holds sway, likewise becomes ours.*

So then, Paul is using the metaphor of baptism to explain the metaphor of circumcision.

**Together**, they figuratively describe **the great salvation** we enjoy as God makes provision for **our new life in Christ**.

As Paul writes elsewhere, in **Ephesians 2:4-5**—

**4 But God, being rich in mercy because of His great love with which He loved us,**

**5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved**

## **B. FORGIVENESS IN CHRIST (13–14)**

Paul continues describing **our great salvation** and does so by referring to the **second provision** of **forgiveness in Christ**—

**13 And you being dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive with Him, having graciously forgiven us all our transgressions.**

**In this verse**, Paul **answers the question** of how God the Father was able to **make us alive** in Christ.

Since our death is **related to our sin**, then in order to give us new life in Christ, God must deal with our sin decisively.

God does this for us in Christ as we receive the **provision of forgiveness through our union** with Him.

Paul emphasises again that this provision of our great salvation is entirely a **work of grace**, which is why he refers to the Father “**graciously**” forgiving us.

Paul writes of this same **forgiveness through union** with Christ in **Ephesians 1:7**—

**In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our transgressions, according to the riches of His grace**

We might still ask, though, how God can **legitimately forgive** us our trespasses **without being unjust**?

As a **holy and just God**, He is **bound by his own character** to punish sin without partiality.

So how does God forgive us while **still maintaining** His **holiness and justice**? Paul answers this in **the next verse**—

**14 Having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us which was hostile to us, He also has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.**

While Paul’s emphasis in **verse 13** is on the **totality** of our forgiveness in Christ—**all our transgressions, past, present, and future** are forgiven—his emphasis here in **verse 14** is the way in which that forgiveness **was accomplished**.

To understand Paul’s argument better, we need to **understand the concepts** he is referring to here.

To begin with, there is a **document that contains demands**.

The **LSB translates** it as “**the certificate of debt consisting of decrees**.”

It refers to a **written document** that is rightly understood as a record of debt.

This record then **details our debt to God** that we incur on account of the **document's demands**.

These demands **can be translated as** *decrees, ordinances, obligations, decision, or commands*.

Paul is then referring to the **Law of God** as it demands **obedience and worship** from all mankind.

**Our failure** to worship and obey God is what then incurs the **debt of guilt** as we transgress His laws and commands.

We **shouldn't limit this** in our interpretation to the **Law of Moses** in the Old Testament, especially because Paul is indicting Gentiles as having a debt of guilt that stands against them.

Rather, we should **understand it as** the law which God has **written on the consciences** of every person, Jew or Gentile.

Paul goes into detail about **this concept** to the Romans when he writes in **Romans 1:32** that—

**although they [Gentiles] know the righteous requirement of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.**

As **one author** summarises the idea, he writes—

*“This handwritten document with regulations, therefore, is a graphic image of the predicament we are in as sinners, with a documented record of the requirements that we have failed to meet and that stand against us by not rendering to our Creator and sovereign Lord the obedience that is owed to his commandments.”*

This “**certificate of debt**,” then, is “**hostile to us**”—as Paul writes—because it **opposes those** who don’t have salvation in Christ by **testifying against them** before God and by condemning them.

We all treasure the promise of **Romans 8:1**—

**Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.**

However, its **clear implication** is that those who are not “**in Christ Jesus**” are in fact condemned.

Paul tells the Colossians that we’re **condemned on the basis of** this written record of our guilt because of our **failure to worship and obey God**.

While this concept gives us a greater understanding of our **predicament outside of Christ**, Paul does also give us the detail of how Christ **accomplishes our salvation** from this **debt of guilt** that God must punish.

Paul describes the **provision of forgiveness** we have in Christ by firstly stating that the Father took the certificate and **“canceled”** it.

We can **also translate** that as he *wiped or blotted it out, or that he erased it.*

The concept isn't one of **fraudulently ignoring the debt**, like a **bankrupt man** might tear up his bills and letters of demand, pretending that they don't exist.

Rather it is a concept of the Father able to **justly cancel the debt** because it has been **fully paid by Christ** and therefore we are no longer condemned.

This is how God deals with the **problem of our sin**.

Paul goes on to **specify how** this was done when he writes that **“He also has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.”**

The **Father did away with** the written document of debt by obliterating it through the **substitutionary death** of Christ on the cross.

Paul has already referred to this saving work of Christ in **Colossians 1:20** when he described Christ, **“having made peace through the blood of His cross.”**

Paul refers to the **same concept** in **Romans 5:9**—

**Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him.**

This is the **central promise of the gospel**—forgiveness of sins because of Christ's substitutionary death on the cross.

We sing of this **wonderful truth** in the hymn, ***It Is Well with My Soul*** when we praise God that—

*My sin, oh, the bliss of this glorious thought!  
My sin, not in part but the whole,  
Is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more,  
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!*

Once again, we must remember that this benefit of forgiveness has been **fully accomplished** by Christ **for all who are in Him**.

### C. VICTORY IN CHRIST (15)

As Paul completes his description of **our great salvation**, he refers to the **third provision** of **new life in Christ**—

**<sup>15</sup> Having disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them in Him.**

In **accomplishing new life** for His people, Christ **dealt with the problem** of our death in sin and alienation from God.

In **accomplishing forgiveness** for His people, Christ **dealt with the problem** of sin and our guilt that demanded God's righteous wrath.

Now here as Paul continues, we see that in **accomplishing victory** for His people, Christ **deals with the problem** of Satan and his harassment of God's people.

As we look at **verse 15**, we see Paul refer to the **demonic forces** described as "**rulers and authorities**."

These, he says, have been "**disarmed**," but that **raises the question**—what power did they previously have that has now been removed through the cross of Christ?

We know from **Revelation 12:10** that Satan and his demons are **constantly making accusations** against mankind as part of their **rebellion against God**—

**Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night.**

Paul assures us **here in verse 15** that Christ has accomplished a **complete and decisive victory** over Satan for all who are united to him.

Paul refers to this in **Romans 8:33–34**—

<sup>33</sup> **Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies;**

<sup>34</sup> **who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.**

Paul finishes his statement in **verse 15** by referring to God as **“having triumphed”** over the demonic forces in Christ.

In **Roman military practices**, victory was followed by the **public demonstration** of the glory of the victor as well as the shame of the defeated.

This often took the form of a **victory parade** called a **“triumph”** in which victorious Roman generals would lead captives in a public procession.

**This is the context** in which God is said to have publicly shamed His enemies by making a **“a public display of them.”**

In other words, this was a **resounding, public victory** for Christ and all who are **united with Him** through faith.

This **benefit of our salvation** in Him, then, assures us that we are **no longer vulnerable** to Satan’s accusations before God’s throne.

As we consider these **three provisions** of **new life, forgiveness, and victory** we can only marvel at what a **great salvation** we receive from God.

But Paul’s emphasis throughout has been that we can only receive this great salvation **if we are united to Jesus Christ, the great Saviour.**

In pointing us to Him, Paul has **consistently pointed** us away from ourselves and to Christ as the One through whom we receive the saving work of the **triune Father, Son, and Spirit.**

As you can now appreciate, assurance of salvation has less to do with you and more to do with the nature and character of the **triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit**.

Confidence in your salvation is **not found by looking inward**, but in **looking Godward** to who God is and what God does to save us.

That is why you should think of assurance as confidence in Christ.

If you find **all that you need for salvation** in your union with Christ then you will be joyfully assured of your salvation.

As you **understand and live in light of your union with Christ**, you will find assurance of salvation.

## CONCLUSION

As believers, we all rightly desire to enjoy assurance of our salvation.

When you look inward to your **own decisions, or experiences, or performance**, you unwittingly turn away from **the true source of assurance**—your great Saviour and the great salvation He has accomplished for all who are united to Him.

Therefore, **look outward and upward** as you focus on God and the **glorious, triune salvation** of the Father, Son, and Spirit.

The gospel is the good news of **the Father** who eternally and infinitely loves you so that **He joyfully sent His Son to save you.**

It is the good news of **the Son** who is so perfectly sufficient that **He joyfully came to die in your place** and rose again having accomplished your salvation once for all.

It is also the good news of **the Spirit** who comes to **make you alive and unites you to Christ** through the faith He implants into the new heart He gives you.

He, therefore, not only **perfectly applies the salvation** that the Father purposed and the Son provided, but **He assures you that the work will never fail** because **the triune God has chosen you** and saved you in order to make you His own eternally.

All of this is what we **receive and find assurance of** through **our union with Christ.**

So we can say, **Christ is the One** who gives us complete, all-sufficient access to this **marvellous, Trinity-shaped salvation.**

So as Paul would say, **find your confidence in Christ!**

## BENEDICTION

May the peace of God, our heav'nly Father,  
And the grace of Christ, the risen Son,  
And the fellowship of God the Spirit  
Keep our hearts and minds within His love.

May this peace which passes understanding,  
And this grace which makes us what we are,  
And this fellowship of His communion,  
Make us one in spirit and in heart.<sup>2</sup>

### **2 Corinthians 13:14**

**The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,  
and the love of God,  
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,  
be with you all.**

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<sup>2</sup> *Benediction (May The Peace Of God)*, <https://gettymusic.store/products/benediction-may-the-peace-of-god>