

Question of the Month

Do you know?

During the course of our lives, events occasionally occur that are so traumatic we can't go more than a few minutes at a time without thinking about what just happened. The incidences are so significant, you can't really think about anything else.

I happen to be in just such a place right now. Only 72 hours ago my mom passed away! (July 30, 2016) Since (a) this is all happening when I normally send out my monthly ministry newsletter, which includes this "Question of the Month" and (b) I can't get it off my mind, I decided to tie the two together. It's probably therapy for me and honoring to my mom.



People ask me, "Do you think your mom is in heaven?" To be quite honest, I have to say, "No, I don't think she is. I KNOW she is!" Skeptics would respond by saying something like, "Well, whatever you need to tell yourself to get through it, I guess that's fine, even though you couldn't possibly know."

If we truly believe the Bible and all that it claims, we should all be able to make the same admittedly bold claim... "I know that I know that I know!" Here's why.

God is a spirit (John 4:24) and we are created in His image (Genesis 1:26). Since God is not a physical being, that means we have a spirit. Scripture further tells us "[God's] Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." (Romans 8:16) Then we have 1 John 5:13 which tells us "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." John is not saying he was telling us these things so we could hope or wish we were saved, but that we would know! This is not simply an academic exercise or a product of logic and human reasoning... it's a spiritual reality. God Himself confirms this with us, not just through our minds, but directly with our spirit.

So from a strictly biblical point of view, you can "know that you know that you know" these things are true. I conveyed this and a few other things to an atheist when he asked, "Why do you believe in God?" I concluded that "I know that I know that I know," and then told him, "That's for me... not really for you", meaning I was not expecting that to be impressive to him or so convincing that he himself would become a Christian. It was for me personally to enhance my confidence in God and His Word. Then when I look at the real world around me, His Word helps me make sense of what I see. I say, "Ah, that makes sense, because of what Scripture says in this particular passage," and "Oh, I get it. That's what the Bible means when it says such and such". I see consistency and clarity. Not in every single instance, but for the majority of the time, it is very coherent. In those cases where I'm still a bit confused, it can be for any number of reasons, including me not knowing Scripture well enough, not making proper observations of what I see, or even God wanting me to just live by faith at that moment, knowing that He might reveal more later, but even if He never does, I can just trust Him. "And we

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know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.” (Rom 8:28)

So while I am certainly sad that my mom is no longer here with me, I have peace because I know for certain I will see her again (along with my dad, grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc. and most importantly, my Savior!) Once again, Scripture is comforting: "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep [i.e. have died], that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope." (1 Thes 4:13)

Just in case you happen to be in a position where you're not quite sure about what will happen to you when you die, here's a quick summary of what the Bible teaches.

God created all life and the entire universe (and it was without sin or imperfection):

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth... And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good.” (Gen 1:1, 31)

Our own sin brought death and a curse into God's creation and separated us from Him:

Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. (Rom 5:12)

Jesus is the only way to God:

“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” (John 14:6)

We can't gain God's favor or obtain His standard of righteousness by trying to be good:

“Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.” (Gal 2:16)

A price had to be paid and Jesus paid it:

“Who his own self [Jesus] bare our sins in his own body on the tree [crucified], that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.” (1 Peter 2:24)

“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.” (Rom 5:8-9)

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Salvation is a free gift:

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.” (Eph 2:8)

How the gift of salvation is truly acquired:

“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” (Rom 10:9)

I hope you already have this confidence. If you do... share it with others! (God’s Word commands us to and why wouldn’t we?)

If you lack the surety, please contact us at info@TheStartingPointProject.com, anytime and we can help you think through these things in a very encouraging, compassionate way. We look forward to hearing from you!