

STOP ASKING JESUS INTO YOUR HEART

A BIBLE STUDY FOR **STUDENTS** ON ASSURANCE

A STUDY BY **JASON GASTON** BASED ON THE BOOK BY

JD GREAR

LifeWay | Students

STOP ASKING **JESUS** INTO YOUR **HEART**

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

J.D. Greear At the age of 27, J.D. Greear became the pastor of a 40-year-old neighborhood church. In the 9 years since, that congregation of 400 has grown to over 5000 in weekly attendance. Today, the Summit Church, located in Raleigh-Durham, NC is recognized as one of the fastest growing churches in North America.

As a teacher, J.D.'s messages aren't intended to just show people how to live better lives. His goal is to leave people in awe of the amazing love of God. Because of his belief in the power of the gospel, J.D. has led the Summit to set a goal of planting more than 1000 gospel-centered churches in the next 40 years.

J.D. holds a Ph.D. in Systematic Theology from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. He also lived and worked among Muslims in Southeast Asia for two years and wrote *Breaking the Islam Code*. J.D. and his beautiful wife, Veronica, have four ridiculously cute kids: Kharis, Alethia, Ryah, and Adon.

Unless God calls him elsewhere, J.D. plans on staying at the Summit Church until he preaches his last sermon at his own funeral before saying goodbye and hopping into the casket.

Jason Gaston is the student pastor at The Summit Church, located in Raleigh-Durham, North Carolina, and recognized as one of the fastest growing churches in North America. Jason received a Master's degree from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, North Carolina, and has been in full-time student ministry for eleven years. Jason's desire is to see a generation of students transformed by the gospel and living out that mission both locally and globally. Jason and his wife, Katie, are the parents of three children: Holt, Annie and Parks.

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SESSION ONE

IMPORTANCE OF ASSURANCE

OVERVIEW

God wants you to be assured of your salvation.

That truth is essential to the life of every believer as they seek to follow Christ in obedience. But the sad truth is that many people struggle to know with certainty that they belong to Jesus.

In our opening session, J.D. Greear will discuss the uncertainty that often goes through our minds when we think about our salvation. This entire study is built around this simple question: *How can anyone know, beyond all doubt, that they are saved?*

Too many students who are truly saved struggle with doubt. They become spiritually paralyzed, spending time and energy worrying whether they've done enough to gain God's approval. They are locked up in fear, when they should be resting in the grace and promises of God.

The flip side of that coin, however, is that there are many who are living with false assurance of their salvation. They have bought into the notion that because they simply prayed a prayer, or walked an aisle, or held up their hand, that their place with God in eternity is secure.

This first session will emphasize God's desire for you to be assured of your salvation, and how assurance in the goodness of God will propel you to a lifelong journey of obedience and radical faith.

WARM UP

- **What are some phrases or terms you have heard centered around the salvation experience.**
- **If a friend were to ask you "What does it mean to be saved?", how would you respond?**
- **How would you define "assurance"?**

WATCH

Use this video guide to follow along with J.D.'s teaching. Fill in the blanks of the key statements, then use the additional space to note other important information.

- **The good news is that God does want you to know that you _____ to Him.**
- **God wants you to be sure of your salvation for a couple of reasons:**
 1. He _____ you.
 2. We will never be able to thrive in the Christian life, to make bold _____, until we are assured of God's love for us.
- **You're never going to be able to lean your life fully on Jesus, to take your hands off everything else, until you're confident of His _____ to you.**
- **Love for God only grows in the _____ of His love for us.**
- **This study is about . . .**
 - ... how for sure a person can know they're _____.
 - ... how they can know for sure they _____ to Jesus.
 - ... how they can know for sure Jesus _____ to them.

VIDEO FEEDBACK



Use the questions below to help process the teaching you heard on the video.

J.D. stated in the video that he has prayed “the prayer” thousands of times, been baptized multiple times, and walked forward at youth events all over the country. How did that resonate with you?

Do you agree with J.D. that there are students that should have assurance of salvation that don’t, and students who feel assured of their salvation, but shouldn’t be? Explain.

Which of the key statements is the most important for you? Why?

If you could summarize the main point from the video in a tweetable statement (140 words or less), what would it be?

GROUP DISCUSSION



- 1. Read John 14:18. Just as J.D. mentioned, God does not want us to doubt his love. How does the idea of God being a faithful Father to the fatherless change the way you view Him?**

How has He been this for you?

- 2. When was a time you were assured of something and it motivated you to action?**

- 3. Read Romans 8:15. What are the two categories of people mentioned in this passage? How are the two different?**

- 4. How does knowing that God longs for you to know Him as “Abba, Father!” change the way you view him?**

WRAPPING IT UP

God the Father longs for you to intimately know Him as a loving daddy. He does not simply want your service as a servant, but rather He longs that you would give Him the intimacy of a son or daughter. God wants for you to be assured of His love toward you. This entire study is built around the simple premise that God the Father wants you to be confident of His love for you and the salvation you have in Christ Jesus.

Are you part of God's family? Are you assured of His love? Explain.

What is one truth from this session that resonates with you?

What is one question that still troubles you?

REFLECT AND PRAY

As you close the session, focus your praying on the following requests:

- Pray that your eyes would be opened to how God loves you.
- Pray that you would move from being uncertain about your salvation to being assured.
- Pray your heart would be overwhelmed with the love of God as a result of this study.

DAY 1 PERSONAL WORK

Key Thought: Assurance fuels the fire of obedience.

Read Daniel 3:1-12.

As young men, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, were captured and taken to a distant land by their enemies. There they were subjected to a new language, new literature, and even given new names: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Though they found themselves in a foreign land among foreign gods, these three young men found great favor among the Babylonians and were even promoted to a place of great influence.

However, there came a point when these three young men had to make a difficult choice:

- Why was their choice so difficult? What was the looming penalty for disobeying the King's edict?

Read Daniel 3:13-23.

- What did they choose to do?
- How did these three young men display an unwavering faith in this situation?

Even in the face of death, they refused to bow to King Nebuchadnezzar because of their obedience to the One True God; Yahweh. They valued God's glory more than preserving their own lives.

- List their bold answer to the King here (vv. 17-18):
- What would prompt that kind of faith statement in the lives of these young men?

They had a great affection for and loyalty to God that was worth more than life itself. Fully assured of God's goodness toward them, they put their trust in Him, regardless of the situation or the outcome.

- Would you have done the same? Explain.

Read 2 Timothy 1:8-12.

- How was Paul able to remain focused and passionate about the mission in the midst of the suffering and persecution he faced in his life?

Paul was confident of his standing before God regardless of what life threw at him.

"You'll never give up your life in radical obedience until you are radically assured of His radical commitment to you." -J.D. Greear

Just like the rappelling illustration J.D. shared in the video, we need to be reminded that it is only when we come to a place of confidence and assurance in Christ that we will be moved from spiritual paralysis to spiritual freedom.

- In what ways have you found yourself spiritually paralyzed and not able to move forward in assurance in Christ?

"In the same way, there are points you can never pass spiritually until you are confident that Jesus will support the full weight of your soul. There are sacrifices you'll never make and commands you'll never obey unless you are convinced of their eternal value. Following Jesus, after all, means saying 'no' to a lot of things." -J.D. Greear

Read Matthew 16:24.

- What does it mean to take up your cross and follow Jesus?

The call to all disciples is a call to FOLLOW HIM and TAKE UP YOUR CROSS ... it's a call to die to yourself and put your faith and confidence in Him.

"You'll never have the courage to embrace the cross until you have the confidence that you own the resurrection." -J.D. Greear

An assured faith fights off temporary fears for the promises of a faithful God.

Reflect and Pray

- Ask God to give you great confidence in His love for you and His passion to see you grow more into His image.
- Confess to Him areas where you have doubted His goodness and His ability to sustain you in all situations.
- Commit to live courageously as you trust in His faithfulness.

AM I REALLY SAVED?

This question runs through the hearts and minds of many students today. Despite God's desire that they be fully assured of their place with Him, students still struggle to know that they belong to Jesus and He belongs to them.

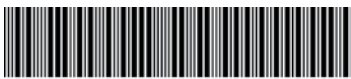
This six-session study based on the book by author and pastor J.D. Greear will help students find the assurance that can seem so elusive. Through video teaching, group discussions, and personal work, students will clearly understand that salvation isn't about just saying a prayer, walking an aisle, or holding up their hand. They will understand that salvation rests solely on their response of repentance and faith toward the finished work of Christ.

Also Available

- ♦ *Stop Asking Jesus Into Your Heart* Leader Guide (item 005720372)
- ♦ Leader Kit (item 005720373) which includes one student book, one leader guide, and one DVD that features six teaching sessions by J.D. Greear.
- ♦ E-book available at www.lifeway.com/stopasking.
- ♦ *Stop Asking Jesus Into Your Heart* book by J.D. Greear (B&H Publishing Group, ISBN 978-1-4336-7921-6).

J.D. Greear is lead pastor of The Summit Church, a multi-site congregation in Raleigh-Durham, North Carolina. He is also author of *Gospel: Recovering the Power that Made Christianity Revolutionary* and *Jesus Continued*. He and his wife, Veronica, have four children.

Jason Gaston is the student pastor at The Summit Church, located in Raleigh-Durham, North Carolina. Jason received a Master's degree from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, North Carolina, and has been in full-time student ministry for eleven years. Jason's desire is to see a generation of students transformed by the gospel and living out that mission both locally and globally. Jason and his wife, Katie, are the parents of three children.



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