

EVIDENCES OF THE NEW BIRTH

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1. GENUINE TRUST IN GOD ALONE FOR SALVATION

We have noted that faith is wrought in the heart as a part (the secondary part) of regeneration. This is necessarily so because the new nature cannot be in unbelief. The faith that is wrought in man in regeneration does not stop short of implicit trust and confidence in Christ as a personal Saviour. It is not merely belief about Him, but faith and trust in and on Him. This is so abundantly evident from all passages dealing with faith that it needs no further argument to substantiate it.

One has not been regenerated until he is willing to trust his eternal welfare wholly to Christ. He must have repented of dead works (Heb. 6:1). All works engaged in for salvation are dead works. No faith is counted for righteousness, and hence is not saving faith, except the faith of him "who worketh not" for salvation (Rom. 4:5). As long as one is looking to anything other than Christ he is not regenerated.

2. THE WITNESS AND INDWELLING PRESENCE OF THE SPIRIT

Rom. 8:16, 9; I John 3:24; 4:13. The witness and the indwelling of the Spirit is not evidenced by some vague, mystical, impractical feeling, but by the constant ruling power of the Spirit (Rom. 8:14) producing devotion to God and an obedient life. It is by the constant indwelling of the Spirit and His operation in us that God performs until

the end, the work that He begins in us in regeneration (Phil. 1:6; 2:13). The witness and indwelling of the Spirit is evidenced in all the ways that follow.

3. READINESS TO ACCEPT GOD'S WORD

John 8:47. A regenerated person will ever show a desire to know the will of his Father in everything and to follow that will when it is made known. He will not be found walking continuously in stubborn rebellion against truth.

4. CONSCIOUSNESS OF SIN

Rom. 7:14-25; 1 John 1:8. No saved person will think himself sinless. Those who do are deceived, and are without the truth, by which we are regenerated (Jas. 1:18) and made free (John 8:32). This makes it plain that they are not saved. The new nature will ever recognize the presence of sin in the body, as in the case of Paul (Rom. 7:14-25). This new nature has in it the enlightening unction of the Spirit (1 John 2:27) and partakes of the nature of God Himself (2 Pet. 1:4), being created in righteousness and true holiness (Eph. 4:24). It cannot be blind to sin.

5. LOVE OF GOD AND RIGHTEOUSNESS

John 8:42; Rom. 7:22; 2 Cor. 5:17; 1 John 4:16-19. Along with the consciousness of indwelling sin will be a love of God and righteousness, just as in the case of Paul. He found sin in the body, yet he delighted in the law of God after the inward man.

6. A LIFE THAT IS OBEDIENT AS TO ITS MAIN TREND

John 14:21-24; Rom. 6:14; 8:6,13; Gal. 5:24; 1 John 1:6; 2:4, 15; 3:8,9; 2 John 6. The life of the saved person will not be perfect, but it will be righteous and obedient as to its main trend. For further discussion of this matter, see treatment of 1 John 2:4.

7. PROGRESSIVE PURIFICATION

1 John 3:3. While the believer never attains sinless perfection in this life, yet he ever wages war against his own sins.

8. LOVE OF OTHER BELIEVERS

1 John 3:14; 5:2. There is such an affinity between regenerated persons that they love each other. One evidence of this love is that they delight in the presence and fellowship of one another. But God has added another test of our love of the brethren. If we love God and keep His commandments, we know that we love the children of God. See second Scripture above. So we are brought back again to the matter of obedience to God.

9. PATIENT CONTINUANCE TO THE END

Matt. 10:22; Rom. 11:22; Phil. 1:6; Col. 1:23; 1 John 3:9; 5:4. Perseverance is as much a doctrine of Scripture as is preservation. By God's preservation of us we are made to persevere. These two doctrines are perfectly consistent, and need to be held and preached as twin truths. None will reach Heaven except those who hold out to the end and overcome the world. See promises to overcomers in Rev. 3 and 4. No promises to others. But all of the regenerated will overcome (1 John 5:4).

~ T. P. Simmons