

Blessed Assurance!



January 10th 2010

Roger Spackman
Te Atatu Baptist Church
📁 Blessed Assurance.DOC

Slide #2 – Foot-soldiers

During the British land wars of the mid 19th century.

There was a rather unusual *custom* practiced by the foot-soldiers engaged in battle.



As they were going to the front line – and passing other groups of soldiers who were dug into bunkers or tending to the wounded.

They would shout this rather unusual greeting to each other:

Four-nine-four boys, four-nine-four!

And the salute that was always returned was;

Six further on, boys, six further on!

These secret passwords were even communicated through Morse code and written documents.

For years the enemy tried to crack this code and find the meaning of these sayings.

But it left them baffled – even for many years *after* the battle had ended.

But in reality, the meaning of these salutes were very simple.

Slide #3 – Hymn-book

You see, each soldier going into battle was given a condensed edition of ‘Sacred Christian Songs’ to keep in his pocket.

four-nine-four was the page number of the well known hymn ‘God be with you until we meet again’.

And *six pages on* from this hymn, at number 500 was the famous song:

‘Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!’

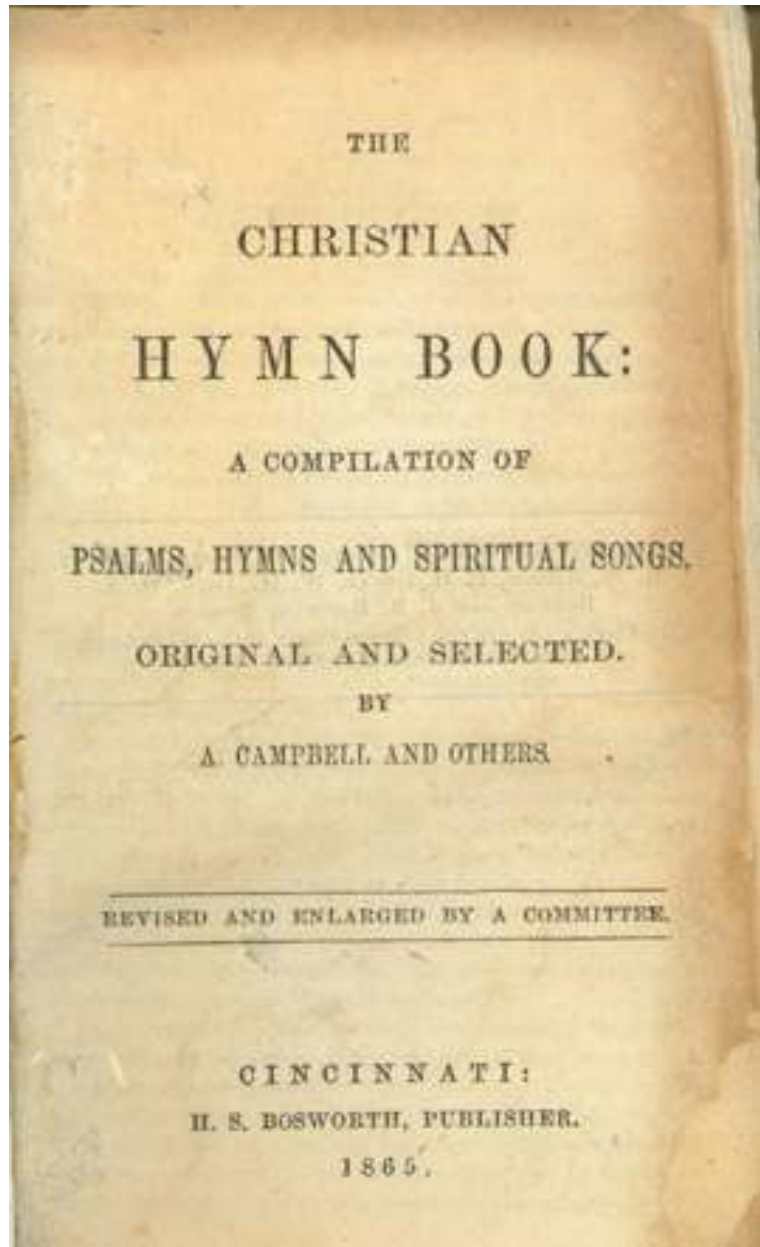
Those soldiers needed those words of *assurance* to keep them going in the battle.

They need *encouragement* along the journey.

And I think – for you and me – *we* need to be encouraged at times as well - along the journey of life.

And I think also, that there are times when we need to be reminded about the assurance we have—

...that there is more to this life – than what meets the eye.



That the battles we face, and the journeys we travel – are all for a reason, even an eternal purpose.

Slide # 4 to 8

Listen to these words of assurance and peace:

Blessèd assurance, Jesus is mine!
 O what a foretaste of glory divine!
 Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
 Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.

*This is my story, this is my song,
 Praising my Savior, all the day long;
 This is my story, this is my song,
 Praising my Savior, all the day long.*

Perfect submission, perfect delight,
 Visions of rapture now burst on my sight;
 Angels descending bring from above
 Echoes of mercy, whispers of love.

Verse 3

Perfect submission, all is at rest
 I in my Savior am happy and blest,
 Watching and waiting, looking above,
 Filled with His goodness, lost in His love.

*This is my story, this is my song,
 Praising my Savior, all the day long;
 This is my story, this is my song,
 Praising my Savior, all the day long.*

You know, as Christians, each and every one can have perfect assurance of the forgiveness of our sins, and the inheritance of eternal life!

Slide # 9

Listen to these words from Hebrews 10:21

Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith.

‘FULL assurance of faith!

That means that there doesn't need to be *any* doubt in our minds about God and eternal life!

Would you like to have that assurance this morning?

Imagine being able to leave this building today with *total assurance* of eternal life and the forgiveness of your sins!

I don't know about you – but that's something I want in *my* life!

I need to know that there is a *purpose* for my life – a *reason* – and that it isn't all in vain.

And I think that you would want this too.

We can have the *full assurance* of our faith!

You know, around twenty years ago, I made a *discovery* that changed my life for good.

It is something I have shared with you *many* times already.

But you know – even though I know it – I usually forget to do it!

I discovered that I could actually *increase* the amount of faith that I have in my heart and in my life.

I discovered that believing in God, and trusting Him – was something that I could *increase* in my life.

Slide # 10

Please turn with me in your Bibles to Hebrews 10:17

Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.

A paraphrase of this verse would go something like this:

Slide # 11

Faith to believe and trust in God comes as we listen to, and read God's holy Word!

All this means, is that as we read God's Word, or listen to it being preached – that our faith and trust in God *actually increases*.

It's that simple!

Let me give you a quick example.

Now, most, if not all of us go through hard times, especially when money seems to be short.

You know what I mean, when the car breaks down, we've got to buy new shoes for the kids, and then a birthday or a wedding comes along.

And on top of all this, our bank account is sitting on zero.

We all know what that's like – the stress that comes, the arguments, the worry,

...the different plans and ways we try to work out how we will get through and manage – despite a limited income!

But then, if we turn to God's Word and ask Him what He has to say about it,

...we discover these wonderful verses of encouragement and promise:

Slide # 12 to 18

"No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.

25 "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes?"

26 Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?"

27 Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?"

28 "And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin.

29 Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these.

30 If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?"

31 So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'"

32 For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.

33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Matt 6:25-34 (NIV)

There we have it!

Rock solid promises from God's Word that brings encouragement and peace.

And the key to all this – is that God will do exactly the same for us, *whatever* the difficulty or problem.

Slide # 19

The Bible is that it is a written encouragement and insight into God's perfect will and plan for our lives –

- it contains the answers to all of life's challenges -

Failing marriages

Financial difficulties

Business decisions

Broken friendship

Family difficulties

Sorrow and grief

Death and dying

Temptations

Lust

Unfaithfulness

Aggression and anger

To name only a few!!!

In fact – God is able to help us in each and every situation or temptation that we find ourselves in today or tomorrow!

Slide # 20

Listen to these wonderful promises!

15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are--yet was without sin.

Heb 4:15 (NIV)

Slide # 21

And it was necessary for Jesus to be like us, his brothers, so that he could be our merciful and faithful High Priest before God, a Priest who would be both merciful to us and faithful to God in dealing with the sins of the people. **18** For since he himself has now been through suffering and temptation, he knows what it is like when we suffer and are tempted, and he is wonderfully able to help us.

Heb 2:18 (Living)

Slide # 22

But remember this--the wrong desires that come into your life aren't anything new and different. Many others have faced exactly the same problems before you. And no temptation is irresistible. You can trust God to keep the temptation from becoming so strong that you can't stand up against it, for he has promised this and will do what he says. He will show you how to escape temptation's power so that you can bear up patiently against it.

1st Corinthians 10:13 (Living)

That's why - we can sing and shout - with confidence and trust:

Slide # 23

Blessèd assurance, Jesus is mine!
O what a foretaste of glory divine!

Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.

Let me share with you - just one more short example of why I am convinced about the reality of God and eternal life;

You see, people sometimes ask me;

Slide # 24- dead trees

‘What if God isn’t real?

What if you get to your death bed and find out that Christianity isn’t true.

All those sacrifices you’ve made.

All those restrictions upon your life.

All that – and it might not even be real!

Well, to people like that, I answer something like this:

Listen carefully!

Slide # 25- lilies

‘I live my life knowing there is a purpose. I know I have a destiny in God.



I have His blessing upon my life each and every day.

God is my Provider, my Commander and my Chief .



God is in control of all the areas of my life – the good and the bad!

If tragedy strikes – if a loved one dies or suffers a grave misfortune, I can have utter peace, knowing I will see them *again* one day soon.

I have no fear of death or dying – only hope of eternal happiness and rest.

And here's where it gets really interesting!

If I die, and I am *wrong* – I'll still die happy, and I'll never know any different.

But if I am *right*, I will live in eternal happiness and life.

Slide # 26- dead trees

But as for you, for a non-believer, life is futile.

It has no ultimate purpose – except a longing to be happy.



You view pain, misfortune and death - as a tragedy – something to be avoided at all cost.

On your death bed, you will only know fear and loss.

And if you are right, you will still die sad and unhappy.

But if – however, you are wrong and I am right – then all you have to look forward to – is facing the judgment seat of Christ.

In fact – this reminds me of two powerful experiences I encountered with two very different people on their death bed.

The first was of an elderly lady, in a hospice – in the last stages of life.

This lady was literally screaming, ‘Somebody help me! – I’m scared and dying! PLEASE, PLEASE – help me – I SCARED!’

And then, another wonderful man of God, only hours before his passing – taking Debbie and my hands in his – praising God and speaking his blessing over our lives.

Slide # 27- lilies

I don’t know about you –
but I know which option I
would choose!



Slide # 28

Blessèd assurance, Jesus is mine!
O what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.



*This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Savior, all the day long;
This is our story, this is our song,
Praising our Savior, all the day long.*

What I haven’t shared with you – is about the person who wrote this amazing hymn.

A lady by the name of Francis Jane Crosby.

Slide # 29- Photo over page

She wrote this song – Blessed Assurance - alone with another 8,000 during her life time, finally going to be with her Lord in 1915ad.

What a talented lady – blessed with such a gift.

However, at only six weeks of age, Francis caught a cold and simple conjunctivitis in her eyes.

A country doctor was called – who made a paste out of mustard and red-hot chili peppers.



The second this evil paste was rubbed into her eyes –

...they literally burned and dissolved away –

...resulting in immediate and permanent total blindness.

However, Francis Crosby was to turn her affliction in to an asset and in later years looked upon her blindness as a *blessing* from God.

She began writing poetry at the age of eight with this simple little verse:

Oh, what a happy child I am,
 Although I cannot see!
 I am resolved that in this world
 Contented I will be.

At the age of 44, Francis was visiting a friend – Mrs. Jo F Knapp.

Jo called Francis over to her elegant pipe organ – to let her listen to a *new* melody she had just composed.

‘What do you think of this tune?’ asked Jo to Francis.

And on the spot, Francis lifted her hands to the heavens and instantaneously composed this song:

Blessèd assurance, Jesus is mine!
O what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.

*This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Savior, all the day long;
This is our story, this is our song,
Praising our Savior, all the day long.*

Let’s pray together.