

E. VINCE PRESS

When Assurance Feels Distant

A Biblical Guide for the Troubled Conscience

A RESOURCE FROM GOD LOVES ME?

For those who sincerely trust Jesus Christ yet struggle with guilt, fear, or recurring doubt, this framework draws distinctions between the basis of salvation, the response of faith, the evidences of discipleship, and the accusations of conscience.

THE ORIGINAL ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK

Assurance Framework — A Guide for the Troubled Conscience

This framework is a guide to reading Scripture and seeking pastoral counsel, not a test that can pronounce a verdict on any person's eternal state. It gathers the main distinctions developed in Parts II and III (Ephesians 2:8–10; 1 John 5:11–13).

1. What is the ground of salvation?

Jesus Christ—His person, death, resurrection, and saving promise—is the ground of Christian hope. We do not create salvation through the intensity of our feelings or the consistency of our moral performance (Romans 3:21–26; 5:6–11; 1 Corinthians 15:3–4). This is the question of the Savior's sufficiency, not the believer's perfection.

2. What does receiving grace entail?

Scripture calls persons to repent and believe the gospel (Mark 1:15; Acts 20:21). Living faith is not mere agreement with

propositions, and repentance is not a purchase price paid for forgiveness. Grace trains those who receive it toward a changed life (Titus 2:11–14; James 2:14–18). Christian traditions differ about the precise relationship of regeneration, justification, and the possibility of final apostasy; this framework does not erase those differences.

3. What evidence can responsibly inform assurance?

Begin with God's promise in Christ, then consider the Spirit's witness and the direction of a life: confession rather than concealment, willingness to receive correction, love of neighbor, and concrete steps away from known wrong (Romans 8:15–16; 1 John 1:8–2:2; 2:3–6; 3:14–24). These signs are not an arithmetic score, and their imperfect presence must not be made into a demand for sinlessness.

4. When the conscience accuses

Ask whether the accusation identifies an actual, actionable wrong or merely repeats an old fear. If harm continues, cease it, confess truthfully, accept accountability, and seek restitution where safe and possible (Luke 19:8–10; Galatians 6:1–2). If you have already responded faithfully and doubt merely repeats itself, do not treat repeated anxiety as new evidence. Seek wise pastoral care; persistent compulsive reassurance-seeking may also warrant clinical support.

A final caution

Neither a peaceful feeling nor a distressed one settles salvation. Biblical warnings against unrepentant sin remain serious (Hebrews 10:26–31), and biblical promises to those who come to Christ remain real (John 6:37; Romans 8:1). The purpose of this framework is to direct the troubled conscience toward Christ and responsible discipleship—not toward endless self-surveillance.

Questions for reflection

- Am I placing my confidence primarily in Christ's saving work or in how secure I feel today?
- Is there a specific wrong for which confession, restitution, or accountability is needed?
- If I have already acted responsibly, am I treating repeated fear as though it were new evidence?
- Whom could I approach for sound pastoral counsel rather than solitary rumination?

Explore the complete book

This reading sample is an introduction to God Loves Me? Finding Assurance Through the Lives of Saints Who Sinned. Discover the E. Vince Press catalog at rightmindleftbrain.com.

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