

October 2009

Cyberspace News

Michigan News



Are You Certain You Are Saved?

Elder Charles Moore

There is very little we humans crave more than certainty. We want to be certain about our health. We want to know our car can be depended on. We want to know we can pay our bills and we can afford to retire someday. We want to know we are forgiven for our sins and we want to be certain of eternal life.

Yet, there are few who are certain. If you ask, "Are you saved?" many folk won't know what you are talking about. Others will say, "I hope so," "I guess I am," or "I don't know." Still others will say, "I go to Church, etc." Some follow the very dangerous practice of relying on their feelings.

The issue is: "Am I saved now?" and "Can I have reasonable assurance of eternal life?" I want to assure you that you can. John states this is his reason for writing his epistle **1 John 5: 13 I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life.**

Apostle John gives us seven tests by which we may assure our hearts before God that we have eternal life. As you will see most of these are the fruit of a right relationship with God, but not the basis for receiving salvation itself. Be careful to distinguish the difference:

Test #1: Do we believe Jesus

Christ is God's Son? We must have a firm faith that He is God's Son. **1 John 4: 14 And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. 15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.** But, be careful. To confess this faith is not just a glib expression of mental assent. It involves serious conviction if it means anything at all. We must be willing to live according to our faith. Faith that does not change us is no faith at all.

Test #2: Are we keeping His commandments or are we liars? **1 John 2: 3 And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. 4 Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, 5 but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: If we love Jesus, we will obey Him. Those who don't love Him don't obey Him because they follow their own inclinations and desires of the flesh. 1 John 3: 23 And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his**

Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us.

Test #3: Do we follow the example of Jesus? Jesus has set an example for us and calls us to imitate His integrity, His faithfulness to God, and His willingness to sacrifice. John exhorts us to walk the way Jesus walked. **1 John 2: 6 whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.** If He is our Savior, He must be the one we follow in this world. We will never follow Him perfectly, but it must be the inclination of our heart.

Test #4: Do we love the Father or the world? **1 John 2: 15 Do not love the world or the things in the world, the love of the Father is not in him. . . . 17 And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.** We either love the Father or we love the world, it is never both. We often try to straddle both worlds but we must settle in our minds that all that we see here that seems so permanent is only temporary. It will not last past this life. Only what's done for God will last.

Test #5: Do we habitually practice righteousness rather than sin? Righteousness is a trait inherited from God. **1 John 3: 9 No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God. 10 By this it is evident who are the**

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children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother. This doesn't mean we can never sin. It refers to a continual practice of sin. There is forgiveness for the sin of the whole world. **1 John 2: 1 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. 2 He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.**

Test #6 Do you love other Christians? **1 John 3: 14 We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death.** Love does not save us. It is evidence of salvation. If we love the Lord, we must love His children. **1 John 4: 11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 12 No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.** God's love is perfected in us if we love one another.

Test #7 Do you have a conscious awareness of the indwelling Holy Spirit? **1 John 3: 24 Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us. 1 John 4: 13 By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.** The indwelling of the Holy Spirit of God is a great blessing given to those who truly love and trust Jesus. We see in Scripture that He strengthens, intercedes, and seals the Christian. We are told our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit. I Cor. 6:19.

I want to close with a story Pastor Adrian Rogers tells of a time he went to visit a woman who was dying. He asked her if she was assured of her salvation, and she said she was not. He asked her if she would like to be. And she said, "Indeed I would". So he explained to her from God's Word what it meant to be saved, and then prayed with her. She prayed fervently and asked for forgiveness and confessed her trust in Jesus as Savior. He turned to her family, who was there, and said, "Isn't it wonderful that she has been saved, and is going to heaven?" Her son-in-law immediately rebutted, "Nobody can know she's saved" To which Pastor Rogers took out his Bible, opened it to our passage for today and read **1 John 5: 13 I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life.** Do you see the word "know" in this verse? The man said, "Yes, I do". Then Pastor Rogers said, "Of course we can know that we have eternal life, the Bible says so".

Greetings from Michigan. We have had a busy month in October, but Thanksgiving is almost here so we can start making pumpkin pies!

We started the month with fall retreat and were very happy to have Sonya Pease from New York and Deborah and Jim Stoner from Maryland for the weekend. We had Lynn Vaughn, Kay and Jim Nevil and other guests come on Saturday afternoon for a program. With the help of Charlie and Aurine Moore I finished the history of the church I had been working on for awhile. We made a booklet of the history available to everyone on Saturday afternoon, and if any of you wish to get one just let me know and I will send it to you. It sure brought many memories back. On December 13 of this year we will be meeting in our church for 40 years. We are so blessed.

David and Ruth Charles were here one Sabbath this month and are planning several trips this next month. They keep very busy and catch up with friends wherever they go.

We have a couple of outlying folks that really need your prayers this month. Kerry Johnson (New Jersey) sustained a head injury while skating awhile back and is having some neurological problems related to the injury. Please pray that his treatments relieve the numbness, etc. he is experiencing. Rachel (Begeman) Sottile has been diagnosed with breast cancer and is in the midst of treatment. Please pray for her.

Dorothy Layton reports some improvement in her walking from the knee surgery she had. She has driven her car a few times so we are happy to hear of the progress.

Seth Begeman has purchased a home in the Cleveland area where he lives. Dad Tim and Mom Diane were very pleased to go and help with the big move. Seth still enjoys working for the parks and recreation areas in Lake County.

Stephanie Fasbender has moved to Monroe this month from the Detroit area. She is very happy to be near the church and her mom and dad, Charlie and Aurine Moore.

Remember that God is only a prayer away for the big things and the small things!

<p style="text-align: center;">DON'T FORGET</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;"> C.O.L.O.R. CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE 7 PM </p>

Michigan Report

Aurine Moore

October was a wonderful news month. The weather for retreat weekend was temperate and mild with beautiful colors and then the month got cold enough for people to ask, "What happened to Indian summer?" Then the month ended in the 7-'s of all things!

Retreat itself was special and wonderful. Our faithful far away visitors came as well as people right here in Michigan. Friday night was a great chili fellowship dinner followed by a short program featuring the background story behind several old favorite hymns. A lot of work went into preparing a personal history of the United Church of the Lord Our Righteousness by Geneva Begeman so the weeks leading up to the retreat featured many conversations about unearthed historical documents (thanks Judy Begeman for your many years of impeccable workmanship, attention to detail and lovingly archived newsletters and documents and to the countless people who took photos over the years). It was a joy remembering and certainly helped us to keep a secret that needed keeping: we used part of the program to honor two of our 'they were here before we even had a church' founding members - Dale and Geneva Begeman, our faithful servants. People sang songs that they have loved (the Echoes) and that were testaments to them (Jeff Begeman and Aurine Moore), people came from far and near to recount how they were personally touched by Dale and Geneva in their work as part of this church body and the church as a whole. Some beautiful letters were sent by people who couldn't come but wanted to share their own memories. Dale and Geneva were presented with a crystal lighthouse, but I think the memories that were shared meant the most to them and those who came for the program. It is GOOD to be thankful to those who have gone before. One of the most heartfelt sentiments expressed was how much of a debt we owe to all those who were part of those founding days and for establishing a vision of a church that was founded on gratitude to the Lord Our God who IS our righteousness. That backdrop was helpful as we faced the business meeting for we have found ourselves in the same situation as the membership and our local community. Income has decreased, expenses have gone up and we've had to make some tough decisions such as reducing the amount of funding for our missionaries. We truly pray that things improve so we can increase support again and that God

triples His blessings on each of our missionaries.

One of our sermons on the First Book of John focused on, "What we can know for sure: Jesus Christ - What He did and who it was for. Wednesday night home Bible studies kicked off at Dale and Geneva's home. We're studying Galatians, using videos that are taped at All Souls Church in London England. Richard Bewes, the series moderator, comes from a family whose Gospel preaching tradition began with a mission sermon by D.L. Moody on September 26th, 1882, when his grandfather, then 14 years of age, made his commitment, and later became a preacher himself. Richard, his grandson, has since retired as rector of All Soul's church but has an interesting web site, www.richardbewes.com with a page on 'Pocket Bible' where he advocates not only carrying a Bible at all times to indicate "you mean business" but also a biblical thought of the day to share with others wherever you go during the day - nice tidbits to remark on at the water cooler or family get together.

Marcia Moore spent most of the month having one unanticipated problem after another following abdominal surgery. One bright spot in her month was being accepted for a new apartment complex and learning she had been moved and unpacked by church family members working together. Stephanie Fasbender has moved to Monroe from Waterford Michigan to be closer to church and family. Chelsey (Begeman) Connor has been accepted to graduate school, Elizabeth Goins has found a great Bible Study group, Rox-Ann Bruggman now anchors an online country radio show on Justgoodradio.com, and Joel DeHaan has a job driving trucks and is now training to drive those big boys at a truck driving school in Iowa. There was also a whole lot of driving by other members of the congregation for their work, with Jeff Begeman arriving home from North Carolina to wave off Melinda who headed to Chicago, Tim Begeman going down to Tennessee as Diane Begeman traveled to Mid-Michigan. Some people (aka the Fedors) just went to Florida for the fun of it and David and Ruth Charles made a pit stop in Michigan for part of the month. All returned to their respective homes safely.

Finally one of the things I learned this month is that saying May God be with you is really inaccurate. Whether you know it or not, God is always with you. So my new closing thought is, may you be aware of God's abounding presence wherever you walk this month!

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25 Things Worth Thinking About

- 1) Give God what's RIGHT -- not what's LEFT.
- 2) Man's way leads to hopeless end; God's way leads to endless hope.
- 3) A lot of kneeling will keep you in good standing.
- 4) He who kneels before God can stand before anyone.
- 5) In the sentence of life, the devil may be a comma, but never let him be the period.
- 6) When praying, don't give God instructions -- just report for duty.
- 7) Most people want to serve God, but only in an advisory position.
- 8) Nothing else ruins the truth like stretching it.

Looking back through the life of David Charles

Geneva has asked me to write something about my life for the Newsletter, just as my good friend Jerome Ripley did in the April issue. It is not going to be easy to follow Rip's well written and informative article because my life has not been as exciting as his, but I'll give it a try. Here goes.

In August of 1924 I was born in Aberbargoed, a little coal mining town in the Rhymney Valley, about 16 miles north of Cardiff in South Wales. My Dad fathered eight children by his first wife and just me by his second, Rebecca Anne Davies. Unfortunately, all of my half-brothers and sisters had died at fairly young ages except for three—Lily, Tom, and Albert. When I was born Lily was 20 and Tom was 17. (Neither of them lived with my parents). Albert was 4 at the time and was my only close sibling, so to speak. Tom died in 1933 without ever seeing me and Lily lived until 1975, becoming quite close to Ruth and me during and after our visit to Wales in 1955. Albert is still in good health. He and his wife, Pearl, live in the house in which I was born.

All my father's family were staunch Church of England people who worked in the coal mines. When he was about 40 Dad left the Episcopalian Church and became a Seventh Day Adventist. By the time I was born he had moved on to become a SDA Reform Movement minister. I guess that makes me a PK (preacher's kid). I believe I lived up to the bad reputations most such people have. Boys will be boys. Just before my fourth birthday I was being chased by another kid and ran out into the street. I was promptly hit by an automobile. I suffered a broken collar bone but it could have been much worse had Albert not been right there on the sidewalk, saw what was about to happen and slowed me down by grabbing my shoulder. Thanks, Albert.

The Reform Church saw fit to transfer my father to London in 1928 and so it was that in the next 5 years I began to speak like a typical Londoner (Cockney). I started school, 1st grade, in 1929 at White Hart Lane Elementary School in Wood Green, North London. The church had but few members so Dad's pay was very limited. We had to move a couple of times into less expensive rental houses--finally into a multi-roomed house on Jolly Butcher's Hill where Mom could sub-rent rooms to people. One tenant had a hobby. He made steam driven speedboats. One day he asked me if I would like to see one run. We went up to his room where the boat sat on two saw horses. He lit the fuel and soon the propeller started to turn but there wasn't much else to see. Bored, I turned to look out the window at the bus garage across the street. Suddenly there was a loud noise and I spun around just in time to get a blast of boiling water in my face. The big tin-can boiler had exploded. Once again, it could have been worse. Evidently, I must have closed my eyes just before the water hit me. My whole face was a mess of sores and my eyes were stuck shut for about three weeks. I really do have much to be thankful for because I was not blinded and the accident left me with no facial scars. PTL.

By the end of 1933 it was decided to move us back to Wales and it wasn't long before my Welsh accent came back. In 1936 I successfully passed the entrance examination and entered Ysgol Lewis', Pengam (that's Lewis' School in English), an all boys grammar school. I enjoyed high school and did fairly well in all subjects except English literature. Shakespeare and I did not get along too well. I also did well in sports competition with cross country and the 1-mile being my best running events. By the time my 18th birthday came around I had matriculated from high school, had two years of college, and was teaching woodshop at Aberbargoed Boys' School. The students were 12-15 years old but they treated me well. When World War II ended in 1945 the teacher, whose job I had taken when he was drafted into the British army, returned to his position and I became unemployed. So I took a job as a truck driver until I came to America in December of 1946. Don't laugh, it paid well but it was a garbage truck. I had to go to restaurants and army camps and pick up their garbage and take it to the "piggery" where it was boiled and fed to the hogs. I didn't have to do that part of it but I did feel a little like the prodigal son at times.

Sometime in 1942 my life was changed. When my father was young he had a friend named Harry Spencer who married, emigrated to America, and raised three sons before his wife died. Around 1926 Mr. Spencer went back to England, married another Englishwoman, and came to our house in Wales for a honeymoon before coming back to the USA. Dad heard very little from him until one day in 1942 a letter arrived saying that they remembered a little 3-year-old boy running around the house when they were there. Would that little boy care to write to their little girl who was now 15? I really wasn't interested but when Dad said "You WILL write" I snapped to attention, saluted, said "Yes, sir" and got the writing materials out. I was 18, working, and paying room and board, but it was still Dad's house and he was the boss. I wound up writing for four years, three of them being war years. The fourth year our correspondence developed into more than 'pen-pal-ism' and we decided that I should come to America.

The war being over thousands of G.I Brides were making their way to the States but somehow I was able to get a passport and a visa. I did, however, have to sign a document stating that I would marry this gal within three months of my arrival in America or I would have to return to England. And so it happened that on December 11, 1946 at 8:00 o'clock in the morning David Charles discovered this great country as the ocean liner Ile de France steamed into New York Harbor. Mrs. Spencer and my long distance 'fiance', Dorothy, met me there and we all journeyed by train to Washington D.C. where Dorothy went back to school at Columbia Missionary College where she was a pre-med student. Mrs. Spencer and I were taken by car to the Spencer residence in Epping Forest, Annapolis, Maryland. I got out of the car at 3:00 o'clock in the morning. The wind was blowing through the trees, and there was snow on the ground. The 'house' turned out to be an old, small summer cottage with one bedroom and a big, log-burning, open fireplace to provide heat for the whole place. The 'bathroom' was in a crawl space under the cottage and a bucket served as a toilet. There was a bag of lime alongside to cover what was done in the bucket. I was shown to what was to be my bedroom for the next three months. It was a screened in porch with no glass. Lots of blankets, though. A glass of water left on my nightstand would become solid ice by the morning. I remember thinking "If this is what America is really like why did I leave home?" When I awoke the next morning I was reminded of my childhood in Wales. I came out of my 'room' to discover 72-year-old Mr. Spencer buck naked taking a galvanized tub bath in front of the fireplace. After breakfast I started my first job in the United States—cutting fireplace logs on one end of a two-man saw—in the snow.

Things did not work out between Dorothy and me. Within a month it became obvious that Dorothy was not the girl I wanted to spend my life with. It was hard to take at the time because I had very little money and was totally dependent on the Spencers. I said goodbye to her and have not seen her since except at her father's funeral a few years later. All together I worked with Mr. Spencer for about three months during which time we built a septic tank, dug a basement under the cottage by hand, put in partitions, did the wiring, plumbing and drywall and made the cottage quite presentable. Apart for room and board I was not being paid anything so I finally ran totally out of money. My time to get married had gone by and I was concerned about how I was going to get back to England. I went to the British Embassy to plead my case. The official went through my passport and handed it back to me saying "You are all set. Go out and get a job". I had not noticed a stamp on the back page which said, "Admitted for permanent residence at New York on Dec. 11, 1946". I don't know who, how, or why that was done at Immigration but I do know that, "God works in mysterious ways His wonders to perform". I'm still here, I'm not in jail, and I have been an American citizen since April of 1954.

A millwork company in Washington DC hired me at Journeyman wages, and I found a one-room apartment about four blocks away from my work. I met a lot of wonderful people including Richard and Laura Cooke, the Laytons, the Hepburns, the Wilkinsons, the Rogers' family, and Carl and Ellen Momberger in the Lord our Righteousness Church in Washington. Another person I met there was a young lady by the name of Norma White who sometimes played the piano in church. She later married Jerome Ripley.

At that time Elder Merle Rogers was the Pastor of the LOR Church. On his travels around the country he had met a young lady named in Michigan named Ruth Begeman and he decided to play Cupid. He took me out to Michigan on May 30, 1947 and introduced me to her. It was like being led like a lamb to the slaughter for I met most of the big Begeman family that day. I guess they had determined not to 'let this one get away' because it wasn't five minutes after Elder Rogers and I got in the house that we heard Ruth's two-and-a-half-year-old niece, Janet, yelling, "where is Ruthie's boy friend." No amount of denying or explaining could ever prove to me that I wasn't "set-up." Four months later Elder Rogers officiated at our wedding and in October, 2009 Ruth and I celebrated our 62nd anniversary. We have a wonderful family—the four best kids in the world, four kids-in-law who are just like our own, and eleven outstanding grandchildren, six of whom have married and provided us with five-precious great grandchildren so far. All that because I honored my father's demand to write to a girl far from home. Isn't God good? I worked as a carpenter and builder for almost twenty years before going back to college for three years to complete my secular education. Following that I taught Building Trades in high school classrooms for 6 years and worked as a public school administrator for 15 more until I retired in 1986. Ruth and I have lived in Florida since then.

My church life has been interesting also. The Lord our Righteousness Church in Michigan was organized in 1948 with Ruth's father, Albert Begeman, as its leader. We met in homes. Also in 1948, Laura and Richard Cooke travelled with Ruth and I to the west coast where we were privileged to observe a youth camp being run by Elder Wilkinson. Upon our return a committee was formed to study the feasibility of having a camp in the eastern United States. I was appointed to the committee and in 1951 our first camp was held in Bellefontaine, Ohio. In 2010 our 60th camp will be held. I am now the only living member of that original committee. I firmly believe that none of us even imagined that we were being used by God in planning a program which would bring the Gospel of Salvation to thousands of young people. Many changes have taken place in our church during the years. Sadly, Albert Begeman died in 1957. I was elected to take his place as the church leader and as time went on we decided to get a church building. An old one-roomed schoolhouse became available and during the time we met there, the United Church of the Lord our Righteousness saw fit to ordain me as a minister of the gospel. In 1968-9 our whole congregation participated in building a new church in Monroe, Michigan. Soon afterward Elder Wilkinson came from Philadelphia to be our full-time Pastor. Since that time I have done everything the church has requested of me until five years ago when I announced that since I was now 80 years old I would no longer accept any more preaching invitations because I felt that others could do much better than I. I certainly hope that no-one interpreted that to mean I was retiring completely from God's work for I don't believe that is possible. Since that time I have been called upon to perform a few weddings and funerals and when I am requested I will continue to do that as long as I am able. Until that time I wish God's continued blessing on the United Church of the Lord our Righteousness and, in particular, the Michigan Church under the able leadership of Elders Moore and Tim Begeman.



