TITLE: **ASSURANCE OF SALVATION**
PART I

Satan - the liar - is constantly trying to get men to doubt God. (cp. Gen. 3:1). Many real Christians are sometimes plagued by torment, fear, and doubt regarding their salvation. God seems so far away; they seem trapped.

I. WHY DO SOME PEOPLE LACK ASSURANCE?

A. POSSIBLY THEY ARE UNSAVED

1. They don't have life (I Jn. 5:12) (This is why there is no change on their life)

2. They don't have spiritual discernment (I Cor. 2:14) (This is why they don't understand Scripture)

3. They are blind (II Cor. 4:3-4; cp. Jn. 12:40)
**Examine yourselves to see whether you be in the faith - II Cor. 13:5)

B. POSSIBLY THEY HAVE LAPSES IN WHICH THEY DOUBT GOD'S TRUSTWORTHINESS

1. Because of man's untrustworthiness

In a world where one's word is not trustworthy (especially in NYC), many Christians unconsciously doubt God's Word. There was a day when you could trust a person when he said: "You have my word on it." We tend to unconsciously connect man's fraud, disloyalty and unfaithfulness to God.

2. Because of extreme introspection

a. Seeking a certain feeling. Don't trust feelings; trust the facts of God's Word

b. Feeling unworthy ("fear hath torment" - I Jn. 4:18)

C. POSSIBLY BECAUSE OF FALSE TEACHING

Note: warnings to beware of false teachers (II Tim. 3:5; Tit. 3:9-10)

Examples of false teaching:

1. They say, "If you didn't repent enough - you are not saved."
(The question is not did you repent enough; but rather did you genuinely repent--that is, have a change of mind regarding your sin and Christ's sufficiency.)

2. They say, "If there is illness, hardship or trouble in your life - you are not saved."

3. They say, "If you cannot give a specific date - you are not saved."

4. They say, "If you have committed the unpardonable sin - you are not saved."
NOTE: In the context of Mt. 12:24-32, the unpardonable sin is: "the willful, continued denial of the Holy Spirit's testimony concerning the person and work of Christ."

5. They say, "The Bible teaches that a saved person can lose his salvation."
Examples of their proof texts: Heb. 6:1-6; II Pet. 2:19-22; Gal. 5:1-4 ["fallen from grace"];
I Cor. 9:26-27 ["cast away"]; Heb. 3:12-14.

D. POSSIBLY BECAUSE OF UNCONFESSED SIN

1. When you sin you break fellowship with God-I Jn. 1

2. When you sin you grieve the Holy Spirit

NOTE: One who is genuinely born again cannot continually practice sin

Why? 1) His "seed" (God's divine nature) will prevent it (I Jn. 3:9)

2) God will chasten him (Heb. 12:5-11)

CONCLU: Don't take your eyes off of Jesus (Heb. 12:1-2) and put them on yourself or others (II Cor. 10:12). Trust God's Word because it is truth (Jn. 17:17) and He is faithful (II Thes. 3:3; II Tim. 2:13).