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**“We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life” (I John 5:20).**

## **Stand With Confidence**

**Central Truth:** Salvation imparts boldness.

**L259. Date:** February 1990. **Text:** I John 5:13-21.

**Topic:** Security: Of Believers.

“*Know*” is the key word to the first epistle of John. It is appropriate to conclude a study of the epistle with an emphasis on Christian assurance. Here is a study from which the believer should come rejoicing in faith.

Many people have problems with assurance of their relationship with God. Some are caused by not knowing the promises of God recorded in Holy Scripture. Others are caused by doubts of God's promises. And some problems are the result of sinful rebellion against what God has said.

God wants each Christian to live in the full assurance of faith. He has given promises. He has confirmed His promise with His oath. He has demonstrated His faithfulness to those who trust Him. He has given us resources to aid our growth in faith. What else could He do to make us trust Him?

Yet, some Christians seem almost addicted to doubt. Some almost brag about how difficult it is to trust God. Not so! Remember the solemn word, “*Whatsoever is not of faith is sin*” (Romans 14:23). One should flee from doubt as he would flee from a ferocious animal. Lack of assurance is not a weakness or a cross to bear. It is sin against God. Therefore, “*be not faithless, but believing*” (John 20:27).

**I. CONFIDENT OF SALVATION (I John 5:13)** The Christian can be saved and know it. John wrote his first epistle to give assurance of salvation.

**A. We believe on the Son of God.** We believe that He is God in human flesh. We believe that He spoke the words of God and did the work of God. We believe that He carried our sins in His own body when He went to the cross. We believe that His death paid the penalty for our sins. We believe that He arose from death and ascended back to the Father. We believe that He is at the right hand of God this moment to make intercession for us. We believe that so certainly that we have staked the destiny of our immortal spirits on His promise to save us from eternal death and hell. We are believers!

**B. We have eternal life through believing on the Son of God.** Jesus Himself promised that whoever believes in Him would never perish but have everlasting life (John 3:14-18). He stated repeatedly that whoever believes in Him has eternal life as a present possession (John 3:36). He promised that the one who believes in Him would never be condemned (John 5:24). *“This is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life”* (I John 2:25). Since He who promised is faithful, we can rest in absolute assurance that we have eternal life through faith in Jesus, the Son of God.

**C. We keep on believing on the Son of God.** The more we know Him, the more we trust Him. The one essential thing God requires of us all is to believe on Him whom God has sent (John 6:28, 29). The whole of the Christian life is bound up in our trusting Jesus. Spiritual growth is from faith to faith. The essence of being a Christian is summarized in the statement, *“The just shall live by faith”* (Romans 1:17). Our faith in Jesus to save us is only the beginning. All of life is an expression and experience of fellowship with Him by faith.

We who believe *“know”* (absolute assurance) that we have eternal life. That causes us to trust Jesus the more.

## **II. CONFIDENT OF ANSWERED PRAYER (I John 5:14-16)**

Faith in God to answer prayer follows logically upon faith in God to save us from our sins. He who loved us enough to forgive us while we were poor lost sinners will surely answer our prayers now that we are saved and sanctified children.

**A. Pray with confidence.** God promises to answer prayer. You can trust Him to keep His word. He has promised to give whatever we ask, what we desire, and all things good if we ask aright. Think about that! God turns us loose in our petitions, requiring only that our prayers be in Jesus' name, according to His will, in faith, with a forgiving spirit, and according to His indwelling Word. Pray. God will hear.

**B. Pray with specific petitions.** Please do not offer those general requests of “bless all for whom we should pray” or “bless all who are in need.” Ask specifically. Jesus told of a man who went to his neighbor to get bread to feed a hungry guest who had arrived unexpectedly (Luke 11:5-10). He did not ask for food, or just for bread. He asked for three loaves of bread. A specific petition gets a specific answer. The text says, *“If we ask any thing.”* A *“thing”* is specific. When you pray, ask God for specific things and you will get them.

**C. Pray in the will of God.** That limitation is essential. Otherwise, selfish petitions would arise before God and He would be obligated to answer all kinds of foolish prayers. He knows what is best for us and for the work of His kingdom. It is best that He gives according to His will. He will never give a bad thing; He will always give the best thing. You are protected and assured when you pray in the will of God. .

How can you know the will of God? Study the Bible. Pray to know His will. Counsel with mature Christians. Submit to His will as best you know it. When His will is unknown, pray “if it be Your will” and mean it. You can know His will, do it, and pray according to it.

**D. Pray with assurance that God hears.** He does not merely hear in that He is aware of your words. He hears in that He listens, understands, agrees, and acts. Can you imagine God taking that kind of interest when you pray? He does. The prayers of His children are like a fragrant perfume before Him. He delights when you pray. When you cry, God hears from His holy temple. Be confident. *“The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry”* (Psalm 34:15). Pray with assurance.

**E. Pray that God may answer.** God does many things for us apart from our petitions. But some things He does just because we pray. *“He shall call upon me, and I will answer him”* (Psalm 91:15). That is God's promise to you personally. Jesus said that if we pray in faith, whatever we ask, we can reach out the hand in full expectation that God will give it (Mark 11:24).

God wants you to pray. He wants you to pray in faith. He has given these great promises to encourage you to pray.

### **III. CONFIDENT OF PERSEVERANCE (I John 5:18)**

There is hardly a passage in all the Bible which gives greater assurance than I John 5:18. Three great pillars of assurance are given here.

**A. The saint does not sin.** Read 1 John 3:3-10 again if you question that statement. It is an expanded treatment of the statement, *“We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not”* (I John 5:18). Sin is not his lifestyle,

though he may err here or there. He knows that fleshly lusts war against his soul, so he flees from them. He refuses to give the members of his body as instruments to sin. He is a saint and seeks to live like one. The Christian who says, "I sin; I sin every day; I can't keep from sinning over and over," must understand that he is not living like a Christian. No wonder his heart is miserable and his testimony weak. A born-again child of God, in whom God's Spirit dwells, turns from the works of the flesh and produces the fruit of the Spirit. The saint does not live a life of sin.

**B. The saint is kept from sin.** "*He that is begotten of God keepeth himself*" (I John 5:18). "*Begotten of God*" is the key to understanding that statement. It does not mean that the person who has been born again keeps himself. That would put security in man's hands and take it out of God's hands. The verb used in the Greek text in which John wrote is one used to refer to an eternal generation. It is used in the New Testament only of Jesus. Reference is to the only begotten Son of God, Jesus our Lord. The text says Jesus personally protects the one who trusts Him. What a promise!

**C. The saint is safe from the wicked one.** "*That wicked one toucheth him not*" (I John 5:18). The "*him*" of that statement might be Jesus or it might be the saint. Either way it assures the believer that he is secure in Christ. If the wicked one (the devil) does not touch the saint, he is safe. If the wicked one does not touch Jesus, the saint is still safe because he is in Christ. Faith in Jesus becomes the victory which overcomes the world (I John 5:4). The saint has power over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt him (Luke 10:19). That is security!

#### **IV. CONFIDENT OF UNION WITH GOD (I John 5:19, 20)**

One of the greatest discoveries a new convert will make is to realize his personal union with God. God is not just up in heaven, or somewhere in the world, or in His church. God is personally present with and within the believer in Jesus. That is the emphasis of I John 5:19, 20.

**A. We are of God** (verse 19). We belong to Him as sheep of His pasture. We are related to Him as children of His household. We are governed by Him as citizens in His kingdom. We stand in amazement and say. "*Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God*" (I John 3:1). We are His!

**B. We are with God.** He has come where we are. He is with and within us. He has promised never to leave us or forsake us. We are held in His hand and are the theme of His thoughts. Like a loving mother who is constantly attuned to the cry of her newborn baby, God is constantly aware of us and

ready to help us. There is no place we can go, no condition we can experience without God being there and sharing it with us. Thank You, dear Father.

**C. We know God.** Be sure you understand that statement. It is not that we know about Him. We know Him! The lost man can study theology and know much concerning God. But only one who trusts Jesus can know God personally. We do! Jeremiah caught the implications of that and wrote these words from God: *“Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD”* (Jeremiah 9:23, 24). We glory in knowing Him.

**D. We are in God.** So intimate is our union with Him that our physical bodies are limbs of His body (I Corinthians 6:15) and we in His church are members of His body, His flesh, and His bones (Ephesians 5:30). Therein is our hope.

Pause here and review what you have read. You can be confident that you are saved, that God will answer your prayers, that the devil will not grasp you, and that you are united with God. That is a blessed assurance, indeed. Go out with joy and live like a person with that birthright.

### **Questions for discussion**

1. What does “*know*” mean as used in I John?
2. Why does God want us to live in assurance?
3. What benefits have come to you because you trust Jesus?
4. How can you be sure that God answers your prayers?
5. How can you be sure that you pray in the will of God?
6. What do you believe about the security of the believer?
7. Who keeps the person who believes in Jesus?
8. What does it mean to say that we are “*of God*”?
9. How has this study given you great assurance?
10. How can you share this truth this week?