

A Christian Know-It-All

(1 John 5:13-21)

12/21/16; Wed PM Pine Grove

Introduction

While driving from Miami to New York, a big shot lawyer exited I-95 outside of Florence SC to get some gas and a snack...

As he prepared to leave the convenience store, he ran rolled through the stop sign as he headed to the on ramp to 95...

Well, a local cop saw him slide through the stop sign, turned on his blue lights and came up to stop him..

The lawyer saw the cop and proceeded to pull over, but had intentions of getting a ticket...

He was a know-it-all who felt like he could out-smart the cop with his eyes closed...

Besides he was a Harvard graduate and a top lawyer in New York City...

As the officer approached his car, the lawyer rolled down his window..

“Sir, you ran that stop sign back there, so I need your license and registration...”

“For what officer” asked the lawyer.

“Well I have to write you a ticket.”

Well, officer I am a lawyer in New York City, and I know a lot about the law.”

“And I didn’t break break the spirit of the law.”

“I slowed down and checked traffic then proceeded onto the road.”

There wasn’t anyone around. What’s the real harm?”

Well, the law states you have to come to a complete stop, so you broke the law.

Well, officer if you can show me the difference between stop and slow down, I’ll be happy to take that ticket...

But if you can’t, you don’t have a case against me and I am headed back to New York...

Sure I can show you the difference between stop and slow down...

Just get out of the car a minute.

So the know it all lawyer steps out and the officer takes out his baton and begins beating him over the head with it...

And he asks the lawyer, "Do you want me to stop or slow down?"

That is how we feel about know-it-alls, right?

We like seeing them get it all wrong...

I've entitled this final section of the 1 John, the Christian know-it-all...

We all know what a know it all is...

It's a person with a answer for everything...

They have a huge ego and a lot of confidence and they aren't afraid to tell you...

Now, the Bible consistently teaches the need to be humble...

The need to put yourself below others...

Yet, we are going to learn tonight that having confidence as a believer is not a bad thing...

In fact, it is good to know some things are for certain if you are truly saved...

And John is going to list for us 3 guarantees of the Christian life tonight...

Three truths that he wants us to know...

And have confidence in if we have passed the tests of salvation...

These guarantees are found at the end of John's letter almost as the bonus of passing the tests of salvation...

Kinda like the bubble gum at the center of a lollipop...

If you have worked your way through the letter and discovered that you are a true believer, John wants to leave you with some guarantees that you now possess...

So, let's look at these guarantees in verses 13-21 as we close out this great letter by the apostle John...

The first guarantee is found in verse 13....

I. True Believers Know They Have Eternal Life (13)

13 These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.

What are the ‘these things’ of verse 13?

Some say it is just the 12 verses that precede verse 13 in chapter 5...

But I think John is talking about the entire letter that he has just written the church...

All these things that he has written about in the letter that serve to test a person’s faith...

What they believe...

How they love...

Their pattern of obedience to God’s commands...

These things that John has written about since chapter 1 verse 1 were written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to give John’s readers confidence that they are saved and have eternal life...

John is going to use the word “know” very frequently in this final section....

Because that is what he was hoping to give them in this letter...

He wanted them to know some things...

To have confidence...

To have assurance...

To be certain...

And all that he has written has the purpose of helping them know...

Now, verse 13 shouldn't surprise us if we are familiar with John's gospel...

Because near the end of it in the next to last chapter, John wrote this

John 20:31...

31 but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is [h]the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.

As a teacher of the Word of God, I appreciate John because he tells me the purpose of two of his books right on the pages of Scripture..

John writes with a purpose...

In the gospel of John, he wrote to help his readers know that Jesus is the Christ...

In John's first letter, John writes to help those who have trusted in the Son to know that they have eternal life...

You don't have to go to seminary to figure out the purpose of the gospel of John or the first letter of John...

You simply have to read what John wrote...

Now, don't miss what John is saying here...

Believers who pass the test of salvation can know that they are saved...

They can be confident in their salvation...

Now, clearly a true believer wouldn't boast about that or let it be a source of sinful pride...

But it is fine and dandy to know that you are saved and possess eternal life, if you examine your life and see that you have the right belief about Jesus, have a love for God, and have a pattern of obedience to God in your life....

In fact, John wrote this letter to help you know that...

Which means that God wants true believers to know that they are truly saved..

The Christian life is not to be lived with anxiety over your salvation, it is to be lived with confidence in knowing you are saved...

Confidence is a good thing if you dont allow it to grow into arrogance and pride...

My girls are learning how to play golf, and I constantly remind them...

If you swing confidently, you have a greater chance of success...

If you with anxiety and are not really sure if you know what you are doing, there is greater chance of all kinds of problems...

In the same way, God does not want the true believer filled with fear and anxiety as they live the Christian life..

As Paul told Timothy...

7 For God has not given us a spirit of [f]timidity, but of power and love and [g]discipline.

And though Paul was talking to Timothy about doing ministry, the same principle applies to confidence in your salvation...

As John ends his letter to the church, he wants true believers to be filled with assurance about their salvation and not doubt..

The second thing that John wants true believers to know as he finishes up his letter is found in verses 14-17..

II. True Believers Know They Have The Ear of God in Prayer (13)

Let's read verses 14-17...

14 This is the confidence which we have [l]before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. 15 And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him.

16 If anyone sees his brother [m]committing a sin not leading to death, he shall ask and [n]God will for him give life to those who commit sin not leading to death. There is a sin leading to death; I do not say that he should make request for this. 17 All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not leading to death.

This passage is where many people are often led astray and lose confidence in God and in their prayers...

John wants us to know this....

The prayers of true believers are heard by God...

The Bible teaches this principle from beginning to end...

Psalm 34:15

***15 The eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous
And His ears are open to their cry.***

Proverbs 15:29

***29 The Lord is far from the wicked,
But He hears the prayer of the righteous.***

Those who are truly saved should know that God hears their prayers, if our prayers are asked according to His will...

Now what does this mean?

Well for starters, prayers that are according to God's will are asked from a heart that is in God's will...

We won't look at all the verses, but prayers that come from a person living in disobedience to God are not offered in the will of God...

Clearly, the prayers of an unbeliever are hindered by their unbelief...

But even for Christians who are living in sin, their prayers are also not going to be prayed according to the will of God...

God is not seeking perfection in those making the prayers, but he is seeking the right direction of the hearts of those making requests to Him...

We can't live in sin and ask a prayer that is in the will of God...

Number 2, we need to realize that prayer is not about our desires but about the desires of God being accomplished in the world...

TV evangelists that demand God answer their prayers are only talking to themselves and their audience only...

Prayer is not a list of our demands but a list of requests that are in line with the will of God...

And how do we know the will of God?

Because we know his Word?

What is God's will...

Well, it is all over the Scriptures...

God's will is for people to be saved...

God's will is for believers to grow in their sanctification....

God's will is for us to give thanks in all things...

What God wills is not a mystery.

He has revealed it in Scripture...

Now, we may not know specifics about his will, but we do know what God desires from His Word..

For instance, you can pray for a person to be saved...

But you have no assurance of their salvation because we lack perfect knowledge of who God will save..

You can pray to get a certain job for good biblical reasons, but God may or may not allow that to happen for His own reasons...

We can know the general will of God and we can pray according to that will, but we can't know the specifics of God's will...

So, we ask and we know he hears, but we aren't assured that we will get a "Yes" because we lack the perfect wisdom of God..

Jesus prayed in the garden that he wouldn't have to go to the cross, yet that wasn't the plan of the Father for the Son...

So, he still went to the cross, and we are glad that God didn't answer that prayer, aren't we?

If he had honored Jesus' request and spared him from the anguish of the cross, we would all be dead in our sin with no hope of salvation..

Remember that next time you pray and get a "No".

Sometimes, God's "No" is a far greater blessing that you could have ever imagined...

Yet, the promise of what John is saying is this...

God hears the prayers of the truly saved, and when they line up with His will perfectly, we have confidence that we have the requests that we made...

Think about your own children....

When they ask you for something, you hear them...

But you don't always grant the request because you have more wisdom that they do at this point in their life...

Daddy, can I have a cookie before I eat supper?

No son, you can't. It's not a good idea..

Why Daddy? I need to eat..

Isn't it your job to feed me? Isn't that you will for my life to see me grow?

It is son, but I have a better plan for you than that...

I want you to grow because you ate your broccoli and not your cookie...

God has the wisdom, but more importantly, he has the perfect plan and will to bring about the best result...

Yet, He doesn't cut out His people from accomplishing His will...

He allows us to pray and be a part of accomplishing His perfect plan and bringing forth His perfect will, and why does he do that?

Because he loves us....

Getting back to our kids for a minute...

Let's say they eat a good supper and eat their broccoli...

And they come and ask us for a cookie then...

What does it do to us?

It thrills our heart to be able to say yes and answer their request...

We enjoy watching our kids get a “yes” to their question, and I can’t help but think that the same is true in God’s relationship with His children..

We should take our requests to God knowing that he hears us and will grant our requests if they are asked in line with His will...

Now in verses 16-17, we simply get an example of prayers that go answered and unanswered by God...

In each example, the person is praying for someone who is committing sin..

And the prayer is for God to deliver them from that sin...

In the first case, the person is praying for someone who is committing a sin not leading to death and that prayer is granted and God delivers them..

And in the second case, the person is praying for someone who is committing a sin leading to death, and that prayer is not answered..

So, are we to understand this...

Well, the key is to understand what a sin leading to death is...

In one sense, all sins leads to death, yet there are cases when a person falls into a pattern of sin that is so destructive that God determines to end the person's life over it...

Ananias and Sapphira come to mind in the NT...

They lied to God over what they were giving to the church and God ended both their lives on the spot...

Also, some people in the NT were also taken the Lord's Supper in an unworthy manner, meaning they were participating while living in sin...

And many of them died as a result of this sin...

One thing you need to keep in mind here is that the sin may not be the same for everyone...

For some, it may be a pattern of lying and there is one final lie that leads to their physical death..

For others, it may be a pattern of sexual immorality and that one final sin leads to their death..

For others, it may a pattern of anger and that one final outburst leads to their death...

Now, this doesn't mean they lose their salvation...

It simply means that they lose their life, though their souls are saved...

And the principle here is that a prayer offered for someone in sin to be delivered will be answered as long as the person hasn't passed that point of no return in the will of God...

However, if that sin has gone on for so long and remained unconfessed to God and there is no show of repentance..

It doesn't matter how long or often you pray for that person, God's will has been determined and his or her life will end due to that sin..

And though people have twisted these verses to mean all sorts of things, they simply serve as examples of answered and unanswered prayer requests made to God...

And they also serve notice to us to not fall into a pattern of sin and stay there...

Because that sin could be the sin that ends our life if we allow it to continue without any sign of repentance...

Now, let's bring this back to the point of the passage which is to increase our confidence in 3 guarantees of the Christian life if we have passed the tests of salvation in 1 John...

The first is to increase our confidence that we possess eternal life if we are truly saved...

And the second is to increase our confidence in prayer is we are truly saved...

And there is one final guarantee for the truly saved in verses 18-21..

III. True Believers Know They Have the Edge for All Eternity (18-21)

Let's read verses 18-21...

18 We know that no one who is [o]born of God sins; but He who was [p]born of God keeps him, and the evil one does not touch him. 19 We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. 20 And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding so that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life. 21 Little children, guard yourselves from idols.

In 6th grade, the only game to play at recess was kickball...

Even the girls played kickball, and it was highly competitive...

We picked teams every day, and the winning team always was able to go first in the lunch line the next day...

For most of the year, the teams went back and forth and were pretty evenly matched...

However, half way through the year, a new kid moved to Whitmire...

And his name was Johnny, and he must have failed a few grades because he was clearly older than us...

We were 12 and 13 in sixth grade, and Johnny looked about 15...

He was taller and stronger and faster, so he was a kickball professional...

It was a given fact that if you were picked to be on the same team as Johnny, you were going to win that day...

So, we all wanted Johnny on our team...

He gave us an edge over the other...

A really big edge...

He was almost a guarantee for being first in the lunch line the next day...

For the true believer....

For the one who has passed the tests of salvation in 1 John, it goes without saying that he has an edge in this life and in the life to come...

Look at some edges that John mentions in these verses...

#1 - We have an edge over sin...

John tells us in verse 18 that no true Christian stays in sin...

Yes, they sin and they may fall into a pattern of sin for a time, but they will not stay there long...

For God Himself pulls him out of sin, and keeps Satan's hands from grabbing him too firmly...

What an incredible promise of being truly saved...

Because let's face it...

If it was up to us to stay saved and stay out of sin, we would lose that fight every time...

Praise the Lord that he gives me an edge over sin..

Not only can I have victory over sin as a Christian, God is there to snatch me from the jaws of defeat and the hands of Satan...

A second edge we have as beliefs is found in verse 19..

#2 - We have an edge over what influences us..

John writes that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one...

In other words, every unbeliever's life is directed by Satan and his influence...

No unbeliever would tell you that they do the work of Satan unless they were mentally ill, but the Bible would tell you that....

Unbelievers live under the god of this world and the god of this world is Satan...

Believers on the other hand, are under the influence of God as the Holy Spirit controls our life...

He that is in us is greater than he that is in the world...

A final edge that believers possess is found in the final verses of 1 John...

#3 - *We have an edge on the truth.*

John simply ends this letter with a reminder that true believers have the guarantee of knowing the truth...

WE know the true God because we know and are part of the Son of God..

Even verse 21 is reminder that there is no other true God than the God of the Bible...

And the wonderful reality for the one who has passed the tests of 1 John is that he or she knows the true God...

There isn't any anxiety over whether there are other Gods out there...

We have a guarantee that the God we know is the only God to know...

And the only God who can save...

Everything else is an idol or false god that has been made with human hands or invented by a human mind...

And every other god is a lie and not of the truth...

We have the truth because we have the true God, who is the God of truth...

And what comfort it is to know that we have a guarantee that our God is the true God if we are a true believer according to 1 John..

And what a comfort it is to know that we a guarantee to know that our prayers are heard by God if we are a true believer according to 1 John...

And what a comfort to know that we possess eternal life if we are a true believer according to 1 John...

Conclusion

As we close this first letter of John, let me remind you of what John has tried to accomplish in your life as a Christian through what he wrote...

First, John wanted to establish what true salvation looks like...

And the reason for that is this....

False teachers, false Christians and false salvation have been around as long as true teachers, true Christians, true salvation...

And therefore, we must constantly be reminded of what real salvation looks like...

And John has boiled true salvation down to three essential components that reveal to anyone whether their profession of faith in Christ is true or false...

And those three parts are...

What they believe about Jesus Christ...

How they love God and love others..

And what is the pattern of obedience in their life..

The false teachers in John's day were saying they were saved but they had a wrong view of who Jesus was...

They didn't love God or others...

And the pattern of their life was not obedience to God but rebellion against Him...

And since that was the case, the readers of John's letter were able to see that these teachers were not true teachers but more importantly, these teachers weren't even true Christians..

And that is an important reminder even today that not everything that glitters is gold...

We need to move beyond the glitter in a lot of people and teachers and Christians and examine them under the microscope of 1 John....

And only when they pass the Word of God can we say without a doubt that their glitter is a sign of true gold that comes with being a true believer in the true God...

And just like we appreciate a good scientist who tells us our gold is real...

We should appreciate the apostle John who has helped us to see if our faith and the faith of others is real or simply simply fools gold...

Let us pray...