

## **John's Closing Words**

No. 161

### **Introduction.**

I. At this time I would like to invite your attention to the reading of 1 John 5:13-21.

II. John closes his first epistle with these important words.

**1JO 5:13 These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, in order that you may know that you have eternal life. 14 And this is the confidence which we have 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 committing a sin not leading to death, he shall ask and 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. 18 We know that no one who is born of God sins; but He who was born of God keeps him and the evil one does not touch him. 19 We know that we are of God, and 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, in order that we might 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.**

III. There are many lessons found in this reading of which I would like to emphasize five. **Each of these lessons are intended for Christians.**

I. **Know We Have Eternal Life** - John begins our text by saying we may know we have eternal life. (1 Jn. 5:13).

A. The word "know" does not mean we must "guess" or "speculate," but it means we can be sure, confident, certain of our salvation.

1. The certainty is not on the basis of revelations or dreams or miraculous power.

2. It is not on the basis of our own subjective, human feelings or the feeling of others.

B. In this epistle John revealed clearly how we can be confident (sure) of our salvation.

**1:7 but if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.**

**2:3 And by this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments.**

**2:29 If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone also who practices righteousness is born of Him.**

**3:14 We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death.**

**3:24 And the one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And we know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.**

**4:7 ¶ Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.**

**4:8 The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love.**

**4:13 By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.**

**4:15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.**

**5:1 Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God; and whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him.**

**5:4 For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world-- our faith.**

**5:5 And who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?**

B. Brethren these scriptures and scores of others that could be read show that a Christian can be confident in his or her salvation.

1. The one who is uncertain of salvation will **live a life of doubt and fear and frustration**.
2. The one who is uncertain **denies the power of Jesus** to cleanse him of his sins.
3. The one who is uncertain will never be able to convince others that they should forsake the world of sin and doubt and fear and be a Christian. How can others be led to Christ when the Christian says, "I am not certain I am a Christian. I do not know if I have been forgiven. I do not know if I am saved. I am unsure that I have eternal life."

**II. God Answers Prayer** - John informs us that God answers prayers. (1 Jn. 5:14, 15).

A. Once again John uses the word "know".

1. We can "know" God answers our prayers.
2. We can have confidence and boldness in regard to prayer.

B. It is clear from the text that God does not answer every prayer.

1. God will not hear the prayers of those who **ignore His word and rebel against Him**. (Prov. 28:9).
2. God will not answer prayers that are uttered **without faith**. (Heb. 11:6; Jas. 1:6).
3. God will not answer the **prayers of the arrogant**. (Jas. 4:6).
3. God will not answer **selfish prayers**. (Jas. 4:3).
- 4.. God only answers prayers uttered in accordance with His will.

C. The will of God is clear.

1. He wants us to pray for **our needs**. (Matt. 6:10).
2. He wants us to pray for **forgiveness**. (Matt. 6:12).
3. He wants us to pray for **wisdom**. (Jas. 1:5).

4. He wants us to pray for **peace**. (1 Tim. 2:1, 2).
5. He wants us to pray for **the sick, the discouraged, the poor, the lost**.
6. He wants us, in all things, to pray in accordance with His revealed will. God assures us He will answer prayers according to His will.

III. **A Sin Unto Death** - John tells us that there is a sin unto death. (1 Jn. 5:16, 17).

**1JO 5:16 If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, he shall ask and 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.**

A. John here speaks of “a sin unto death.” The word “death” is not physical death., but it is spiritual death. (Rom. 6:23).

B. What is “a sin unto death.”

1. Some have tried to identify it with the sin of adultery or theft or murder or some other great sin. These sins can certainly lead to spiritual death, but the Bible gives examples of all these sins being forgiven.
2. It does not appear “a sin unto death” is to be identified with a specific sin.
  - a. It most likely refers to any sin a brother will not confess.
  - b. It is certain that all confessed sins can be forgiven. (1 Jn. 1:9).
3. The Hebrew speaks of “sin unto death” as wilful continuous sin. (Heb. 10:26, 27).
  - a. The Hebrew writer maintain there is no more a sacrifice of sins for those who live in sin without repentance.
  - b. It is possible to allow ones heart to become so hardened by sin that it will not repent.
  - c. God will forgive the person, but the person will not repent.

C. John does not state it is wrong to pray for such persons, but he does not command prayer for Christians who refuse to repent and spurn God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit.

IV. **One Born Of God Does Not Sin** - John declares the one born of God does not sin. (1 Jn. 5:18a).

A. Some have misunderstood this statement about sin.

1. Some believe the Christian cannot sin at all.
2. This causes some to **doubt their conversion** because they sin.
3. This causes others to affirm the Christian cannot sin (do wrong.). They rationalize what they do must not be evil “since a Christian cannot sin.”
  - a. While in Cuba I visited with Jose Hernandez. The church here put him through the Jamaica school of preaching. He is recently returned to Cuba to preach. We were discussing some of the doctrinal problems in Cuba. One of the problems he mentioned was the denial of some religious people that a Christian can sin.

b. This doctrine is based on our text and also 1 John 3.

**1JO 3:6 No one who abides in Him sins; no one who sins has seen Him or knows Him.**

**1JO 3:9 No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.**

c. It is certain a Christian can sin. (1 Jn. 1:7, 8, 10).

d. Paul often dealt with the problem of sin among Christians.

**1CO 5:9 I wrote you in my letter not to associate with immoral people; 10 I did not at all mean with the immoral people of this world, or with the covetous and swindlers, or with idolaters; for then you would have to go out of the world. 11 But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he should be an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler-- not even to eat with such a one.** See 1 Cor. 6, 11.

B. In First John the tense in the original language is present tense. The present tense means durative, continuous action.

1. It does not mean a Christian cannot sin.

2. It means the Christian is not a continuous, habitual sinner.

3. The Christian loves God and strives to do His will. He does sin, but sin is more the exception than the rule.

a. The man of the world can sin and care less.

b. It breaks the heart of the Christian when he sins.

c. When the Christian sins, he repents and seeks forgiveness.

V. **Keep Ourselves From Idols** - John admonishes his readers to keep themselves from idols. (1 Jn. 5:21).

A. It is interesting that this admonition is given to Christians.

B. We usually think that **only pagans are in danger of idols**, but this is not so.

1. There have been Christians, both past and present, who struggle with idolatry. This is especially true in places where men have been converted from the worship of idols to the worship of God. Some have tried to worship both. (Exod. 20:2).

2. **Some in the church today have their idols.**

a. They would never worship a graven image.

b. They do put all kinds of things before God.

3. Brethren, we must guard ourselves from idols. We must worship only God and put nothing before Him or in competition with Him. (Matt. 4:10).

**Conclusion.**

I. As we return to our text, it is also vital that we believe in Jesus as the Son of God. We must submit to Him. Only those who submit to Jesus will be saved. (Jn. 3:36; 14:6).

II. **We invite you to come to Jesus this very day.** Jesus died on the cross for you and He wants to save you. He shed His blood for your sins and He wants to wash your sins away. Confess your faith in Christ and be baptized for the forgiveness of sins. Live for Jesus and eternal life is yours. Come as we stand and sing.

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