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BLESSED ASSURANCE AND ABSOLUTE CONFIDENCE

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF 1 JOHN
NUMBER 34
1 JOHN 5:11-13

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1 JOHN 5:11-13 "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God;"

The words "this is" come from the present, active, indicative of eimi and this is the verb of eternal existence. In other words, the two little words "this is" means that this is permanent truth. It has always been true and it will always be true. The word translated "record" is from marturia and should be translated "witness." So this phrase should be translated "And this keeps on being the witness." This is a perpetual, consistent and unchanging witness. "That God hath given" means that God is the source of life and salvation. The word for "given" is the aorist, active, indicative of didomi and this points back to an occurrence in eternity past. God actually gave us eternal life before we existed. God gave us what we knew we would need even before we had the need. God knew what we would need, and long before the need arose (because God is an omniscient God and knows everything) he made a perfect provision for that need. The active voice here means that God is the one doing the giving, and the indicative mood means the reality of this wonderful grace gift. GOD ALWAYS GIVES TO MAN ON THE BASIS OF HIS PERFECT CHARACTER. This gift is in the dative of advantage, and this means it is to our advantage to receive this gift from God.

GOD GIVES US 36 THINGS AT THE MOMENT OF SALVATION

At the very moment you put your faith in Christ, God does 36 distinct things for you. (We have these outlined both on tape and on paper if you care to study these 36 things.) Only one of those thirty-six things is mentioned here. According to this passage, he gives us eternal life and this gives God some working room. Grace needs some working room, and we can't understand what God is doing for us until we understand grace. Understanding grace gives us an amazing sense of security or stability. When you depend on your own power and own ability, you have no security or stability. Your human ability or my human good is not strong enough to carry you very far. We soon come to discover that all stability and security depends on who and what God is and your acceptance of his grace way of living. Every law that provides for your welfare is a God given law. Any way you take it, remember that your sustenance and stability is from God.

THE SOURCE OF ETERNAL LIFE

Eternal life is from God, and it never comes from man or from what man achieves. Even when man was first created and still in innocence, he didn't have eternal life. Even being sinless doesn't give him eternal life. That type of evangelism which suggests that if you will just stop sinning, then you will be saved is erroneous. It just simply is not true. If you were to stop sinning (which you can't do, because you were born with an old sin nature), but just for argument's sake, let

us assume that you stop sinning and never commit another sin for the rest of your life; that still wouldn't provide for your eternal life. Stop sinning does not mean you have eternal life. If you could do this for the rest of your life (and did not believe in Christ), you would just go to hell in a little more self-righteous condition and that is all it would mean. Look for a moment at Adam, who was created sinless and innocent. How long he lived in that state we do not know, but we do know that not for one day while he was sinless and innocent did he have eternal life. Before Adam had eternal life, he had to have spiritual death (which happened when he ate the forbidden fruit) and then he received eternal life. And remember this, he received it in exactly the same way that you and I received it. He came to know Christ as Saviour and he accepted the provision Christ made for him. Therefore the gift of eternal life is used in this passage to illustrate the grace of God.

So we have this phrase "This keeps on being the witness." God always existed and God always had a plan. His plan is as strong as his character. His character is perfect and his plan is perfect.

ETERNAL LIFE IS PART OF THE ESSENCE OF GOD

God is sovereign, righteous, just, eternal life, love, omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent, immutable, and veracity. The Lord Jesus Christ also has these same exact essence qualities. The Holy Spirit also has these ten essence characteristics. Therefore, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit all have eternal life. This is why this verse before us says specifically "This life is in his Son." God gives us the eternal life that is in his Son because Christ is the Saviour and Christ is the one who went to the cross and paid for our sins. This phrase might have said, "This life is in the Father" and that would also be true, but God the Father is not the Saviour. We receive our eternal life from Christ the Saviour because he is the one who died for us and he is the manifestation of God. When we accept Christ as Saviour, we enter into union with Christ and Christ is the God-man. He is eternal life and we enter into union with him and we share his life. This is the illustration the writer uses to explain grace. Paul, John and Peter all emphasize this doctrine again and again. We have the statement, "This eternal life keeps on being in his Son." This is en plus the locative and it means resident in his Son. Eternal life is in Christ and we are in union with him.

THE DOCTRINE OF POSITIONAL SANCTIFICATION

1. THE MECHANICS OF POSITIONAL SANCTIFICATION.

Positional sanctification is a reality as a result of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. The baptism of the Holy Spirit has nothing to do with baptism in water or speaking in tongues. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is not accomplished by getting into water or by babbling in some tongue. The baptism of the Holy Spirit takes all of one second, and it is not seen, is not observable and it has no accompanying phenomenon. 1 Cor. 12:13 explains how it happens. "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." It was first prophesied by Jesus Christ.

ACTS 1:5 "For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence."

The baptism mentioned in Ephesians 4 is not water baptism.

EPHESIANS 4:5 "One Lord, one faith, one baptism,"

This is the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit took you at the moment of salvation and entered you into union with Christ. You were not changed in any way so far as an emotional experience is concerned. The baptism of the Holy Spirit does not cause anyone to babble or speak in a tongue. If you are wearing a red dress when you receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit, it does not turn the red dress white. Of if you were wearing a white dress when you received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, it doesn't change the dress to red. It occurs in less than a second. One second you are in Adam (In Adam all die) and the next second you are in Christ (In Christ shall all be made alive).

2. POSITIONAL SANCTIFICATION BELONGS TO THE CARNAL AS WELL AS THE SPIRITUAL BELIEVER. (1 Cor. 1:2 and 30)

Most of the people to whom the Corinthian letters were addressed were carnal believers who were out of fellowship and had been carnal for a long time. But they were still "in Christ." This Corinthian passage says "To them that are in Christ Jesus." They are sanctified in Christ Jesus. This is a title for all believers including the carnal and the spiritual. In the Greek it says, "All of you are in Christ Jesus." So all of these believers, both carnal and spiritual, are included in positional sanctification.

A terrible heresy.

There are people who run around over the country having deeper life conferences and their line goes like this--"If you are living a sinful, carnal life, chances are you were never saved in the first place. You need to accept Christ as Lord and really get saved." So they come down the aisle and get saved again and get baptized again. We have a lot of that kind of thing going on today. Please let me ask you to remember this, if you have ever believed in Christ, you are in him now, whether you are carnal or spiritual. That saying, "If he is not Lord of all, He is not Lord at all" is heresy. He is Lord and has always been Lord and you can't make him Lord of your life. He takes the Word of God and this is the material he uses in bringing you to spiritual maturity. Him being your Lord depends on two things--your acceptance of him as Saviour by your faith in him and appropriating for yourself the Word of God. Feeling and ecstasies and a rosy glow has nothing to do with salvation. These things may come or may not come as a result of salvation but it is not a part of the salvation package itself.

3. POSITIONAL SANCTIFICATION PROTECTS THE BELIEVER FROM DIVINE JUDGMENT IN ETERNITY.

Romans 8:1, "There is therefore now no judgment to them that are in Christ Jesus." That last half of the verse "who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit" is a part of verse four and should not be in verse one. That sentence is a part of the inspired Word of God, but some sleepy scribe wrote it in there at the end of verse one and it is a part of verse four. Once

you are "in Christ" you cannot be judged. Why? Because Christ was judged on the cross for your sins and once you accept him, your judgment is over forever. The sins can't be judged twice. The moment a believer dies, his soul and spirit is in the presence of God. Imagine snatching that soul and spirit out of the presence of the Lord and making the saved person stand before the Great White Judgment Throne! It is ridiculous.

4. POSITIONAL SANCTIFICATION QUALIFIES THE BELIEVER TO LIVE WITH GOD FOREVER.

Two things God has that you must have--Eternal Life and Perfection which we also call Plus Righteousness. This perfection will become a reality for you at the Judgment Seat of Christ when in your resurrection body the old sin nature is stripped away and all the human good is burned. This is the result of positional truth. This perfection is a potential reality the day you are saved, but it doesn't become final and actual until you stand in his presence. This is all a matter of grace.

5. POSITIONAL SANCTIFICATION EXPLAINS TWO UNEXPLAINABLE DOCTRINES. THE DOCTRINES OF ELECTION AND PREDESTINATION.

EPHESIANS 1:3-6 "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."

In eternity past Jesus Christ was elected to be the only Saviour and to go to the cross and die for our sins. He was also elected to rule in eternity. Once we believe in him, we share his election. Christ was also given a destiny. His destiny as Saviour and the Eternal Prince of Peace is related to the cross. His destiny as a ruler is correlated with his millennial reign of a thousand years and his ultimate reign in eternity. So when we believe in Christ we share his destiny.

We also share his destiny and we are said to be predestined. We are the elect according to the foreknowledge of God and we are the elect in him before the foundation of the world. The unbeliever is never said to be elected or predestined.

6. POSITIONAL SANCTIFICATION PRODUCES A NEW CREATURE IN CHRIST.

2 CORINTHIANS 5:17 "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

This new creature comes from being "in Christ." You are not a new creature because you gave up certain sins or because you changed your behaviour pattern. You are a new creature because you are in Christ. You were outside of Christ and now you are in Christ. It is not an experience you have but rather it is something that results because of faith. A new creature is always the result of God's work and it is not the result of our reformation. We are trophies of the grace of God.

7. POSITIONAL SANCTIFICATION GUARANTEES THE ETERNAL SECURITY OF THE BELIEVER.

Once you are "in Christ" you are there to stay.
(Romans 8:38-39)

In my judgment this is the greatest doctrine of Christianity.
Christianity is not a religion but a relationship.

8. POSITIONAL SANCTIFICATION EXISTS IN TWO CATEGORIES.

(1) It is retroactive. It carries us all the way back to the cross and we are identified with Christ in his death on the cross. This is taught in Romans 6 and Col. 2:12 and 3:3. All human good is rejected. Human good was rejected at the cross.

(2) We are also identified with him as he is seated at the right hand of God. We are identified with him in his resurrection. This is taught in Hebrews 1 and 2.

9. LOOK AT THE IMPLICATIONS OF POSITIONAL TRUTH.

- a. Eternal life. (1 John 5:11-12)
- b. Absolute righteousness. (2 Cor. 5:21)
- c. Election. (Ephesians 1:4)
- d. Destiny. (Ephesians 1:5)
- e. We share his Sonship. (2 Tim. 2:1)
- f. We share his heirship. (Romans 8:16-17)
- g. We share his sanctification. (1 Cor. 1:2 and 30)
- h. We share his Kingdom. (2 Peter 1:11)
- i. We share his priesthood. (Hebrews 10:10-14)

10. LOOK AT THE CHARACTERISTICS OF POSITIONAL SANCTIFICATION.

- a. It is not an experience. It is not an emotion or ecstasies.
- b. It is not progressive. It cannot be improved upon either in time or in eternity.
- c. It is not related to human merit or human good. Grace excludes all human good.
- d. Positional truth is eternal in nature. It will last forever.
- e. This doctrine is only known by the Word of God.
- f. It is attained in toto at the point of salvation.

Therefore 1 John 5:11 says, "This keeps on being the witness, that the God hath given (in eternity past) eternal life. This eternal life keeps on being in his Son."

1 JOHN 5:12 "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." "He that hath" is a present active participle of echo. The Son always has had this eternal life. It comes to us by believing in Christ. (John 10:31, 14:6 and 10:28)

Now in this next phrase we have the opposite side of the coin. "He that hath not" and this is also the present, active, participle of echo plus the negative. You either have or do not have eternal life. You either believe or you do not believe.

1 JOHN 5:13 "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God."

This is the witness of the Word. "Have I written" is the aorist, active, indicative of grapho. These things were written in a point of time, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. "Believe on the name of the Son of God" is not in the original and it is not needed to clarify the meaning of this verse. The rest of the verse says, "That ye may know that ye have eternal life." "That ye may know" is a perfect, active, subjunctive of oida. This subjunctive is used to show that there are some who do not know this truth because they do not have doctrine in their minds. In other words, many believers won't believe in eternal security and therefore they never are sure about their salvation. Confidence is based on doctrine, on what the Bible says and not on the way you feel.

Confidence in the Word of God brings inner happiness.

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