

Lesson for December 11, 2005

The Book of I John

Chapter 5:10-15

Verse 10

“He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God hath made Him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son.”

The believer has the “third witness” to facts concerning Jesus Christ indwelling Him, God the Holy Spirit. No longer blinded by Satan, the believer through the ministry of God the Holy Spirit has the potential to bear witness to truth about Jesus Christ. Through the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit the believer can learn the truth regarding Jesus Christ. (Romans 8:16)

The person who rejects Jesus Christ and the gift of eternal life is calling God a liar by failing to believe all the record that God has given regarding Christ. Prior to the completion of the canon of Scripture we had first hand, “mouth-to-mouth” records of Christ’s life, death and resurrection. Now that we have the canon of Scripture, we have a complete and comprehensive documentation regarding the facts about Jesus Christ. To disbelieve this record is to call its author a liar.

Verse 11

“And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and that life is in His Son.”

What exactly is the record to which John is referring? It is the recorded fact, the testimony that God has given to the believer eternal life as a result of being in union with Christ. Eternal life is found only in Christ. This statement by John also presupposes all that was accomplished by Jesus Christ that gives Him the right to give a believer eternal life.

In eternity, all believers will have eternal life, but there will be inequalities among believers with regard to eternal rewards and blessings. Since God blesses the believer on the basis of capacity, it is easy to understand how there will be inequality in Heaven. Not all believers develop capacity for blessing at the same rate nor do they share the same degree of capacity. The more a believer learns and applies the Word of God, the greater his capacity to receive rewards both now and in eternity. This does not mean that anyone will be

unhappy or remorseful in Heaven. God in His matchless grace sees to it that no believer spends eternity in any condition other than perfect happiness. Remember that the sin nature no longer exists in Heaven, so jealousy, envy, bitterness, etc. will not be characteristics possessed by the believer.

Verse 12

“He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.”

Eternal life is God’s life (one of His attributes) imputed to the human spirit (its home) at the moment of salvation. This imputation of eternal life occurs simultaneously with the imputation of the human spirit. Though we possess eternal life the very moment we trust Christ as Savior, we do not fully experience it until we enter the eternal state. It is the life of God that the believer possesses which creates the capacity to receive and appreciate eternal rewards. Since it is God that imputes eternal life to the believer, it is a matter of grace. Therefore, eternal life is not deserved nor can it be earned. This means that anyone that has believed in Christ for salvation (regardless of their current spiritual status) possesses eternal life. It also means that the believer is secure in Christ *forever*. (John 5:25-26; 11:25-26; 14:6; I John 5:11-13)

Verse 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.”

There is sound doctrinal reasoning for knowing that a believer is secure forever. The most important fact to note is that eternal security depends upon God’s faithfulness, not man’s faithfulness. It is the life of God (eternal life) that He imputes (credits) to every believer at the moment of salvation, which assures us of an eternal relationship with Him. The Bible says that believers are guarded in the “hand of God.” We are also given a guarantee in the Person of the Holy Spirit, Who indwells every believer. The Holy Spirit Himself is the seal that secures forever our eternal life. Since salvation is a grace function and has nothing whatsoever to do with human effort or human merit, losing your salvation through sin would negate God’s grace – a blasphemous thought. (John 10:28-29, 14:16-17)

If a believer could lose his salvation through sin, who is to be the judge of which particular sin cancels his salvation? If you merely have life until you sin again, then you do not have eternal life. A

lack of understanding or believing in the eternal security of the believer results in lack of confidence in God and His Word. Assurance of salvation should be dealt with in spiritual childhood and cease to be an issue once a believer has begun to learn and apply Bible doctrine. Confidence in God is a function of our Royal Priesthood and is obtained by the consistent study and application of God's Word. The more doctrine you learn and apply, the more you know about God and the more confident you become in His plan and purpose for you. (Romans 8:38-39; I John 3:21-22)

Verse 14

“And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us.”

Prayer is the grace system of communication with God for the believer. The purpose of prayer is to communicate with our Heavenly Father. God communicates with us through His Word. We communicate with God through prayer. God, therefore, expects all believers to use prayer. We are actually commanded to pray without ceasing, which means *to have a consistent prayer life*. Prayer can be a powerful tool in the hands of a believer who knows how to use it. There are correct principles and procedures for praying, and it is important that we learn and use these principles and procedures.

(I Thessalonians 5:17; Ephesians 6:18; Philipians 4:6; Hebrews 4:16)

It is the privilege of every believer to have a part in another person's life or ministry through prayer. We all need the prayer of others. Therefore, it is important that we develop a consistent prayer life. In James 5:16 it tells us that the effective, continuous prayer of a righteous person (a person living in God's power system) has great results.

Verse 15

“And if we know that He heareth us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him.”

This verse makes it clear that if the believer wants the desire of his prayer fulfilled, he must pray according to God's will. However, it is not always God's will for you to have what you are praying for. Have you ever heard the phrase, “Be careful what you ask for”? Well, this is true with God also. Remember that God has both a directive will and a permissive will. This means that sometimes He gives us our request but it does not turn out to be what we really desired. Sometimes the request is granted but not the desire. Sometimes the request is not granted, but the desire is granted. Sometimes the

request is granted, and the desire is granted. Sometimes the request is not granted and the desire is not granted. God always knows what is best for the believer.

Why Prayer Is Not Heard or Answered

The number one reason our prayers are not heard by God is what the Bible calls carnality (being controlled by the sin nature). Carnality may take various forms in the life of the believer. Any sin removes our fellowship with God and the control (filling) of the Holy Spirit and this keeps our prayers from being heard. (Ephesians 6:18) Lack of faith hinders our prayers. (Matthew 18:19; 21:22; Mark 11:24) Selfishness and lack of compassion are sins that keep our prayers from being heard. (James 4:2-3; Proverbs 21:13) Lack of peace in our marriages hinders our prayer life. (I Peter 3:7) Arrogance or asking for things that are against God's will keep our prayers from being heard or not answered. (Job 35:12-13; I John 5:14) Lack of obedience keeps our prayers from being heard. (I John 3:22) Putting out a fleece, (which means asking God to give you a sign as a confirmation that He wants you to do a certain thing), keeps God from answering our requests. (Judges 6)

Prayer should always be to thank God for His blessings, petition Him on the behalf of others and ask for help in doing His perfect will. Prayer is not a problem-solving device where God magically solves all of our problems with a "wave of His magic wand." God has given us the ability to solve our own problems by using the Bible doctrine in our souls under the control of and with the power of the Holy Spirit.