



Bible Study for March 18, 2020

There are a lot of things that we don't know. We are living in a time of great uncertainty. But aren't you glad that there are some things we can know. Paul said in **Rom. 8:28**, “*And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.*” And in **2 Tim. 1:12** he states, “*I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that Day what has been entrusted to me.*”

There are some things we can know as children of God. The songwriter said it this way, “Many things about tomorrow I don't seem to understand. But I know who holds tomorrow and I know who holds my hand.”

In 1 John, John has written to us about some things we know. In this concluding passage of his epistle, John emphasizes the certainty of these things by using the word “know” *7 times* in this section. Please read the text and then refer back to it as you read the Bible study.

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. 14 And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: 15 And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him. 16 If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it. 17 All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death. 18 We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not. 19 And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness. 20 And 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. 21 Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen. **1 Jn. 5:13-21**

We Know That We Have Eternal Life v. 13

Verse 13 is the purpose statement for the book of 1 John. It is very similar to the purpose statement made in the Gospel of John 20:31, “*but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.*” John wrote his gospel to unbelievers to bring them to faith in Christ. He wrote 1 John to give believers confidence that they possessed eternal life.

“These things” are all that John has written in his letter. *Believing on the Christ, Loving God, Obeying God, Loving one another.*

“That may know that you have eternal life”: An elderly man said to H.A. Ironside, “I will not go on unless I know I'm saved, or else know it's hopeless to seek to be sure of it. I want a definite witness, something I can't be mistaken about!” Ironside replied, “Suppose you had a vision of an angel who told you your sins were forgiven. Would that be enough to rest on?” “Yes, I think it would. An angel should be right.” Ironside continued, “But suppose on your deathbed Satan came and said, ‘I was that angel, transformed to deceive you.’ What would you say?” The man was speechless. Ironside then told him that God has given us something more dependable than the voice of an angel. He has given His Son, who died for our sins, and He has testified in His own Word that if we trust Him all our sins are gone. Ironside read 1 John 5:13, “You may know that you have eternal life.” Then he said, “Is that not enough to rest on? It is a letter from heaven expressly to you.” God's Spirit used that to bring assurance to the man's heart.

Do you know that you have eternal life? Are you believing on the name of the Son of God? Do you love and obey God? Do you love the brethren?

We Know That We Have Answered Prayer vv. 14-17

Three other times in this letter the word **confidence** is used. In each case, confidence in approaching God is in view. Two times it is confidence to approach God on the day of judgment and the other occasion refers to confidence in approaching

God in prayer as in this verse. This “confidence” is based upon the fact that we know that we have eternal life (v. 13). Show me someone who doesn’t have assurance of their salvation and I’ll show you someone with a weak, unbelieving prayer life. But show me a Christian that knows that they have eternal life and I’ll show you a Christian who has confidence to “come boldly before the throne of grace to obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

We are to pray “**according to his will.**” Prayer is not a convenient device for imposing our will upon God, or for bending His will to ours, but the prescribed way of subordinating our will to His. It is by prayer that we seek God’s will, embrace it and align ourselves with it. Every true prayer is a variation of “Thy will be done” (Stott, 188).

Robert Law wrote: “Prayer is a mighty instrument, not for getting man’s will done in heaven, but for getting God’s will done on earth.” George Mueller, who fed thousands of orphans with food provided in answer to prayer, said: “Prayer is not overcoming God’s reluctance. It is laying hold of God’s willingness.”

In Psalm 3 we see an awesome thing. King David is on run for his life from his own son Absalom. When it seemed like everyone against him, David said, “I cried unto the LORD with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill.” David’s confidence was that when he prayed, God heard him. And according to our text, for God to hear is the same thing as to answer.

David knew what John says we can all know, that, in the words of Spurgeon, “We need not fear a frowning world while we rejoice in a prayer-hearing God.”

Do you have confidence that God hears and answers your prayers? If not, John says that we should if we know that we have eternal life.

NOTE: Based on the context of the book of 1 John, the “sin unto death” is: “The Denial that Jesus is the Christ come in the flesh and that his death is necessary for salvation” (Pillar).

We Know That We Have Victory Over Sin and Satan v. 18

There is victory over sin and Satan for the true child of God. The phrase “sinneth not” (KJV) does not mean someone who is sinless or perfect, but someone who does not habitually continue in sin (present tense).

The text says that “the evil one does not touch him.” That reminds me of the story of the boxer getting beat to a pulp in the ring and his trainer in his corner kept telling him, “Keep it up, champ, he ain’t laid a glove on you!” Finally the boxer cried out, “Well, you better keep an eye on that referee because someone is beating the tar out of me!”

That’s the way we feel sometimes, but the truth is that Christ has one the victory over sin and Satan. Imagine an oak tree is growing in the park, wrapped with an ugly vine which threatens to suck all the life from this beautiful tree. But look, the City Parks and Recreation workers have seen it and cut the vine from its root. The vine that remains looks threatening but it has received its death blow.

There is victory for the Christian over sin and Satan. Victory was won at Calvary. Although there are still pockets of resistance, Christ has conquered all of his enemies and all of mine. This theological truth has practical results for the true child of God.

We Know That We Belong to God. v. 19

All people either belong to God or to Satan. All are either followers of Christ or followers of this world’s system which is opposed to God and His Christ. Our practical victory over sin and Satan indicates that we are not of this world. *Compare with 1 John 3:4-10.*

There is a contrast between true believers and the world. Frankly, if you can look at your life and see no difference between those who belong to the world, then you probably don’t belong to God.

We Know That Jesus Christ is the True God. vv. 20-21

This is the most fundamental of all the affirmations included in this passage. It strikes directly against the false teaching of those in the community that received this letter who denied that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God come in the flesh. There is a shift in the Greek word translated “know” in this verse (*Oida* to *ginosko*). The difference between these two words is being knowing facts cognitively and knowing a person intimately.

Do you know Jesus Christ? Not just facts about Him, but do you have a personal relationship with Him through faith?