

# A message for believers

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[ 0 : 00 ] The Apostle John writes practically and he writes simply. He does not try to bedazzle us with his writings.

But he gives us here in his letters the commonplace of theology. He doesn't delve into the deep mysteries and so on.

And you see, it is infinitely more beneficial for us to know these things than it is to delve into the deep mysteries and the deep teachings of theology.

It is far more important for us to know that we have eternal life than it is to know about the order of events that will happen in the last days and so on.

And John's purpose here is to lead the children of God, those called by him, in the fullness of time into the assurance of the knowledge of the possession of eternal life.

[ 1 : 27 ] And that's the purpose that this letter has been written to at the end, which the Apostle has in view.

Now this epistle then is written to those that believe. It is written to believers.

And it is not written to any other. To believers and to believers only. To confirm them in their faith.

And not only to confirm them, but to conduct them, as it were, to a higher degree of their faith.

The text this morning is found in 1 John 5, the chapter read, and at verse 13.

[ 2 : 27 ] There we read, 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, that ye may know that ye have eternal life.

Now, the first thing that I want you to note, is to whom this is written. It is written for all those who believe on the name of the Son of God.

It is not written to anyone else. It is written for those who have just begun their walk of faith.

For new believers, newly converted, the young in the faith, those who have just believed, as it were.

It is written for those who have been longer in the faith.

Perhaps the first flush of excitement is dying, as it were. And they are battling along with the sin that besets in this world.

[ 3 : 57 ] It is written for them. And it is written for the more mature Christian, the believer who has run most of his course, and who has been many years in the faith.

In other words, it is written for all Christians, for every type and person that has turned to the Lord Jesus Christ.

And it has been written that they may know the life of God in the Lord Jesus Christ. And so these things are not written for unbelievers.

They are not written for unbelievers. And that would be a very fatal error for such to believe that they had eternal life.

And the sad thing is, today, that there is many teachings abroad that say that God is love and that in no way will he reject any person that has been born of a woman.

[ 5 : 09 ] Well, we know that is certainly not a scriptural teaching at all. And it is a fatal error that is being taught that such have eternal life.

We know that the scriptures say that he that believeth not is condemned already. He is condemned.

She is condemned already. The message then is for all who have come to the Lord Jesus Christ.

No matter how imperfect they may be in their walk, no matter how underdeveloped they may be in their faith, but it is for all those that have come to the Lord Jesus Christ, and none besides.

To them and to them alone. Now it seems from our text that many believers in the world do not know that they have eternal life.

[ 6 : 23 ] It would seem that John is writing here to many people who don't seem to really realize or to understand or to know that they have eternal life.

Some seem to believe, for example, and we know in these days the very great truth of this. Some seem to believe, for example, that even if they are now saved, that they may yet be lost, that the life that is in them, the lively hope, the life, the new life that has been given them, shall somehow die. And so they seem to think that even though they are now called, that they may yet be lost. And I remember talking to a Christian of many years who was of that thinking.

Yet the life which the Holy Spirit imparts is not a life of days and months and years.

It is not that kind of life. It is a life in eternity. It is eternal life. When the Spirit of God comes to a person.

[ 7 : 54 ] And when the Spirit of God touches that person and gives them the rebirth, they become reborn, reborn again, they are new creations in the Lord Jesus Christ.

They are born to eternal life. It is life in eternity. The new birth then is a birth to endless life.

And this is what the Apostle John is trying to get through to these people in his time. It is a new birth.

And it is a birth to endless life. The body may die, yes, but the soul ever liveth.

And the soul of the believer shall dwell forever. And the body shall be resurrected. It is a birth to endless life.

[ 8 : 54 ] Born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible. It is not possible that the life within the believer can perish.

Because it is incorruptible. It is not open to corruption. And so it shall never perish. But yet other Christians seem to think that they do not possess eternal life at present.

But they think that perhaps it is something that is to come. That they will get as a sort of reward at a later stage.

When they die, the angels will come and they will be carried away. And so on, thinking like that.

But John says, Know that ye have, these things are written that ye may know, That ye have eternal life. Ye have it, you have it now.

[ 10 : 01 ] It is within you. In other words, the life that the believer lives on this planet, The life that he has now that he walks, He walks under grace.

And the grace life is the glory life in the bud, as it were. It is the glory life in the bud, ready to come to a bloom.

When they will be transported to be with Christ, where he is. But also note that what John is saying, Is that everybody without qualification, Who believes, Has eternal life.

Everybody, whoever believes, Has eternal life. And so what he is saying here, Is that the Roman Catholic, Who believes in the Son of God, The Lord Jesus Christ, Has eternal life.

No matter how skew, And how many errors they get taught, By their priest and so on, And how wonky their theology is, If they are believers in the Son of God, They have eternal life.

[ 11 : 28 ] And so the Methodist, Who believes, Has eternal life. The Baptist, Who believes, The Assembly of God person, Who believes in the Son of God, Has eternal life, As the Pre-Church person, As the Church of Scotland.

Whoever, Without qualification, So it is not, A fact, About you, And a few others.

It is not that. It is a general truth. It is something which is true, Of all believers, Without distinction, And without qualification.

Every person who believes, Has eternal life. And we may not doubt this. It is not open to doubt.

It is not, A matter of deduction, On our parts, For us to decide, For or against. It is not that.

[ 12 : 37 ] It is a matter, Of revelation. Chapter 5, Verse 1, We are not, To form an opinion, On this, But we are, To believe it.

Now, The Apostle John, Wants you, To know this, That ye, Have eternal life. It is ascertainable.

It is something, Which we, Can know, For certain. You know, Whether you doubt, Or, Whether you believe.

You know yourself, Within your heart. It is an ascertainable thing. And yet, Our natures, Have taken such a, A funny twist, In the fall.

And we are really, And so confused, And so mixed up a state, As I mentioned last week, Mel Gibson making that, Very profound statement, Our natures are so mixed up, Within us, That many of us, Have doubts.

[ 13 : 52 ] And I have met many people, Who, Have doubts, That have gone round, Visiting here and there, And, They just don't seem, To be able to grasp, The fact, That there is, Assurance to be had, In the faith, In the Lord, Jesus Christ.

And so, Many have doubts, And many of the doubts, That are held, By these people, Are really, Completely unreasonable. There is no basis, Really, For them, To have any doubt at all.

And yet, They are things, That are not to be scorned, Because, They are very real to them. And, They can't seem to, Get through, The, The, This doubt that they have.

Now, This letter of John, Is just the right thing, For such people. It is exactly, What these, People need.

And, Indeed, All believers, It is the thing, Which, All believers need, And which, I believe, Should be, Preached upon, And taught, In the churches, To the strengthening, Of the Christ, Of the church, Of the Lord Jesus Christ.

[ 15 : 15 ] It is a thing, That, It is a letter, Which, Dispels, Doubts, And so on, And lets people, Know, Of a certainty, That, They have, This eternal life, Within them.

Now, Some, May think, That, To have, A full assurance of faith, Is an impossible thing. How can I know? How can I, Where can I see it? How can I know, What is, What you're saying, Or what you believe, Is correct?

How, How can I know? How can I know? And so many, Have these, Doubts, They, They do not believe, That it is possible, To have, A full assurance.

But John, Shores here, That it is not impossible, That it is, Very plain. If one wants to, Look, At the, The faith of the Lord Jesus Christ, A living person, Knows that he is alive, Because he is breathing, Because he is thinking, Because he is, A able to move around.

And so a saved person, Must know that they, Are saved, From the wrath of God, In the Lord Jesus Christ. And what a comfort it is, To have, Such knowledge, To be able to, Walk and to think, To yourself, I am saved.

[ 16 : 49 ] I will be with the Lord Jesus Christ, One day. Death shall not, Hold me. I may go down, To the grave, But my soul, Will depart, To be, With the Lord Jesus Christ.

And my body, Will be resurrected, When the trump, Sounds. What a comfort it is. And it puts, Things into perspective, And helps us, To live, In this world, Which is, Under sin.

And so, The Christian's, Assurance, Comes from, Believing, And having, Believed, Being, As the apostle Paul says, Sealed with the spirit, Of God.

It is not, It is not, A matter, Of being, Baptized. It is not, A matter, Of being a member.

It is not, A matter, Of any, Man-made rule. It is, A matter, Of believing, In, The Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, What has John, Written here?

[ 18 : 01 ] What marks, Are in us? Which, Are able, To show us, That we have, Eternal life. Well, The first thing, Is in chapter 1.

Look in chapter 1, If you want, Chapter 1, 69. It is truthful, Dealing, With God. It is, Walking before God, In truth.

In the light, Not, In the dark. If you say, You have fellowship with him, And yet, You walk in the dark, You lie. And, The truth, Is not in you.

But, If you walk in the light, As he is in the light. And you, Confess your sin, Confession of sin. Is, So, Important, In the Christian.

If we confess, Our sins. If, We repent, Of, Our sins. We are not, Walking in the dark. But, We are walking, In the light.

[ 19 : 09 ] And, In the light, We are exposed, As needy sinners. We are exposed there, For what we are. And yet, What does it say? It says, God is faithful, To forgive us, Because he has said he would, And he surely shall.

And so, That is the first mark, That we have there, Truthful, Dealing with God. Knowing, What we are, Before him, Confessing, What we have done.

But then, Into, Chapter 2, And 3, Following, We read there, Hereby we know, That we are in him, If we keep, His commandments.

Another mark, If we keep, His commandments, We may know, That we have, Eternal life. Obeying, The Lord, From the heart, So that, All that we do, Is in accordance, To his word.

Holiness, Being the object, Of our life. Living according, To what he tells us to do. Living according, To his directions. Obeying him, Being obedient to him, And succumbing to him, And putting to

death, The sins of the party.

[ 20 : 29 ] For his servant, You are whom you obey. You see, If you do not, You are the servant, Of Satan.

The servant, Of him, Who you obey. Our obedience, Yes, It may be imperfect, In this life. It's not easy, But we strive, To do, What is right.

And if we are, Then, Beyond question, We are, One of his sheep. Because the Lord, Jesus Christ, Tells us, My sheep know my voice, And they follow me, And they hear my voice, And they come. Keeping the commandments, Keeping the commandments, Of God. But then, In 2, 15, Chapter 2, And 15, We read, Love, Not the world.

Love, Not the world. Then, In 3, 1, We read, The world, Knows us not, Because it knew him not. Separation, From the world, And its values then.

[ 21 : 42 ] What is dear, To the people, Of the world, People and their sin, Is not, Our values. We value, The Lord Jesus Christ, Above all.

Above all things. There is nothing, So precious, To us, Who believe. And therefore, We do not, Value, The things, Of the world.

Abraham could find, No city, Of habitation. He was an alien, And a stranger, In the world.

Separation from the world, Is a sign, A sure sign, Of, Eternal life.

And so, Have you, Met opposition, From the ungodly, Have you, Met the opposition, Of them? The world, She is a difference, In the believer, You know.

And the serpent, Hisses at the seed, Of the woman. But the Lord Jesus Christ, Says if the world hates you, Know that it hated me first.

[ 22 : 52 ] I remember, When I, Was thinking about telling you this, And I think I will. When, When, When I was newly converted, Well, Not newly, I'd been converted, A few months, I used to shoot, Provincially, And for springbok trials, And so on, In, With a pistol.

And we used to go all over the country, And I shot for the northern cape, And, Before conversion, One of the boys, Traveling, Drinking, And all the rest of it, That was associated, With that sort of scene.

Once, I became a Christian, I didn't stop, Shooting. And I wasn't the only one, There was a couple of Christians there. But, When we were going, To this shoot, We, Got, There was one car, There was two cars, My car, And another.

And when I arrived, At the point of departure, The other car was there, With, Five shooters in it. And I was in the car myself, So I drew up.

And then somebody said, Well, Who will travel with Kerry? We were going to welcome, About 150 miles, A long trip. Who will, And nobody wanted to come with me.

[ 24 : 16 ] Because they wanted to, Tell their stories, And so on. And they didn't want to come with me, Because, They felt that I might be telling them, About the Lord Jesus Christ.

They see the difference, You see. Eventually somebody did, But anyway, That's another story. The serpent, Hishes at the seed, Of the woman, The world sees the difference.

We must be separate, From them. To help them. But now, Chapter 2, 10, And 11, We see there, That he, That loveth his brother, Is in the light.

Another mark, We've had three already, Here's another one. He, That loveth his brother, Is in the light. The evidence of love, In your life, Is a great help to us.

Do you feel, That you're no one's enemy? Do you feel, That love, Is the principle, Of your life? Do you feel that?

[ 25 : 24 ] Or, Is there one, That you hate? Are you, Unforgiving? Because, If so, You are not, Dwelling in the light.

A loving spirit, Is a, True sign. Of, Eternal life. If you are not, A loving spirit, You have taken, Cain's side.

You are on the side, Of Cain. You see, Love is God. And, God is love. And, Everyone that loveth, Is born, Of God.

A loving spirit, Evidence in life, Is a true sign, That one has, Eternal life. But, Then again, In the fourth chapter, We read, Beloved, Believe not every spirit, And try, Whether they are, Of God.

Believe not, Every, Spirit. You see, If you take, Scripture, For your guide, And taking, No other, Bearing witness, To the truth, The truth, Then bears witness, To you.

[ 26 : 36 ] It will then, Bear witness, The word of God, Bears witness, To you. And, Jesus says, A stranger, They will not follow, For they do not, Know his voice.

If we don't, Have anything to do, With heresies, And false teachings, And cults, And things like that. We, Only want to know, What did Jesus say?

What does God say? We're not interested, In what men say, No matter who it is. We want to know, What God says, Not what men say.

A stranger, They will not follow, For they do not know, His voice. But finally, In chapter 3, In 21, 22, We read, Of the blessings, Another mark, The blessings, Of having a clear conscience, Before God, And the evidences, Of answered prayer.

The evidences, Of answered prayer. If your heart, If our hearts, Condemn us not, If our hearts, Do not condemn us, And whatsoever, We ask, We receive, There we have, A sure, And a certain sign, That we have, Eternal life.

[ 28 : 03 ] If we, Can say, With Peter, Lord, Thou knowest, All things, Thou knowest, Lord, That I love thee, Thou knowest it.

If we can say that, With the apostle Peter, That is one of the best grounds, Of the full assurance, Of faith.

And in loving God, If we receive, Answer to prayer, Which I'm sure many of you, If not all of you, Know that you have.

Because I, Certainly, Know that I have. And not only, Individually, But corporately. And I don't know, If any of you noticed, That we prayed, Two weeks ago, For Northern Ireland, And the situation there.

And it was looking, Pretty dodgy. And it looked, As though it could have, Turned nasty. And yet, It didn't. We prayed, For peace.

[ 29 : 11 ] And we weren't the only ones. There must have been, Many people. That was answer to prayer. If we receive, Answers to prayer, What a token, Of God's love, For you that is.

What a token, Of God's love. And what an assurance, It is. You see, Walking with God, In this world, Abiding, Under the shadow, Of the almighty God, Is, The best help, That we can have.

God, Never made, A person, You see, To know, And to love him. And then, Cast them away. He never did that.

I hate divorce, Saith the Lord, I hate divorce. Eternal life, Is surely in you, When God, Is your joy. When God, Is your joy, There is eternal life, In you. And when, The spirit of adoption, Cries in you, Abba, Father, Then you can stand, Against the devil's, Furies, And all his, Worst, Temptations.

[ 30 : 37 ] Amen, And may God, Bless to you, That word.