

## THE SPIRIT WITNESSES IN US 1 John 5:10-13

As we continue our study of **1 John 5**, we do so by picking up where we left off in **verse 10**. The last half of the verse reads “he that believeth not God hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.” This is not the first time John has used the word “*liar*” (emphasis mine) in this letter, but it is, maybe, the most significant time! He uses the word at least five times in: **1:10; 2:4; 2:22; 4:20; 5:10**.

Can we even imagine how incredulous and depraved fallen mankind must be in order to have the audacity to think, let alone suggest, that God is a liar? It was J. Vernon McGee that said: “When you don’t believe God, you add to your other sins by implying He is a liar. God says ‘Trust Christ, and I’ll save you.’ If you say ‘I don’t need Christ to be saved,’ then you are calling God a liar.”

Have you ever given much attention to the phrase “the record that God gave of His Son” found in **verse 10**? As ashamed as I am in confessing this, I have not given as much attention to this phrase in the past as I should have. Do you know what the words “the record” are referring to? They are referring to nothing less than the record God has given of His Son as recorded in the Word of God found in **Genesis 1:1** all the way through to **Revelation 22:21**!

The record John refers to includes, but is not limited to, the record we have of Jesus acting in the beginning as the Creator of all things seen and unseen in **Genesis**. It is the record God has given to us of His Son, as the promised seed of the woman, made manifest in the incarnation as recorded by **Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John** in their accounts of His life. It is the record we have of Him in **Revelation 5:6** seen as “the Lamb of God.” There we see Him “in the midst of the Throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders...” There we see Him as He “stood a Lamb as it had been slain.” This testifies to His death and resurrection. It is here in **Revelation 5** that we find the record of Him standing before the Throne not only as the Lamb, but also as the “Lion of the Tribe of Judah”! It is in **Revelation 19** that we have the record of Him coming from Heaven with His “vesture dipped in blood” leading “the armies which were in heaven...clothed in fine linen, white and clean.” And He was doing so as the “KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.” This is the record God has given us of His Son about in whom He was well pleased according to **Matthew 3:17**.

As John Phillips said “To become acquainted with the record and to refuse it is a serious matter. It is tantamount to calling the living God a liar.” May I say to that, “Well said John!?” Still, we have people in our day, like John had in his day, who were bold enough to take a stand against the record God has given of His Son in His Word. As those people were bold enough to take their stand against the Word of God, John was bold enough to take his stand against the Gnostics who stood opposed to the Lord. Today, if we hold the truths about Jesus Christ that John held, then we are to take our stand against all those who oppose the truth of God’s Word and we do! We stand against all those of our day who criticize the Word of God just as John stood against the Gnostics who were in error in his day.

The Gnostics professed to possess a super-intellect. They claimed they possessed a knowledge superior to everyone, even superior to God. They thought their knowledge to be sufficient enough to stand in opposition to the Word of God and, hence, the God of the Word. Therefore, they made claims about the Word of God for which they had no justifiable right to make. They had their theories, but they had no facts to support their theories. According to John, those men were bold and brazen enough to confront the Word of God, and again the God of the Word, to the point they were guilty of calling God a liar. How foolish can fallen man prove himself to be?

As we begin to consider **verse 11**, please allow me make a global statement. Probably, everyone, at one point of time or another, has dealt with doubts about their salvation. God, knowing man as He does (**John 2:24-25**), moved John to declare one of the reasons for which he was inspired to write this epistle or letter. One of the reasons for this great letter is set forth in **verses 11, 12, and 13** of this chapter. Beginning with **verse 11** John begins telling us something all believers need to know. He begins by saying: “And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his son.”

As with the Gospel that bears his name, this Apostle declares in this letter two things he wanted all men to know. Those two things are: (1) for men to “believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God” and (2) that “believing ye (we) might have life through his name.” **John 20:30-31**. He knew that when men would believe in the Christ they would become a possessor of a witness who would be a constant, permanently abiding, and internally dwelling “witness in” them. He also knew that that witness was none other than “the Spirit of truth” Jesus said would come in **John 16:13**.

Let it be known! We do have a “know so salvation.” God never intended His children to live their Christian life for Him in uncertainty, doubt, and a constant fear of being able to lose what had been given to them by grace through faith! Absolutely not! Rather, He wants those who belong to the family of God to live with boldness, confidence, and assurance of their salvation. God knew anyone who would place their faith and trust His Son would become one of His “little children.” Therefore, knowing what He knows, He moved John to write this letter so those who trust Christ could know without any doubt that they are truly a child of God. In order to assure that would happen, God made a way for the “Spirit of truth” to become a permanent resident and witness in the heart of every believer in order to testify to them of the assurance of their salvation. What a gracious God He is!

As we have seen in the last phrase of **verse 10**, John refers to the “record” God has given of His Son. As we have seen in brief, I believe that record is the Word of God. As he did in **verse 10**, in **verse 11** John makes mention of the “record” once again. There he states “and this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life and this life is in his Son.” It seems to me, John is testifying to the fact that, to some degree, what he was writing and has now written was a part of the inspired Word of God! How amazing would it have been to understand that what he was writing was to be a part of the eternal Word of God?!

Now before we move on, did you catch what John said the “the record” was given for? He said it was given as a witness. He said it was given to let those of us who believe that Jesus was the Christ, know we are a present possessor of “eternal life and this life is in his Son.” With only a few words John does two amazing things. First, (once again) John refutes the false ideas and teachings of Gnosticism by stating Jesus Christ was, is, and always shall be the Son of God. Second, he establishes a fact about the assurance of salvation a person who has trusted Christ for salvation has in this life, in order to live confidently for Christ in this life. John let’s us know in plain terms that all who trust Christ have (again for emphasis) in the present, in this life, eternal life.

In keeping this great thought in mind, in **verse 12** John makes a statement which is both clear and concise. He states: “He that hath (which is present tense verbiage) the Son hath life (which is a reference to eternal life seeing Jesus is eternal): and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” That statement is so simple that even I can understand it!

There can be no justifiable doubt about the fact the Word of God teaches a believer has “eternal life” because that is the kind of life they receive when they receive Jesus as Savior. There is no doubt that the Bible clearly teaches the security of the believer. But, there is also no doubt that at the same time teaches the Bible teaches the insecurity of the make believer. Do you recall on a few occasions throughout this epistle, John saying something like “He that saith” or “If any say” or “If a man say...”? Man may say anything he wishes to, but we need to remember, just because man says something does not make it true. Men may think and say things like “No one in this life can know for sure they are saved and going to Heaven when they die” but that *is not what the Word of God says!*

According to the Word of God, God has given to us more than *a hope so salvation*. He has given unto us *a know so salvation* for which we all should be grateful for!

The subject of the security of the believer is, unfortunately, a controversial subject especially for those who will not allow the Scriptures to speak for themselves. It is my opinion the controversy about whether or not one can be saved one minute and lost the next, comes from a gross ignorance of the Word of God.

It is not the intention of this little Bible study to attempt to settle the question of whether or not one who trusts Christ as Savior can be saved one minute and then be lost the next. No, that is not the intention of this study although I **do not** believe that can happen. But it is the intention of this study to set forth what the Word of God clearly and repetitively states. And that is the fact that when a man, woman, boy, or girl sees themselves lost, repents of their sins, and by faith receives Christ as Savior, they become partakers of the life of Christ which is eternal life. In fact, according to **2 Peter 1:4** they become a “partaker of the divine nature.”

So, isn't it reasonable to conclude that since the life Christ has is eternal then those who receive Him by faith as Savior receive eternal life when they do? Once they receive Him who is eternal, then eternal life becomes a possession of theirs. In fact, in the Gospel according to John we find Jesus saying: “As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom though has sent.”(**John 17:2-3**)

You see, eternal life is not something we wait and hope for *after* we have lived our life on planet Earth. No, that is not what God's Word clearly teaches at all. That is

not His plan. Eternal life is something a person receives *when* they trust Christ as Savior in order to live the kind of life for Him He has called them to live while *in* this life.

Sad but true, many seem to fear the doctrine of the security of the believer because they have unbiblical thoughts about the doctrine. To be honest, that was my problem as a young Christian when I refused to believe the truth about this great doctrine! I did so out of ignorance and by simply accepting, without questioning the traditions I had been honestly, but errantly, taught. I thought then, as many wrongly believe today, the doctrine of the security of the believer gave those who believe that doctrine a license to sin. But that idea is not true at all!

In fact, that idea has no Biblical foundation on which to stand. In fact, the doctrine of the security of the believer teaches the opposite! The doctrine of the security of the believer teaches that the follower of Christ is to be holy, separated from the world, is a new creature in Christ, and that they are in the world but not of the world along with many other similar things.

Of the many Scriptures which teach the truth about the security of the believer, allow me to reference just one. The passage I refer to is **Titus 2:12**. There we learn the Christian is to be “denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, (and that) we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.” There is no license here to sin. In fact, this is the foundational truth on which the great doctrine of the security of the believer stands throughout the Word of God.

Now allow me to ask: where is the license to sin found in that passage or in any other passage in the entire Word of God? It does not exist! **Titus 2:12** is only one of the many verses of Scripture which teach a believer is to live a life separated unto God and from sin. Not a life of or in sin.

To repeat intentionally, let it be known the doctrine of the security of the believer *does not* give anyone a license to sin as some wrongly believe. But, *it does* give the believer the power to serve the Lord confidently in light of knowing they have been “accepted in the beloved” **Ephesians 1:6**. What this knowledge does is to liberate a believer so as they can serve God acceptably without fear of being rejected. What this knowledge does not do is to liberate a believer to live a life of sin.

**Romans 3:23** clearly declares: “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God:” That is an irrefutable fact. Sin is a part of life whether a man is saved or not. Even those who are saved *sin on occasion*, unfortunately, **BUT** they *do not make sin a life style!* When a man is a sinner he *runs to sin*. When a man is a saved he *runs from sin*. If a man makes sin a lifestyle, we need to remember what John said about those kinds of people. In **1 John 3:6** he says: “...whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him.” In **1 John 3:8** we read: “He that committeth sin is of the devil...” Both of those verses are plain enough for us all to understand. What he said there is pretty clear don’t you think!? Let us understand, when a believer does sin they will be quick to do what John has taught them to do early in this great epistle. (please review **1 John 1:5 - 2:2**)

I have meet, and probably you have meet, people who believe and say, “No one can know they are saved until they die and stand before God in judgment and have Him either consign them to Heaven or to Hell.” In fact, I am afraid that kind of thinking is far too common even among those who profess to be a Christian.

But, may I say, according to what I read, it seems John has written what he has written in **1 John 5** to assure the people of God that they are indeed the people of God. To assure them *in this life* they are in reality saved and bound for that placed called Heaven!

In order to bring this brief lesson to a close, we find **verse 13** testifying to us. Please pay attention to where John, by the leadership of the Holy Spirit places the emphasis in **verse 13**. He says: “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* (emphasis mine), and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.”

Please notice he did not say we cannot know for sure whether or not we are saved until we die. Or, all we can do in this life is live with uncertainty and simply hope we are saved without knowing for sure we are saved.

**NO, THAT’S NOT JOHN IS SAYING AT ALL!**

In fact he said matter of factly in **verse 13**: “*that ye (we) may know that (we) ye have (that is current possession in this life) eternal life.*” (emphasis mine) I don’t know how the Lord or John could make this truth any plainer than they have?!

The fact is, the word “know” in **verse 13** means absolute assurance. In other words, it is entirely possible to be saved and know it!

In **verse 13** we find one of those reasons or purposes for which the Apostle wrote what he has written. Actually, I believe we find two reasons in this verse.

The first reason or purpose we find is, as I just stated, to assure the believer they have eternal life by believing on “the name of the Son of God.” As you know, one of the key words in the Books written by John is “believe” or one of its cognate forms. In fact, in the Gospel that bears his name, he uses that word at least ninety nine times. In light of that fact, I believe it is quite clear what John’s reasons or purposes are here. His two reasons are, as has been stated, first of all to testify to the fact that by believing in Jesus Christ a person is saved and becomes a present possessor of eternal life.

The second reason or purpose as to why John wrote was to assure everyone (especially the Gnostics) Jesus the Christ of Nazareth truly was, without doubt, the only begotten “Son of God.” It means, He was, in truth, God incarnate or God manifest in the flesh. It means He was very God of very God and very man of very man. It means He was so much God it was as if He was not man. It means He was so much man it was as if He was not God. It means He was both divine and human. It means He was Jesus the Christ from the time of His conception in the womb of the virgin Mary to the time of His ascension back to the Father in the body He received at His birth. When He ascended, He took with Him the very nature of man He received when He was born of the virgin Mary. It is a fact that the Scripture teach “there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, *the man* (emphasis mine) Christ Jesus.” **1 Timothy 2:5!** It’s wonderful to know we have a man in glory representing us who understands.

Although we are soon to come to the end of this great epistle, we ought not to forget the stand John has taken and continues to take in this letter against the false teaching of the Gnostics. Remember, the Gnostics taught the Christ or the divine part of Jesus came upon Him at His baptism and departed from Him at the crucifixion. John declares, in undeniable terms, that Jesus Christ was—in truth—the Son of God, sent from God. I believe we can believe John’s testimony. After all, John told us he has seen Him, heard Him, touched Him, and he knew his testimony was true. I don’t know about you, but I believe I will believe John and the testimony he has given unto us by the inspiration of the Spirit.

God has been gracious in giving *to us* a witness of the things of Christ Jesus His Son such as He has in His Word. But, He has also been gracious enough to give us that personal, ever present and constantly abiding witness *in us*, who have believed on Christ as Savior. As you know, that witness is the Holy Spirit Himself and He is the Spirit of truth, as we have already learned, mentioned by John in **verse 6** of this chapter.

God knows the benefits of someone knowing without doubt the salvation they asked for and received by faith to be an ever present, always abiding reality. If you don't have that assurance, **it is yours by simply believing what the Word of God teaches instead of believing what man proposes.**

I thank God for the witness He has given to those who have trusted His Son as their Savior. I say, as did Paul in **2 Corinthians 9:15** "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift."

In our next study we will consider some truths about how to get our prayers heard and answered. We will also delve, to some degree, into a somewhat mysterious teaching about what John calls "a sin unto death."

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