

1 John 5:14-21
“Faithful assurances part 2”

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I. Intro

The 5th chapter of 1st John has shown that “our faith” is based upon “a single fact” that Jesus is God the Son and that trusting in Him alone comes with “four assurances” that when trusted continually by the believer will cause “four consequences” in our life:

- A. **THE FACT**: Vs. 6-10 **Jesus is God the Son**
- B. **The Consequences**: Vs. 11-21
 1. Vs. 11-13 Confidence in this truth will give us: **Assurance of “Eternal life”** which will produce the consequence of a **change in our destiny**
 2. Vs. 14-15 Confidence in this truth will give us an: **Assurance of “Answered prayer”** which will produce a consequence of a in **change our communication**.
 3. Vs. 16-19 Confidence in this truth will give us an: **Assurance of “Continued transformation.”** Which will produce the consequence of a **change in our direction**.
 4. Vs. 20-21 Confidence in this truth will give us an: **Assurance of the “Completion of our race.”** Which will produce the consequence of a **change in our confidence**.

When we last left our study we examined the first of these four assurances: The **Assurance of “Eternal life”**. There we took note that John emphasized, “*Four truths about our Eternal Life*” based upon Four Words that John uses in these verses.

- A. Vs. 11 **GIVEN**: We read that, “**God has given US eternal life**”: Eternal life is a gift that even before we are given the understanding of it, the reader can BEST understand it by knowing **Who gave it**. “Eternal Life” is qualified by the phrase “**and this life is in His Son**”. Furthermore, we see that **Eternal Life is not just a “Present” it is a present that is a “Person, Jesus Christ”!** The last thing I notice is the two-letter word “**US**”.
- B. Vs. 12 **HAS**: The second thing John reveals about “Eternal Life” is that it has two amazing features that are both explained by this one word HAS. This first quality of Eternal life is found in the “**Present tense**”, which describes the **enjoyment can START NOW and doesn’t have to wait until the future!** It is stated by John in the **negative so that the believer in Jesus as the Son of Good can KNOW NOW that they will enjoy eternal life and not have to wait AND SEE!**
- C. Vs. 13a **BELIEVE**: “**John writes this letter so that the reader can make sure that we are Children of God**. What God GIVES we can only obtain by FAITH that God Himself has bestowed that we can believe. Faith is the key to receiving, possessing, and knowing! To not believe is to make God a liar but to believe will lead to a greater and growing in God’s abundant grace.

D. Vs. 13b **KNOW**: The knowledge that is revered too here is “absolute” knowledge. Oh what “blessed assurance” of the blessings that God has granted us because our faith in the Son. All such failures in our life come from the lack of confidence in the unsearchable treasures that are already ours in Christ! We all have a continual need to know that we are and will always be long to God.

II. Vs. 14-15 Change our communication ... Answered prayer

Vs. 14-15 We can now take up the second of the four assurances”; that when trusted continually by the believer, will cause “four consequences” in our life. The first thing of note is the difference between the “absolute” knowledge in verse 13 and what it produces in the believer in verse 14 which is “confidence”. In the Greek the word in verse 14 “confidence” is “free and fearless confidence”. What makes this amazing is found when we consider both aspects of our communication: Ourselves and to Whom this free and fearless confidence in communication is with. It is then that the greatness of this gift is realized. We mortals struggle in our “communication” it is what often leads to our disagreements as we lack the “confidence” to speak our heart for fear of being rejected. Oh, but dear saint think of this great gift as we have been granted “confidence” to speak our heart to the ONLY ONE who fully knows our hearts!! The “assurance” is NOT first that God guarantees our request but that our “Heavenly Father” HEARS us!! The Greek word “ask” is to ask for something to be given. What is even more blessed is the phrase “anything according to His will”. This is NOT a condition but a PROMISE; that before we ask if we allow Him He will FIRST transform our request from what we THINK we need to what ONLY GOD KNOWS WE NEED! Thus, guaranteeing the promise of verse 15 “That whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.” That is the assurance in our communication that if we allow Him to rein in our hearts He will start with changing our heart bending it to His which

is always in our best interest and for His glory. Prayer NO LONGER needs to be in uncertainty if we first allow God to transform our hearts as we can pray in Confidence and assurance! Prayer in the heart of this kind of saint is a mighty instrument “*not for getting my will done in heaven, but for getting God’s will done on earth*”. The Apostle John reveals here that Prayer (*our communication with God*) is NOT overcoming God’s reluctance and instead is laying hold of God’s willingness! Prayer is God’s ordained way of communication to give His children WHAT they need. He ordains the “means” and guarantees the “end”. It is this communication that is the true “thermometer” of our relationship that keeps us in close contact with Him daily. It was writer Shakespeare that wrote, “*We, ignorant of ourselves, beg often for our own harms, which God denies us for our good, thus we find profit in our not receiving what we ask in prayers.*” *When we learn to ask what God wants we will always receive what He has!*

III. Vs. 16-19 Change in our direction... Continued transformation

Vs. 16-19 This third assurance comes with a difficult passage that we will need to address first so we can enjoy the gift that the apostle brings to his readers. First we will need to start our examination of this passage by ASKING the right questions as well as carefully noticing John’s words as it relates to the answers.

1. **First Question:** What is the sin that leads to death?
2. **Second question:** Why is it ineffective to pray for a person who has committed a sin that leads to death.

What we know based upon this from John’s words:

1. Vs. 16a Describes a Believers sin as John refers to this type of sin as “his brother” and furthermore describes it as “visible” as John says that we will “see” this. John says that praying for this kind of believers’ sin is effective as God will grant life for this person.
2. Vs.16b-17 Describes the ineffectiveness of prayer in the specific case when of a person who has sin leading to death and it is differentiated by the phrase: “*All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not leading to death*”. Sin by its definition causes separation and is against all that is right. But John is clear here that in a specific condition it is ill

reversible by prayer. The question is what is this specific condition?

3. Vs. 18 Seems to offer clarification that the person of verse 16 who is a believing brother “born of God” is NOT the person that is the specific case of verse 16b-17. Simply put the true believer is CAN NOT commit the sin that leads to death, but they can clearly commit sin that is unrighteousness that leads to separation from experiencing the benefits of our relationship with God.

The Apostle’s point in writing was to cause the reader to make certain that they had truly experienced the transformative encounter with the Living God through God the Son. As noted there were among the first century church that denied the divinity of Christ and had no relationship with Jesus of the Bible but instead one of their own imaginations. In Mark 3:28-29 we read Jesus words, ***“Assuredly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they may utter; but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness but is subject to eternal condemnation.”*** And it seems that this is what John is referring too here. This “Unpardonable sin” is die apart from receiving Christ. This is further brought out in the writer of Hebrews in 6:4-6 ***“For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame.”*** The specific person that the apostle John speaks of here that Jesus mentioned, and Hebrews further explained is the person who has experienced the revelation of the Holy Spirit with regards to the true identity of Jesus as not only being the Messiah but being the God the Son. This person problem is not ignorance of the revelation but rather rejection of the revelation and willful disobedience and prayer cannot reverse this as they already have all they need for faith and if continued in this hardened heart condition will lead to eternal separation from the truth!

So, what is the “assurance”? It is that even if true believer sins it need not be a permanent condition and is reversable by those of us praying for them. It is essentially what wrote about in his letter to the Philippians in 1:6 where we read: “***Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ***”. Satan, the world system our flesh cannot permanently disrupt the fellowship of the believer. God offers the believer an intercession from each of us if we notice a fellow believer astray from fellowship! Peter’s courage failed and His faith dimmed but it didn’t fail as the Lord prayed for him. We are in the Lord’s keeping and Jesus said to the Father in John 18:9 that “**Of those whom You gave Me I have lost none**”. We may wonder from time to time, but **we will NEVER BE LOST** as He will always find us and be faithful to bring us back to Himself.

IV. Vs. 20-21 Change in our confidence...Completion of our race

Vs. 20-21 The fourth and final assurance is NOT based upon mere intellectual agreement but proven transformative relational knowledge. The Christian life is NOT a theological THEROY but instead it is personal growing intimate relationship with God through the finished work of Jesus. Here the assurance is NOT that we have a hold of Him who alone is eternal life which is the point above but even greater is that our relationship is with HIM who will never let us God, never leave us or forsake us. As much as we long to be with Him, God is infinitely more desiring to be with us. He proved this while we were yet sinners but sending His only Son to make it possible. Every other pursuit is an empty idol that is lifeless and only in a relationship with God will we ever find what we have always longed for!