

February 18, 2018 - I John 5: 7-21 - “Confidence in Position, Pray, & Protection”

Introduction:

The Winter Olympics continue this week in South Korea and the young, untested United States team said it is brimming with confidence. They are one of the youngest American teams at the Winter Olympics, featuring four seventeen year-olds. The United States squad is full of confidence and expecting to be on the podium in Pyeongchang. Our women's team boasts four of the ten top skiers in the world. Gold medalist Mikaela Shiffrin of the United States is one and she has already won the gold for Alpine Skiing in the Ladies' Giant Slalom. With all of the confidence the US has exhibited in the 2018 Winter Olympic Games we have only 5 gold, 2 silver and 2 bronzes.

The difference in winning is often caused by the confidence factor. Confidence is a feeling or consciousness of one's powers or of reliance on one's circumstances... If you knew that in fifteen minutes you would have to stand in judgment before a Holy God would you be confident in your eternal destiny.

I Confidence in Position (5:7- 13; 20-21).

1. John returns to a theme he started with in the beginning of the letter: the real, historical foundation for our trust in Jesus Christ. In 1 John 1:1-3 the emphasis was on what was *seen* and *heard* and *looked upon* and *handled* – real stuff, real people, real things. Just like water and blood are real, so was the coming of the Son of God, Jesus Christ. He is the logos. A Greek philosopher named Heraclitus first used the term Logos around 600 B.C. to designate the divine reason or plan which coordinates a changing universe. In Colossians 1:16 we see why Jesus is called the Logos; he is God minister in creation and government of the universe, the cause of all the world's life both physical and ethical.

John continues: If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son (1 Jn 5:9). Witness is mar-too-ree'-ah; from the Greek meaning evidence given. We believe the witness of men all the time. For instance, do you believe George Washington was the first president of the United States? How do you know that? Have you ever seen him or heard his voice? No, if we can believe what we read in history books written by authors we don't know, we can certainly believe the Bible because it is the Word of God. Check out **Proverbs 30:5**.
The assurance of eternal life is based on the work of Jesus.

2. The Word of God (5:10-13) assures me I have eternal life. If a person will not believe the Bible, nothing has the power to convince them. We must believe the Bible because it alone tells us: **And this is the record that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son (1 Jn 5:11).**

The phrase ‘hath given to us eternal life’ is past tense and means we already have eternal life if we have accepted Jesus as Savior. That's why John writes: He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life (5:12).

Eternal life is in Jesus Christ because it only comes through a relationship with God through His Son. Our assurance of eternal life does not hinge on our emotions. God Word is proof.

3) In (1 Jn 5:13) I can know not might know. Sometimes I may not feel saved, but I am because of the promises of God's Word. One of the greatest promises that enables us to know we have eternal life is Romans 10:9. If you have done that, you have eternal life or God is a liar. The key that unlocks the door to eternal life is believing in Jesus Christ as God's Son and resting in that by faith. This is such an essential principles that John repeats it before closing in verse 20 and exhorts a final command.

C.S. Lewis once said, "The Problem of Prayer is we regard God as an airman regards his parachute; it's there for emergencies but he hopes he'll never have to use it"? Faith leads to confidence in prayer.

II Confidence in Pray 14, 15

1. So, a person can lose confidence in their praying. The fact that this is true can be seen in John's closing remarks to the brethren he address in this letter and us. Verse 15- He hears!

Sometimes we pray and don't receive the answers we want, or we feel like we get no response at all. We have done all we can do, we're walking in step with Him – but sometimes we will still pray for something and it will not turn out according to our request. When this happens, what is going on? How can we stay motivated to pray even when the response we seem to be getting is silence? Would you believe that Christians could lose confidence in prayer?

2. The apostle John wrote to restore the believer's confidence in prayer. The letter of 1 John is largely written to combat false teachings that undermined the faith of believers by saying that Jesus was not fully God or by teaching that Jesus was not really human. The result of these false prophets teaching false doctrine was that the joy and confidence of the believer's experience was being greatly distressed.

Now John wrote to restore their confidence in basic Christian certainties like prayer. He goes on and affirms that this assurance (the child-father relationship) gives us confidence in prayer. The word confidence means boldness or freedom of speech. No power can separate us from this. **Romans 8: 37-39.**

3. Is it in the will of God? John writes in verse 14 - How can we know we are praying in the will of God? We remembering God's will never contradict His Word. Praying according to his will reveals the purpose for prayer is not to get our will done in heaven but heaven's will done on earth. C. S. Lewis said, "Prayer doesn't change God; it changes me."

4. John makes certain that prayer is not a time for demanding what we want from God. Prayer is talking to God about what He wants. Note that John does not say "we SHALL have

what we ask,” but he writes we know that we have. This means the answer is immediate—the instant we ask. This doesn’t mean the answer will be immediately realized. We may not realize the answer for days, months, or years. God always answers our prayers in one of three ways: “yes,” “no,” or “wait.” The Bible contains one story after another of how God always answers prayer. In regard to our prayers we must remember God never gets in a hurry.

5. We need to focus on another element of prayer that of Intercession and since so much of what is left here in this text is John reaffirming confident in things we should know. I want to spend most the remaining time on intercessory v.16, 17 prayer: It is our duty to pray for one another, to intercede on their behalf. We often neglect this duty. This is what family does.

In the Jewish law and Old Testament there were specific sins punishable by death, though that is not the meaning here. There are several facts you must note about this “sin unto death” . **First** the article “a” is not present in the Greek text. So John was not meaning any one particular sin.

Second, the verb translated sin is present tense and means a continuous engaging in sin. In Greek it literally reads "continually sinning and does not refer to an isolated act of sin. Therefore, this verse may refer to the premature physical death of an unrepentant believer whose sin is premeditated, prolonged, and defiant of God's commands. Some modern interpreters fall back on the “unpardonable sin” that Jesus mentioned blasphemy against the Holy Spirit as the “sin unto death.” This does not fit one’s Greek NT but fit with one’s Systematic Theology.

In John’s community there were those falling away from the faith, returning to Judaism, apostatizing. Then, there were those who kept on sinning, whose lives were marked by false faith, disobedience to God’s commands and lack of love. Prayer for them might well be an exercise in futility. For example, some people in the church at Corinth habitually made the Lord’s Supper into a drunken party.

Their sin was a prolonged, premeditated mockery of the Lord’s Supper. **I Corinthians 11:30** - describe the result of their sin? Over the years, I have known of several who have committed what, I believe, could be a sin unto death. Time won’t allow for the story of Ananias and Sapphira.

When believers fall into sin, as Peter did when he denied the Lord, they need our prayers. We must re-commit ourselves to prayer for one-another.

III Confidence in Protection (5:18-19).

1. This verse basically means the Evil One can’t drag a believer into sin. Remember I John 4:4- **Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. 1 Cor. 10:13**

2. This is true in spite of the fact the whole world lieth in wickedness (1 Jn 5:19b). To confirm this truth, just look at the filth, vulgarity, and profanity on TV or listen to some of the music on the radio. Because the world lieth in wickedness and is under the influence of the Evil one. Jesus pray for us in John 17:15 to keep us from the evil one. Even though the world is under the control of the Evil One, he cannot harm us because of the promises of God and the prayers of Jesus. As Christians, we can be confident in prayers, we can be confident in protection and

1. Verses 18-20 use the phrase we know three times. Now John writes: **And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true (5:20a).** Jesus is God spelling Himself out in a language we can all understand. The most documented life in history is that of Jesus Christ because His life split history into B.C. and A.D. Each time you write the current year on a check, the number denotes that many years from His birth.

2. Jesus came to give us an understanding, that we may know him that is true. He came to give us the capacity to know God in a personal way.

Not only did Jesus come so we could know God through Him, but also to change our spiritual position. John puts it like this: **and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life (5:20b).**

Our spiritual position in Christ means we are part of the family of God because in him we have eternal life. Romans 8:1 **There is] therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.**

Conclusion:

John concludes this great epistle: Little children, keep yourselves from idols (5:21). Idols are not only made of stone and precious metals. Anything that reduces our devotion to God is an idol or pagan god. There are just two kinds of people in this world: true worshipers and true idolaters. They are not something that only existed in ancient cultures. An idol is anything we love more than God. It can be pleasure, possessions, popularity, positions, or whatever. Anything that draws you away from God is an idol. If God is not number one in your life, you serve some other god. That's why first of the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20:3 is so very important. God is a jealous God for our love.