

Life In The Son

1 John 5:11-13

Study #17

(Not entirely original with me)

INTRODUCTION:

Any person who believes in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord will repent of his/her sins and be forgiven. That person is indwelt by the Holy Spirit and then given something to do for the Lord. The Christian does not depend upon his/her works to either save him/her or keep him/her saved. One has his/her eternal life in Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ only. God gives eternal life as a gift to those who trust, believe in His Son.

I. GOD HAS GIVEN US ETERNAL LIFE (11a)

A. ETERNAL LIFE: A PRESENT POSSESSION, OR A FUTURE HOPE...?

1. John writes of “eternal life” as present possession...
 - a. “God has given us (not will give us) eternal life” - **1 Jn 5:11**
 - b. “He who has the Son has (not will have) eternal life” - **1 Jn 5:12**
 - c. “...that you may know that you have (not will have) eternal life”- **1 Jn 5:13**

2. Yet Paul wrote of “eternal life” as a future hope...
 - a. “who will render to each one according to his deeds: eternal life to those...” - **Ro 2:6-7**
 - b. “...you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life” - **Ro 6:22**
 - c. “in hope of eternal life...” - **Ti 1:2**

B. ETERNAL LIFE: BOTH A PRESENT POSSESSION AND A FUTURE HOPE...!

1. It is both, not one or the other

2. This is a case where the same term (eternal life) is used by different authors to describe different concepts
 - a. Paul normally uses the term to describe that which begins after the judgment...
 - 1) The same way Jesus uses it in **Mt 25:46**
 - 2) And again in **Jn 12:25**
 - b. Whereas John uses the term to describe the life we now have in Christ because of the fellowship we enjoy with the Father and the Son...
 - 1) Jesus defined “eternal life” as knowing the Father and His Son - **Jn 17:1-3**
 - 2) John defines it similarly in **1 Jn 5:20**

C. THE MEANING OF ETERNAL LIFE IN OUR TEXT...

1. John began his epistle by referring to Jesus as “that eternal life” - **1 Jn 1:2**

2. He ends his epistle by describing eternal life as knowing Him who is true and being in Him who is true (i.e., in Jesus) - **1 Jn 5:20**

3. This leads me to believe that John uses “eternal life” in the same way Jesus did in **Jn 17:3**
4. I.e., a quality of life that comes from having true fellowship with Deity...
 - a. Which begins upon our conversion from “death” to “life” - cf. **1 Jn 3:14-15**
 - b. Which comes from “knowing” God and Jesus (the term “knowing” suggesting a close and personal relationship, not a casual awareness)
 - c. Because God and Jesus are “eternal life” (cf. **1 Jn 1:2**), those in fellowship with them have life that is best described as “eternal” (in quality, though potentially in quantity)

(So the testimony of God is first this: He has given us “eternal life”, a quality of life based upon fellowship with Deity!)

II. ETERNAL LIFE IS IN HIS SON (11b,12)

A. HE WHO HAS THE SON HAS LIFE..

1. We saw where Jesus defined “eternal life” as knowing God and Himself - cf. **Jn 17:3**
2. Jesus also taught that He came that we might have “abundant life” - **Jn 10:10**
3. As confessed by Peter, only Jesus truly has “the words of eternal life” - **Jn 6:68**
4. Paul wrote that all spiritual blessings (of which eternal life is one) are found in Jesus - **Ep 1:3**

-- The conclusion should be fairly obvious: it is only in Jesus that eternal life can be found, and if we wish to have eternal life, we must be in Jesus!

B. HE WHO DOES NOT HAVE THE SON OF GOD DOES NOT HAVE LIFE...

1. This sounds rather exclusive, but no more so than Jesus’ own words in **Jn 14:6**
2. Peter also made it clear that salvation (life) is found only in Jesus - **Ac 4:12**

(Therefore, one who remains outside of Christ has no hope for eternal life (in either sense of the term))

[Of course, it is not the will of God that any perish (cf. **2 Pe 3:9; 1 Ti 2:3-4**). Therefore, through His Spirit He inspired John to write so we might know whether or not we have the Son. In other words...]

III. WE MAY KNOW THAT WE HAVE ETERNAL LIFE (13)

A. JOHN HAS WRITTEN THAT WE MIGHT KNOW...

1. That has been the purpose of this particular epistle
2. His desire is that we “know” we are saved, not just hope that we are...
 - a. “Now by this we know that we know Him...” - **1 Jn 2:3**
 - b. “By this we know that we are in Him.” - **1 Jn 2:5b**
 - c. “We know we have passed from death to life...” - **1 Jn 3:14a**
 - d. “And by this we know that we are of the truth...” - **1 Jn 3:19a**

- e. “And by this we know that He abides in us...” - **1 Jn 3:24b**
- f. “By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us...” - **1 Jn 4:13a**

3. Thus, throughout his epistle he has been giving us “benchmarks” by which we can know whether we have eternal life in us

B. WHEN DOES ONE “KNOW” THEY HAVE ETERNAL LIFE...?

1. When they keep the commandments of Jesus - **1 Jn 2:3-4**
2. When they keep His words - **1 Jn 2:5**
3. When they love the brethren - **1 Jn 3:14**
4. When they believe what the Spirit has revealed about such things - **1 Jn 3:24; 4:13**
5. When they confess Jesus to be the Son of God - **1 Jn 4:15**
6. When they believe that Jesus is the Christ - **1 Jn 5:1**

(Taken together, these “benchmarks” reveal that one truly “knows” the Lord, and thereby has “eternal life” - cf. **1 Jn 5:20**)

CONCLUSION:

1. John’s desire was that his readers would continue to believe in the name of the Son of God - **1 Jn 5:13c**
 - a. That is my desire also, and I pray that in some small way that you have been encouraged you to remain strong in your faith in Jesus Christ
 - b. If you do not yet believe, or your faith is weak, read these scriptures of John - **Jn 20:30-31**
2. Do you truly have “eternal life”?
 - a. Do you believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, who came in the flesh and died for our sins? - cf. **Jn 8:24**
 - b. Are you keeping the commands of Jesus?
 - Which we learn from His apostles is the means by which we receive Christ? - cf. **Ga 3:26-27**
 - c. Do you love the brethren? - cf. **Jn 13:34-35**

(Material from Mark A. Copeland)