

Apply The Word

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Message Info

Title:

Assurance in This Life

Speaker:

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Date:

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Scriptures:

1 John 5:13-21

Theme: Assurance of eternal life brings assurance in this life.

Introduction: In both his Gospel and this letter, John has similar focuses on life and faith. The Gospel was written with an evangelistic purpose: that people might come to believe in Jesus. This letter was written to provide assurance for those who already believe: we have life, in Christ, and we can and must be confident in it. And the life that we have is *eternal*—it will not end. Not only that, but the eternal life we've been given has already broken into this life here and now, even as we await its fulfillment at Jesus' return.

Here are 3 ways eternal life should affect us in this present age:

1. In prayer (14-16a)

The reality of the life we've been granted means that we should have full confidence before God when we pray. Our God hears us.

However, there is a rather large and important qualification in the text: he hears us if we ask anything *according to his will*... Our confidence in prayer comes as we pray in line with God's will.

The Lord knows what is best, he loves us, so to pray according to his will is to pray for the very best thing we can.

John also calls us to apply this powerful truth about prayer to the very practical matter of praying for our brothers and sisters in their sin.

2. In failure (16-19)

John speaks of different kinds of sins for which we might pray, and tells us that there are prayers "leading to death" for which we ought not to pray.

The best understanding of that phrase is that it speaks of someone whose life shows a pattern of denying Christ, a persistent rebellion against the Lord.

We all sin and fail in this life; yet even then we should have confidence. Jesus is our Savior, and his love brings us to the path of life again and again.

3. In knowledge (20-21)

"You are what you know" – we base our lives on what we know. But the reality is even deeper than that: our knowledge of God isn't just rational or theoretical. To know God is to have tasted his goodness to us in Christ.

Because we know the true God, John also calls us to keep ourselves from idols. It is so easy for us to pursue what we desire in faithless ways—we must return to God.

Questions:

1. Do your prayers reflect appropriate confidence in God?
2. How does the Lord's grace meet you in your failures?
3. How are you fighting idolatry in your life?