

Lesson 6

1 John 5:6 - 21

WHAT DO YOU KNOW FOR SURE?

Memory verse: "I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life." (1 John 5:13 NIV)

John's great emphasis has been on love, but he never wants anyone to believe he earns salvation by loving others. We are born of God when we put our trust on Jesus and on His saving work in our lives.

We also understand that John was not talking about a mere intellectual assent to Jesus being Messiah (as even the demons might have, as described in James 2:19). Instead, he means a trust in and reliance on Jesus as Messiah.

John makes it plain we must believe Jesus *is* the Christ. There are many, of a new-age sort of thinking, who believe Jesus *had* the "Christ-spirit" - as they claim also Confucius, Mohammed, Buddha and certain moderns did. But we would never say Jesus "has" the Christ - **Jesus is the Christ.**

His commandments are not burdensome when we really love God. When we love God, we will *want* to obey Him and please Him. When you love someone, it seems little trouble to go to a lot of difficulty to help or please that person. You enjoy doing it, though if you had to do it for an enemy, you would be complaining all the time. Just as the seven years of Jacob's service for Laban *seemed only a few days to him because of the love he had for her* (Genesis 29:18), so obeying God's commands does not seem a burden when we really love Him. An old proverb says, "Love feels no loads."

Since believing on Him is the key to being born of God (1 John 5:1), the key to victory is faith, not only an initial, "come-to-the-altar-and-get-saved" faith, but a consistently abiding faith, an ongoing reliance and trust upon Jesus Christ.

We learn from this epistle that the life of *abiding faith and trust* in Jesus Christ is the life that overcomes the pressures and temptations of the world.

"Nothing is certain but death and taxes." Benjamin Franklin wrote those words in 1789. Of course, a wise man like Franklin knew that many other things are also certain. The Christian also knows that there are many certainties. Of spiritual truth, Christians are not afraid to say, "We know!" In fact, the word know occurs thirty-nine times in John's brief letter, eight times in this closing chapter.

Man has a deep desire for certainty, and he will even dabble in the occult in his effort to find out something for sure. A businessman having dinner with his pastor said to him, "Do you see those offices across the street? In them sit some of the most influential business leaders in this town. Many of them used to come over here regularly to consult a fortune-teller. She isn't here anymore, but a few years ago you could count up the millions of dollars in this room as men waited to consult her."

The life that is real is built on the divine certainties that are found in Jesus Christ. The world may accuse the Christian of being proud and dogmatic, but this does not keep him from saying, "I know!"

In these closing verses of John's letter we can find certain Christian certainties on which we can build our lives with confidence.

Things to learn: 1) Jesus Is God and Eternal Life 2) God Answers Prayers 3) Real Practising Christians

Discussion questions:

1) What assurances from verses 6 to 13 affirm that eternal life is in Jesus who is God in the Person of the Son? (15 mins)

2) We know that God answers prayers from verses 14 to 15, but is there a special formula for prayers? (15 mins)

3) How can verses 15 to 21 encourage practising Christian today? (15 mins)