

Proof of Life: Knowing You Have Eternal Life
1 John 5:13-21

Introduction

- **V.13** is similar to **John 20:30-31** – This is the purpose statement of the letter of 1 John.
- **From *Religious Affections* by Jonathan Edwards:** *God made us so that the only way we can be confident of our salvation is by dying to ourselves, killing our selfish, self-centered natures. Self-examination can be an important part of the process, and we should not neglect to examine our own hearts -- and yet this sort of introspection alone will never give us the assurance we need. Self-examination is all well and good, but the time comes for action. The apostle Paul sought assurance this way by "forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, [pressing] toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus; ... if by any means [he] might attain unto the resurrection of the dead" (Phil 3:13-14, 11); "I therefore so run, not as uncertainly" (1 Cor. 9:26). His assurance of winning the prize come more from running than from considering, and the swiftness of his pace did more for his confidence than any self-examination, no matter how intense.*

Proof of Life: The Purpose for the Letter (v.13)

- A) These Things
 - a. Doctrinal Proofs
 - b. Relational Proofs
 - c. Moral Proofs
- B) To Believers
 - a. In the Name
 - b. Of the Son of God
- C) That You May Know
 - a. Resting knowledge
 - b. Feeling knowledge
 - c. Possessing knowledge (that eternal life is yours)

Proof of Life: Our Confidence through Prayer (vv.14-17)

- A) Confidence is NOT relative, it is TOWARD God (**v.14a**)
 - a. Why is this the focus?
 - b. What else REALLY matters?
 - c. Our assurance is only concerned with knowing and being known by God – there is no other object of our praying
- B) Confident to Ask (**v.14b**)
 - a. Conditional Confidence - "anything"
 - b. Provisional Confidence – "according to his will"
- C) Confidence in God's Will (**v.14c**)
 - a. **Matt.6:10**
 - b. **Luke 22:41-44**
 - c. **C.S. Lewis**, "If God had granted all the silly prayers I've made in my life, where would I be now?" (**Letters To Malcolm**)
 - d. **John Calvin**, "But some one will say, Does he not know without a monitor both what our difficulties are, and what is meet for our interest, so that it seems in some measure superfluous to solicit him by our prayers, as if he were winking, or even sleeping, until aroused by the sound of our voice? Those who argue thus attend not to the end for which the Lord taught us to pray. It was not so much for his sake as for ours. He wills indeed, as is just, that due honour be paid him by acknowledging that all which men desire or feel to be useful, and pray to obtain, is derived from him." (**Institutes**)
 - e. **Benny Hinn**, "...never, ever, ever go to the Lord and say, 'If it be thy will' Don't allow such faith-destroying words to be spoken from your mouth. When you pray 'if it be your will, Lord,' faith will be destroyed. Doubt will billow up and flood your being. Be on guard against words like this which will rob you of your faith and drag you down in despair." (**Rise And Be Healed**)
- D) Confidence in Being Heard (**v.14d**)
 - a. HE hears US!
 - b. **Rom.8:26-27**

- E) Confidence in Being Answered (vv.15-17)
 - a. The result of the confidence of His will prayed
 - b. A Specific Example (Biblical community @ its best?)

Proof of Life: A Distinct Identity (vv.18-21)

- A) We Know...Believers will have victory of sin (v.18)
 - a. This is not so much a statement of will-power as it is regeneration / new nature (Christ's righteous nature)
 - b. Unbroken patterns of sin reveal lostness
 - c. This exposes the lies of Satan's control and the Believer's victory of his works!
- B) We Know...Believers live their "sonship" (v.19)
 - a. Out of assurance
 - b. Distinct from the World
 - c. Foreigners & aliens in virtually every way
 - d. No mix – leads to understanding v.21
- C) We Know...Believers abide as Worshipers (v.20)
 - a. Made worshipers by God's gift of Himself in Christ
 - b. Being from Him is being in Him for Him
- D) The not-so-obscure warning against Idolatry (v.21)
 - a. All sin is idolatry – an issue of treasure, value, worship
 - b. All obedience is worship
 - c. Our assurance rests in an overtly God-centered pursuit
 - d. To put it in the positive, **Richard Baxter** states, *"Every soul that hath a title to this rest places his chief happiness in God. This rest consists in the full and glorious enjoyment of God. He that makes not God his chief good and ultimate end, is in heart a pagan and a vile idolater. Let me ask, then, dost thou truly account it thy chief happiness to enjoy the Lord in glory, or dost thou not? Canst thou say, 'The Lord is my portion? Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee?'"*

APPLICATION

- A) Are you certain that you are a child of God?
 - a. Do you pass the doctrinal, relational and moral tests?
 - b. Is your heart bent to see God's will done and do you find prayers answered where you take joy in God's will being done?
 - c. Do you pray for those in the church who are bound by sin?
 - d. Are you keeping yourselves from idols?
- B) If you are uncertain or perhaps you know you're not a Child...
 - a. Acknowledge that God alone is holy.
 - b. That you are a sinner.
 - c. Confess that Jesus is the only Savior by whom any person could possibly be saved. That He is both God and man.
 - d. Admit your need for Him (confess your idolatry). Turn from the lies of Satan (toward self-indulgence of every kind) and turn toward Christ (and His church) to follow him with others who are striving for the same pursuit in Christ.