

I John 5:13–21

I John 5:13 These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

To preach Christ and make Him known is to preach the precious gift of spiritual regeneration. It is to reveal that God's eternal life can be found in the One sent to declare Him to the world. There is but one entrance into heaven, and it is through the Son of God,¹ Who now sits in heaven.² There should be no guesswork in determining one's salvation, as both God's Word and God's Spirit will confirm its possession. Sincerely believing in Jesus Christ,³ obeying His words,⁴ and loving the brethren⁵ produces confidence that one is born of God, and shares spiritual relationship with

Him. While religion provides no real certainty of these truths, genuine belief in the Savior does.

And that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God. The second part of this verse, which appears at first as a duplication of thought, is actually just an exhortation to continue in the faith. It is not enough to merely believe upon Jesus Christ for a brief period of time, which offers no sure hope of gaining the spiritual life offered through Him. True faith is enduring; it is not short-term, for a time, or temporary. The mere profession of piety will save no one.⁶ Thus, continued belief in the Son of God and subjection to Him must extend until this earthly life is over, or we are received into heaven by Him.⁷ Practically, faith produces faithfulness, which is essential to receiving from God all that He

1 Acts 4:12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

2 Mark 16:19 So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.

I Pet. 3:22 Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.

3 John 11:25 Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

John 3:36a He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life:

John 6:40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

4 I John 2:3 And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.

John 14:23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

John 8:31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;

5 John 13:35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

I John 2:10 He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.

I John 3:14 We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.

6 Matt. 7:21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

John 8:41 Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God.

7 I Thess. 4:16–17 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: ¹⁷Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

has promised. *That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises* (Heb. 6:12). When any lack following God's will for their lives, this demonstrates their lack of true spiritual regeneration. *From that time many of [Jesus'] disciples went back, and walked no more with him* (John 6:66).

(*Barnes' Notes on the Bible*, John 6:66) *Many of his disciples*—Many who had followed him professedly as his disciples and as desirous of learning of him. See the notes at John 6:60.⁸

Went back—Turned away from him and left him. From this we may learn,

1. Not to wonder at the apostasy of many who profess to be followers of Christ. Many are induced to become his professed followers by the prospect of some temporal benefit, or under some public excitement, as these were; and when that temporal benefit is not obtained, or that excitement is over, they fall away.

2. Many may be expected to be offended by the doctrines of the gospel. Having no spirituality of mind, and really understanding nothing of the gospel, they may be expected to take offence and turn back.

To truly believe in the Son of God, faithfulness to Him must continue throughout our entire life. All departure and falling away from the Savior, prior to this, has perilous and eternal consequences. *For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame* (Heb. 6:4–6).

⁸ John 6:60 *Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?*

⁹ II Tim. 4:10 *For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.*

(*Barnes' Notes on the Bible*, Heb. 6:6) Such a statement might be one of the most effectual means of preserving from apostasy. To state that a fall from a precipice would cause certain death, would be one of the most certain means of preserving one from falling; to affirm that arsenic would be certainly fatal, is one of the most effectual means of preventing its being taken; to know that fire certainly destroys, is one of the most sure checks from the danger. Thousands have been preserved from going over the Falls of Niagara by knowing that there would be no possibility of escape; and so effectual has been this knowledge that it has preserved all from such a catastrophe, except the very few who have gone over by accident. So in religion. The knowledge that apostasy would be fatal, and there could be no hope of being of the danger than all the other means that could be used. If a man believed that it would be an easy matter to be restored again should he apostatize, he would feel little solicitude in regard to it; and it has occurred in fact, that they who suppose that this may occur, have manifested little of the care to walk in the paths of strict religion, which should have been evinced.

The Christian's call requires faithfulness until the end. *But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved* (Matt. 24:13). Once the Christian journey begins, it cannot be departed from. To do so endangers the promise of eternal life itself. To even begin looking back is dangerous; actually turning back is spiritually fatal.⁹ *And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God* (Luke 9:62).

(*Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary*, Luke 9:62) *No man, &c.*—As ploughing requires an eye intent on the furrow to be made, and is marred the instant one turns about, so will they come short of salvation who prosecute the work of God with a distracted atten-

tion, a divided heart. Though the reference seems chiefly to ministers, the application is general. The expression “looking back” has a manifest reference to “Lot’s wife” (Ge 19:26; ¹⁰ and see on [1621] Lu 17:32¹¹). It is not actual return to the world, but a reluctance to break with it. (Also see on [1622] Mt 8:21.¹²)

I John 5:14 And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us:

One way to encourage faith in God is to focus not on the petition, but rather on the Lord Who has the power to grant it. Understandably, no faith can really be developed by looking at the obstacle, and consequently, not God’s ability to help us to overcome it. This was the spies’ sin, when they returned from searching the promised land and gave an evil report of what they had seen.¹³ Thus when praying for deliverance, we should trust in God’s ability to deliver and not be consumed with our own natural incapacities. Spiritual confidence in God is what characterized Abraham’s faith, and it should characterize ours as well.¹⁴ *And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred*

years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah’s womb (Rom. 4:19).

(Barnes’ Notes on the Bible, Rom. 4:19) *He considered not*—He did not regard the fact that his body was now dead, as any obstacle to the fulfillment of the promise. He did not suffer that fact to influence him, or to produce any doubt about the fulfillment. Faith looks to the strength of God, not to second causes, or to difficulties that may appear formidable to man.

It is not confidence in self that gives hope of answered prayer,¹⁵ but trust and confidence in the One we are praying to.¹⁶ For this reason men should not look on their own fleshly inadequacies, shortcomings, and incapacities, but rather trust in the Lord, Who has none. *Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me?* (Jer. 32:27).

I John 5:15 And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.

Expectant prayer is the most effective prayer. This is observed in the lame man at the gate Beautiful;¹⁷ the woman who

10 Gen. 19:26 *But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.*

11 Luke 17:32 *Remember Lot’s wife.*

12 Matt. 8:21 *And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.*

13 Num. 13:25–29 *And they returned from searching of the land after forty days. ²⁶And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh; and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and shewed them the fruit of the land. ²⁷And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it. ²⁸Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there. ²⁹The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south: and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains: and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan.*

14 Rom. 4:19–22 *And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah’s womb: ²⁰He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; ²¹And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. ²²And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.*

15 Prov. 28:26 *He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered.*

16 Prov. 3:5 *Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.*

17 Acts 3:2–8 *And a certain man lame from his mother’s womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple; ³Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms. ⁴And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us. ⁵And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them. ⁶Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. ⁷And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle*

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came to touch the hem of Jesus' garment expecting healing;¹⁸ and the centurion who sought for Jesus to speak only a word in order that his servant might be healed.¹⁹ This is again why men's eyes should be solely on the Lord, similar to when Peter's eyes were focused on Jesus when he walked on the water,²⁰ lest their attention become distracted, also like Peter, by observing the storm, and dependent faith in God is lost.

(Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary, I John 5:15) Not one of our past prayers offered in faith, according to His will, is lost. Like Hannah,²¹ we can rejoice over them as granted even before the event; and can recognize the event when it comes to pass, as not from chance, but obtained by our past prayers. Compare also Jehoshaphat's believing confidence in the issue of his prayers, so much so that he appointed singers to praise the Lord beforehand.²²

bones received strength. ⁸And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God.

18 Matt. 9:20-22 And, behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him, and touched the hem of his garment: ²¹For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole. ²²But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour.

19 Matt. 8:5-13 And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, ⁶And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. ⁷And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. ⁸The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. ⁹For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. ¹⁰When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. ¹¹And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. ¹²But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ¹³And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour.

20 Matt. 14:22-32 And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away. ²³And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone. ²⁴But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary. ²⁵And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea. ²⁶And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear. ²⁷But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. ²⁸And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. ²⁹And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. ³⁰But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. ³¹And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? ³²And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased.

21 I Sam. 1:9-17 So Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh, and after they had drunk. Now Eli the priest sat upon a seat by a post of the temple of the LORD. ¹⁰And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore. ¹¹And she vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head. ¹²And it came to pass, as she continued praying before the LORD, that Eli marked her mouth. ¹³Now Hannah, she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard: therefore Eli thought she had been drunken. ¹⁴And Eli said unto her, How long wilt thou be drunken? put away thy wine from thee. ¹⁵And Hannah answered and said, No, my lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the LORD. ¹⁶Count not thine handmaid for a daughter of Belial: for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief have I spoken hitherto. ¹⁷Then Eli answered and said, Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him. ²² II Chrn. 20:5-22 And Jehoshaphat stood in the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the LORD, before the new court, ⁶And said, O LORD God of our fathers, art not thou God in heaven? and rulest not thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? and in thine hand is there not power and might, so that none is able to withstand thee? ⁷Art not thou our God, who didst drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Israel, and gavest it to the seed of Abraham thy friend for ever? ⁸And they dwell therein, and have built thee a sanctuary therein for thy name, saying, ⁹If, when evil cometh upon us, as the sword, judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we stand before this house, and in thy presence, (for thy name is in this

When a man spiritually perceives that God has heard him,²³ he should expect, when his request is according to divine will, to receive what has been asked.²⁴ The

house,) and cry unto thee in our affliction, then thou wilt hear and help.¹⁰ And now, behold, the children of Ammon and Moab and mount Seir, whom thou wouldest not let Israel invade, when they came out of the land of Egypt, but they turned from them, and destroyed them not;¹¹ Behold, I say, how they reward us, to come to cast us out of thy possession, which thou hast given us to inherit.¹² O our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee.¹³ And all Judah stood before the LORD, with their little ones, their wives, and their children.¹⁴ Then upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, came the Spirit of the LORD in the midst of the congregation;¹⁵ And he said, Hearken ye, all Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou king Jehoshaphat, Thus saith the LORD unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's.¹⁶ To morrow go ye down against them: behold, they come up by the cliff of Ziz; and ye shall find them at the end of the brook, before the wilderness of Jeruel.¹⁷ Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; to morrow go out against them: for the LORD will be with you.¹⁸ And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground: and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell before the LORD, worshipping the LORD.¹⁹ And the Levites, of the children of the Kohathites, and of the children of the Korhites, stood up to praise the LORD God of Israel with a loud voice on high.²⁰ And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa: and as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper.²¹ And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed singers unto the LORD, and that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say, Praise the LORD; for his mercy endureth for ever.²² And when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir, which were come against Judah; and they were smitten.

23 Ps. 34:4 I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.

Ps. 34:6 This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.

Ps. 3:4 I cried unto the LORD with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill. Selah.

24 Abraham and Sarah—Gen. 17:15–16 And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be.¹⁶ And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her. Gen. 21:1–2 And the LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did unto Sarah as he had spoken.² For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him.

Joshua—Josh. 10:11–14 And it came to pass, as they fled from before Israel, and were in the going down to Bethhoron, that the LORD cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died: they were more which died with hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword.¹² Then spake Joshua to the LORD in the day when the LORD delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon.¹³ And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day.¹⁴ And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the LORD hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the LORD fought for Israel.

Hannah—I Sam. 1:1–2, 6, 10–11, 19–20 Now there was a certain man of Ramathaimzophim, of mount Ephraim, and his name was Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephrathite:² And he had two wives; the name of the one was Hannah, and the name of the other Peninnah: and Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children.⁶ And her adversary also provoked her sore, for to make her fret, because the LORD had shut up her womb.¹⁰ And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore.¹¹ And she vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head.¹⁹ And they rose up in the morning early, and worshipped before the LORD, and returned, and came to their house to Ramah: and Elkanah knew Hannah his wife; and the LORD remembered her.²⁰ Wherefore it came to pass, when the time was come about after Hannah had conceived, that she bare a son, and called his name Samuel, saying, Because I have asked him of the LORD.

Elijah—I Kgs. 17:21–22 And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again.²² And the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived.

Hezekiah—II Kgs. 20:1–6 In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live.² Then he turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the LORD, saying,³ I beseech thee, O LORD,

only way also that believers may experience the powerful effects and wonderful results of prayer is by praying.²⁵ For God cannot prove Himself until men believe that God is, and that the Lord will justly reward those who diligently seek Him.²⁶ When prayer is offered with expectant faith, God can reveal His supernatural spiritual ability to do exceedingly above all that is asked and/or thought. Understandably, it is not God's power that falls short in times of need, but His people's faith, which cannot perceive that what is impossible with man, is entirely and absolutely possible with God.²⁷ Ultimately, whatever any can perceive, God is able to do exceedingly abundantly more than this. Now unto [God] that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us (Eph. 3:20).

(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, Eph. 3:20) That is able to do—see the notes, Romans 16:25.²⁸

remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore.⁴ And it came to pass, afore Isaiah was gone out into the middle court, that the word of the LORD came to him, saying,⁵ Turn again, and tell Hezekiah the captain of my people, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the LORD.⁶ And I will add unto thy days fifteen years; and I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this city for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.

Jabez—I Chrn. 4:9–10 And Jabez was more honourable than his brethren: and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, Because I bare him with sorrow.¹⁰ And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested. Jonah—Jnh. 2:1–2, 10 Then Jonah prayed unto the LORD his God out of the fish's belly,² And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice.¹⁰ And the LORD spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land.

25 Jer. 29:12 Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. Phil. 4:6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

26 Heb. 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

27 Luke 18:27 And he said, The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.

28 Rom. 16:25 Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,

29 I Thess. 3:10 Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?

I Thess. 5:13 And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves.

30 I Cor. 2:9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

31 Acts 8:15 Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: Acts 12:5 Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.

Exceeding abundantly—The compound word used here occurs only in this place, and in 1 Thessalonians 3:10; 1 Thessalonians 5:13.²⁹ It means, to an extent which we cannot express.

Above all that we ask or think—More than all that we can desire in our prayers; more than all that we can conceive; see the notes on 1 Corinthians 2:9.³⁰

According to the power that worketh in us—The exertion of that same power can accomplish for us more than we can now conceive.

I John 5:16 If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.

Praying for other Christians in need in the body of Christ is as essential as praying for our own needs.³¹ If we love our

brothers as ourselves, we will seek God's help for them.

Though there is a *sin which is not unto death*, there is undoubtedly one that is. *There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.* In all of life there are natural laws that govern points of no return. The same is true concerning spiritual laws, when men progress further in sin than where God's forgiveness will follow. An example of this can be observed in the physical realm, if a man jumped off an exceedingly high and lofty cliff but then, in the middle of the fall, abruptly changed his mind, yet nothing could alter the fatal result. In some things, and especially so in regard to certain sin, there exists an event horizon.³² Once this has been passed, there is no chance of reversing the choice that has been made, nor to avoid the inevitable repercussions that must come because of it. Sin against the Holy Spirit is such a fateful error as this: an error for which neither repentance nor prayer can change God's judgment. *Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men* (Matt. 12:31). If any passage of Scripture should alarm men to the danger of aligning themselves with the devil and carrying his words of blasphemy against the work of the Holy Spirit, it is this one. If this sin is committed, no room for forgiveness remains, and not even prayers of faith can alter God's sentence. No sin is so great as proclaiming evil the work of God. To proceed this far in sin goes

beyond even the manifold grace of God. To align oneself with the devil is to carry out his malicious and treacherous aims and speak evil of the Lord's work. The consequence of this devilish act is none other than eternal damnation.

(Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers, Matt. 12:31) The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. — ... The Pharisees were warned against a sin to which they were drawing perilously near. To condemn the Christ as a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber, as breaking the Sabbath, or blaspheming when He said, "Thy sins be forgiven thee," was to speak a word against the Son of Man. These offences might be sins of ignorance, not implying more than narrowness and prejudice. But to see a man delivered from the power of Satan unto God, to watch the work of the Spirit of God, and then to ascribe that work to the power of evil, this was to be out of sympathy with goodness and mercy altogether. In such a character there was no opening for repentance, and therefore none for forgiveness. The capacity for goodness in any form was destroyed by this kind of antagonism. The human nature in that extremest debasement has identified itself with the devil nature, and must share its doom.

I John 5:17 All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death.

When men do not adhere to the commandments given by either God's Word or God's Spirit, it is sin; however, this does not imply that all sin is unpardonable and must end in death. God's nature is to forgive, so that if a man repents of his sin, the Lord's grace will prove itself greater than his transgression.³³ Nowhere also is God's

Phil. 1:19 For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

³² "the surface of a black hole: the boundary of a black hole beyond which nothing can escape from within it" "Event horizon." *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*, Merriam-Webster, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/event%20horizon>. Accessed 12 Apr. 2023.

³³ *Isa. 43:25 I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.*

Heb. 8:12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.

love manifested more than when He forgives those who have broken His laws and transgressed His commandments. Ultimately, pity on the sinner is one of the greatest expressions of divine love that is extended toward him. Vast amounts of sin have been forgiven through repentance,³⁴ and the penalty for sin avoided³⁵ because of the generosity of God's nature. Just as man's fallen nature compels him to sin against God's laws, God's loving nature allows for forgiveness for this disobedience. The gospel of Christ is undoubtedly a gospel of divine grace wherein men, though unworthy of pardon, are still, because of heavenly mercy, granted it. *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness* (I John 1:9).

I John 5:18 We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is be-

gotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.

The truth is non-debatable that any true Christian cannot remain living in sin, nor will he return back to it once born of God.³⁶ God's very own nature imparted to him prohibits this.³⁷ Thus, if a man claims he can remain in sin and live as he always has and still be saved, then you can be sure he has never received true spiritual regeneration.³⁸ Continuing in sin, or refusing to leave it, only proves that men have never been saved by Christ, since it is the children of wrath,³⁹ and not the children of promise, who foolishly believe the holiness of heaven and the uncleanness of sin can be joined. Yet no man can truly enter heaven without being born of God,⁴⁰ and all those truly born of Him will depart from serving their carnal nature, which consists of nothing but sin.

Mic. 7:19 He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.

Ps. 103:2-3 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: ³Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;

34 II Sam. 12:13 And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.

Luke 15:17-20 And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! ¹⁸I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, ¹⁹And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. ²⁰And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

Ps. 32:5 I acknowledge my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.

35 Ezek. 18:20 The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.

Rom. 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

36 I John 3:9 Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

37 I John 2:29 If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him.

I John 3:6 Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him.

38 II Cor. 5:17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Ezek. 36:26-27 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. ²⁷And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

39 Eph. 2:3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

40 John 3:3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

John 3:7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

(*Barnes' Notes on the Bible*, I John 5:18) *We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not*—Is not habitually and characteristically a sinner; does not ultimately and finally sin and perish; cannot, therefore, commit the unpardonable sin. Though he may fall into sin, and grieve his brethren, yet we are never to cease to pray for a true Christian: we are never to feel that he has committed the sin which has never forgiveness, and that he has thrown himself beyond the reach of our prayers. This passage, in its connection, is a full proof that a true Christian “will” never commit the unpardonable sin, and, therefore, is a proof that he will never fall from grace. Compare the notes at Hebrews 6:4–8; Hebrews 10:26.⁴¹

But he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not. Adding to the wonderful truth

that the new birth transforms the human heart is that God's only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, preserves, protects, and keeps safe⁴² those whom God has given Him⁴³ and made to become part of His mystical body.⁴⁴

(*Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers*, I John 5:18) *But he that is begotten of God keepeth himself.*—Rather, he that is begotten of God keepeth him: that is, the Son of God preserves him. (Comp. John 6:39; John 10:28; John 17:12; John 17:15.)⁴⁵

It is Christ's blood that saves the Christian, and it is Christ's power that preserves and keeps unholy and deceptive spirits from exerting the needed spiritual influence to lure him back to a life of sin and death.

41 Heb. 6:4–8 *For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, ⁵And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, ⁶If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. ⁷For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: ⁸But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.* Heb. 10:26 *For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,*

42 John 10:28–29 *And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. ²⁹My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.*

I Thess. 5:23–24 *And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.*

II Thess. 3:3 *But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.*

43 John 6:37 *All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.* John 17:6 *I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.*

John 17:9 *I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.* John 17:11 *And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.*

44 Rom. 12:5 *So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.*

I Cor. 12:12–13 *For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. ¹³For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.*

I Cor. 12:27 *Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.*

Eph. 5:30 *For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.*

45 John 6:39 *And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.*

John 10:28 *And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.*

John 17:12 *While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.*

John 17:15 *I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.*

(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, I John 5:18) *And that wicked one toucheth him not*—The great enemy of all good is repelled in his assaults, and he is kept from falling into his snares.

(Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary, I John 5:18) *that wicked one toucheth him not*—so as to hurt him. In so far as he realizes his regeneration-life, the prince of this world hath nothing in him to fasten his deadly temptations on, as in Christ's own case. His divine regeneration has severed once for all his connection with the prince of this world.

Where habitual sin is, God is not. Where sin is preferred more than faith, the Holy Spirit's presence cannot be.⁴⁶ This undoubtedly includes every willful sinner's heart.⁴⁷

True believers in Jesus Christ have been made anew.⁴⁸ They have, through the ministry of the Son of God, been given a holy Spirit, which convicts them of sin⁴⁹ and

will not allow their heart to continue in it.⁵⁰ Where the Spirit of Christ truly is, the desire to continue in sin cannot exist. Hence, he who is truly born of God *sinneth not*; he cannot, simply because Christ's new nature that has been imparted to him is far greater than the previous sinful nature received from Adam.⁵¹ Ultimately the holy, spiritual genetics of heaven are far greater than the sinful, natural genetics passed on from Adam.

Because of their relationship with the Son of God, those saved are made completely new creatures. *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new* (II Cor. 5:17). This spiritual transformation⁵² is similar to when God took from the Spirit upon Moses and gave it to the seventy elders of Israel.⁵³ But now God has taken the Spirit of His Son, and anointed those saved by Christ, so that they might share in the same spiritual nature⁵⁴ as their Savior.

46 I John 1:10 *If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.*
I John 2:4 *He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.*

I John 3:6 *Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him.*
47 Jer. 18:12 *And they said, There is no hope: but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart.*

Jer. 7:24 *But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in the counsels and in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward, and not forward.*

Heb. 3:12 *Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.*

48 Col. 3:10 *And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:*

Rom. 6:4 *Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*

49 John 16:8 *And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:*

50 I John 3:9 *Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.*

I John 3:6 *Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him.*

51 Rom. 5:12 *Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:*

52 I Pet. 1:23 *Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.*

53 Num. 11:25 *And the LORD came down in a cloud, and spake unto him, and took of the spirit that was upon him, and gave it unto the seventy elders: and it came to pass, that, when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, and did not cease.*

54 I John 2:20 *But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.*

I John 2:27 *But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.*

I John 5:19–20 *And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.*

²⁰ *And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.*

These verses reveal the three spiritual realities that every child of God will be made to know through the revelation given to him by the Son of God:

1. That God is Jesus Christ's Father, and Jesus Christ is God's Son.
2. That the whole world *lieth in wickedness*.
3. That he who is saved is *in Him that is true*, even His Son, Jesus Christ.

I John 5:21 *Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.*

These last words of the apostle seem to be a digression, yet the danger of unintended idolatry remains, even for those born of God. Idolatry can occur when personal pursuits, worldly pleasures, carnal desires, and the cares of this world wrongly assume the place in the believer's heart reserved solely for God and His Christ. For this reason Christians should take great care and regularly inspect their own hearts to ensure that nothing assumes the rightful place reserved solely for the Savior.

(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, I John 5:21) (1) Those to whom he [the apostle] wrote were surrounded by idolaters, and there was danger that they might fall into the prevailing sin, or in some way so act as to be understood to lend their sanction to idolatry.

(2) in a world full of alluring objects, there was danger then, as there is at all times, that the affections should be fixed on other objects than the supreme God, and that what is due to him should be withheld.

There is no middle ground for true Christians to balance love for God and love for the world. To love what the flesh desires, and not what the Holy Spirit wills, only reveals the absence of true salvation. Consequently, if any desire to be saved, then sincere, deep, and genuine love for God must arise above every other carnal and worldly affection in the heart.⁵⁵ Idolatry is the foundation of all unrighteousness, and no man who lives in it will inherit everlasting life.⁵⁶ Many also have deceived themselves into believing that they may continue in sin, pursue its carnal pleasures, and still enter heaven. This is not the truth of God's Word, nor what the apostle John personally heard and was taught by Jesus Christ. If any believe otherwise, they have entered into conflict with the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and shall as a result, forfeit the salvation offered through Him. *This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him [Him] is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth* (I John 1:5–6).

⁵⁵ Jude 21 *Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. Deut. 6:5 And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.*

Ps. 31:23 *O love the LORD, all ye his saints: for the LORD preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer.*

II Thess. 3:5 *And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.*

⁵⁶ I Cor. 6:9–10 *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, ¹⁰nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.*

