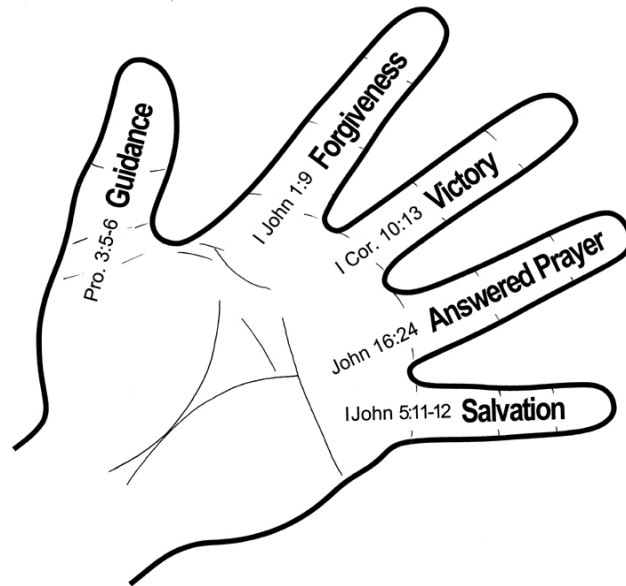


# Beginning with Christ

*LeRoy Eims*



## Assurance of Salvation - I John 5:11-12

“And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life” (I John 5:11-12).

When the Apostle John speaks of eternal life, he has something in mind that is completely different from the mere idea of existence after death. Many religions teach that life goes on after it has ended on this earth. It is true that our soul will live on. When God breathed into man the breath of life, man became a living soul. God breathed eternity into his life. Unlike the animals, our life will go on.

However, the question at hand is this: In what way will it go on? In a state of eternal life, or eternal death? That is the issue. What then, is eternal death? John himself tells us. Let me quote from the New International Version of the New Testament: “But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters, and all liars - their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death” (Revelation 21:8).

Eternal life is just the opposite: “Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior, Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel” (II Timothy 1:9-10).

What a contrast! An eternity of fellowship with God, or an eternity separated from Him. When John says that eternal life is a gift of God in Jesus Christ, he is making a tremendous statement. It cannot be earned, we will never merit it or deserve it, but it can be ours in Christ.

What then does the Apostle mean when he says, “He that hath the son?” Who is he talking about? How is that possible?

Quite simply, he is referring to all those who by faith have the Son of God, by His blessed Holy Spirit, dwelling in their hearts. The conditions are simple. Paul speaks of it when he said he had spent his life: “Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ” (Acts 20:21).

Sin is leading you further and further from God in a state of endless separation. God calls upon you to turn to Him, to leave the path of death and darkness, and walk in the light of love, grace and mercy. God commands all men everywhere to repent, turn to God and do works fit for repentance.

The second condition is faith in our Lord Jesus Christ for He is our way to God. Sin must be abandoned and forsaken and Christ must be trusted for pardon and forgiveness. He is our only Redeemer and Savior. Therefore, “He that hath the Son hath life and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” Turn to Him today and receive God's unspeakable gift - eternal life in Christ.

### **Assurance of Answered Prayer - John 16:24**

“Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My Name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full” (John 16:24).

What is prayer? The dictionary says it is approaching God in word or thought, often with an earnest entreaty. Webster says it consists of adoration, confession, supplication or thanksgiving. I would add intercession; going to God on behalf of others.

Why is it easier for some people to pray than it is for others? I know some who find such joy in prayer they can hardly bring themselves to do anything else. I met two people like this when I was in my first assignment with the Navigators.

I had been involved with the group for some years before, but now I was on my own. I was in Pittsburgh carrying on a campus ministry. I was living with a young minister, Rev. Ken Smith, and we would stop by the home of these two elderly sisters to take them to church. I soon became aware of a very strange thing.

In their conversation on the way to church it seemed to me that they spent most of their time in prayer. The more I got to know them the more I realized that was, in fact, the case. They would spend the morning in prayer. After they had lunch on the stove they would pray until it was cooked. After lunch they would pray until suppertime, cook supper, and then pray until time to retire for the night.

It was amazing. You couldn't keep them off their knees. They found such joy and fulfillment in entering into the presence of the Lord.

Now I know others who are mightily used of God, but who do not have the same victory in prayer. Oh, they pray, but it is not their strong point. Some find joy in teaching the Word, others in witnessing, others in some sort of service behind the scenes. When they discuss prayer they deplore

their prayer life. They pray, but it is a struggle. What's the answer to that? Frankly, I think there must be some people among us in the body of Christ who are specifically called to pray. It is their life.

But it is also evident in the Word of God that all of us are commanded to pray. Our calling may be to evangelize or to serve or whatever. But mark this: none of it will be productive if we ignore prayer. Prayer must undergird all we do.

Jesus said to pray in His name. He is our mediator, our only way to God. And when we do God will fulfill our joy. Prayer is one of the keys to a joyful Christian life.

### **Assurance of Victory - I Corinthians 10:13**

“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but Cod is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it” (I Corinthians 10:13).

The Scripture teaches that you and I must be on our guard at all times. Peter wrote: “Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary, the devil, like a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour” (I Peter 5:8).

Paul, in the context of our verse for today, gave us a word of caution: “Wherefore, let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall” (I Corinthians 10:12).

We must never grow confident and secure in ourselves. Others have fallen. We may too. And we are most likely to fall when we think we are strong and able to take care of ourselves.

But to this word of caution, God adds a message of comfort. Although we live in a world fraught with temptations and snares, we must not despair or grow over-anxious. Admittedly we will face the common testings and temptations that everybody else faces. But we have a tremendous advantage. We have a faithful God watching over us day and night. He neither slumbers nor sleeps.

Satan may deceive and accuse, but God is near to comfort and guide us in the way of truth. Our best friends may prove false, the world may fail us, but God is faithful. Our strength and security is in Him. He will not, He cannot fail. When a temptation comes, God knows. He knows exactly what we can bear. He knows exactly the amount we can take. He will see to it that the temptation is proportionate to our faith and spiritual condition.

My son-in-law is a wrestler. I remember going to a match at the Air Force Academy and watching him win. He wrestled another guy in his own weight class. He was not allowed to wrestle one of the little guys; nor was he on the mat with someone much heavier than he. Everyone was matched up with other men their own size. Now, that's what God does. Our temptations are always a size we can grapple with.

And there is another tremendous promise here. There will always be a way of escape, a way out. He will never lead us down a blind alley. There will never be a valley so dark that we can't find our way through. There will never be an affliction so grievous but that He can see us through it and turn it to our spiritual advantage.

So there is no room for a despairing spirit or hopelessness. God wants you to walk this path of life, and He will permit no obstacle in the path that will force you to leave it or turn and go back.

### **Assurance of Forgiveness - I John 1:9**

“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).

There have been times when the fate of a nation depended on the accuracy of a message. In wartime will the enemy launch its attack today or tomorrow? The man who delivers the message had better have it right. And he must deliver it as it is; he is not allowed to tamper with it to make it easier to read or in some way sound better.

In the context of our verse John says that's what he is doing. He is delivering a message, just as he had received it from God. “This then is the message which we have heard of him and declare unto you.” No frills. No modifications. No private interpretation.

The message? “God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.” To the psalmist light was the garment of God. Peter explained that becoming a Christian was being called out of darkness into His marvelous light. Therefore, to walk in darkness and claim they had fellowship with God was a lie, and they knew it. God is the Excellency of perfect holiness and purity.

Now that poses a problem. You and I are not perfect: We do foolish things, we make mistakes, we sin. If that's what keeps us from fellowship with God then there is no use of our arising to it. But thank God, that is not what he is saying. He is talking about walking in darkness and to walk in darkness is to persist in our ignorance even when we know better, to persist in our sin even when we know the consequences, and to live contrary to the Word of God even though God has revealed the truth to us.

No, we must walk in the light if we are to have fellowship with God. And the blood of Jesus Christ has a continuing, purifying power in our lives through the blessed Holy Spirit of God.

OK, you say, all well and good. But what happens when we do sin? What then? Well of course, that is a problem. John reminds us of that in verse 8: “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us” (I John 1:8). A wavering will, weakened standards, foolish impulses borrowed from the world or made attractive by the devil can occasionally get to us. Not to admit this would be to mislead ourselves; the truth of His Word is not in us.

Then comes the promise of today's verse. Go to God. Confess your sin. God's faithfulness is great. He is true to His Word. His righteousness is declared in the sacrifice of Christ on the cross, and you will be cleansed and forgiven in His name.

### **Assurance of Guidance - Proverbs 3:5-6**

“Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths” (Proverbs 3:5-6).

When God calls upon us to exercise faith, it is to be total and undivided. Our hope, our confidence must be in God alone. No confidence in the flesh, no reliance on human wisdom. Naturally we resist that idea in our pride and self-reliance. We want to lean on ourselves, to trust our own foolish and false ideas.

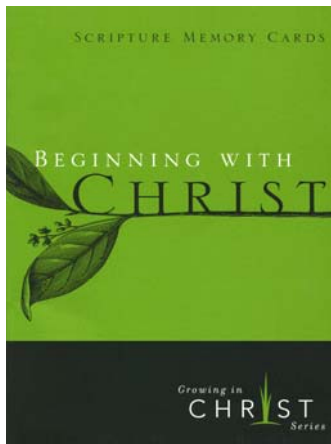
This is the story of Adam and Eve, and the history of mankind ever since. We want to go our own way and do our own thing, to lean on our own understanding. But our own understanding is likely to take us down the wrong path, in the wrong direction. Why?

The human mind by itself, without the illumination of the blessed Holy Spirit, corrupted by the fall, is a false and untrustworthy guide. Does this mean we are not to use our heads? No, Absolutely not. Dawson Trotman the founder of The Navigators used to tell us: “God gave you an awful lot of leading when He gave you a mind.” So faith in God strengthens, enlightens and invigorates our minds.

Self-dependence is folly and rebellion is ruin. But to trust in the Lord is a dynamic, adventuresome, exciting life-style. Placing your faith in the power, goodness and wisdom of God is the most sensible thing you can do.

The next step is to take all the ordinary matters of life to Him in prayer. To give lip service to God and then try to make do by ourselves in the everyday affairs of life is self-idolatry. Morning prayer, the practice of taking things to God in the first place, before we have consulted human counselors or just let things take their course; this is a powerful practice that is much overlooked.

Stick with the Word and prayer. Don't look for strange revelations. Open your Bible and go through it with a sober, practical and reverent faith. God will not lead you astray. “He shall direct thy paths.” No step you take that you have prayed over will bring ultimate regret. Naturally you will never be infallible, but even in your mistakes, God will see you through.



These five carefully selected Bible verses are contained in the [\*Beginning with Christ\*](#) Scripture memory pack. This short booklet is great for explaining the basics of salvation and the Christian life. Topics include Assurance of Salvation, Answered Prayer, Victory Over Sin, Forgiveness, and Guidance. This is one of the very best tools available to help someone get off to a good start as a follower of Jesus Christ. The text can be read in only a few minutes, but it covers all the bases and gives plenty of Scripture references. It includes tear-out Scripture memory cards with 5 key Bible verses in both KJV and NIV. It's the perfect way to introduce new believers to the 60-verse [\*Topical Memory System\*](#) without overwhelming them. May God bless you as you fill your life with His Word!