**We Can Know We Have Eternal Life**

In our last three articles, we have discussed things of which Christians can be confidently assured. The apostle John emphasized things we can know in his first epistle (1 John). This final article in the series will focus on the confidence we can have in our ultimate salvation.

Some folks believe the confidence of the Christian lies in the doctrine of the Impossibility of Apostasy. While “once saved, always saved” offers comfort, it results in a false sense of security for the child of God who allows himself to become complacent. Paul warned Christians in the region of Galatia about falling from grace (Galatians 5:4). He even stated that a lack of self-discipline could result in his own disqualification (1 Corinthians 9:27). Paul was talking about a person enjoying God’s grace, then losing it. He was talking about changing from a state of qualification to a state of disqualification. The “once saved, always saved” doctrine is simply not scriptural.

The Christian’s confidence in eternal life is not founded in the notion that falling away is impossible. A person’s soul is secure when he is in a right relationship with Christ. “The testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life” (1 John 5:11-12). Since eternal life is in God’s Son, the key to confidence is getting into Christ and remaining there.

The person who believes in Jesus (Mark 16:16), repents of his past sins (Acts 2:38) and is willing to confess Jesus as Lord of his life (Romans 10:9-10) clothes himself with Christ when he is baptized into Christ (Galatians 3:27). Furthermore, Jesus has certain expectations of those who would be His lifelong disciples.

John wrote that Jesus is the “true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man” (John 1:9). “If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin” (1 John 1:6-7).

Finally, the key to walking in the Light is the grace of God, not perfect law-keeping. “If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:8-9).

You can know that you have eternal life. But that confidence comes from establishing fellowship with Christ through humble obedience to His will, then remaining in Him by living by His precepts and appealing to His grace when you fall short. What a blessing.

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