

INTRODUCTION:

This morning, I would like for each of us to think of a time in your life when you were dealing with some sort of uncertainty.

- For you it might have been a time when you were going through some kind of a transition in your work situation.
- Or for some of our students that are here today, you are facing the uncertainty of High School for the very first time.
- For those that have had children, think back about the uncertainties in life when you were expecting that first child.
- There are also a number of uncertainties that go with our health as that changes over the years—Physical health and financial health as well.

When we have experienced going through these times of uncertainty, one of the things that we desire most is some level of assurance!

- We want to be reassured that everything is going to be okay.
- We want to know that things are going to work out in the long run even if we have to endure this brief time of uncertainty.

When Traci and I were considering a new health insurance company not too long ago, we came across this company called Assurant Health.

- When you think about it... that really is excellent name for a company that you want to put your trust in to pay for medical problems should they arise.
- As John Harvester I am sure will agree with me... an insurance company is meant to give assurance to the individual who is purchasing the coverage.

When it comes to uncertainties of life, we all need a little bit of assurance now and then.

- And if we really stop and consider the most important assurance, I think we would all agree that the assurance that we can have as a Christian is the most important assurance of them all.

This morning, I would like us to look at a passage of scripture in **1 John 5**.

- This is a passage that has been an incredible assurance to millions of people over the last 2000 years.
- At the time that John writes this first letter, he was an elder of the church in Ephesus.
- But, I'd like us all to remember that John had been with Jesus for the three years of ministry.
- John was in that inner circle with Peter and had seen Jesus go through a transfiguration up on the mountain.
- He was there in **John 12** when Jesus announced that the hour for His death had finally come—Jesus had said, "**Father glorify Thy name.**"
- John then heard the very voice of God when God replied to Jesus saying, "**I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.**"
- John was there by the cross when Jesus died.
- He was there in **Acts 2** when Peter preached that the Jews had put Jesus on that cross and when 3000 people responded in baptism and thousands more just after that.

- He was there in Jerusalem preaching the word with boldness and when instructed not to teach about Jesus, he and Peter responded by saying, “...*we cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard.*”
- It was Peter and John that went to Samaria right after the stoning of Stephen.
- And later on, the apostle Paul referred to John as one of the pillars of the Lord’s church.

I guess the point that I’m trying to make about John is that when he wrote this letter of **1 John**, he had been an eyewitness to all sorts of amazing miracles and circumstances—and these experiences had refined John to a point of spiritual strength that was beyond what we can even imagine.

- John had been told by Jesus Himself that He was going to prepare a place for him in heaven.
- You see... I’m not sure if any man ever had a stronger assurance of heaven than John—The disciple whom Jesus loved.
- And so let us take a look at **1 John 5:10-13** and let us see what John says about how we can all have an assurance of eternal life.

10 The one who believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself; the one who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has given concerning His Son.

11 And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.

12 He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.

13 These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.

This morning, I want us to put a very special emphasis on **verses 12 & 13**.

- John very specifically said, “*He who has the Son has the life*”

So... as we study this passage this morning, the only question that really means anything to us at all is this... WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR US TO HAVE THE SON?

- When I sought out the answer to this question this past week, it shouldn’t have come as a surprise to me that most of the passages that answer this question best were written by none other than the apostle John.
- As we progress through this sermon then, we are going to take a look at some of passages that answer this question.
- What does it mean for us to have Jesus Christ and how can we be certain we have Him?
- John said that we can KNOW that we have eternal life!

I. In 1 John 2:23, I discovered that if we want to have Jesus, WE MUST ACCEPT JESUS CHRIST AS THE SON OF GOD.

This, of course is going back to the very basics of Christianity, however just take a look at the wording of **1 John 2:23**.

- John wrote, “*Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also.*”
- Note specifically the word “*also.*”
- According to this verse alone... If a person confesses belief in the Son of God, that person has both the Father and the Son.
- Now look at the next verse... “*As for you, let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father.*”

- So the main point that I want us to understand from this is that this idea of having the Son is very closely connected with the idea of abiding in, or listening to Him, and it carries with it a connotation of being united with Him and willing to do whatever He has instructed.

Just a couple of chapters later, the apostle John, in all the wisdom he had gained over the years, said, *“Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.”*

- He takes it a step further in **John 5:26** when he wrote, *“For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself...”*
- And again John wrote *“...these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.”* (**John 20:31**)
- John clearly understood that having eternal life begins with an understanding that Jesus is the Son of God.

We often sing this in a song, but I like how the apostle Paul put it, *“I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.”* (**Galatians 2:20**)

- Let us once again, remind ourselves that the main question we’re trying to address is that we can know we have eternal life if we have the Son.
- And John has told us that *“...the one who confesses the Son has the Father also.”*

II. **Something else we can learn in 2 John 1 is that having the Son involves, ABIDING IN THE TEACHING OF JESUS.**

Let us notice together what it says in **2 John 1:9**. *“Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son.”*

- So, in addition to believing and confessing in Jesus as the Son of God, John wrote that the one who abides in the teaching of Christ has both the Father and the Son!
- In other words, we *“have the Son”* if we abide in Jesus’ teaching!

About 20 years ago, I received a Bible in the Simple English Translation.

- I have really appreciated this Bible over the years because it was given to me by the chorus director at York College—A man with whom I have a great deal of respect for.
- But more importantly than that, the Simple English Translation is a literal translation that does not use paraphrases—In other words, it is not a loose translation.
- The scholars who worked on this translation were part of the Restoration movement and were solely interested in providing the most accurate, up to date, and easy to understand wordage from the Greek to the English.

I really like the way the Simple English words **verse 9** for us... It says, *“A person must continue to follow only the teaching of Christ. If anyone goes beyond Christ’s teaching, then he does not have God. But if a person continues to stay within the teaching, then he has both the Father and the Son.”*

- With this understanding that a person must continue following only the teaching of Christ, we recognize the value of understanding the New Testament.
- The teachings of Jesus certainly go beyond just that which was written in red in many of our translations.
- The letters written by Paul, and James, and Jude and the ones written by John are very clearly the teachings of Christ that have been passed on to us.
- Paul, who wrote most of the epistles of the New Testament was specifically told by Jesus that he was His chosen instrument.

- Throughout the book of Acts and Paul's letters, it is very clear that he was being guided by the Spirit of God to carry out the wishes of Christ.
- He was specifically chosen to write down the teachings of Christ (in letter form) for our benefit!

So, first of all, John tells us that we must believe in the Son of God, but then also, we must continue in the teaching of Christ, if we want eternal life.

- Let's continue forward... perhaps in a direction that you least expect.
- What other passages tell us how we can have the Son?

III. In **John 6**, we find that WE MUST PARTAKE IN THE BODY OF CHRIST.

In this passage that we are about to read, we are going to find that Jesus made a statement that was very difficult for some of His followers to handle.

- As a matter of fact, many of His followers quit following Him because of this statement in **John 6**.
- Today, we have a little more insight as to what Jesus was talking about, but as we read this keep in mind that Jesus knew that some of them were unbelieving.
- Read with me from **John 6:53-57**...

53 So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves.

54 "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.

55 "For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink.

56 "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him.

57 "As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also will live because of Me.

The point that Jesus was trying to make from saying these things is that He is the source of eternal life.

- *"He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life."*
- Down in **verse 67**, when some of His followers had left, He asked the twelve, *"You do not want to go away also, do you?"*
- To which Peter demonstrated that he understood when he said, *"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life. We have believed and have come to know that You are the Holy One of God."*
- Peter understood that Jesus had the *"words of eternal life"*—a message of salvation.

And so this morning as we think about this difficult statement that Jesus made, we begin to see the value and the importance of partaking in the body of Christ through the Lord's Supper that He instituted on the night in which He was betrayed.

- About 20 or 25 years later, the apostle Paul wrote to the church in Corinth.
- In **1 Corinthians 11:23ff**, Paul gives us a little more clarity about what Jesus had said.
- We often read this when we take the Lord's Supper, but we need to notice from this passage that Jesus very specifically wants us to do this for some specific reasons.
- Read with me **1 Corinthians 11:23-30**...

23 For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread;

24 and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

25 In the same way He took the cup also after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

- 26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.*
27 Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord.
28 But a man must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup.
29 For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself if he does not judge the body rightly.
30 For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep.

Let us note several things from this passage.

- First of all in **verse 23**, Paul makes it clear that Jesus had specifically given these instructions to Paul.
- He said that he had received these things from the Lord and he had delivered them to the church.
- Secondly, we must note that Jesus specifically commanded that we eat the bread representing His body and that we drink the fruit of the vine representing His blood.
- And we do these things in remembrance of Him as we “...*proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.*”
- And thirdly, as we do this, Paul says that we must examine ourselves.

For me, taking of the Lord's Supper is my one opportunity during the week to reflect back on the previous six days and to consider my shortfalls, to humble myself in acknowledgment that Jesus has extended to me eternal life.

- As He said back in **John 6**, “*He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life.*”
- I believe that it is extremely important for us to continually acknowledge this gift of eternal life that He has extended to us.
- As Paul specifically said about the church in **Acts 20:7**, they were gathered together to partake of the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week.

Again, we come back to that same initial question... How can we truly know that we “*have*” or “*abide in*” the Son of God?

- John told us in **John 6:56**, “*He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him.*”

IV. As we approach this question another time, we find also in **John 6 that WE MUST HAVE THE SPIRIT OF GOD.**

In **John 6:63**, Jesus tells His disciples, “*It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.*”

- More specifically in **Romans 8:9**, the apostle Paul says that we must “*have the Spirit of Christ.*”
- He said, “...*you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.*”

We've been exploring the fact that we must have the Son if we want to have eternal life.

- And Paul here is saying that the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ must dwell in us.
- Paul continues on in **verses 16-17** of the same chapter... “*The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ....*”
- And again Paul wrote to the church in **1 Corinthians 2:12**, “*Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God.*”

The question therefore must be answered... At what point does the Spirit of God begin to dwell within us?

- In the New Testament, I can think of only three different ways in which the Spirit began to dwell within people.
- First, we find in **Acts 2:4** that the Holy Spirit was directly given to the 12 apostles and again in **Acts 10:44-46** that the Holy Spirit was directly poured out upon Cornelius and his household.
- These were two miraculous occurrences at two pivotal moments in the beginning of the Lord's church.
- It happened first so that the Jews would believe in Jesus as the Son of God and it happened a second and final time so that the Gentiles would believe and be welcomed into the body of Christ.
- In both cases Peter by ordered the believers to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.

There is a second way in which the Holy Spirit was given to people—by the laying on of the apostles' hands.

- In **Acts 8**, Philip had been teaching in Samaria and when they received the word of God, Peter and John came and prayed for them and in **verse 17** it says, "***Then they began laying their hands on them, and they were receiving the Holy Spirit.***"
- And again, we see that baptism was connected to receiving the Spirit as they had been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.
- We see another excellent example of the Holy Spirit being given by the laying on of hands in **Acts 19**.
- There were some disciples in Ephesus who had received "***John's baptism***" and Paul asked them if they had received the Holy Spirit and they said they hadn't even heard whether there is a Holy Spirit.
- What I find intriguing about this passage is that Paul seemed to be surprised that they had not received the Holy Spirit upon their baptism.
- And so they were baptized in the name of Jesus and Paul gave them the Holy Spirit by the laying on of his hands.

And so, since there is no longer the miraculous outpouring of the Holy Spirit today, and since we no longer have the apostles to lay their hands on us, we find that there is a third and final way that people received the Holy Spirit.

- And we find the perfect example of this in **Acts 2:38** at the very founding of the Lord's church.
- When Peter preached Jesus to the Jews and they believed, he told them to "***be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.***"
- In all of these examples of people receiving the Holy Spirit, we find that water baptism was also a part of that process!

And so, once again, we find that if we want that assurance of eternal life, we must have the Spirit of Christ.

- I repeat the words of **Romans 8**... "***But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.***"

V. There one final passage in Hebrews 4 that talks about having the Son of God and it says that WE MUST HOLD FAST TO OUR CONFESSION OF FAITH IN HIM.

Hebrews 4:14 says, "***Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.***"

- In the book of **Revelation** (written by the Apostle John I might add) Jesus said, “*Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.*” (**Revelation 2:10**)

SUMMARY:

This morning, we have been looking primarily at the words of John who was a man of very solid spiritual strength.

- And John told us that “*He who has the Son has the life*” and he told us that we “*may know that [we] have eternal life.*”
- And so the question that we have been deeply contemplating is how can we know that we have the son?
- The New Testament answers this question for us in several bits and pieces.
- First of all, we must accept Jesus Christ as the Son of God... “*the one who confesses the Son has the Father also.*” (**1 John 2:23**)
- We also learned that we must continue to follow only the teaching of Christ... “*if a person continues to stay within the teaching, then he has both the Father and the Son.*” (**2 John 1:9**)
- Third, we found that we must partake of the body of Christ... Jesus said, “*He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him.*” (**1 John 6:56**)
- Fourth, John again tells us that we must have the Spirit of God... He said, “*It is the Spirit who gives life...*” (**John 6:63**) And Paul said if we don’t “*have the Spirit of Christ,*” we don’t “*belong to Him.*” (**Romans 8:9**) We also learned that we receive the Holy Spirit at baptism.
- And finally, we learned again from John in **Revelation 2:10** that we must “*Be faithful until death*” and we can receive the crown of life.

CONCLUSION & INVITATION:

Having insurance is good, but having assurance is far better.

- There are way too many uncertainties of life, but there is one thing that we can be assured of.
- Jesus specifically assured his followers that He is going to prepare a place for us.
- If you have confessed Jesus as the Son of God, have continued in His teaching, you have remembered His death at the Lord’s table, you have received the Holy Spirit through baptism, and you have remained faithful “...*you may know you have eternal life.*”

If you haven’t done these things in your life, I encourage you to come forward as we stand and sing...