

Sent: Thursday, November 12, 2015 12:12 PM
Subject: Last MOB Study on I John!

Men--Last nite we covered the last portion of I John (5:6-21) which ended our study of this great book, among other things, with a strong reiteration and assurance--"certainty" (so called by Wiersbe)--of the most fundamental of all Christian doctrines (the Deity of Christ and Incarnation of God)! This concerns the person and work of Jesus Christ, which John, writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, felt compelled to restate, in view of the false teaching about Him that had already crept into the early church--and which is certainly present in our world today!

John, who clearly identified Jesus Christ, in his earlier gospel, as God in the flesh and as the only begotten of God--and who was an "eye witness of His majesty--recorded selected words and works (including miracles) of Jesus as evidence and "testimony" so that, he wrote, "you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you might have life through His name" (John 20:31).

His message in I John, addressed to believers, reinforced the truth that Jesus was, in fact, God in the flesh. And while he "testified" to His majesty and to His "manifestation" in and through the believer, he said the "testimony of God" (the Father!) is even greater! He cites the "testimony" given by God (and the Holy Spirit) at the baptism of Jesus (recorded in Matthew 3:16-17), where the Spirit "descended like a dove" on Him, and a voice out of heaven proclaimed: "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased!" And then the "testimony" of God surrounding His death on the cross, where His blood was shed, and "the veil of the temple torn in two...and the earth shaken, and tombs opened, and bodies of saints raised from the dead and entering the holy city (Jerusalem)! And, in the midst of all this, the centurion, and those keeping guard over Him, responding in awe: "Truly this was the Son of God!" (Matthew 27:50-54)

But there's also a subjective witness within the heart of a believer! John "testified" that the one who believes in the Son of God "has the testimony (of the Holy Spirit) within himself!" Paul wrote in Romans 8:16 that: "The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are the children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ..."

And not only does John write about "the Spirit within" but also about the "witness" that we have in the Word of God (the Bible)! His epistle closes with the strongest of assurances in all of Scripture, in 5:11-13: "And 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 life! These things I have written unto you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life!" Sounds so certain!

But there's even more assurances in John's closing words--including the "confidence which we have before Him that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him" (5:14-15). We learned from this, and related Scripture, that the most important thing about prayer is "the will of God"! And it's best reflected by Jesus Himself (in Luke 22:41-42), while praying in the garden--and in contemplating the cross and the wrath of God that was going to be poured out upon Him for the sin of the world--when He asked that, "if possible, this cup might

be removed from Me... but that not My will, but Thine we done!" Wiersbe quotes George Mueller as once saying: "Prayer is not overcoming God's reluctance. It is laying hold of God's willingness!" And someone else noted that prayer is God's appointed means for a believer to receive what God wants to give him! Isn't it great to know for sure that God hears and answers our prayers, according to His--and not necessarily our--will!

Well, there's at least one final "certainty" that John writes about in our text--and that's a restatement of the reality (in 5:20) that, "we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us an understanding so that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life!"

Wow! Nice to know some really important things for sure!

Interesting that John would add as his final statement--the warning that we should "guard ourselves from idols"! When we have the "real thing," why would we ever settle for anything less? What does he think we are? Human?

Well, that's it for John--at least for organized study! Hope our study of this book will always be a great memory, and resource for you, as I know it will be for me! For sure!

Next week, on to 2 Peter!

May God bless your week!

Lowell