

The Word of Life Messenger

“Holding forth the word of life” Phil. 2:16

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No. 8

FIRST JOHN

A “KNOW-SO” SALVATION

The Gospel according to John has been called “the Book of Life,” in that it describes clearly the way of life – the way of salvation. John’s three letters, especially 1 John, may be called “the Book(s) of Knowledge,” as setting forth the believer’s grounds of assurance. The word “know,” in various forms, is used at least 38 times in the five chapters. The Greek word is one which means “to know by examination or experience.” In short, John here recommends the scientific method of experiment, putting things to test, as in a laboratory.

This is not the way a lost person is saved; John’s gospel deals with salvation by grace through faith as a gift of God. But this scientific, inductive method strengthens the assurance of the one who has believed. Put God to the test (Malachi 3:10 – “prove Me”). Find out by examination! To do so will deepen your faith, in accordance with the text of the book, 1 John 5:13. (See also Jn. 7:17.)

Some things we can know for sure are set forth here.

First, we can know the character and nature of God, as manifest in Christ – 1 Jn. 1:1-5, Jn. 1:18.

Second, we can know His holiness, our consequent sinfulness,

and His gracious provision – 1 Jn. 1:6 - 2:2, Jn. 3:16.

Third, we can know that we know Him (that we have become acquainted with Him), 1 Jn. 2:3-4, Jn. 14:15.

Fourth, we can know that we are in Him, 1 Jn. 2:5-11, Jn. 15:4.

Fifth, we can know Him at any accountable age (a parenthetical note), whether children, youth, adults, etc., 1 Jn. 2:12-14, Jn. 5:24.

Sixth, we can know what the world cannot know (another parentheses), 1 Jn. 2:15-17, Jn. 17:25.

Seventh, we can know that we are living in the last age, 1 Jn. 2:18, Jn. 5:25. (Compare Acts 2:16-17; Heb. 1:1-2; 1 Cor. 10:11.)

Eighth, we can know all things, 1 Jn. 2:19-20, Jn. 14:26. (Note: This does not mean that we understand all things, but that the Spirit will keep us from error as we test (prove) all things by Him.)

Ninth, we can know the truth, Jn. 2:21-28, Jn. 8:32.

Tenth, we can know that the righteous God is the Father of all righteous people, in regeneration (new birth), 1 Jn. 2:29 - 3:1, Jn. 8:41-44. (This is contrary to the “universal fatherhood” idea.)

Eleventh, we can know that He is coming again to glorify us with His

own nature, 1 Jn. 3:2, Jn. 14:2-3, 17:24.

Twelfth, we can know that He takes away our sins, 1 Jn. 3:3-13, Jn. 1:29. (The type is the passover lamb.)

Thirteenth, we can know that we have passed from death unto life, and that no habitual sinner has life eternal, 1 Jn. 3:14-15; John 3:18, 36; 5:24; 10:27. This is true because that which is born of God (the inner nature) does not sin, and by the “law of correspondence” the outside becomes like the inside. “God works inside out.”

Fourteenth, we can know that we are of the truth. 1 Jn. 3:16-22, John 14:15-17, 27.

Fifteenth, we can know that He abides in us (see Romans 8:16). 1 John 3:23-24, Jn. 15:4-7. (This is by His witnessing Spirit.)

Sixteenth, we can know the false spirits and the true Spirit. 1 John 4:1-6, John 8:47.

Seventeenth, we can know that we dwell with Him, and He in us. 4:7-15; John 10:28-29, 14:20.

Eighteenth, we can know the love that God has to us. 1 John 4:16-21, John 16:27.

Nineteenth, we can know that we love the children of God. 1 John

(continued on page 4)

SOUND DOCTRINE

“But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine” (Titus 2:1). The true minister of Jesus Christ must preach sound doctrine if he is to please the Lord who called him. For doctrine to be sound it must be spoken from God’s word. “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Tim. 3:16,17).

First may we consider the principles of sound doctrine. Luke writes concerning “a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us” (Luke 1:1). He says, “they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word” (Luke 1:2). He also writes, “that thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed” (Luke 1:4). The all important principles of doctrine go back to the beginning. God first spoke by inspiration of the Bible and we have those things that God saw fit to reveal unto us. “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have handled of the Word of Life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and

shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us” (1 John 1:1,2). Jesus was manifested in the flesh. He was virgin born and lived a perfect life. He went to the cross and died for our sins and was buried and raised from the grave.

Second, may we see the profit of doctrine. “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine” (2 Tim. 3:16). Profitable doctrine will nourish us and cause us to grow. Paul instructs Timothy to “be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine” (2 Tim. 4:6). “Holding fast the faithful word” of doctrine will exhort and convince the gainsayers (Titus 1:9). As Paul wrote to the Ephesian elders, he kept back nothing that was profitable for them (see Acts 20:27). “For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God” (Acts 20:27).

Third, may we notice the purpose of doctrine. God’s purpose for sound doctrine is to cause us to grow as His children that we might be grounded in the faith. The man of God should preach the truth in love to ensure growth for God’s children. “But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ” (Eph. 4:15). As the preacher must preach the truth, it is the responsibility of

God’s children to hear and take heed to the preached Word. “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby” (1 Peter 2:2). The growth of God’s children in the word of God will give us a greater knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. “But grow in grace, and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18). The growth in the knowledge of our Saviour should keep us from getting away from the gospel. “If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister” (Col. 1:23). The gospel is “how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures” (1 Cor. 15:3,4). May we as God called preachers and God’s people in the local churches never be moved away from the glorious truth.

As Paul and Silas went to Berea they found that “these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so” (Acts 17:11).

- Gladwin Carpenter

TRIBULATION AND TRIALS

In John 16:33 Jesus told his disciples “In the world you shall have tribulation.” Why is this so? Why do believers have troubles in this world? First, look up and behold your heavenly Father who is holy and pure. One day we shall be like Him. We shall be conformed to His image. Is it an easy thing to subdue your iniquities and drive your cor-

ruptions far from you? Do you not want to be taught to love righteousness and hate iniquity in preparation for that time when you shall be perfect even as your Father is perfect? Also, look down and see where you are. You are in the enemy’s territory and you once were subject to him. Do you think he will give up his subjects easily?

The world is not your friend and Satan is your adversary just as he was of your Savior. Lastly, look within. Sin and self are still within. Even with no one to tempt you, you have evil enough within you for trouble. But our Lord has promised to be with us in tribulation.

- Larry Windham

THE MUSTS OF SOULS

“Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again” (John 3:7)

Could there be any greater contrasts than that which is offered in chapters 3 and 4 of the Gospel of John? Nicodemus was a well educated man; he was a moral man and a ruler of the Jews. He was a member of the Sanhedrin, the Jewish governing and religious body of the Jews under the Romans. He had power, position, reputation and probably wealth. On the other hand, the woman in chapter 4 had been married five times and the man with whom she was living at the time was not her husband. Yet, Jesus told Nicodemus that he needed to be born again and the Samaritan woman at the well that she needed to drink of the water which he would give, that she needed to be saved also. In John 3 and 4 there are 5 “musts” which speak of the musts of the soul and the need of the sinner. Jesus reminds us that all people need a savior, no matter what they think about themselves or who they might be.

1. THE MUST OF THE SINNER (3:7)

Why do people need a Savior? Why do they need to be born again? There are two reasons.

A. Because of the sinfulness of men.

The Bible tells us that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23). The writer of Ecclesiastes writes “There is not a just man upon the earth that doeth good and sinneth not.”

B. Because of the holiness of God.

The Bible tells us that a holy God cannot at all acquit the guilty

(Exod. 34:7). He who is absolutely pure cannot at all look upon sin or ignore the penalty that it demands. The wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23). Sin separates between God and man (Isa. 59:2).

How then can sinful man be born again and be accepted by a holy God? Jesus said “Verily, verily I say unto you except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God” (John 3:5). To be born of water does not speak of baptism, but of the Word of God. John 15:2 says “Now are you clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.” James 1:18 says “Of his own will begot He us with the word of truth.” Paul writes in Titus 3:5 “Not by works of righteousness which we have done but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit.” The Holy Spirit uses the Word of God and in particular the gospel of Christ to convict the sinner of his sin, of the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ and of the judgment to come for those who know not Christ. The sinner under the power of the Holy Spirit believes that Jesus died for his sins and that his only hope of forgiveness and heaven is found in Jesus’ blood and righteousness. He is quickened and made spiritually alive. He is born again by God’s grace.

2. THE MUST OF THE SAVIOR (3:14-16)

The measure of love is always its willingness to give; its capacity to sacrifice. If we would measure the love of God we must measure it by

Calvary. Paul said “He spared not his own Son, but delivered Him up for us all.” Was ever so great a gift given to sinners? In giving Christ, God gave us all things in Him. Do we need forgiveness? God’s forgiveness is in Him. “In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.” Do we need peace with God? “Christ made peace through the blood of his cross.” Do we need cleansing? “The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin.” Do we need justification? Assurance of salvation? Power to overcome an evil habit and strong temptation? Fellowship with God? Equipping for service? Joy, comfort and hope? All these we have in Christ. Poor sinners find in Jesus all they need for salvation, sanctification, and glorification. But all these blessings are not apart from the cross. Jesus said “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have eternal life” (3:14-15). If we were going to be saved, if our sins were going to be put away, Christ must die as our substitute. He must die the innocent in the place of the guilty, the innocent on behalf of the guilty. The sin penalty must be paid and we could not pay it ourselves. We can say that payment was:

A. Provided by the love of God (3:16).

B. Purchased by the Son of God (3:14-16).

- Larry Windham

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Notice

The Northeast MS Baptist Bible Conference will meet with Union Grove Baptist Church, Tilden, MS, located on HWY 25 south of Fulton, MS on Friday, Sept. 8, 2006.

7:00 p.m. - Bobby Adams

Alt. - Bobby Joe Poss

7:25 p.m. - Song

7:30 p.m. - Fred Hartley

Alt. - Gladwin Carpenter

7:55 p.m. - Song

8:00 p.m. - Alton Elrod

Alt. - Larry Windham

Bro. Chris Duncan and the Church invite you to this time of worship and Bible study. A meal will be served after the conference.

“The Word of Life Messenger” may be viewed on the internet at www.atCalvaryBaptist.net

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A “KNOW-SO” SALVATION (continued from page 1)

5:18 - 8, John 15:17.

Twentieth, we can know that we have eternal life. 1 John 5:9-13; John 3:15, 6:39.

Twenty-first, we can know that our prayers are heard and properly dealt with. 1 John 5:14-15, John 14:13-14.

Twenty-second, we can know that we cannot so sin as to be lost. 1 John 5:16-18, John 17:12.

Twenty-third, we can know that we are of God, though the world is not. 1 John 5:19, John 3:19-20.

Twenty-fourth, we can know that Jesus Christ came in the flesh. 1 John 5:20a, John 1:18.

Twenty-fifth, we can know the true God only through Jesus Christ His Son. 1 John 5:20b-21, John 10:9, 14:6.

- Charles Blair

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