

Congregational handout; outline sermon text on following pages

Sermon Notes & References

This Is Eternal Life  
John 10:26-29

September 4, 2016

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<sup>A</sup> Jeremiahs 31:2-3; Romans 8:35-39

<sup>B</sup> John 20:30-31; 1 John 5:13; Ephesians 2:10

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<sup>C</sup> 1 John 5:20; Psalm 23:6; John 17:3; Colossians 1:19-20

<sup>D</sup> John 10:17-18, 5:26, 17:2; Revelation 22:17; Ephesians 1:4

<sup>E</sup> Matthew 11:28

A. Knowing & Being Known

1. Parents & Children

- a. A lot of us here are parents; all of us are children
- b. As parents we want to ensure that our children know it, are secure in the knowledge of our parental love and care
- c. As children we have often been reminded of the love and heritage we have from our parents and grandparents
- d. there have been many reminders
  - (A) "You're the spittin' image of your father"
  - (B) "She acts just like her mother"
  - (C) "The apple doesn't fall too far from the tree"
- e. this knowledge, this assurance, this security is the basis of a healthy relationship between parents and children

2. God as the Father of His Children

- a. wants us to be wholly assured of that relationship
- b. to be secure in the knowledge that He IS OUR Father, and we are HIS children
- c. that we know Him even as we are known by Him
- d. this was true in the OT of His people Israel, for the Lord says, '2 Thus says the Lord, "The people who survived the sword Found grace in the wilderness—Israel, when it went to find its rest." 3 The Lord appeared to him from afar, saying, "I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore I have drawn you with lovingkindness.'" (Jeremiah 31:2-3)
  - (A) everlasting love
  - (B) from before the world existed
  - (C) until after this world has ceased
- e. and it is true in the NT: '35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 Just as it is written, "for thy sake we are being put to death all day long; we were considered as sheep to be slaughtered." 37 But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. 38 For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.' (Romans 8:35-39)

### 3. John Writes with Purpose

- a. with many books in the Bible it takes some considerable study in order to understand the purpose of what is being written
  - (A) a study of the historical books in the Bible for background, or,
  - (B) a study of the quotations in the NT from that book; and so on
- b. but with John's gospel, that is not a problem
  - (A) for he himself states the purpose of the book
  - (B) **'30 Many other signs therefore Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.'** (John 20:30-31)
  - (C) John writes so that readers may come to eternal life through faith
  - (D) with the key items of faith being that Jesus is
    - (1) in His human nature the Messiah
    - (2) in His divine nature is the Son of God
  - (E) not a list of do's and don't's, but in simple faith entrusting oneself body and soul into Jesus' keeping for one's eternal destiny
  - (F) on this matter the Christian can be assured that God is his Father
- c. so John's epistle has likewise a stated purpose
  - (A) and again it is not too difficult to discover
  - (B) **'These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, in order that you may know that you have eternal life.'** (1 John 5:13)
  - (C) so the believer in the name of the Son of God – that is, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God – may KNOW they have eternal life
  - (D) but assurance is not to be confused with presumption
  - (E) so in 1 John there are seven tests – the **'these things I have written'** – a person may give themselves to know their faith is real
  - (F) But those we have dealt with another time, and not today
  - (G) except to say that it is mere presumption – pride in ourselves – to think that we are Christians because of something that we did:
    - (1) I prayed the prayer confessing Christ on March 29, 1949
    - (2) I was baptised by immersion in a baptist church
    - (3) for to trust in these is to trust in our own works & selves

- (H) assurance is based rather on the Person & work of Jesus the Christ
- (1) it is founded upon what He did at the cross for us
  - (2) and that prayer, that baptism, and every other service that we have performed is in simple response to His work
  - (3) 'For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.' (Ephesians 2:10)
  - (4) Those good works that we do are the signs confirming the Holy Spirit's activity in us, by Whose activity we pass the seven tests given in first John

## B. The Nature of Eternal Life

### 1. What Is Eternal Life?

#### a. John has something to say on this subject in his epistle

- (A) 'And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding, in order that we might 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.' (1 John 5:20)
- (B) the first thing in that verse is the matter of relationship: that in Jesus Christ we can know God and we can abide in Him
- (C) the second part of the verse assures us that it is this relationship, then, which constitutes eternal life
- (D) God is eternal, and if we are in relationship with God, then of necessity that relationship is eternal, for God does not change
- (E) death can have no effect on that relationship, because by it we are linked to God who is beyond time and space
- (F) so David could say without pause, 'Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life, And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.' (Psalms 23:6) – relationship uninterrupted by death

#### b. This is confirmed by Jesus' words in His High Priestly prayer: "And this is eternal life, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." (John 17:3)

- (A) eternal life is not simply everlasting existence – the latter is the possession of every living human being
  - (1) but for some it is headed to everlasting destroying
  - (2) and to the believer to everlasting living
- (B) the difference is the effect of sin: sin separates from God
  - (1) unforgiven sin separates eternally from God – the Bible uses a number of pictures, the lake of fire being one, to put in human terms just how terrible that is

- (2) sin forgiven at the cross – our every sin, past, present & future – reconciles the believer eternally to God: `19 For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fulness to dwell in Him, 20 and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven. 21 And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, 22 yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach—` (Colossians 1:19-22)
- (3) Paul then continues to speak on perseverance which is a subject for another day
- c. let us turn back to John 10 and today's text and look at this

## 2. Source of Eternal Life

- a. we have sought to make it clear that our eternal life rests not upon what we have done but upon who Jesus IS and what He has DONE
- b. `17 "For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. 18 No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father.'" (John 10:17-18)
  - (A) Jesus, the incarnate Son of God, was given the right to possess life in Himself: "For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself;" (John 5:26)
  - (B) this means as well that Jesus has the right to dispense life: "even as Thou gavest Him authority over all mankind, that to all whom Thou hast given Him, He may give eternal life." (John 17:2)
- c. Henriksen: **The dying and rising again are deeds, not merely experiences. They are deeds of perfect and purposeful obedience and love.**
- d. there are two parallel truths in Scripture
  - (A) man's responsibility to obey God's invitation to salvation: `And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost.` (Revelation 22:17)
  - (B) God's choice of believers, "just as He chose us in Him (i.e., Christ) before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him. In love" (Ephesians 1:4)
- e. of the sheep – those who know Christ and are known by Him – Jesus says in verse 29, "My Father who has given them to Me"
  - (A) every believer is a gift by the Father to the Son – an eternal gift from an eternal Father to His eternal Son
  - (B) salvation begins, takes place and ends with God & His purpose
  - (C) God – the Triune God – is clearly the Source of eternal life

### 3. Entrance to Eternal Life

- a. addressing the Jewish rulers, Jesus said, "But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep." (John 10:26)
  - (A) believing in Jesus is the evidence that you are His sheep
  - (B) in contrast to the unbelieving rulers, how do the sheep show faith?
- b. verse 27 answers the question: "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me;"
  - (A) when Jesus says, "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28)
  - (B) those who are His sheep – believers in Christ
  - (C) hear His voice; recognise His voice and are recognised in turn by Him; and they obey, they follow

### 4. Possessing Eternal Life

- a. following Jesus is also an ongoing evidence of possessing eternal life
  - (A) the sheep may sometimes balk at leaving the sheepfold
  - (B) but nevertheless at the Shepherd's persuasion – and exercise of the crook in His hand – they come forth and follow Him
- b. as they hear and follow Jesus, we discover in verse 28, "and I give eternal life to them," – it is in the day by day following Christ, that we grow in that relationship which reveals the reality of what is eternal life
- c. Jesus continues to speak in verses 28-29:
  - (A) "28 ... and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of My hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand." (John 10:28-29)
    - (1) that 'no one' – means just that – 'neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing,' – not even our own selves, can snatch (steal, plunder) them for we kept by both the Christ's hand & the Father's hand
    - (2) in this picture of God the Son and God the Father holding us in the hand, there is a figure of eternal life, which consists of our abiding relationship with God in Christ
  - (B) verse 30 – "I and the Father are one." – these two hands are one in essence – what more can this mortal desire than to be possessed by the immortal God and to know Him for all eternity!

## C. Conclusion

### 1. Only Believe!

Fear not, little flock, from the cross to the throne,  
From death into life He went for His own;  
All power in earth, all power above,  
Is given to Him for the flock of His love. —{2}.

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AV Authorized (King James) Version of 1769  
NAS New American Standard version © 1960, 1995 The Lockman Foundation (usually the 1995 edition)  
NKJV New King James Version © 1979 Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers  
WEY The New Testament in Modern Speech © 1902, 1912 R. F. Weymouth

Some of the commentaries and resources used in the preparation of this message are identified as follow:

BM - *Biblical Museum*, Editor James Comper Gray, ca 1870  
NICNT - *The New International Commentary on the New Testament*  
*The Gospel according to John*, by Leon Morris  
NTC - *New Testament Commentary*, by William Hendriksen; Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, MI; 1954  
RWP - *Robertson's Word Pictures of the New Testament*, by Dr. A. T. Robertson  
TEC -- *The Gospel according to John*, by George Allen Turner & Julius R. Mantey, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, MI; ca 1965

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