

Reading – 1 John 5:6-17

Sermon #12

Sermon - 1 John 5:6-13

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Title - Having Christ

Having Assurance

I love to be with the saints when they die. When I was first assigned the hospital ministry and funerals at our home church upon returning from Papua New Guinea I was concerned and to be truthful a little scared. But, I soon found out it was a privilege to be with saints as they prepared for death and as they died. It is as though I get to walk up to a door that for most people is very far away. Death for the saints, in general is not frightening, but for the times I have been with unbelievers it is a very different story. I have two motives for desiring to be with the saints of Christ during their dying. First, I want to keep vigil against the devil that loves to terrorize the saints at the hour of death and to stand by the wounded and fight for them with the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. Secondly, I want to see them safely through the door as they enter eternity with Christ.

I must confess I have another motive for wanting to be with the saints as they die. I have the hope that someday I may get a glimpse through the door. I think that if I stand guard often enough, I might see something of what Paul saw when he said, ²¹“For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. ²²If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. ²³I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better.” (Philippians 1:21-23) I can't help but think that when a soul departs from the life of a saint, Christ himself draws especially near. Maybe I will get a glimpse

or maybe I will have to wait to see it all when I die. I remember what Stephen saw as death approached, Stephen, “full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.” (Acts 7:55) He knew where he was going and had peace.

As I sat and thought of the massive killings of late, which included both the unsaved and believers I was filled with sadness. As I compared these deaths to that of a saint’s death by what we would consider normal life and natural death my mind turned to the sermon I was to preach this Sunday, this morning. I recalled that the passage in 1 John had a key verse summing up John’s whole reason for writing his letter, “I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life. (1 John 5:13)

I prayed, "O Lord, what can I say to the people on Sunday that will make them feel the enormity of the value of eternal life You give Your saints?" If only I could bring every one of them with me to experience the dying of a saint. To experience this process and how different it is for a saint and an unbeliever. If only they could all stand here and listen and watch while the Word is recited, the glorious gospel of Christ is spoken into the wrinkled ear of an old dying saint. A saint who has lived their life faithful to Christ.

The Apostle Peter came to my mind and what he wrote, ³“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, ⁵who by God’s power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶In this you rejoice, though now for

a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷ so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. ⁸ Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, ⁹ obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.” (1 Peter 1:3-9) As we each approach death, whether near or distant the realization that is the outcome of our faith is the salvation of our soul. This reminds me that as we live through the trials of life in this broken world it both tests our faith and strengthens our faith in Christ. As believers we do not walk this path of life alone; we have Christ and fellow believers as a gift of God for our journey.

As the Apostle Paul wrote to the believers in Rome, ⁷ “For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. ⁸ For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord’s. ⁹ For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.” (Romans 14:7-9) How will you die? Where will you die? When will you die? At that time both Christ and believers will draw near and we can sing to you as you die here on earth and prepare to live in heaven - **When we've been there ten thousand years, bright shining as the sun, we've no less days to sing God's praise than when we'd first begun.** As His children God has given each the gift of eternal life with Him – nothing is more important for a believer.

My beloved, I pray that God helps you understand this morning - that nothing is more important than having eternal life. Summertime is coming and it is filled with subtle deceptions. The advertising of all sorts of things that are suppose to

improve our image. For example, we begin to think more about our bodies because in the summertime people see more of them. So we think about whether we have a tan. We think about whether we look pudgy. We can actually begin to think these things matter!

When you look in the mirror to see how your tan is doing and whether your skin is sleek, remember those close to you that have gone on ahead to heaven. It did not make any difference to them if they had a tan or a sleek body. It did not make any difference to them that their flesh hung on their bones like wet paper. One thing mattered, [“Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.”](#) (1 John 5:12) They knew they had life eternal because they had the Son who is eternal life.

Having Eternal Life

The text for this morning has some puzzling things in it that theologians love to debate. Reading beginning in verse 6 of 1 John 5, [“This is he who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ; not by the water only but by the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. ⁷ For there are three that testify: ⁸ the Spirit and the water and the blood; and these three agree.”](#) Perhaps in the future we may come back to these verses. But, it seemed to me there was one message in this text I wanted to focus on. The one extremely critical thing that is very clear for me and that is a most important question to ask is, “How can I have eternal life?” How can you have eternal life? According to John, God himself has testified in answer to this question.

God’s testimony is found in verses 11 and 12, [“And this is the testimony, that God](#)

gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹² **Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.**” These verses give the content of God's testimony. We don't often think of God witnessing to us. We think of ourselves as witnessing for Him. But verses 11 and 12 describe the content of God's witness. If there ever were any testimony in the courtroom of life that we ought to listen to, it would be God's testimony. According to John the testimony of God is, **“This is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.”** (1 John 5:11) Faith in, believing in Jesus as the Christ, as revealed by God the Father gives eternal life. Then God defines eternity further, **“Whoever has the Son has life!”** Believers have eternal life that begins here on earth and continues in the presence of God forever upon their mortal death. God also reveals the destiny for those who do not believe in Jesus as the Christ, **“whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.”** (1 John 5:12) Unbelievers will recognize Jesus upon their mortal death, but they will never have life with God. Oh, how completely terrifying.

The key then is, **“Whoever has the Son has life!”** What does this mean? So what does it mean **“whoever HAS the Son?”** The word "has" can communicate a lot of different nuances. For example, it doesn't mean quite the same thing each time when you say, " He has a dollar," or, "He has a cold," or, "He has a lawyer."

But there is something common to all those meanings of when one “HAS” something, it means there is a relationship with you and it has an effect on you. If you have a dollar, it buys a dollar's worth for you. If you have a cold, it makes your nose run. If you have a lawyer, he stands in your stead and fights for you in court. Having something means that it does its function for you and has a relationship to

you.

Having The Son Eternally

Now the testimony of God in verse 12 says, **“Whoever has the Son has life!”** We understand and can say that having the Son means if you have the Son, then the Son has a relationship with you and does many things for you. Jesus gives you the Holy Spirit to live in you; guiding you, strengthening you and giving you spiritual wisdom, these are among many other helps one receives by having Jesus. If you want to spend one of the most encouraging hours of your life, take an hour and make a list of everything Jesus is as God the Son and then everything you can think of that Jesus has done or does for you. It will be a much longer list than you might imagine. List what Jesus’ promises are and how many He has already done for you personally. Then you will be able to sit back and better understand what it means, **“Whoever has the Son has life!”**

What does it mean to have the Son? John sums it all up in the word **“LIFE.”** **“Whoever has the Son has life!”** Eternal life is not just the extension of all the frustrations and half-joys of this life. When you enter heaven or when Jesus returns every frustration will be gone and every half-joy will be full-joy. As Jesus clearly said, **“I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”** (John 10:10) What Jesus said has a double meaning; we are to live life to the fullest and with abundance through Christ while here on earth because He gives us **“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.”** (John 14:27) Secondly, our abundant life in Christ and His peace will be perfected when we enter His presence. If you **“HAVE”** the Son, it means that anything that infinite love and

infinite power and infinite wisdom can do for your good will, in fact, will be done for you. The world will try and condemn us, but we do not belong to the world. Paul addressed this very issue, “Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?” (Romans 8:34-35) No, absolutely not, nothing can separate us from Christ! Why does the world take this condemning approach towards those who belong to Christ? The answer is found in the second half of verse 12 of 1 John 5, “whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.” Unbelievers do not have a relationship with God. On the other hand, by God’s power that lives within believers, we are conquerors over this corrupt world. God told John in Revelation, “The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son.” (Revelation 21:7) Which means that the Son of God takes the tribulations of your life and actually turns them for your good. You don't just escape from your enemy but because of Christ your enemy is defeated. When you give your life to Christ and serve Him only, He also serves you. In fact there are 8 verses in Revelation that lay out who we are and what we will be as conquerors through God’s power and might. This would be a great study for you this coming week. I look forward to hearing what you discover.

So, if you want to be more than a victim, as so many in our country claim to be, if you want to be more than a survivor and, indeed, even more than a conqueror in the battles of life, then you must “HAVE” the Son. For “Whoever has the Son has life!” This means all the life that an omnipotent God can give. How much is this? Look at the list you are going to make of everything God is and what He has done

for you and it is far more than that!

Having The Son Is Believing

But we still haven't answered the question, "How do we come to **have** the Son?" This is very important because the last part of verse 12 says, "whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life." In other words not every one has the Son and so not every one has eternal life with God. Jesus said, "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God." (Revelation 2:7)

Considering what Christ taught and what John wrote, it is infinitely important to know how to "HAVE" the Son. The fate for those who do not "HAVE" the Son is the second death, which is also eternal, as we read, "But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death." (Revelation 21:8) You say, "Before Christ I was not any of those." I say, "Really!" You never lacked faith? You never had a sexually immoral thought? You never lied? "For there is no distinction: ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. ... For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 3:22-23, 6:23) We are all sinners, the difference is if we have the Son or not.

So, then how do we "HAVE" the Son? The answer is not complicated or hard to find. It is implied clearly in verse 13 of 1 John 5; "I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life." Notice that verse 13 says that those "who believe in the name of the Son of God" have eternal life and in verse 12 we read, "Whoever has the Son has life!"

The answer is simple; the way to “HAVE” the Son is to “BELIEVE” in the Son. You “HAVE” the Son of God if you give your life to Him and trust in Him or believe in Him and through the Son you have the Father and are given the Spirit.

I want to briefly tell you about the famous movie, *A Passage to India* that was released in 1984, I know that was before some of you were born, but it really was not that long ago. I believe it will help you see the point the Apostle John wants us to understand. Here we go, there was a young Indian doctor who had been arrested for allegedly assaulting a young English woman in India. The case became an explosive point of tension between the Indian people who longed for independence and the colonial English government who wanted to maintain control. The whole colonial power structure seemed to make the doctor's case hopeless even though everybody knew his integrity was above question. Unfortunately, he was far too poor to afford a lawyer.

While the doctor’s case looked more hopeless by the day, the most famous and gifted lawyer in all India, *Amritrao*, heard of this doctor’s plight. This lawyer had a reputation of taking on the British and standing up for the Indian underdogs. For me one of the most powerful scenes in the film was when two of the doctor's friends bring him word in the jail that this famous lawyer is willing to defend him. Then, as if it were too good to be true, they say, "And he's not even going to charge a fee!"

Now the doctor has a lawyer. He “HAS” a lawyer. John wrote, “[Whoever has the Son.](#)” The doctor has a lawyer and the lawyer is going to defend the doctor and fight for the doctor in court. This lawyer will use all of his reputation, all of his eloquence and all of his skill to save the doctor.

How did the doctor come to “HAVE” this great lawyer? He never had met him before. He had no money to pay him. He was far away from the lawyer in a different city and a different part of the country. Yet, he could now say to all his enemies, "I “HAVE” a lawyer!" How did he come to have the best lawyer in India?

It starts with the motivation of the lawyer. He has two goals: First, the liberation of India from the British, and second, the glorification of his own legal skills. In the movie the courtroom becomes tumultuous, but the doctor’s lawyer is sitting at his table utterly calm, as though in sovereign control of the situation. He is showing what he really loves is the liberation of India and the display of his skills for the helpless doctor, his services are not for sale. He will not be paid. That would call into question what he really loves and what his true motivation is.

So, how does the doctor come to have this lawyer? The lawyer makes a free offer, and the doctor hears the offer and accepts it. He could have refused, but he accepts. He trusts that the lawyer’s offer is sincere, and he believes this lawyer can defend him. He “HAS” the lawyer because he “TRUSTS” the lawyer.

So too, it is with the Son of God. He has two goals, the liberation of His people from sin and death, and the glorification of His own powers and glory. That is the origin of salvation. That is the source of eternal life. To show the world that what He loves is the liberation of His people and the magnification of His power and glory. To demonstrate His sincerity, Christ’s services are not for sale. He will not be paid.

So how do you come to “HAVE” the Son of God? He makes you a free offer, you accept His offer and you trust Him. The Son always, always fulfills His promises for

those who trust in Him. [“Whoever has the Son has life!”](#)

Not Having The Son

Of course, there are at least three ways that the doctor could have rejected the lawyer and for one to reject the Son of God. You can say, "I can handle this case by myself." Or you can say, "No point in answering the telegram. He will never come. Why would he come all this way for me? I am not any nobody of importance and he is world famous." Or you can say, "Sure tell him to come. But he better not tell me to do anything stupid in the courtroom, because I'm not going to do any that would make me look foolish."

Some of you here this morning need to have the Son of God. Don't reject His offer of life by any of these three responses. None of us can handle our case by ourselves. We are far worse off than the doctor because we are guilty! When we die and stand before God we cannot handle our case because we are guilty and as a just Judge He will pass sentence. However, if we have the Son, in a sense we have the best lawyer ever, because He paid our penalty and by His sacrifice we receive eternity in heaven. But, on the other hand, [“whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.”](#)

Do not take the position that Satan wants you to and say, “The Son of God won't come to work for and defend a nobody like me.” You see, the only kind of people Christ works for are the undeserving. The Son of God says, "I am coming to help you **not** because you're somebody, but because I'm somebody; and I like to show I am somebody by saving those who are nobodies." God loves to glorify the fullness of His grace by saving the least likely candidates for eternal life, just like me.

Having The Son Is Life

Don't say, as Satan wants you to, "Well, yes, I will accept Jesus' offer to be my lawyer or my advocate, but He better not tell me to do anything foolish." That is not trust. You can't keep a lawyer that you do not trust. As the writer of Hebrews wrote, ["The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?"](#) (Hebrews 13:6) When we trust Christ the world cannot do anything to us.

King David said, ["Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him, and he will act. ⁶He will bring forth your righteousness as the light, and your justice as the noonday."](#) (Psalm 37:5-6) Trust in Jesus, as your Lord and He will act on your behalf. ["This is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹²Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life."](#) (1 John 5:11-12)

Time is precious! Have the Son – have eternal life!