

03-07-1Jn

Rev. David G. Bostick

08/10/08

*

INTRODUCTION:

I have been a Christian all of my life in the sense that I was raised in a Christian home so I never knew any other religion. I have had a growing personal relationship with Jesus Christ for more than 47 years now, and for 37 years that has been an intimate relationship. Friday I was thinking about Jesus words to the thief on the cross next to Him; "Today you will be with me in paradise." The last words out of the thief's mouth just before he died were a confession of his sinfulness and a request for Jesus to allow him into His kingdom. When I heard Don Francisco singing about this encounter I began to wonder what I might say to Christ just moments before my death. With all sincerity to you, this is what I would say, "Lord I am a sinner and unworthy to be in your Kingdom. Forgive me for all my sins. I place my eternal destiny in your merciful hands. Do with me what your love demands."

Now please understand me, I would not say this at the last minute to make sure that everything was confessed so I could get into heaven. If I do not have a last breath or moment of consciousness before I die with which to utter these words, I have the utmost confidence that as surely as the thief is in paradise with Christ I shall be there also. Not for any good that I have done in my lifetime but because I believe in the Son of God, Jesus Christ. On this I stand. On this I rely and depend. On this I rest my eternal security.

I must also tell you that when I came to truly believed that Jesus was the Son of God it changed my life forever. He became the priority in everything I do.

TEXT:

John 14:27 (NIV) Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

Introduction: (Review)

Eight specific purpose statements were made by the Apostle John. We have looked at seven of them so far and this morning we look at number eight.

1. **Belief** that leads to eternal life brings peace
2. **Joy** in fellowship with God and His Son brings peace
3. **Victory** through an advocate brings peace
4. **Clarity** about the new law brings peace
5. **Forgiveness** brings peace
6. To **Know** God intimately brings peace

7. To **Overcome** the evil one brings peace
8. To be **Assured** that I have eternal life brings peace

Purpose #8 – Assurance

1Jn 5:13 (NIV)

(13) I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know (fact) that you have eternal life.

I guess the one thing that people struggle with, in their Christian life more than anything else is their assurance. With all the conflicting messages that they have heard, and the natural ups and downs of an individual's emotions and feelings, assurance is a hard thing to grasp. Another thing that makes assurance hard to reach is selfishness which leads to a lack of faith. John knew that people struggle with this issue so one of the purposes for his writings was to give people assurance of eternal life. He wanted them to know the facts. He wanted them to know that they had eternal life if they believe in the name of the Son of God.

Context: (within John's epistle)

Eternal Life:

1Jn 5:10-13 (NIV)

(10) Anyone who **believes** in the Son of God has this testimony in his heart. **(the witness of the Holy Spirit within us)** Anyone who does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because he has not believed the testimony God has given about his Son.

(11) And this is the **testimony**: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

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

(13) I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.

First a simple outline of these verses reveals 5 truths about eternal life.

1. Belief in the Son of God gives us the witness of the Holy Spirit
Anyone who **believes** in the Son of God has this testimony in his heart.
2. God gives us eternal life
God has given us eternal life
3. If you have the Son you have eternal life
He who has the Son has life
4. If you do not have the Son you do not have eternal life
he who does not have the Son of God does not have life
5. You can know **(fact)** that you have eternal life

I write... **so that you may know that you have eternal life**

When we look at John's stated purpose of assurance; "I write... so that you may know that you have eternal life", in the context we see the importance of belief. Belief is the key to eternal life. In fact we will see this in other places as well. So if belief is a key factor in eternal life, then it is important to understand what John and the rest of the New Testament writers meant when they used the word belief.

Today: If we hear something on TV or see it on the Internet we believe it to be true. We receive e-mail messages all the time that contain what seem to be fantastic claims and we spread them around to all of our friends and acquaintances. However I have learned and I hope you have too, that most of what I see, hear, and read these days I would not rely on as important facts to base my life on. The research I take the time to do, proves most of the fantastic that I read about to be myth. I guess that is why the world thinks the Bible is a myth. Too much of what it claims seems too good to be true. It is how we are conditioned these days because often we have learned the truth the hard way. But the word believe in New Testament times carried a very different meaning.

Then: The Greek word for belief is "pisteuo" **Belief** (g4100, it means to be persuaded of something (as opposed to just hearing something and repeating it), it means to place your confidence in something, trust - Signifies reliance upon something, not mere credence. (This is dependence on something not just acceptance of it, and in this case depending on something that has eternal consequences.) CWS-NT To be firmly persuaded as to something.) So when I believe in the Son of God, this belief goes to the extent of reliance or dependence upon the fact that it is the Son of God that gives me eternal life. Belief is not just an acknowledgement and acceptance that something might have happened or might be true, but rather it is something I rely and depend on. John wants us to rely on the truth that the Son of God gives eternal life. This is a belief that does not just acknowledge the facts known but it is truth that is believed in a way that it changes a person's entire life. This change is not an instant conformity to rule and action but a change of the mind, attitude, and focus of a person's life direction. Priorities are changed so that one heads in a different direction with a different ultimate priority in life – the priority of Eternal Life. Throughout the New Testament you see this changed life theology in message and practice.

The Big Picture: (within the New Testament)

The importance of belief:

John 3:14-16 NIV In His conversation with Nicodemus Jesus said...

(14) Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, (speaking of the cross)

(15) that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.

(16) "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

This is the basis of salvation which leads to eternal life. When you and I believe in the Son of Man lifted up, this belief goes to the extent of reliance upon the fact that it is the act of being lifted up that gives me eternal life. Belief is not just an acknowledgement that something happened but that I rely on the act of being lifted up for eternal life. This is seen in many places throughout the New Testament. Here are just a few taken from John's writings.

John 3:34-36 NIV

(34) For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit.

(35) The Father loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands.

(36) Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him."

John 5:24 NIV

(24) "I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.

John 6:40 NIV

(40) For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day."

John 6:44-48 NIV

(44) "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day.

(45) It is written in the Prophets: 'They will all be taught by God.' Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me.

(46) No one has seen the Father except the one who is from God; only he has seen the Father.

(47) I tell you the truth, he who believes has everlasting life.

(48) I am the bread of life.

I wish we had time to go through all of the references that just the Apostle John makes to eternal life but we do not have that kind of time. It would be a beneficial personal Bible study for any Christian to embark on. When you do this study one thing will become overwhelmingly clear... to have eternal life you must believe in the Son of God.

Belief is not just an acknowledgement and acceptance that something might have happened or might be true, but rather it is something I rely and depend on. John wants us to rely on the truth that the Son of God gives eternal life. This is a belief that does not just acknowledge the facts known but it is truth that is believed in a way that it changes a person's entire life. This change is not an instant conformity to rule and action but a change of the mind, attitude, and focus of a person's life direction.

Priorities are changed so that one heads in a different direction with a different ultimate

priority in life – the priority of Eternal Life.

Practical Example:

The Woman at the Well:

John 4:4-14 NIV

- (4) Now he had to go through Samaria.
- (5) So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph.
- (6) Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about the sixth hour.
- (7) When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?"
- (8) (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.)
- (9) The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)
- (10) Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."
- (11) "Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water?"
- (12) Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his flocks and herds?"
- (13) Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again,
- (14) but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

John 4:28-30 NIV

- (28) Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people,
- (29) "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Christ?"
- (30) They came out of the town and made their way toward him.

John 4:40-42 NIV

- (40) So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days.
- (41) And because of his words many more became believers.

(42) They said to the woman, "We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world."

The woman at the well is a good example of one who believes and receives eternal life. Jesus used living water as a metaphor for eternal life. Let's look at the story a little more closely.

- - [Joh 4:6](#) "Tired as He was..." From a human perspective, Jesus is tired and thirsty, and He probably does not want to talk to the woman at the well about religion.

- - [Joh 4:9](#) The woman brings up a racial issue that captures Jesus' attention. You see Jesus has no qualms in violating the social and political taboos of talking to a woman and a Samaritan woman at that.

(- - See [Isa 55:1...](#); [Jer 2:13](#))

- - [Joh 4:11](#), [Joh 4:15](#) the woman thought the well she used every day was the well of life. "The well is deep and you have nothing that will reach the water." It is interesting that you could not just walk up to this well and get water out of it. You had to know to bring something with you to get water out of this well. In this way the town had restricted the use of their well.

- Why is it significant that this well was restricted? Why was it only for the village not for everyone?

- Compare it to the water Jesus is offering, it has no restrictions.

- - everyone can be healed, have eternal life (physical means to draw water does not matter, physical drink)

- - everyone has access to Jesus at all times (physical location does not matter)

- - His healing is not limited to physical healing (physical thirst is not the most important thirst)

Whenever one looks at any situation there are always things about that situation that are obvious. We tend to dwell on the obvious in our culture. Very rarely do we look deeply at something. In almost every situation, looking at the not so obvious is important. This is especially true in spiritual matters. For example, when we look at the encounter that Jesus had with the Samaritan woman at the well we see both the obvious and the not so obvious.

- the obvious

- - the woman was living in sin

- - she had access to all the water she could carry

- - she is religious knowing her own beliefs but also the beliefs of the Jews

- - she is politically correct and gender conscious, she knows her expected place in society

- the not so obvious
- - she was thirsty for more than physical water
- - she thought her sin was a secrete
- - she didn't know as much about religion as she thought
- - eternal life was within her grasp

From the encounter Jesus has with the Samaritan woman where He offers her living water...

John 4:10 (NIV) Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."

To the writings of John who tells us that we can know that we have eternal life...

1Jn 5:13 (NIV)

(13) I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know (fact) that you have eternal life.

To the words of Jesus that promise us peace...

John 14:27 (NIV) Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

We learn that by believing we have eternal life and the assurance of eternal life brings us peace within.

Have you believed in such a way that the direction and focus of everything in your life was and is being changed?

- - -