

# 1 John 5:13-15 The reason I write to you

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Let's pray.

Didn't Dave Bird do a superb job last week on the believer's assurance of salvation?

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If you weren't here last week and you would like to hear his message, then it is on our website where you can listen to it directly from the website or you can download it.

<http://cityedgechurch.com.au/welcome/media-archive/>

I said to him after he had finished that it was the best treatment I have heard or read on the subject, particularly the analogy of God giving us the Holy Spirit in our hearts as a deposit for eternal life and that if God does not come through on his promise then by rights he should forfeit the Holy Spirit in us which is inconceivable as he would then have to forfeit himself.

God has given us his Holy Spirit as a deposit or a guarantee of what is to come and I just want to take a quick look at two passages that speak about this deposit.

## 2 Corinthians 5:1-5

1 For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

2 For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling,

3 if indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked.

4 For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened--not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.

5 He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a **guarantee**.

## Ephesians 1:11-14

11 In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will,

12 so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory.

13 In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit,

14 who is the **guarantee** of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

The ESV uses the word guarantee and the NIV uses deposit. It could also be rendered as pledge.

The idea is that God has given the Holy Spirit to us as a pledge or deposit guaranteeing what is to come - eternal life.

The language of these passages is one of certainty. Here are just a few of the words Paul uses in regard to eternal life.

- Have
- Prepared us for
- Given us
- Obtained
- Inheritance
- Predestined or predetermined
- Sealed
- Promised
- Guarantee

Our eternal destiny and our earthly future are very secure in Him and we can have that level of confidence or assurance.

If our eternal security depended on ourselves then we would have no reason to have this level of confidence.

One of the strongest objections I have heard and experienced myself to this teaching on assurance comes from a perspective that believes that it cheapens God's grace and his gift of salvation and gives people license to keep on sinning and doing whatever they like while still claiming the name of Jesus.

This is a valid criticism and one that we should expect to hear. In fact it was Dr. Martin Lloyd Jones who once said that if we are not being accused of this very thing then we are not preaching the biblical gospel.

Paul also faced this criticism and had the following to say.

**Romans 6:1-23**

1 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?

2 By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?

3 Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?

4 We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

5 For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.

6 We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.

7 For one who has died has been set free from sin.

8 Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.

9 We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him.

10 For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God.

11 So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions.

13 Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness.

14 For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

15 What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means!

16 Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?

17 But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed,

18 and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.

19 I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification.

20 For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness.

21 But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death.

22 But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life.

23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

As I said last week that when I asked Dave to come and speak, he asked me what he should speak on, I said that he should hear from God and bring what God gives him.

Little did he know that one of the main verses he used is the very one that we were up to in our study of 1 John.

Let's finish off this morning by turning to it now.

**1 John 5:13**

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.**

For the believer there is and there should be a confidence in God that we have eternal life i.e. that it is our present possession as well as our future state.

This assurance was one of four main reasons why John was writing this letter.

The other three were:

**1 John 1:4**

And we are writing these things so that **our joy may be complete.**

**1 John 2:1**

I am writing these things to you so that **you may not sin.**

**1 John 2:26**

I write these things to you about **those who are trying to deceive you.**

John was writing to the church so that they could have confidence in what they believed and in whom they believed.

He wanted them to know that in Jesus they were secure and could live holy joy filled lives knowing that they have eternal life and that they should not be deceived by anyone.

John was combating a dangerous false doctrine that was beginning to spread toward the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century known as Gnosticism, which essentially denied the divinity of Jesus or that Jesus was God who had come in the flesh.

One such person was a guy called Cerinthus who John more than likely would have had in mind when he wrote this letter and guys like him were causing these Christians plenty of uncertainty about their faith to the point that this particular church experienced a split (1 John 2:19).

*Cerinthus distinguished between the man Jesus and the Christ. He denied the supernatural birth of Jesus, making him the son of Joseph and Mary, and distinguishing him from Christ, who descended upon him at baptism and left him again at his crucifixion. Cerinthus is also said to have taught that Jesus will be raised from the dead at the Last Day, when all men will rise with Him.*

(Source <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cerinthus>)

This sort of teaching flew directly in the face of what they had been taught and it was eating away at their confidence.

**1 John 5:14-15**

14 And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us.

15 And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.

This confidence about who we have believed in and what he has done for us affects everything in our lives, but particularly prayer. And if we ask anything according to his will he hears us.

**James 1:6-8**

6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind.

7 For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord;

8 he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

If we don't have a confidence in God when we pray we should not expect to receive anything from him in prayer.

Let's finish off this morning by taking communion and spending some time praying for each other.