

## BEING SECURE IN AN INSECURE WORLD” 9 / 6 / 20

I John 5:1-5, 11-12

INTRODUCTION — He was SIXTY YEARS OLD, and had worked for the company for 42 YEARS. He seemed to be on the track to FIVE FINAL YEARS with the company, giving his best to cap off a great career. BUT HIS BOSS CALLED HIM IN, and gave him a DIFFICULT CHOICE: EITHER RETIRE EARLY, at age SIXTY, or else take a lower paying job with the company, like he had 25 years earlier, and retire at age 65 with a much smaller pension. CORPORATE DOWNSIZING and COST-CUTTING MEASURES had come to CATERPILLAR TRACTOR COMPANY in 1978— and MANY OF THE THOUSANDS OF OLDER WORKERS WERE CAUGHT BY THE NEED OF MODERN COMPANIES TO TRIM THEIR EXPENSES— OR RISK GOING OUT OF BUSINESS. WITH CORPORATE DOWNSIZING, the DOT-COMs failing, the STOCK MARKET taking such HIGHS and LOWS—>> IS THERE ANY SECURITY IN THE WORLD??

I. IS THERE ANY SECURITY IN LIFE???

A. SECURITY— NOT IN THIS WORLD!!

B. The prophet ISAIAH said: “The grass withers, and the flowers fade....” (40:6a)

C. AND KING SOLOMON wrote in ECCLESIASTES 3: “There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot, a time to kill and a time to heal....” In other words: — CHANGE is the only CONSTANT!!

D. BUT- In spite of the INSECURITIES and CHANGES that always happen in this world— THERE IS A PLACE OF SECURITY!!

E. ISAIAH went on to say: “The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the Word of our God stands forever.”

F. IN JESUS CHRIST— THERE IS SECURITY!!! Jesus said to his disciples, just before he ascended into HEAVEN: “I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS, EVEN to the END of the WORLD.” (Mt. 28:20) SO.....

II. IS THERE SECURITY in our SALVATION??

A. How can we be SURE— that WE ARE: SAVED??

1. Is it POSSIBLE to know about salvation before we die?? — Most OTHER RELIGIONS in the world DO NOT TEACH about any ASSURANCE of SALVATION while we are here on earth.— ISLAM, for instance: ISLAM does not teach of ANY ASSURANCE of SALVATION. “The Muslim can never know if he is forgiven. ALLAH (their name for GOD) is UTTERLY UNCONSTRAINED, INDEED ARBITRARY, in His display of mercy. So there is ALWAYS FEAR in the Muslim heart, especially as he draws near to death. Always there is uncertainty.” 1 ( Michael Green )

— BUDDHISM — Has a wide variety of concepts about “Salvation” and eternal life. Some are borrowed from Hinduism. Other concepts are borrowed from other religions or philosophies.

— NOW — WE ARE NOT TRYING TO ATTACK or TRASH OTHER RELIGIONS or BELIEFS!! NOT AT ALL!!! — BUT ONE OF THE BELIEFS THAT ATTRACTED PEOPLE to the CHRISTIAN FAITH in the YEARS AFTER the RESURRECTION of JESUS, WAS the CONFIDENCE that CHRISTIANS HAD and SHARED, THAT THEY WERE CERTAIN of BEING FORGIVEN, and ASSURED of ETERNAL LIFE in JESUS CHRIST ! !

— HOW WOULD YOU LIKE IT IF YOU COULD NEVER BE SURE IF YOU WERE SAVED?!?

ALWAYS FEARFUL THAT GOD MIGHT CONDEMN YOU ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT??!??

2. AND what about the term: SAVED?? In I John, the crucial issue is BECOMING a CHILD of GOD!!! - JOHN— in v. 1: “Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God...” – What matters is that WE ARE GOD’S CHILDREN!! FOR, GOD’S CHILDREN have NOTHING to fear about ETERNITY!!!

3. AS FAR AS the term: “BEING SAVED,” we should PROBABLY speak of THREE TENSES of SALVATION— PAST, PRESENT, & FUTURE:

Past: — I “Have been saved...” from the PENALTY of sin by Jesus Christ’s death & resurrection; Present: — I am “Being saved...” (every day) from the POWER of sin, which leads me to sin— “Saved” by the INDWELLING HOLY SPIRIT;

Future: — I “Will be saved...” one day from the very RESENCE of sin when I go to be with God — for ETERNITY!!

B. How can we be SURE that we are SAVED?? 1. v. 2 — by LOVING GOD!! That is SURE & CERTAIN EVIDENCE that we are TRULY SAVED!! And how do we SHOW that we love God???? 2. v. 2 — by OBEYING His commandments!! 3. v. 3 — His commandments are not too HARD !! NOT TOO BURDENSOME! AFTER ALL, WHAT DOES JESUS INSIST ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT COMMANDMENTS????!! “ ‘Love the LORD your God with all your heart & with all your soul & with all your mind.’ And the 2nd is like this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law & Prophets hang on these two commands.” (Mt. 22:37-40, NIV)

4. AND, JOHN SAYS, “EVERYONE WHO LOVES THE FATHER LOVES THE CHILDREN AS WELL” (v. 1b). SO, LOVE FOR GOD IS “LIVED OUT” BY LOVING YOUR BROTHER & SISTER IN CHRIST!!!! AFTER SEEING THAT, ask yourself:

5. CAN TRUE CHRISTIANS: live immoral, “sin-filled” lives, FAILING TO LOVE OTHER CHRISTIANS, EVEN HATING OTHERS, and still be “children of God”???? REMEMBER— JESUS SAID, “BY THEIR FRUIT YOU WILL KNOW THEM.” (Matt. 7:16)

C. JOHN also tells us the RESULT of “Being Saved” —

1. v. 4 — we will OVERCOME the world!! – THIS MEANS that, by the POWER of the INDWELLING HOLY SPIRIT in our lives, WE SHALL OVERCOME SIN IN OUR EVERYDAY LIVES!! AND BE ASSURED of ETERNAL LIFE!!! 2. v. 5 — Who else can OVERCOME the world??

3. Years ago, when I was fresh out of school and a pastor for the FIRST TIME, TWO young ladies representing the JEHOVAH’S WITNESSES knocked on my parsonage door. WHEN THEY FOUND OUT I was a METHODIST PASTOR, they tried to use some New Testament Greek to argue their point. I finally just said, “Can you be certain you are SAVED for ETERNITY? Aren’t you SELLING WATCHTOWER papers TONIGHT because YOU CAN’T BE CERTAIN YOU ARE SAVED, and you HAVE TO WORK YOUR WAY TO HEAVEN??” She finally conceded that it was so.

4. IS THERE ANY RELIGION or PHILOSOPHY IN THE WORLD THAT PROMISES the DEFEAT of SIN & the OVERCOMING of THIS DESTRUCTIVE, SIN-FILLED WORLD????!?!?!

5. ONLY JESUS CHRIST PROMISES THAT!!! ON the night he was betrayed, Jesus spoke to his disciples & said: “In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have OVERCOME the world.” (Jn. 16:33, NIV)

6. ONLY JESUS CHRIST defeats SIN, SATAN, and JUDGMENT, and GIVES US the ASSURANCE of EVERLASTING LIFE!!!!

7. ONLY JESUS CHRIST gives us the POWER of the HOLY SPIRIT in our lives!!!

8. v. 11-13 — And: ONLY in JESUS CHRIST are we assured of ETERNAL LIFE!!

CONCLUSION — JOHN WESLEY— raised in a PARSONAGE in EPWORTH, ENGLAND, in early 1700's. Went to OXFORD UNIVERSITY.... Learned NT Greek, OT Hebrew; learned LATIN, GERMAN & FRENCH; studied MEDICINE (herbal medicine)Went into the MINISTRY to find the ASSURANCE of SALVATION..... Served as a pastor for a few years.... Then he returned to OXFORD UNIV. as a TUTOR, and Started the “HOLY CLUB” w/ his younger brother Charles, and Charles’ friends, including GEORGE WHITFIELD; Went to GEORGIA in 1736, to serve as a PASTOR to the ENGLISH colonists, and as a MISSIONARY to the AMERICAN INDIANS. ON THE SHIP OVER to Georgia, the MORAVIAN CHRISTIANS sang during a storm— Conversation on docks with AUGUST SPANGENBURG..... In Georgia, got involved with SOPHIE HOPKEY....“O LORD, I went to America to save the Indians, BUT WHO, O WHO, WILL SAVE ME???” BACK IN ENGLAND— more ORAVIANS, esp. PETER BOHLER..... Prayer meeting on Aldersgate St., London: MAY 25, 1738— “MY HEART WAS STRANGELY WARMED.....”

SPRING, 1739— the revival began in BRISTOL, ENGLAND. By his death in 1791, more than 100,000 people had heard and responded to the GOSPEL as preached by WESLEY and the preachers he trained over the years— and were ASSURED of their ETERNAL SALVATION!!!!

DOES GOD ASSURE US OF ETERNAL LIFE??? YOU BET HE DOES!!!