

## **TRIUMPHANT CERTAINTIES**

by Rev. G. Grant Verrdoold  
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### **TEXT:**

“9 If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God which He has testified of His Son. 10 He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son. 11 And this is the testimony: that 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 These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may *continue to* believe in the name of the Son of God. 14 Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. 15 And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him. 16 If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin *which does not lead* to death, he will ask, and He will give him life for those who commit sin not *leading* to death. There is sin *leading* to death. I do not say that he should pray about that. 17 All unrighteousness is sin, and there is sin not *leading* to death. 18 We know that whoever is born of God does not sin; but he who has been born of God keeps himself, and the wicked one does not touch him. 19 We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies *under the sway of* the wicked one. 20 And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may 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. 21 Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.” 1 John 5: 9 - 21

### **Background:**

John, the son of Zebedee, the “son of thunder”, the author of the 4th Gospel, the writer of this epistle calls readers back to three basics of Christian Life: true doctrine, obedient living and fervent devotion. In verse 13 he says, “These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may *continue to* believe in the name of the Son of God.”. I want you to highlight “These things”.

The language of the Gospel echoes across the whole epistle written by the same John who walked with Jesus!

This is the same John who stood at the foot of the cross when Christ was crucified. (John 19). The same man who, along with Peter, witnessed the empty tomb on the first Easter morning. (John 20). He travelled with Jesus into the city of Ephesus, where modern western Turkey now is. The disciple who laid his head on the bosom of Christ at their last passover meal. The same John who witnessed Christ’s miracles of healing and sat listening to HIS preaching of the Beatitudes. This same John also witnessed the horrors of the Roman Empire in the first century, the violent coups, assassinations, persecutions, overarching ambitions, civil wars and clashes between classes. This is the John boiled in oil and then abandoned on the isle of Patmos.

This John proclaimed GOD’s sovereign voice to the church, the holy scriptures in the right voice. Oh, my friends, GOD’s sovereignty is not negotiable!!!

“The twenty first century problems in a first century church.”, said William F. Cook III. These are what plagues Christians of every generation.

The sin of incest. “It is actually reported *that there is* sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is” 1 Corinthians 5: 1. Instead, “Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.” 1 Corinthians 5: 7.

Litigation between believers before unbelievers. "" 1 Corinthians 6. Instead, lay down your rights. "" 1 Corinthians 6.

The sin of self-deception. "But brother goes to law against brother, and that before unbelievers!" 1 Corinthians 6: 6. Instead, Glorify GOD with your body. "For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." 1 Corinthians 6: 20.

Celibacy, sexless marriages, divorce, virgins and widows. (1 Corinthians 7).

These deceptions began with the Gnostics of old and have developed into the secret orders of the Free Masons of today. Men who think that there is no truth, except what they claim is truth. Men who worship science and technology, mysticism and astrology instead of recognizing and honouring the real Truth of GOD Almighty!

Keep to the truth of The LORD GOD Almighty!!

### The HOOK:

It is remarkable how, throughout the whole epistle of 1 John, John continually uses the word, "KNOW". You can know the truth and the truth will set you free! "And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8: 32. John seems to have kept to this vital truth and declares over and over, "We Know".

In this age it is fashionable NOT to know anything, instead all you have to do is ask Siri or just "Google" it. There is no need for study. In this time when the professedly learned would hold us in a state of perpetual doubt, and poets tell us there is more faith in honest doubt, everyone seems to be bewitched with what is called Post Modern Thought. In this post-modern world, several horrendous things are going on. There is no objective reality, there is no scientific or historical truth, science and technology not a vehicle of human progress, and there is no longer a universal narrative.

Yet, there is something certain, some awesome grip for our anchor, a solid foundation to build our eternal hopes upon. YES! And that something can be trusted! That something is certain! That something is true! That something is faithful and sure!!

Going through this wonderful epistle you will feel the force of the verb, "KNOW"! Indeed you can know the truth, and I hope you can hear the truth today!

In the second chapter John says, "Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments." 1 John 2: 3. Later he will say, "I write to you, fathers, Because you have known Him *who is* from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you have overcome the wicked one. I write to you, little children, because you have known the Father. I have written to you, fathers, because you have known Him *who is* from the beginning.

I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, And you have overcome the wicked one." 1 John 2: 13 & 14. "But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things. I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and that no lie is of the truth." 1 John 2: 20 & 21.

Do you hear that? **Because you know it!** Do you see how often the concept of knowing comes through in this text?

And following this theme, the 3rd chapter tells us, "Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." 1 John 3: 1 & 2.

Can you hear the resounding tone of the vital truth pulsing off the pages? Do you hear the "We know" and "You know"? Why does he repeat it so often? Because he had the echo of his Master's words ringing in his ears!

Please recall how John laid his head upon his Master's bosom that night and caught his Master's spirit. "Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved." John 13:23. It was there that he caught his Master's words and thoughts! He felt the sway of his Master's passion and conviction. He could feel the holy, heavenly-sent convictions swirling from his Master's soul! He sensed the deep affection Jesus had, and HIS dedication and holy devotion for the things of GOD! He was awed by the outbreak of zeal Jesus had and HIS ardour and joy, even as it led HIM to the cross of Calvary, unblemished in the face of cruel and indignant men! John felt it! John experienced the unrelenting passion, the fire of his Master's conviction!

I sensed, as I read and re-read this epistle, how John the Apostle aspired ever more to Jesus' great call of, "Follow ME", pulsing in his heart!

"GOD's great grace is my goal! I cannot turn this way or that, or retreat from my pilgrim path. Martyred or not, it is GOD's will! My soul still shines with HIS eternal love!" (Anonymous Poet).

John, the beloved of Jesus, reproduces his Master more fully than any other apostle!

Listen to The Master's words in the 14th chapter of John. "4 And where I go you know, and the way you know." 5 Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?" 6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. The Father Revealed 7 "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him." John 14: 4 - 7.

What a glorious day to know HIM!! What a glorious time to know HIS love, HIS mercy, HIS peace and HIS power!

The words of Jesus had so fastened, so welded, so sealed upon John's mind, and had so deeply impressed upon his heart, that when his soul needed words, it caught which had rooted themselves so firmly among the most happy memories of his life! John, who had walked, talked, and sat at the side of Christ for 3½ years, was too intimate with HIM to doubt! John had too much heart to be a questioner. He was too earnest, too intense, too close, too dedicated, too sincere, to question HIM as Thomas did!

John's soul was like his LORD's, on fire with divine love and it burnt up the chaff of all doubt! Note how positive John is in this beloved epistle!

"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life—" 1 John 1: 1.

John does not hesitate, or fear, or doubt for one moment. This evidence is too sure, and his conviction is too firm! "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love." 1 John 14: 8

If the church of the present time would only love Jesus better, she would speak much more confidently about HIM! But where the dampness of chilled affection settles, the cold chill of doubt is sure to follow.

It is so true that the wintry nights of declining love to Christ! The frostbite of unbelief will bind the rivers of spiritual life!!

I pray the church of Christ will blaze with the enthusiasm of those who came before it! I pray you will catch the fire of passion for Christ that John had!! Renew your vows to HIM and look to HIM with a holy confidence!

### **The BOOK 1** - The Certainty of Eternal Life.

John's holy purpose in writing to these believers was to encourage them and provide them with a triumphant certainty in the midst of their very uncertain times! A time of violent coups, assassinations, persecutions, civil wars and clashes between classes brought on by the increasing domination of the Roman Empire, and the instability created by the overarching

ambitions of Domitian, the Roman Emperor from 81 -96 AD, who saw himself as enlightened, but he was, in reality, arrogant, cruel and paranoid!

Specifically, John wanted to provide them with triumphant certainty concerning their relationship with GOD! That is why his final remarks here in this wonderful letter are not just a random collection of thoughts, but rather a powerful conclusion to everything he has written.

“These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may *continue to* believe in the name of the Son of God.” 1 John 5: 13.

The phrase, “These things” refers back to everything John has written in this epistle (letter). He is simply saying that the main reason he wrote this letter is to give Christians absolute certainty about their relationship with GOD and the fact of eternal life!

It is interesting that this verse in John’s first epistle is such a close parallel to a passage in his Gospel (the Gospel of John). In the last 2 verses of chapter 20 he said this, “<sup>30</sup> And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; <sup>31</sup> but these are 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.

One of the precious bonuses of being a Christian is the wonderful hope that extends beyond the grave into the glory of GOD’s tomorrow!! Did you catch that? We have a wonderful hope that extends beyond the grave into the glory of GOD’s tomorrow!!

The Bible says that we are pilgrims and strangers in a foreign land. This world is not our home. Our citizenship is in heaven!!

The hope of eternal life rests solely and exclusively upon your faith in Jesus Christ!! Please!! Make no mistake about this!! Eternal life comes by and through The LORD Jesus Christ alone!

Life’s too short! Don’t delay! Have you given your heart to Jesus? Have you surrendered your life to Christ? I hope you have!! You can know HIM today!! You can have the hope of heaven right now!!!

The dying thief on the cross claimed this promise. “<sup>42</sup>Then he said to Jesus, “Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.” <sup>43</sup> And Jesus said to him, “Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.”” Luke 23: 42 & 43

Today is the day, my friend! Now is the hour! You can receive the hope of heaven in your heart!! “For *there is* one God and one Mediator between God and men, *the* Man Christ Jesus,” 1 Timothy 2: 5.

## **The BOOK 2: The Triumphant Certainty of Christ our LORD**

“And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may 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. Hallelujah!! “Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.” 1 John 5: 21.

In these verses we once again discover the main reason for John’s letter. He wants to make it clear that the ONLY way to KNOW the One True and Living GOD is through our LORD, Jesus Christ!! No-one can be saved who does not believe in Christ, for there is no salvation apart from HIM!!!

That’s why John says, in verse 20, that Jesus Christ is the True GOD and eternal life. What a triumphant certainty this is!!!

In light of all the other philosophies and religious ideas in the world, John will conclude by saying, in verse 21, keep yourselves from idols. In other words, guard yourselves from worshipping any other god than the One True GOD who has revealed Himself in the person of Jesus Christ!!

Do not be swayed by some "mystic mystery", some "secret knowledge". Salvation is not found in some ecstatic experience but is based on the fact of Jesus' life and testimony!!! The truth is found only in the Bible!!

What a fantastic word for us today in our digital Babylon! Like those to whom John wrote in the first Century, we live in a very pluralistic and secularist society that offers a lot of different religious viewpoints, opinions and ideas, especially when it comes to having a right relationship with GOD!!

Jesus made it crystal clear when HE, Himself, said, "Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." John 14: 6. Jesus did not leave any room for us to be inclusive when it comes to spiritual truth! HE was unapologetically exclusive about the way to heaven!! There is no middle ground when it comes to Christ because HE is the ONLY way!!

By HIS own admission, Jesus said, "I can't be just one way, or just a way to heaven."

HE is either the ONLY way, or HE is no way at all!!!

Have you chosen the right way? Have you sought Jesus? My friend, I hope so! Trust Jesus! Trust HIM wholly!! Let HIM renew you and fill you with the joy only HE can give!!

A.W. Tozer said, "Faith is the gaze of a soul upon a Saving GOD!"

### **The TOOK:**

Get ready for a grand conclusion here!!

Is there anything that gives meaning to our lives? Is there anything we can hold on to?

In the midst of changes certain things never change! The nature of GOD never changes! GOD does not change! In all the centuries past, GOD has never changed!

HE said, ""For I *am* the Lord, I do not change; Therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob." Malachi 3: 6.

The Bible declares, "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had formed the earth and the world, Even from everlasting to everlasting, You *are* God." Psalm 90: 2

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning." James 1: 17

GOD is a holy GOD!! GOD is a righteous GOD!! "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!" Revelation 4: 8b. That word, "holy" is given more prominence by being repeated 3 times. See the certainty in the Biblical proclamation that GOD will always be!

GOD is also unchanging in HIS love! Aren't you happy about that? "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Romans 5:8. How amazing! How wonderful! GOD loves us! HE has a radically, amazing love for each and every one of us!! HE is unrelenting in HIS grace and love for us!

And here is the best part, the way of salvation has not changed! The gracious word of GOD that changes not still declares, "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."" Acts 4: 12. The only way to GOD is still only through HIS Son, Jesus Christ!!

HE is the only one in history of whom it is written, "He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."" John 3: 36. Those are pretty powerful words from Christ Himself!!

If there is any doubt in your heart that you can know Christ today, Christ can, and will come into your life. All you have to do is ask HIM! Believe HIM! Give yourself to HIM! Trust HIM!!

I am not calling you to a church. I am not calling you to an organization. I am not calling you to a sophisticated philosophy.

I am simply calling you to the person of The LORD Jesus Christ!  
HIS truth is a triumphant certainty because it is impossible for GOD to lie!  
This is not about a religion. This is about a personal relationship with Jesus Christ!!  
Find this certainty and you will say with John, "He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life." 1 John 5: 12. That's the life that Jesus gives, unending, everlasting life, to the fullest! Jesus is waiting to give it to you today!  
Charles Spurgeon said, "If your theology doesn't change your behaviour, it will never change your destiny!" Do you hear that? Think about that!  
Christ not only died for all, HE died for each! HE died for you!  
Knowing that we will be with Christ forever far out-weighs the burdens of today!  
Keep your eyes on Christ!! In my whole life, through all sorts of trials, turmoil and attacks from the devil, friends, I have never known anyone to accept Christ's redemption and later regret it!  
Find that wonderful truth, my friends! Start walking in that triumphant certainty!!  
Amen!!