

OPEN BIBLE CHURCH

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SERMON TITLE

Now You Know

SERIES**DATE**

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KEY SCRIPTURE

1 John 5:13-20

SYNOPSIS

In a world of confusion and uncertainty, there are still some things that we can know for sure.

HIGHLIGHTS



🔑 NOW YOU KNOW

The famous preacher and founder of the Methodist church, John Wesley, once said, “When I was young I was sure of everything. But after a few years, having been mistaken a thousand times, I was not half so sure of most things as I was before. And at present, I am hardly sure of anything except what God has revealed to me”

I think most of us can sympathize with Wesley. We just live in a world of uncertainty filled with unclear messages. Of course, the undisputed champion of muddled messages is Hall of Famer and former manager of the New York Yankees, Yogi Berra. Just a few of his better known “yogi-isms” include statements such as:

- *Baseball is 90% mental. The other half is physical.*
- *Nobody goes there anymore; it's too crowded.*
- *You gotta be careful if you don't know where you're going, because you might not get there.*
- *You should always go to other people's funerals, otherwise they won't come to yours.*
- *When you come to a fork in the road, take it!*

Sometimes the things people say are rather confusing, aren't they? On the other hand, our confusion doesn't always stem from what others are saying; sometimes we become confused because we just don't quite communicate clearly.

The story is told of a photographer for a national magazine who was assigned to get photos of a big forest fire. Wanting to take some aerial pictures, he asked his home office to hire a plane. They made the arrangements and told him to go to a nearby airport, where the plane would be waiting for him. When he arrived at the airport, there was a plane warming up by the runway. He jumped in with his equipment and yelled, “Let's go! Let's go!” The pilot swung the plane into the wind and they were soon in the air. “Fly over the north side of the fire,” yelled the photographer, “and make three or four low level passes.” “Why?” asked the pilot. “Because I'm going to take pictures,” cried the photographer. “I'm a photographer and that's what photographers do!” After a pause the pilot said, “You mean you're not the flight instructor?”

Like I said, we live in a confusing world. At a time when TV screens are filled with competing political advertisements, disagreements about foreign policy, and all kinds of news reports based on false information, we wonder: “Just what do we know for sure?” Well, in a world of confusion and uncertainty, the Apostle John writes to us about some **things that we can know for sure**.

🔑 1 John 5:13-20 NLT

13 I have written this to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, **so that you may know** you have eternal life. 14 And we are confident that he hears us whenever we ask for anything that pleases him. 15 And since we know he hears us when we make our requests, we also know that he will give us what we ask for. 16 If you see a Christian brother or sister sinning in a way that does not lead to death, you should pray, and God will give that person life. But there is a sin that leads to death, and I am not saying you should pray for those who commit it. 17 All wicked actions are sin, but not every sin leads to death. 18 We know that God's children do not make a practice of sinning, for God's Son holds them securely, and the evil one cannot touch them. 19 We know that we are children of God and that the world around us is under the control of the evil one. 20 And we know that the Son of God has come, and he has given us understanding so that we can know the true God. And now we



live in fellowship with the true God because we live in fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ. He is the only true God, and he is eternal life.

In this world of confusion and false information—when scientists are constantly changing their theories and politicians change their stances—John assures us that there are some things that we can know for sure. He mentions several certainties in these nine verses.

☞ OUR PROMISE

John begins by saying, “I have written this to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that ☞ you may know you have **eternal life**” (1 John 5:13 NLT).

As believer in Jesus Christ, we can know that we have the promise of eternal life. God has gone on record in His Word as offering eternal life to everyone who believes in Jesus Christ. This is God’s promise, and we can count on God’s promises. Listen to just a few of the verses in the Bible that assure us of eternal life:

☞ John 3:36... “He who believes in the Son has eternal life”

John 5:24... “he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life”

John 6:40... “everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life”

John 6:47... “Truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life”

Romans 6:23... “the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord”

Eternal life is a gift; it’s not something that we earn. We receive eternal life not only from Christ, but in Christ. Verse 12 says, “He who has the Son has life.” Christians need never worry nor be confused on this issue. If you are in Christ—a child of God—then you can say with confidence that you know you have eternal life.

In times of confusion, in times of loss, in times of desperation, the first truth of which we can be certain is God’s promise of eternal life.

☞ OUR PRAYERS

In the next verse John tells us that **God hears us** when we ask anything according to His will. And, he goes on to say that we have what we asked of Him.

It is one thing to know that we have eternal life in heaven through Jesus Christ, but what about the needs and problems of daily life? Well, that’s where prayer comes in. Now, in my experience, I don’t always get what I ask for. Do you? As far as I can tell, there are four different answers that God will give concerning our prayers. First, sometimes God’s answer is **direct**. Sometimes I get exactly what I ask for.

Sometimes, however, God’s answers are **delayed**. Sometimes you pray for something and it doesn’t happen right away; it’s delayed. Maybe you start to wonder if God was listening. But then, later on down the road, you get your answer.

At other times God’s answers are **different**; you ask God for one thing and He gives you something else. It may have to do with a career, or move, or a relationship. Sometimes we’re taken by surprise when we get something completely different, but with God, it’s always best.



And then, on occasion, our requests are **denied**. Sometimes you ask God for something and His answer is no. Paul asked three times to have his “thorn in the flesh” removed; God’s answer was no. Sometimes He tells us no as well.

So how can John say we know that God hears us and gives us our requests? What is John’s formula for prayer that moves the hands of God? John was very specific—only “if we **ask** anything **according to His will**... we have the requests which we have asked from Him.” Pray in line with His will and you can pray with confidence!

Do you know why Jesus always got His prayers answered? He always desired the will of God. Prayer is not about getting my will done in heaven, it’s getting God’s will done on earth. God always says yes when our requests are in line with His desires. To pray effectively, then, we need to determine God’s will. And what is that? Consider this: most of God’s will is already found in the pages of Scripture!

If God has commanded a certain attitude or action, we can be confident that is how God wants us to live. So, turn the commands of God’s Word into requests. Make the prayers found in God’s Word your own. Pray God’s promises back to him. By using the Scripture as the basis for your prayer life, you’ll be sure to pray in a way that honors God and then you can know that His answer will be yes!

☞ **OUR PROTECTION**

John goes on to say in verses 18-19... We know that God’s children do not make a practice of sinning, for God’s Son holds them securely, and **the evil one cannot touch them**.

Christians still sin, but don’t make it a regular practice. We fall short just like everybody else. But we have something the rest of the world doesn’t. We have Jesus. Jesus protects us from Satan and from ourselves, keeping us from that dark path that leads to eternal death. But that doesn’t mean Satan won’t try to lead us astray. He tells lies, as he did to Eve, and when people believe his lies they turn away from and disobey God’s truth. Or, Satan may inflict physical suffering, as he did with Job. Satan is like a serpent that deceives and a lion that devours. He’s a formidable enemy.

☞ But **Satan is still no match for Jesus**. The Son of God has your back. He’s looking out for you—keeping you out of trouble and safe from Satan’s attacks. God gives us power to overcome, because He will never permit us to be tested beyond our strength.

Romans 8:37

in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

The assurance of God’s protection is the guarantee of ultimate victory!

☞ **OUR POSITION**

John says, “We know that **we are children of God**.” Have you ever pondered the significance of being a child of God? You hold a precious position in God’s eternal family. Isn’t that incredible? God wants a family, and He created you to be a part of it!

The entire Bible is the story of God building a family who will love Him, honor Him, and reign with Him forever. When we place our faith in Jesus, God becomes our Father, we become His children, other believers become our brothers and sisters, and the church becomes our **spiritual family**. Christians aren’t just called to believe, we’re also called to belong.



Every human being was created by God, but not everyone is a child of God. That's a special position held only by believers. The only way to get into God's family is by being born again into it. You became a part of your human family by your first birth; you become a part of God's family by your second birth.

In truth, your spiritual family is even more important than your physical family because it will last forever. Our families on earth are wonderful gifts from God, but they're temporary and fragile. On the other hand, our spiritual family—our relationships with other believers—will continue throughout eternity.

Plus, the moment you were spiritually born into God's family, you were given some astounding birthday presents: the family name, the family likeness, family privileges, intimate family love and acceptance, and the family inheritance! The Bible says, "And since you are his child, God has made you **his heir**" (**Galatians 4:7 NLT**). In other words, everything He has belongs to you!

1 Peter 1:3-4

3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade — kept in heaven for you,

Revelation 21:7

7 He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son.

There may be a million things which we aren't sure about, but according to John there are at least a few that we can be sure of. We can know beyond any doubt that our promise, our prayers, our protection, and our position in Christ are all a sure thing.

Tony Campolo recalled a deeply moving incident that happened during Jr. High week at a Christian camp. Even though this was a Christian camp, many of the campers were not, and many who were did not act like it. They treated one of the campers, a boy with spastic paralysis, with heartless ridicule. Whenever he would ask a question, the boys would deliberately answer in a halting, mimicking way. One night his cabin group chose him to lead the evening devotional before the entire camp. It was one more effort on their part to have some fun at his expense. Without hesitation, the boy stood up, and in his strained, slurred manner—each word coming with enormous effort—he said simply, "I know Jesus loves me, and I love Jesus!" That was all he said, but no one laughed—there was absolute silence, broken only by the sound of some of the boys beginning to cry. Something wonderful happened in the hearts of the campers that week, and it was all because of his simple testimony, "I know Jesus loves me, and I love Jesus."

In this world of so much uncertainty, do you know that you know... that Jesus loves you? And, do you know for sure that you love him? If not, today would be a good day to get that cleared up. Jesus is waiting for you to come to him. He's welcoming you into his family and he's offering you an eternity in heaven with him.