



Sunday school at 9:30, Service at 10:30 with King's Kids.

NEWS

No Wednesday Night Classes on December **22** & **29**, 15th Yes, 22nd & 29th No.

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I JOHN 5:13, These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.

This verse concludes the last section - essentially verses 5-12. Almighty God desires His children to have _____ in this life.

John uses the idea of believing in the name of Jesus. Not only is it the whole person, it stands for that person's _____. Belief in Jesus must encompass His _____.

Having eternal life is different from receiving it later on. For the Christian eternal life begins _____. Eternal life is not living forever - it's _____. It's allowing Heaven to exist in you today. Eternal life is _____. It's effective when we spend it. Prayer is the mechanism. Time is the currency. Because prayer is _____.

I JOHN 5:14&15, ¹⁴This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. ¹⁵And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him.

Fill out the other side, detach this part of the page, and place it in the offering plate or the prayer/suggestion box in the lobby or with an Elder or Deacon of the church.

God Bless You!

There are Bible verses that give the impression that whatever we _____ for in faith, we will receive, no questions asked.

The Kingdom of Heaven _____ where God's Will is done. As His children, knowing, loving, trusting Him, we should recognize that He knows all things and He is perfectly _____. To ever think we could ever know better than Him is...

Why pray then? Prayer isn't about getting your will done in _____, it's about getting your will aligned with His. Here God is explicit. He _____ you.

I JOHN 5:16-18, ¹⁶If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, he shall ask and God will for him give life to those who commit sin not leading to death. There is a sin leading to death; I do not say that he should make request for this. ¹⁷All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not leading to death. ¹⁸We know that no one who is born of God sins; but He who was born of God keeps him, and the evil one does not touch him.

When we remove the caveat, the command is to pray daily for your brother committing _____.

The caveat: Don't bother praying for those brothers on the road to death. Brothers means fellow Christian. What does "Leading to death" mean? What is the sin that leads to death?

When a child of God sins in this God _____ them as any good parent would. As a fellow child, never interfere with the Father's discipline of your siblings.

I JOHN 5:19&20, ¹⁹We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. ²⁰And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding so 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.

I JOHN 5:21, Little children, guard yourselves from idols.

Write a brief note – detach and place in the offering, or the prayer box, or give it to a Deacon or Elder.

Name _____ Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____



1 John

Love one  another

Advent **2021** **4th Sun.**

*For You
are my hope,
O Lord God*

Psalm 71:5



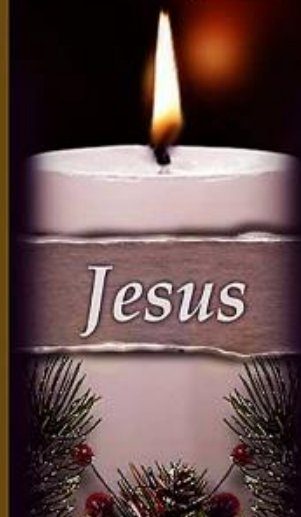
*For God so loved
the world that
He gave His only
begotten Son*

John 3:16



*And the Word became
flesh and dwelt among
us, and we beheld
His glory*

John 1:14



*And you will have
joy and gladness,
and many will
rejoice at his birth.*

Luke 1:14



*"Glory to God in
the highest, And
on earth peace,
goodwill
toward men!"*

Luke 1:14





I John 5:13, These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.

⁵Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

⁷For there are three that testify: ⁸the Spirit and the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement...

¹⁰The one who believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself...

¹¹And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. ¹²He who has the Son has the life...

This verse concludes the last section. The “things written,” referred to here, are the things that we talked about last week - essentially verses 5-12. The point here is that Almighty God desires His children, well that’s you and me, to have assurance in this life.

Your Heavenly Father wants you to know, by instruction, by evidence, by experience, and by trust in Him, that you are His. He wants you to be convinced of your parentage and so of your status, standing, condition, and position. That’s the reason He had John write.

Again, John uses the idea of believing in the name of Jesus. Not only is it a metonymy that means the whole person, in this usage it stands for that person's character and what they represent. In this case, what John is stressing, is that this belief in Jesus, must encompass His work. It is a belief in all that Jesus stands for and all that He has accomplished and all that He will yet complete. It is, at the end of the day, a faith in Him as destroyer of sin and death, as founder of righteousness and life, as Lord and Savior forever.

That's not at all possible if you believe in the wrong Jesus. While perfect theology and doctrine are not prerequisites for Salvation - a reasonable Christology is. You must accept the Savior God gave, not some facsimile of human invention.

When you do accept Jesus for Who He truly is, rather than for who you wish He was, then and only then, can you be filled with the eternal life that only He can grant.

Remember, verses 11&12 just stated that "God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son."
Therefore, "He who has the Son has the life."
Possesses that eternal life.

Having, holding, possessing eternal life is different from receiving that life later on. For the Saved person eternal life begins at the moment the Holy Spirit invades their being. When God accepts you into His family as His beloved child because of faith in the completed work of Jesus the Holy Spirit indwells you and eternal life begins. The Kingdom of Heaven within you is established.



What is the Kingdom of Heaven? It is where God's Will is completely unopposed - whatever He Wills in Heaven, done on earth - done in your life. That's obedience. Obedience comes from trust. Trust comes

from knowing God relationally, which is knowing God through love. Love that comes from Him and love that is commanded by Him and that's obedience again. Can you see it?

Eternal life is not living forever - it's not, not dying. Eternal life is connection to God. It is relational. It's allowing Heaven to exist in you. It is living in His love. Now, let me say that again. Eternal life is living in His love and that begins now, not later.

When we live in His love, we return His love to Him and we begin to share it with those in our Christian family and then, when God's faithfulness proves to you that His love supply for you is in no danger of running out, you share His love all the more.

If we keep the cycle going, we eventually share His love with everyone He puts in our path, saved and unsaved alike, but in different ways. Our goal in loving the church is akin to the Biblical concept that "Charity begins at home" (I Timothy 5:8, etc.). As I've said, "If you cannot love the people under your own roof, any love for the people in this room is a lie, and if you cannot love the people in this room, any love for the

people out there is a lie. If you insist you love others, but cannot actually love those nearest, you are a liar, according, not to Scott, but to God.” It’s easy to send a check to Ethiopia, how about taking someone across the room out to lunch? Our goal in loving the lost is the hope that they will be found.

Eternal life is living in His love and that is only ever effective when we spend His love. Cycle through the loop.



I’ve alluded to it, and actually stated it, a few times over the past months; prayer is the mechanism. There was a great lie perpetrated on the American people in the

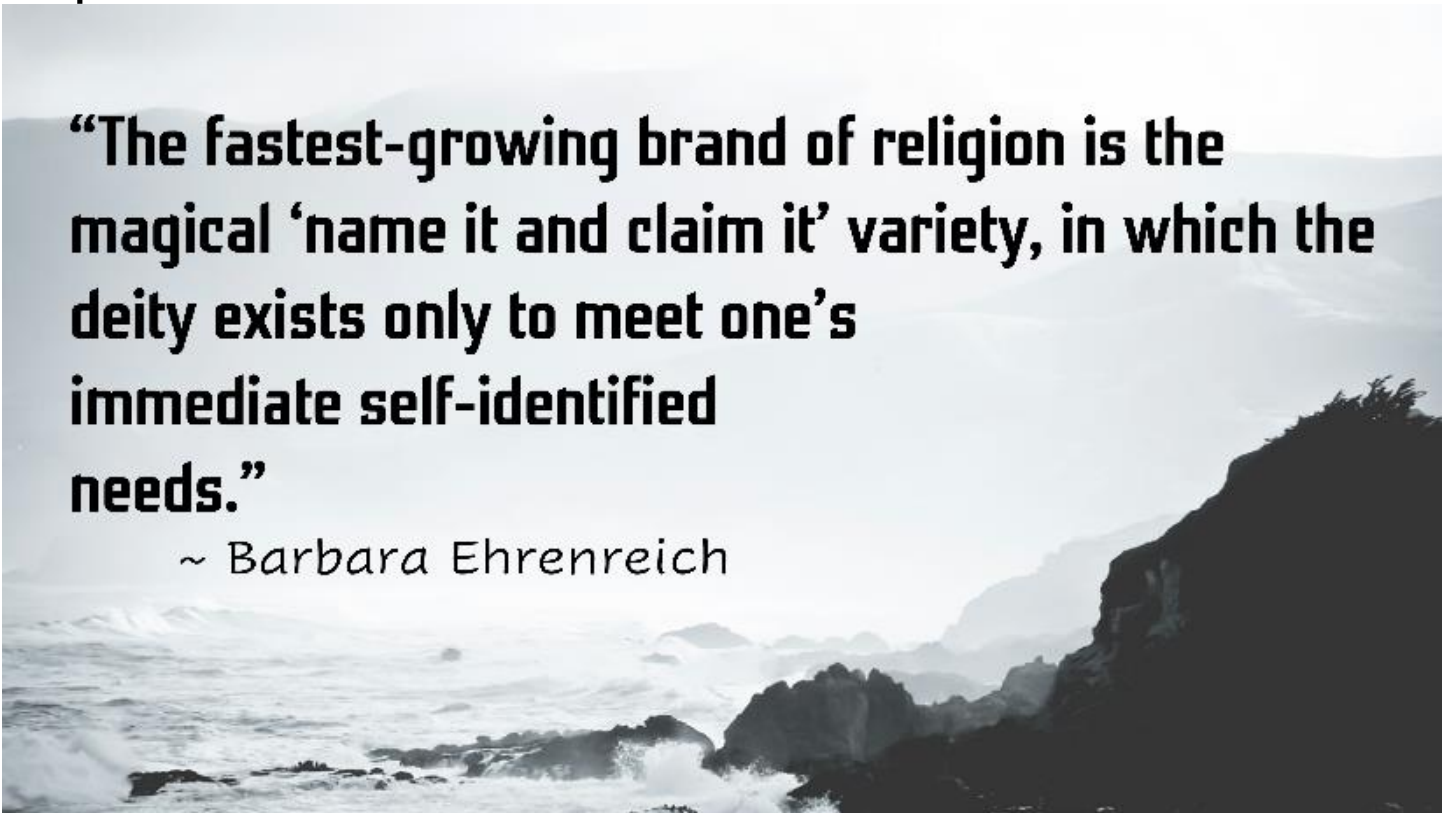
1970's that sought to relieve the guilt of those selfishly choosing to neglect their own children. It was that quality time was more important than quantity time. It started with women's liberation. The first explicit use I could find was a 1973 quote, "A woman's right and responsibility is to be self-fulfilling," To do that "She gives 'quality time' rather than 'quantity time' to each task, whether work or, cleaning the house, or tending the children." We then used it to mitigate any guilt over divorce - an inevitable outworking of liberation. It was okay if the kids only saw dad two weekends a month, as long as it was quality time.

Told a lie often enough and it's difficult not to believe it. Here's the truth. Quality time is the natural result of quantity time. The more time spent the better the chances that some will be of high quality, but it turns out that more time is more important than high quality. The reality is just the opposite of the lie we were fed. Quantity time is better than quality time.

Why am I talking about this? Prayer is relational. You cannot have a great relationship with God by rarely praying even if you think that occasional time is high quality. The only way you will ever cycle through the

loop of love is to actually love and the place that starts in spending quantity time with God. There is no substitute for time. Love God by spending time in His presence. Yes, you can get to a place where all of your time is in His presence, but I'm telling you time intentionally in His presence is required even then - pray.

I John 5:14&15, 14This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. 15And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him.



“The fastest-growing brand of religion is the magical ‘name it and claim it’ variety, in which the deity exists only to meet one’s immediate self-identified needs.”

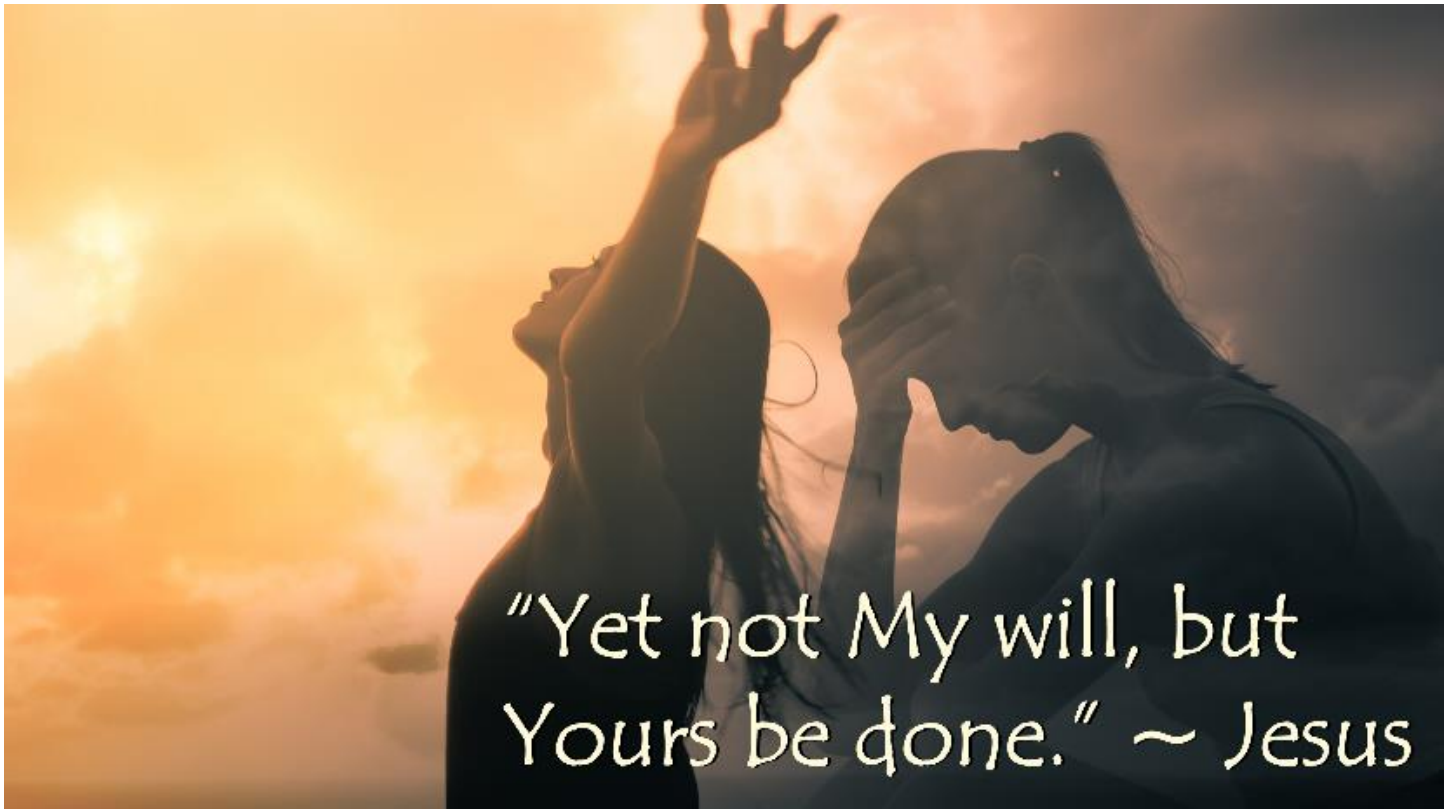
~ Barbara Ehrenreich

That is prayer. People get confused about prayer because Jesus plainly said, "Ask and you will receive." Then in Mark 11:24, "Jesus said, "Therefore I say to you, all things for which you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and they will be granted you." There are similar verses that give the impression that whatever we ask for in faith, we will receive, no questions asked. The problem is the Bible was never written in verses. When we understand the context there is a very clear caveat to all prayer requests. God's Will.

That should be obvious. The Kingdom of Heaven exists where God's Will is done. As His children, knowing Him, loving Him, trusting Him, we should naturally recognize that whatever His Will, it must be far superior to our own. He knows all things and He is perfectly Good. To ever think that a human, or that all humans collectively could ever know better than Him is hubris of the highest sort. Talk about arrogant stupidity.



There is a concept of a good witch. Unlike her evil sisters, she only uses her power for good. Who's definition of good? Hers, of course! The most noble, beautiful and good witch imaginable, uses magic to do good as she appraises what is good. By definition, it is getting her will done in Heaven, rather than God's Will done on earth. Can you see that every Christian pleading with God to do what they believe is good, rather than what He knows to be good, makes them no different than a witch?



Prayer is never about getting God to perform your will over His own, because that would actually be God doing evil. For God to do the lesser good, to appease a person begging for that lesser good, is evil and there is no evil in God, nor should we ever pressure God in that direction.

Why pray then? God's Will is perfect, I pray for His Will to be done. It will be done regardless. So, why pray? Prayer isn't about getting your will done in Heaven, it's about getting your will aligned with His Will so that you're both on the same page. Beyond that, it is about accepting that even though the human you might

disagree, you know that God is right. He's right, not necessarily because you understand, but because you trust.

Examples help. A small child is dying of some horrific disease, you pray for their healing. How could it not be God's Will that such a person be healed? You may never understand a no answer, but you can trust that God knows what He's doing... If you know Him well enough you will.



A Taoist Proverbial story goes like this: A farmer and his son had a beloved stallion who helped the family earn a living. One day, the horse ran away, and their

neighbors exclaimed, “Your horse ran away, what terrible luck!” The farmer replied, “Maybe so, maybe not. We’ll see.”

A few days later, the horse returned home, leading a few wild mares back to the farm as well. The neighbors shouted out, “Your horse has returned, and brought several horses home with him. What great luck!” The farmer replied, “Maybe so, maybe not. We’ll see.”

Later that week, the farmer’s son was trying to break one of the mares and she threw him to the ground, breaking his leg. The villagers cried, “Your son broke his leg, what terrible luck!” The farmer replied, “Maybe so, maybe not. We’ll see.”

A few weeks later, soldiers from the national army marched through town, recruiting all the able-bodied boys for the army. They did not take the farmer’s son, still recovering from his injury. Friends shouted, “Your boy is spared, what tremendous luck!” To which the farmer replied, “Maybe so, maybe not. We’ll see.”

Here God is explicit. “If we ask anything according to His will.” That literally mean that if you can ask anything in keeping with His Will and He will grant it...



That's amazing, but what's far more amazing is that He hears you. Please don't miss that bit. Ask anything in accord with your Heavenly Father and He, your papa God, also known as the Lord God Almighty, Creator of the Heavens and the earth... Hears you. Not listens to you, not is aware of a noise ringing in His ears. He hears you.

Knowing that the Ancient of Days, the Beginning and the End, hears little ole you, should drive you to pray constantly. In fact, the construction here, coupled with the prologue of the Gospel written by John, and the words of Jesus, all combine to remind us that this is a

daily confidence. It is expected that we daily pray for the Will of God to be done on earth just as it is in Heaven. A recent poll showed that only 45% of Americans pray daily. It should be 100%. Pray daily for His Will. But what is His Will? What are we to talk with Him about?



I John 5:16-18, 16If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, he shall ask and God will for him give life to those who commit sin not leading to death. There is a sin leading to death; I do not say that he should make request for this. 17All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not leading to death. 18We know that no one who is born of God

sins; but He who was born of God keeps him, and the evil one does not touch him.

The gist is, “If anyone sees his brother committing a sin... he shall ask and God will for him give life to those who commit sin... That’s all that’s going on in the opening bit when we remove the caveat. I don’t want you to get distracted. The command is to use your time having the ear of God to pray for your brother committing sin. As part of your daily time with your Heavenly Father actively pray for your fellow Christians whom you actually see sinning. You see a brother or sister committing sin, pray for them. Not only is that love, it enables unity.

If the command was, confront every sin you see in everyone else, it wouldn’t be long before there wouldn’t be anyone else around you to worry about. Recognize your own faults, your own mercy received, and pray for others. Do that. It’s a command, not a suggestion.



The caveat: Don't bother praying for those brothers on the road to death. What does it mean? If you are like most Christians, your interpretation will correspond to your predetermined doctrinal indoctrination, not to the actual textual and contextual meaning. I want you to know that there are really smart people looking into these things, but the problem is that most of them already have an ingrained bias and simply cannot see another way to look at the issue.

Please don't be like that. Please allow God to show you His Truth, rather than only seeing through the lens of your preconceived ideas.

This passage is a war zone of competing ideas and it's completely unnecessary. Let's fix that, at least for us. "Brothers" means fellow Christian - specifically those in your life - in your church family. We can't change the consistent meaning of a word in a Letter just because we don't like the implication.

What does "Leading to death" mean? In this Epistle it could legitimately mean physical death, as in Ananias and Sapphira. Spiritual death, as in the Lake of Fire. Or relational death, as in failure to live eternal life now - failure to love as commanded and therefore inability to experience the Spirit-filled life. In the first and third, the person still goes to Heaven - maybe. Obviously in the middle one, not. No chance for the middle deal.

The whole issue, like so many we encounter is a conundrum of our own making. What John was saying is so unbelievably simple. It never required the weird ideas about venial and mortal sins, or the "Unforgiveable sin." We didn't need to see in it more support for the unbiblical Confessional, and certainly could have done without the Calvinistic

misinterpretation of “Brother,” and the Arminian misinterpretation of “Leading to death.”

What did John just say? He explicitly said, just as the Bible has it everywhere, that God hears us and answers our prayers in the affirmative when our prayers are in keeping with His Will.

It is the exact same concept here praying about a brother or sister you actually see sinning. Pray for them. God hears you and God acts as you wish because it is His Will. Sometimes it is not His Will.

What? Hold that thought. Sometimes it is not His Will, we'll circle back. If it is not His Will, He does not hear and does not answer affirmatively - so do not pray about that. That's the point.

People think it's too harsh and they say well we are not commanded, not to pray for such people, so we can if we wish... Wrong. We are commanded not to pray for them. It may not seem like a command the way it's translated, but in Greek it goes along with the initial command to pray for your sinning brother and so this is

essentially do not pray for the sinning brother if their sin is “Leading to death.”

What is the sin that leads to death? That’s just it, there isn’t one. John made sure to use phrasing that at first seems sloppy and ignorant, but upon further examination holds the key. This is not about the unknowing venial transgressions versus the mortal, seven deadly sins, or even about the unforgiveable sin, this is about a character of sinfulness that left unchecked is identical to that which results in death in all three arenas, physical, spiritual and relational.



When a child of God sins in this way - when they are off the reservation, God begins punishing them as any good parent would, to save them. God will use as much force as it takes to bring them back - do not, as a fellow child, interfere with the Father's discipline of your siblings. They are far beyond your help - far beyond your prayers for gentle nudging. They are in the hands of a jealous God - He's going to do whatever necessary to bring them back to the fold - stay out of His way.

He then carries that thought out further. "No one who is born of God sins." Again, it confuses people. John was not senile. He didn't forget what he wrote just minutes earlier. He is not saying that Christians do not sin, in fact, he's saying the opposite. Don't pray for Christians suffering God's punishment due to serious sin. Do pray for Christians foolishly, mistakenly, unknowingly sinning.



“All unrighteousness is sin.” And we are all unrighteous at times, but no one born of God sins unto eternal death, because “God keeps him.” This is the last stanza of the Lord’s Prayer. “Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.” If you have been reborn as a Holy Spirit filled child of God, He will keep you and the evil - evil within and without, physical and spiritual, general and particular - evil cannot take you from Him. He may have to get aggressive with you to bring you back, but He will.

I John 5:19&20, 19We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.

20And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding so 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.

Assurance. The entire world system is corrupt. I find it incredible that Christians think that any political system can ever be otherwise. The notion that there can be a genuinely good government is a humanistic idea, not a Christian one. For the Christian, this world is not our home.



Knowing that gives assurance that you belong to the King. We know Truth came and dwelt among us. We

know Truth personified as the Son, as the Christ, as Jesus and He is the “true God and the eternal life.”

Remember the prologue of this Letter? I John 1:1-3, 1What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life— 2and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us— 3what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.

Here, John reaffirms what He said to open and more than doubles down. This is one of the clearest Biblical statements concerning the deity of Jesus. He is the true God and the eternal life. Remember that last week we saw the clearest statement concerning Jesus' humanity. He is both fully God and fully human simultaneously. As the latter He was tempted in every way - He knows our plight. As the former He was able to remain sinless - He could pay our debt.

To entertain a thought otherwise, is idolatry... I John 5:21, 21 Little children, guard yourselves from idols.