

“The Gift of Certitude”

1 John 5:13

December 22, 2013

S.T.L.

K-Mart Christmas (2006)

Fisher Manor Christmas ([link to Barre in 2014](#))

Intro: **VIDEO** - *“It’s the Most Wonderful Time”*

Question:

How about you?

What’s your REAL reason for the season?

What do you KNOW about Christ, Christmas,
Christians, & the Church?

What are you **absolutely CERTAIN** about
when it comes to Christ, Christmas,
Christians, & the Church?

NOTE: The order of thought behind my question is important...

Because....

If you don't KNOW Christ... you won't "get" Christmas...

AND

If you don't KNOW Christ or GET Christmas... you'll
neither "BE" a Christian nor "get" the Christians...

AND

If you don't KNOW Christ, GET Christmas, and you're not
BEing a Christian... you'll likely be confused (if not
corrupted) by the professing, cultural church...

Praise God..... That's in part why we read 1st John
and celebrate Christmas!

God the Father, God the Son, & God the Holy Spirit want you
to KNOW with unshakeable certitude, what you NEED to
KNOW about Christ, Christmas, Christians, & the true
Church... because He loves YOU!

My prayer this morning is that you will see the interwoven
and unbreakable truths that unify Christ, Christmas, and ALL
Christians (*which IS the Church*)...

Christmas = the Incarnation Celebration!

Certitude: *“certainty, assurance, freedom from doubt”*
(Webster’s 1828 Dictionary)

1 John 5:13 parallels Christmas
C.H.R.I.S.T.M.A.S. Acronym & 1 John 5:13...

C	=	Caring & Coming	Commo
H	=	Hope	Content
R	=	Real-deal redeemed/Redeemer	Contrast
I	=	IN-Christ	Christology
S	=	Son (the ONE Son)	Christ
T	=	True Theos (true God)	Creator
M	=	M. M. M.	Cause
A	=	Absolute Assurance	CERTITUDE
S	=	Saved by the Savior	Christ, Christmas, Christian(s), Church

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

1. Caring:

C = "I have written"

Compassionate Coming/Communication

"Pastoral" heart is evident...

1st John:

Christ-mas/Church

John's ministry

Jesus' ministry

Jeff's ministry

John Piper's ministry...

Quote from Piper as he preached: 1 John 5:6-13

I wanted to be with a certain member of our church when he died...

When I went back to see him the nursing home was quiet on the fourth floor... I sat down beside John's bed and took his ninety-year-old hand. His glazed eyes were half open and his breaths seemed like mechanical responses to an electric respiratory

pacemaker that someone forgot to turn off when everything else had shut down.

But you never know. Had he already been freed from the body to be at home with the Lord? Perhaps... Not sure, and wanting to be with him when he died, I prayed: "Lord, take him now. Lift him right out of my hands. Let me hand him over to you—like a faithful private carrying one of his slain sergeants back to the commander." But he kept on breathing....

I love to be with the saints when they die. It's as though I get to walk up to a door that for most people is very far away, and for some very frightening. I have two motives. I want to keep vigil against the devil who loves to terrorize the saints at the hour of death. I want to stand by the wounded and fight for them with the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. I want to see them safely through the door.

But I have another motive for wanting to be with the saints as they die. I have the hope that someday I may get a glimpse through the door. I think that if I stand guard often enough, I might see something of what Paul saw when he said, "To depart and be with Christ is far better." I can't help but think that when a soul departs from the life of a saint, Christ himself draws very near.

You sit there waiting for each breath to be the last. And your mind turns to the sermon you must preach on Sunday. You recall that it ends with the verse, "I write this to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life."

And you pray, "O Lord, what can I say to the people on Sunday that will make them feel the immensity of the value of eternal life?" If only I could bring every one of them with me to this moment. If only they could all stand here and listen and watch while I recite the glorious gospel into the wrinkled ear of my friend John...

T/S: You see, I have served in 3 funerals over the last 9 days...

I KNOW what John Piper, John the Apostle,
and Jesus, the Christ meant!

2. Content:

H = “these things”

Help & Hope (content = clarity vs. confusion/corruption)

1st John:

- 1 Passion
- 2 Priorities
- 3 Pillars
- 4 Purposes
 - a. Promote Koinonia
 - b. Prevent Sin
 - c. Protect vs fakes
 - d. Provide Assurance
- 5 Proofs

Christ-mas/Church

- Christ-mas = Easter
- His body, bride, children
- John 14:6
- “I came that...”
 - a. ...will have life
 - b. ...set you free
 - c. ...Matt. 10:16
 - d. ...in My hand...
- Obedience = true love!

VIDEO: *“Heart, Soul, & Mind”*

3. Contrast

R = "to you who believe"

Real-deal redeemed (per the One Redeemer)

1st John:

Christ-mas/Church

light/dark

sheep/goats/wolves

obey/disobedient

followers/fakes

worshippers/worldly

gatherers/scatterers

true vs. false spirits

1&2 Cor. 2:14 & 4:4

always-Christ's vs. antichrists

Full armor of God

children of God

"...by your love..."

vs.

children of the Devil

koinonia vs. corruption!

4. Christology

I = "in the name"

IN-Jesus

1st John:

Christ-mas/Church

5. Christ

S = “of the Son”

Son (only Son of God – John 3:16)

1st John:

Christ-mas/Church

6. Creator

T = “of God”

Theos (the One TRUE God)

1st John:

Christ-mas/Church

VIDEO: *“Christmas Interview w/ Satan”*

7. Cause / (Purpose)

M = “so that”

Motivation.... (the cause/purpose(s))

1st John:

Promote Koinonia

Prevent Sin

Protect vs fakes/liars

Provide Assurance

Christ-mas/Church

M.M.M

Gospel of John = Salvation / Availability

1 John = Sanctification / Assurance

8. Certitude

***A = “you may KNOW
that you HAVE”***

Absolute Assurance

This verse is the thrust of 1 John...
and this phrase is the thrust of this verse...

“KNOWING that you KNOW God is everything!” – JDP

1st John:

Christ-mas/Church

Odd

Know

Obvious

Grow

Obsessed

Go!

Over-comers

BE = believe & behave!

VIDEO: *“Christmas Messy Plan”*

He came... lived, & died for humanity’s mess...

We are to live, love, & leave life the same way!

NO MATTER WHAT!

Illustration: Account of **Erik & Dream!**

9. Church!

S = “eternal life.”

Saved by the Savior!

Those saved by the Savior = ekklessia in koinonia

1st John:

Christ-mas/Church

2:28

Ephesians 2:8-10

5:13

Matthew 28:18-20

“eternal” = Quality > Quantity

“life” = “in-Him” & Holy Spirit in-you!

Exponential Blog Quote: Derek Vreeland (pastor & author – *Primal Credo* and *Shape Shifters*)

“...with this approach—inviting people to follow Jesus and be His disciple—we will not see the outward, numeric success seen by other groups getting people to “make decisions.” But I have repented of measuring success by numbers and desiring success at all. I have turned away from ambition and success and instead turned towards faithfulness

and fruitfulness. I want to make disciples of Jesus. I want to make *more* disciples of Jesus. I want to see people following Jesus and allowing the Holy Spirit to conform them into the image of Jesus. Instead of making a decision for Christ to *get* saved, I want to see us following Jesus and finding ourselves *being* saved

Salvation's ever-challenged, never-changing story...

Genesis 1:1

Genesis 3:15

Isaiah 53

Jeremiah 31:3

Nativity

John's baptismal announcement

John 9

John 15 (abide)

John 17:21

Matthew 24-25

Promise to the thief...

"It is finished"

Angel's declaration at the empty tomb

Acts 1:8

Neighbors to Nations!

Revelation 21

T/S: In closing....

How do Christ, Christmas, Christians, & the Church all
come together?

What can we KNOW with Certitude about the unifying
truth that these 4 share?

1 John 5:13 says it all...

*I have written these things to you who believe in the name
of the Son of God so that you may know
that you have eternal life.*

The best 3 gifts every Christian/Church receives are:

1. Christ
2. Certitude
3. Commission

Christ's overwhelming (Christmas) gift is His overcoming
provision of the gospel's guarantee!

Those of us who have really received these gifts of God
are to do our best to help give them away....

To that end, we will close our service today with our special, annual, Lottie Moon Christmas/Missions offering...

After I pray we will shut down the live stream because there will be a video playing that was created in a “closed” country...

- You will see real faces of real people we’ve touched
- You will see real IMB missionary activity
- You will see what cannot be legally seen in places...
- You will see God at work in us and thru us...

- You will see God inviting YOU to join Him – Amen!

Let’s Pray

Lottie Moon Offering / **VIDEO:** Send-Amen!

VIDEO: “I Have Decided to Follow Jesus”

Additional reference: [Ligonier Ministries Blog:](#)

That You May Know

“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” (1 John 5:13).

The early church fathers who give us much of what we know about the immediate post-apostolic age of the church tell several stories about the later years of the apostle John. One of these stories relates John’s unwillingness to be in the same bath house in Ephesus with a certain false teacher named Cerinthus. It is said that when Cerinthus entered the bath house one day, John fled, warning people God might cause the walls of the building to collapse in judgment on the heretic.

While this story may or may not be true, it is clear from early church history that Cerinthus promulgated false teachings that troubled many Christians. He denied the incarnation of the Son of God, saying the spirit of the divine Christ came upon the human man Jesus at His baptism and left Him shortly before His death. This falsehood was one of the many varieties of docetism that plagued the early church and threatened the orthodox confession of the full deity and full humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This Cerinthianism may have been one of the reasons why John wrote his first epistle. In any case, it is clear some people were troubling John’s audience with their denials of the incarnation. Thus we have seen John assert repeatedly that the divine Son really did become incarnate as Jesus of Nazareth (see 5:6–12). With these affirmations, John wanted to make sure to refute the false teaching then current in the church.

However, as today’s passage shows us, the primary purpose for John was not to refute false teachers but to impart the assurance of eternal life to his orthodox audience. Some believers had been troubled by the false teaching and had doubts about their salvation, even though they had successfully resisted the heresy (2:19). As a faithful pastor, John wrote to reassure them of

their faith.

We may also doubt at times. However, as we see in today's verse, God does want us to know we have eternal life, and if we love the brethren, obey God, and confess the incarnation, we can be sure we are born of God's Spirit (5:1–5).

Coram Deo

Many theological traditions deny we can be assured of eternal life. Roman Catholicism, for example, denies absolute assurance is possible for any except the greatest saints of the church. But as we can see today, God does want His children to know for certain they have eternal life. Do you love the brethren, seek to obey God, and confess the incarnation and yet lack assurance? If so, ask the Spirit to testify clearly with these things that you are a child of God.

Passages for Further Study: [Job 19:25–26](#) [Jer. 24:7](#) [John 20:30–31](#) [1 John 3:24b](#)