

1 JOHN: DISCERNING TRUE FROM FALSE SPIRITUALITY

Part XVII: True Spirituality's Greatly Edifying Assurances

(1 John 5:18-21)

I. Introduction

- A. As he closed his epistle, the Apostle John provided edifying spiritual assurances that equip the believer to live in great peace and confidence amid a lost, troubled world that is dominated by Satan.
- B. We view those assurances in 1 John 5:18-21 for our insight and edification (as follows):

II. True Spirituality's Greatly Edifying Assurances, 1 John 5:18-21.

- A. We believers are assured that we can live holy lives regardless of the world's depravity about us, 1 John 5:18:
 - 1. 1 John 5:18 begins with the statement, "We know . . ." to convey the sense of an assured awareness.
 - 2. That truth of assurance from God is that whoever has been permanently spiritually born (*gegennemenos*, perfect passive participle of *gennaō*, "to be born," The Analyt. Grk. Lex. (Zon.), 1972, p. 76, 79) of God, implying that salvation is wholly the work of God and not man (passive voice) with resulting unconditional salvation security (perfect tense), does not sin, 1 John 5:18b. Since 1 John 1:8-10 already taught that every believer has a sin nature and has sinned since salvation, that about which John writes here in 1 John 5:18 is the **new nature** in the believer that has been permanently born of God: that **new nature** is *unyielding* to sin! (John G. Mitchell, Fellowship: Three Letters From John, 1974, p. 162-163)
 - 3. Thus, the believer in Christ has the capacity provided by God to live totally separate from the sin of the world around him regardless of the depth of the world's depravity, 1 John 2:1; Romans 8:3-4.
 - 4. 1 John 5:18c adds that this new nature, being unyielding to sin, is also thus unyielding to the Evil One, to Satan. The one who is begotten (*gennethēs*, U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 825) of God is not Christ in this verse, for John nowhere else refers to Christ in using this verb that means to sire or to give birth to a party (Ibid., The Analyt. Grk. Lex., *gennaō*; Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 903), but John rather referred to the new nature that God creates in the believer at regeneration, Ibid. Thus, the new nature cannot be even "touched" (*haptō*, Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 102) by Satan, meaning the new nature itself is unyielding to demonic possession and Satanic control.
 - 5. Accordingly, the believer by a life of faith that boycotts the old sin nature will live above even Satan's influence on him all due to the spiritual provisions God has given the believer at regeneration!
- B. We believers are thus assured that we can live immune to the control of the world and Satan, 1 John 5:19:
 - 1. Introducing 1 John 5:19 like he introduced verse 18 with another "We know . . ." phrase, John added that we believers in Christ have assurance that we are of God as to our spiritual origination in the new nature given us at salvation, and that the whole world system conversely "lies in the power of" (*keimai*, Ibid., p. 427-428; Theol. Dict. of the N. T., 1974, v. III, p. 654) the Evil One, that is, Satan, 1 John 5:19.
 - 2. Where the whole world is helplessly vulnerable to Satan's ideological, theological and spiritual influence much as an infant that lies helpless in the arms of his mother and her control, the believer's new nature is utterly immune to such helpless vulnerability to Satan! Thus, by utilizing the spiritual resources given him at regeneration, the believer lives above personal helpless vulnerability to Satan and the world!
- C. We believers are assured that we can discern that we are spiritually positioned in God Who is true, which position also certifies that we possess eternal life, 1 John 5:20:
 - 1. The last "We know . . ." phrase states we believers know the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding that makes possible a knowledge of the true God and the understanding that we are positionally in that true God and in His Son, Jesus, Who is God, 1 Jn. 5:20a,b,c.
 - 2. That awareness also gives assurance that one has eternal life which resides in Christ, 1 Jn. 5:20d; 5:11-12.
- D. Based on these greatly edifying assurances, 1 John 5:21 calls us believers to avail ourselves of the blessings of those riches by keeping ourselves from false substitutes for the Lord lest we suffer spiritual defeat in our walk.

Lesson: *By God's creation of the new nature in us, we can live a holy life regardless of the surrounding world's depravity and Satan, we live free of Satan's possession so that we can live above even Satan's influence and not be helplessly vulnerable to his false ideology, work and power, we have an understanding of the true God and His Son, Jesus Christ and understand that we are in Him and thus possess eternal life. Since these assurances are realized only if we relate properly to God, may we keep ourselves from idols, from substitutes for the true God.*

Application: *May we apply the spiritual resources given to us in Christ by relying on the true God versus idols.*