

(T) Welcome to **Discipleship training On The Air**. In this meditation and memorisation series you may learn to become a disciple of Jesus Christ. Two teachers will meditate on the meaning of a Bible verse about one characteristic of a disciple of Jesus Christ and then memorise it together. As you listen to this programme, make notes in a notebook or record the programme. In the first series God promises that all Christians may have 5 assurances. The topic of today's meditation and memorisation is: A DISCIPLE IS SURE OF HIS SALVATION.

POINT 1. MEDITATION OF THE NEW BIBLE VERSE

The new Bible verse that we will meditate and memorise is 1 John 5:11-13. We will ask one another questions to help us to meditate on the truths written in the Bible. Please read 1 John 5:11-13.

(S) 1 John 5:11-13. And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.

(Question). Who is the Son of God?

(T) The term "Son of God" does NOT refer to a common misunderstanding that Jesus is a physical son of God. It rather expresses the thought that the invisible God himself took on the human nature and entered into his creation and into human history in and through Jesus. The Bible speaks of three kinds of "sons".

First. The term "son" refers to a physical son or descendant. John 3:6 says, "Flesh gives birth to flesh." It says that a physical child is born from physical parents. Although Jesus was born as a physical person from his physical mother, *the virgin* Mary, his physical nature was NOT derived from any physical father. Jesus was not begotten in any physical sense, because God does not have a body. The physical body of Christ is not God's body. The physical body of Jesus was created by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35). Mary was a virgin and her child was a completely pure boy. This means that Jesus was absolutely without sin.

Second. The term "son" refers to a symbolic son. The term "son" has the meaning of "having the essential characteristics of" and "belonging to". In Psalm 89:22 a bad person is called "a son of wickedness". He has a wicked nature and belongs to the group of wicked people. In Luke 16:8 the believers are called "sons of the light". They have the essential characteristics of light and belong to the group of people who always walk in the light. In Galatians 3:7 the believers are called "the sons of Abraham". Just like Abraham, they are justified by faith and not by keeping the law. The Bible uses symbolic expressions to help us understand when it speaks about God. For example 2 Chronicles 16:9 says, "The eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth". Isaiah 59:1 says, "The arm of the Lord is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear". God does not have a body or physical eyes, ears and arms, but God does see us, hears our prayers and saves us with his mighty acts.

Third. The term "son" refers to a spiritual son. John 3:6 says, "Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit." The Bible clearly differentiates between a physical son and a spiritual son. Jesus is not the physical son of God, but the spiritual Son of God. Jesus possesses the essential divine nature of God and also possesses the human nature. The invisible God revealed himself visibly by taking on the human nature and entering into this creation and this human history.

(Question). The Bible verse begins with the words "And this is the testimony". What is a testimony?

(S) A testimony is an account of what a person has seen, heard or experienced. A person who gives a testimony is called a witness. In his testimony the witness must tell the truth. He must tell everything he knows. A false testimony is severely punished in every court. Moreover, a testimony reveals something the people did not know before. Therefore, a testimony is a truth that is revealed!

(Question). How does the witness tell his testimony?

(T) The witness does not whisper the truth into the ear of the judge. The witness must say everything loud and clearly, so that everybody in the court may hear his testimony. A testimony is always given in public, because all the people must know the truth. A testimony is a truth that is revealed to the public. It is a truth that everyone in the world should know!

(Question). Who is giving a testimony in 1 John 5:11-13?

(S) It is God who gives this testimony, because in verse 10 he says, "Anyone who believes in the Son of God has this testimony in his heart. Anyone who does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because he has not believed the testimony God has given about his Son." This testimony is God's testimony. The apostle John wrote this testimony down in the Bible, so that all generations of people may know it. And everyone who believes in Jesus Christ keeps this testimony in his heart. But the testimony is originally God's testimony! It is as if God stands up in the courtroom of the whole world and reveals a truth that everybody should hear. The Bible says that God cannot tell lies. Therefore it is important that we understand the contents of God's testimony.

(Question). What does God say in his testimony?

(T) In his testimony, God says that he *gives* eternal life to people. He says that this eternal life is *in Jesus Christ*. He also says, that whoever *has* Jesus Christ, has eternal life and whoever *does not have* Jesus Christ, does not have eternal life.

(Question). If God would give you a loaf of bread, then you would know what God gave you. But now God gives you eternal life. What is this “eternal life” that God is giving to people?

(S) I think that this eternal life must be a *new* kind of life. Eternal life is a *wonderful* life, a *meaningful* life, a *challenging* life, an *exiting* life and a *satisfying* life! And because it is eternal, it is a life that never ends. And because *life* is always more than mere *existence*, eternal life must be a very special kind of life!

John 17:3. “Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.” This eternal life is not merely knowing God, but *knowing God personally and intimately*. Eternal life is a personal and intimate relationship with the living God through Jesus Christ. It is a life together with the living God through Jesus Christ. Whoever has eternal life, lives with God through Jesus Christ now in this world. He will live with God during death of the body and during the resurrection of the body. He will also live with God in heaven and on the new earth forever and ever!

(Question). How does God give this eternal life to people?

(T) 1 John 5:11-13 says that this life is *in God’s Son, Jesus Christ*. Therefore God gives this life to people only through one person in history, namely, Jesus Christ. Let me tell you an **illustration of the Bible and one of its pages**. “My Bible is *one* book, but it has many pages. If I want to give you a particular page of this book, then I could do one of two things: I could tear this page out and give it to you or I could give the whole Bible to you. Because I do not want to destroy the holy Bible, I give the whole Bible to you. Now you not only have that particular page, but you also have the whole book with all the pages in it!” In this illustration, every page in the Bible represents another heavenly blessing! God gives eternal to people in the same way. Jesus Christ is like the whole Bible and eternal life is like the one particular page in the Bible. God will *not* give this one page to you apart from giving the whole Bible to you. God will *not* give eternal life to you apart from Jesus Christ. He will not give you any heavenly blessing apart from Jesus Christ (Ephesians 1:3). God will only give blessings to you and me in and through Jesus Christ! Therefore God gives Jesus Christ to us! Jesus Christ is God’s gracious gift. Just like there are many pages in the one book, likewise there are many blessings in Jesus Christ. When God gives Jesus Christ to you, then he also gives all his blessings to you in Jesus Christ. Eternal life is only one of these blessings. Other blessings in Jesus Christ are forgiveness of sins, a clean conscience, belonging to God’s family, love in your heart and a living hope for the future!

(Question). Can people obtain this eternal life by any kind of personal effort?

(S) No. The Bible says, that God has *given* eternal life to believers. Eternal life is God’s gracious and free gift. You cannot give money to God or to the church or to a church leader and then buy this eternal life. You cannot bribe God to give you this eternal life. You cannot negotiate with God or make a bargain with God to sell you this eternal life. You cannot do good works and earn this eternal life. You cannot do daily prayers and other religious practices in order to deserve this eternal life. You cannot make any big sacrifice to move God’s heart to give you eternal life. There is absolutely nothing that you can do by your own effort to get this eternal life. The Bible says clearly that God *gives* eternal life. Eternal life is God’s gift!

(Question). Then how can you get this eternal life?

(T) I can get this eternal life by *receiving* God’s gift. By receiving the whole book, I also receive that one particular page. By receiving Jesus Christ, I also receive eternal life. In order to have the Son of God, I must receive the Son of God. In order to have Jesus, I must receive Jesus.

(Question). How can anyone receive Jesus?

(S) The Bible says, that a person must believe in his heart and confess with his mouth. He must believe in his heart that Jesus died for his sins and that Jesus was resurrected to give him a new life. Then he must use his mouth, pray and ask Jesus Christ to come into his heart and life. And he must confess with his mouth that Jesus Christ is from now on his Saviour and Lord. Anyone who does not believe in Jesus Christ does not have eternal life. Without Jesus Christ, a person is still dead. He is spiritually dead. One day his body will also die. And finally he will be thrown into the eternal fire, which is called the eternal death.

(Question). How can you be sure that you have eternal life?

(T) 1 John 5:13 says, that if I believe in the Name of the Son of God, I may *know* that I have eternal life. I believe in Jesus Christ. Therefore I *know* that I have eternal life!

(Question). Why is it important that the Bible says, that you may “know” and not “feel” that you have eternal life?

(S) If the assurance of my salvation was dependent on my feelings, I would never be sure if I am saved or not, because my feelings keep changing. 1 John 5:13 does not say that when I believe, I will “feel” that I have eternal life. The Bible says, when I believe, I will “know” that I have eternal life. And because I may “know”, I

am sure of my salvation! I may be very sure that I have eternal life, because *God said* it and because I *did what God said*. Assurance of salvation is based on God's testimony and my belief of God's testimony! God said that he gave me eternal life in Jesus Christ. I accepted Jesus Christ and now I know that I have eternal life. My feelings may change from time to time, but my knowledge about what God has said does not change! God's testimony is written in the Bible and that testimony does not change. God's testimony written in the Bible is the solid foundation of our assurance of salvation.

(T) POINT 2. MEMORISATION OF THE NEW BIBLE VERSE

The method of memorising a new Bible verse has four steps:

Step 1. Meditate and understand the Bible verse before you memorise it.

Step 2. Write the Bible verse on a card or in a notebook. Write topic at the top. The topic today is "Assurance of salvation". Beneath that, write the Bible reference of the verse. The Bible reference today is 1 John 5:11-13. And beneath that, write the whole verse.

Step 3. Memorise the verse in the right way. Always start with the name of the topic, the Bible reference and the first line of the verse. It is a good practice to learn the Bible reference twice, first at the beginning of the verse and then at the end of the verse.

Step 4. Review the new Bible verses every day for five weeks. And review the old Bible verses at least once every three weeks.

(S) Let us memorise the Bible verse together. Then let us take turns to say that part of the verse alone without looking at the Bible or notebook.

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(S) Why is it important to memorise Bible verses without one mistake?

(T) Because it is very hard to unlearn mistakes that you have memorised. Moreover, it is much easier to memorise and review, to recall and use Bible verses when you have memorised them without one mistake.

(T) POINT 3. ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK

First. Review Assurance of salvation: 1 John 5:11-13 once every day for 5 weeks.

Second. See the workbooks "Go and make disciples" and Internet on www etc.

Third. Listen on short wave radio every SATURDAY to WEDNESDAY to "Discipleship training on the air".