

#FIWOGC2117#QUPC-SYS#BT

(The Assurance of Victory, ch. 3 of 4)

1 John 5:13-17

Tape GC 2117

## CHRISTIAN CERTAINTIES

### Part 1

#### Introduction

We live in a world of uncertainty and doubt. Everyone struggles with uncertainty. When you buy a car, there is some uncertainty about whether it will run well, so you request a guarantee. For almost everything we buy, we ask, "Does it have a warranty and how long is it?" There is the uncertainty of life and health; as a result, much money is spent on insurance. We are purchasing protection against something that has not happened yet. There is the uncertainty of employment, so we have unemployment insurance. Even the government provides some insurance for us in an uncertain world.

#### A. The Certainty of Christianity

One of the great truths of Christianity is that it is certain. The world doesn't have certainties, but Christianity has absolute certainty.

##### 1. The Bible reveals certainties

One interesting Bible study is to take a concordance and look up the words "sure," "surely," and "surety" to find out what is actually sure; then look up "certain," "certainly," and "certainty" and you will find some fascinating things. For example:

a) Numbers 32:23--"Be sure your sin will find you out." That is a certainty.

b) Psalm 19:7--"The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple."

c) Proverbs 11:18--"To him that soweth righteousness, shall be a sure reward."

d) Job 34:12--"Surely God will not do wickedly."

e) Isaiah 53:4--"Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows."

f) Isaiah 55:3--"Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David." This passage is speaking about the sure mercies of God.

g) John 6:69--"We believe and are sure that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." The deity of Christ is sure.

h) John 16:30--"Now are we sure that thou [Christ] knowest all things."

i) John 17:8--Jesus said, "I have given unto them [the disciples] the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee."

j) Romans 2:2--"We are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth." You can be sure God will judge righteously.

k) Romans 4:16--"It is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed." The promise of salvation is sure.

l) 2 Timothy 2:19--"The foundation of God standeth sure."

m) Hebrews 6:19--"Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast." Christ is that sure anchor in the soul of man.

n) 2 Peter 1:19--"We have also a more sure word of prophecy." Scripture is that more sure word.

o) Revelation 22:20--Jesus said, "Surely I come quickly."

These are just some of the things Christians can be sure of. They are just a sampling of what is said in Scripture that is a certainty. Christians deal in absolute certainties.

## B. The Conclusion of the Apostle

John ends the formal argument of his letter in 1 John 5:12 and gives his concluding remarks in verses 13-21.

### 1. His message

John's concluding remarks are unlike Paul's customary farewell in that John does not use personal amenities or greetings. His conclusion is a powerful climax to everything he has stated in the epistle. John has given certain tests to identify false teachers, antichrists, and deceivers. His purpose is two-fold: to unmask the unreal and to reward the real.

#### a) Unmask the unreal

One of the things that happens in testing the faith of those who claim Christ is finding out who isn't really a believer.

#### b) Reward the real

The true believers who pass the test can say, "I'm for real!" The same test that reveals the unreal gives confidence to the real Christians, which is exactly what John wants them to have.

### 2. His motive

John stated his purpose in writing this epistle on three separate occasions.

a) Absolute joy

First John 1:4 says, "These things write we unto you, that your joy may be full."

b) Absence of sin

First John 2:1 says, "These things write I unto you, that ye sin not."

c) Assurance of eternal life

First John 5:13 says, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life."

3. His mandate

First John is a book of certainties. John writes that if you obey God, you can have certainty.

a) Certainty as seen in John's epistle

We see the English word know thirty-nine times in this epistle, and seven times in 1 John 5:13-21. You get the idea after looking at all these references that Christians have a great deal of certainty. Life isn't a guessing game. God wants us to be certain of some things. In a world where people really do not know anything for sure, the certainties in the Bible are revolutionary.

b) Certainty as seen in the Old Testament

(1) Job 19:25-26--"I know that my redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." The resurrection of our bodies is a certainty.

(2) Job 42:1-2--"Job answered the Lord, and said, I know that Thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withheld from thee." Christians can be absolutely certain that God knows all things.

(3) Psalm 20:6--David said, "Now know I that the Lord saveth His anointed."

(4) Psalm 56:9--David also said, "When I cry unto thee, then shall mine enemies turn back: this I know; for God is for me." God is on the believer's side.

(5) Psalm 119:75--The psalmist said, "I know, O Lord, that Thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me." If a person suffers in doing what is right, that is good and if he is chastised by God, it is deserved.

(6) Psalm 135:5--The psalmist said, "I know that the Lord is great, and that our Lord is above all gods."

(7) Psalm 140:12-13--David said, "I know that the Lord will maintain the cause of the afflicted, and the right of the poor. Surely, the righteous shall give thanks unto thy name; the upright shall dwell in thy presence." It is certain that God will save His people.

(8) Ecclesiastes 3:14--Solomon said, "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever; nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it; and God doeth it, that men should fear before him."

c) Certainty as seen in the New Testament

(1) Romans 7:18--Paul said, "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing."

(2) 2 Timothy 1:12--Paul here said, "I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day,"

1 John 5:13 says, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know [Gk. oida] that ye have eternal life." John has given certain tests to unmask the unbeliever, but also to give certainty to those who know the truth. Oida is used six times in 1 John 5:13-19. It refers to a positive, absolute, knowledge. It is a guarantee outside the realm of human experience, and those who are true believers can rejoice in certainty.

**Lesson**

1 John 5:13-17 gives five certainties of the Christian life.

I. THE CERTAINTY OF ETERNAL LIFE (v. 13)

"These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God."

God wants us to know we have eternal life. Some have said you cannot really know for sure about eternal life, but the Bible says you can. The best available manuscripts do not include the rest of verse 13, so the verse probably ends after the word life. The phrase translated "that ye may know" is in the present tense and refers to the moment you believe, you have eternal life. What an exciting thought! The Christians whom John wrote to may have been unsettled by false teachers, perhaps doubting their own salvation. But John writes his epistle to assure his readers that if they follow the pattern he prescribes, they will know they have eternal life.

A. The Definition of Eternal Life

Many have wondered what eternal life is. When I was little, I thought eternal life was simply doing forever in heaven what we were doing on earth. But eternal life is not simply a definition of time. People in hell will live forever. Eternal life is much different.

1. According to 1 John 5:20

1 John 5:20 says, "We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true; and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." This verse says eternal life and Jesus Christ are one and the same. Eternal life is not a period of time; it is a person.

2. According to John 17:3

In John 17:3 Jesus said, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." Eternal life means to know God and Christ. It is not just a period of time, but a kind of existence. It is a relationship with God whereby His nature is imparted to us. It is not just a quantity of life but a quality of life. It is having God's life and nature in us. That is what Peter meant when he said we are "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pet. 1:4). Eternal life is not something we are waiting for; eternal life is the life of God in the soul of man. If Christ is in us and I in Him, then we have His kind of life right now! The minute God takes up residence in your life--when you receive Christ--eternal life began. Eternal life is sharing the life of Christ.

    a) We share Christ's nature

Ephesians 2:4-5 says, "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath made us alive together with Christ." He takes up residence in us--our life is His life! We think His thoughts, act like He acts, love like He loves, and hates what He hates.

(1) Our limitation

Someone might say, "But if I now have the nature of God in me, how come I've still got problems?" The answer is that the life of God in you is limited by your flesh. But some day your flesh will be gone. You will leave your body in the grave when you die and never have to agonize over it again. The day you meet Jesus with your new body, you will be like Him.

(2) Our longing

For the Christian, the biggest change that happened in his life was receiving Christ. Death is simply something that occurs along the way. Death is less important than the new birth. The Christian is born into the family of God, and some day with your glorified body, you will be like Jesus Christ. Christ is in you now, but someday you will be fully like Him.

    b) We share Christ's experiences

(1) Peace

God is a God of peace and He wants the Christian to experience peace. In John 14:27 Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let

it be afraid." Likewise Paul said in Philippians 4:7, "The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Sometimes life might not seem too peaceful to you but our flesh limits the expression of God's peace in the Christian's life. When the flesh is dealt with, then the Christian can experience the true peace of God.

(2) Love

In John 15:10 Jesus said, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love." The Christian has God's peace and love. Some Christians have trouble loving others. The reason is that the flesh limits love. Only as you starve the flesh can you love with God's love. That kind of love is the same quality and character as God's own love because He has given it to you. John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

(3) Joy

Jesus said in John 15:11, "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." Whenever you experience joy to its fullest extent, you are experiencing the same joy God experiences. Hebrews 12:2 says we're to be "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross." Whenever you experience joy to the fullest, you are experiencing the same joy that Jesus experienced when He went to the cross. The flesh will be the only thing that limits total joy in the Christian life.

c) We possess Christ's fullness

(1) John 16:15

Jesus said, "All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore said I, that He shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you." The Father gave all things to Christ, He gave them to the Spirit, and the Spirit gave them to us. Verses 23-24 say, "Whatever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it to you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name; ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." Christians could not have too high of an opinion of who they are in Christ.

(2) Ephesians 3:19-20

As Christians, we possess the divine nature. That is why Paul prayed in Ephesians 3:19 that we "might be filled with all the fullness of God." Paul was saying that all Christians possess that fullness, and simply need to appropriate it into their daily lives. Paul went on to say that he prayed that God's fullness would enable Christians to do "exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think" (v. 20). Not too many Christians experience this because we limit the fullness of God by the flesh.

The Christian can be certain that he has eternal life. It is the life of God in the soul of man and is not limited by anything but our flesh.

B. The Dimensions of Eternal Life (see chap. 4, pp. xx-xx )

C. The Duration of Eternal Life (see chap. 4, pp. xx-xx )

## II. THE CERTAINTY OF ANSWERED PRAYER (vv. 14-17)

### A. Identified (vv. 14-15)

"This is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us; And if we know that he hear us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him."

These verses give us a guarantee of answered prayer. The Greek word for "confidence" is parrhesia, which literally means "boldness." We have the true freedom of speech: We can ask God anything according to His will. We can go to God and say, "God, I want to talk to You. Here is what I have in mind ...."

#### 1. The commitment of the father

God is always listening to our prayers. Sometimes my children will say, "Dad," and I am not really paying attention. That isn't like God. In fact, God is more anxious to hear you than you are to talk to Him! God is always waiting for you. You do not force your way into His presence, or beg Him for His attention, He has been waiting for you to arrive. If we know God hears us, we know He answers us.

#### 2. The conditions for answered prayer

Some people pray but do not know beyond that whether God will answer their prayer. God may not answer your prayer when you expect it or how you expect it. God may choose to answer no. But John does give us some conditions for answered prayer:

##### a) Confession

The apostle John wrote, "Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight" (1 John 3:21-22). If you are in sin, you are not doing those things that are pleasing in His sight. Psalm 66:18 says, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me."

There must be a cleansing of the heart, where sin is confessed and repented of. 1 Peter 3:7 says that even your family relationships will be hindered if their is unconfessed sin: "In like manner, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers be not hindered." We must confess our sins.

##### b) Obedience

John 15:7 says, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." The implication of this passage is obedience.

### c) Submission

The primary condition to answered prayer is that it must be done according to the will of God. 1 John 5:14 says, "This is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to His will, he heareth us." God will hear our prayers and answer them if they are not against His will. In John 14:13 and 16:23, Jesus said we will receive anything we ask for in His name. That is the same as praying according to His will. It is being consistent with His nature. However, James said people do not receive their prayer requests when they ask with wrong motives (James 4:3).

True prayer is asking for something because you know it is what Jesus would want. When you pray according to His will, He answers. Some might say, "What's the use of praying if He's going to do only what is consistent with His own will anyway?" The answer is, He has commanded us to pray. Ours is not to question why, ours is to obey. God is going to fulfill His will, and He wants you to pray so that you can recognize His will as it is fulfilled. If we just ignored Him, we would not know what He was doing in our lives. But as our prayers are aligned with what He is doing, then we will be able to see what He is doing and respond to it.

Praying according to God's will is simply praying for what we know He would want. Try praying this the next time: "Father, I ask this because I know it is what Jesus would want." Sometimes you could not say that and be honest with God. Sometimes your only prayer can be, "Do what You will for Your glory." That is a check system for prayer. God uses our prayers to teach us how to line up with His will. Prayer is the thermometer of your spiritual life. The truth is clear: God grants requests for that which is in His will.

#### B. Illustrated (v. 16)

"If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death; I do not say that he shall pray for it."

John gives an illustration of how God answers only those prayers that are consistent with His will. This particular portion of Scripture is very hard to understand.

##### 1. The historical context of 1 John 5:16

Whatever the sin that tended toward death was, John obviously knew what it was and so did his readers, because he didn't explain it. That is the difficulty we have and the reason why we have to work so hard to understand the passage. If I had been alive in that day I would have just repeated the passage and everyone would have understood it. But there are so many years that separate the history and language from our understanding.

##### 2. The possible interpretations of 1 John 5:16

A natural question arises: What does John mean by saying there is a sin that

tends toward death? Does that mean a believer can sin and die? Or does it refer to an unbeliever who commits the sin of apostasy? Those are the two prominent views.

a) It refers to a non-Christian

(1) The position

Some say the illustration refers to the non-Christian who pretends to be a believer. This view assumes that life and death mentioned in verse 16 refer to spiritual life and death. It sees the term "brother" referring to a non-Christian. This is a difficult view to take because it uses the term brother superficially, not genuinely. It says in effect, "If someone is sinning a sin that does not necessarily result in spiritual death, pray for him and God will give him spiritual life. But, if he has committed the sin unto death, don't pray for him." Those who take this view say that the sin unto death is apostasy--that is, hearing the whole truth of God, rejecting it, and walking away from the faith in defiance of God. As Hebrews 10:26 says, such a one has sinned willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth. Is John saying to pray for the man who claims to be a brother, because if he is not a total apostate, God may grant him spiritual life? Are we not to bother praying for someone who appears to be an apostate?

Those who take this view see the man in James 5:19-20 also as a non-Christian. That passage reads, "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know that he who converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." They say this is a non-Christian in the assembly of God who is converted, and is therefore saved from spiritual death. That would parallel what John is saying in praying for people who haven't committed the sin of apostasy. But if they have committed the sin of apostasy, then those who hold this view say we're not to pray for him because he is out of God's saving will.

(2) The problems

There are several problems with this view, the first being the use of the word "brother." John never calls an unbeliever a brother. The entire scheme of 1 John has to do with those who are the children of God. The second problem is that those who say this passage refers to an unbeliever say he has committed a sin causing spiritual death. But if a person is a non-believer, he is already spiritually dead. There is no need to say he committed a sin causing spiritual death because he is spiritually dead already!

b) It refers to a Christian

(1) The position

The other predominant view is that this passage speaks of a true believer. It sees the life referred to in verse 16 as physical life, not spiritual life, meaning God will spare the person's physical life. In other words, if a Christian sins a certain kind of sin, God could remove him from the earth. Verse 16 says, "There is a sin unto death; I do not say that he shall pray for it." John is saying it will not do any good to pray because he is hopelessly lost. If a Christian

prays for his sinning brother, God will answer and spare his life. God will discipline him but He won't take his life. If, however, he has committed a certain kind of sin that leads to physical death, it is too late and it does not do any good to pray for him. God will take him home and get him out of the way.

## (2) The problems

There are also problems with this view. The context of the whole epistle is between Christians and apostates, so it seems to fit the overall context to take the first view. But both of these views are taught in Scripture: Hebrews 6:4-6 and Matthew 12:22-32 teach that a man can apostatize and be beyond salvation. Acts 5:1-11 and 1 Corinthians 11:27-32 teach that a Christian can sin to the place where God takes his life. Which one John happens to be illustrating here is very difficult to know.

### C. Indicated (v. 17)

"All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not unto death."

John adds this because even though God forgives sin, that does not mean sin is acceptable. The word unrighteousness literally means "lawlessness," which is rebellion against God. Even though God forgives sin, it is still violating His law. Verse 17 ends by saying, "There is a sin not unto death." Compare that with verse 16: "There is a sin unto death." What kind of sin would bring death? There are two kinds of sin in the Bible:

#### 1. Sins of passion

There is the sin that is against the will but occurs in a moment of weakness. It is associated with strong temptation, but not premeditated. It is not plotted out nor deliberately planned. It is illustrated in Romans 7, where Paul said, "The good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do" (v. 19). When someone commits that kind of sin, they are grieved, so they repent and turn from it.

#### 2. Sins of premeditation

The second kind of sin is deliberate and premeditated. It is possible for Christians to commit that kind of sin. This is where you sit down and plan in detail. Every time you do it and get away with it, it gets easier and easier. You avoided the consequences once, maybe twice, even three or four times, and it becomes a pattern. This is the kind of sin that tends toward death. It is the prolonged and continued defiant, premeditated sinfulness that brings about ultimate discipline--physical death.

##### a) Leviticus 10:7

There are cases of discipline in the Bible where God's people died as a result of premeditated sin. They were not disciplined with the consequence of death for sins of lust, or impulsive stealing. Leviticus 10:1-5 records the story of Nadab and Abihu, two sons of Aaron. They plotted a sin in disobedience to God's law by offering a strange fire on the altar. Their sin was flagrant and planned out, so

they died because of it.

b) Numbers 16:1-50

Korah and his friends decided to declare themselves priests. They planned to steal the glory that was reserved only for God. The end result was that the ground opened and swallowed them up.

c) Acts 5:1-11

Ananias and Sapphira sold a piece of land they had and pretended to give all the money to the apostles, when in actuality they gave only part of the money away. Peter knew that Ananias and Sapphira had lied and confronted them with it. God killed them right on the spot where they stood.

d) 1 Corinthians 11:27-32

Because of the sin of Corinth, there were also Christians coming to the Lord's table who were worshiping idols, demons, and taking part in the notorious sex orgies. Many of them became sick and some of them even died because they engaged in willful hypocrisy against God.

All sins that resulted in instant physical death were flagrant and premeditated. They all involved hypocrisy toward God because they most directly violated His majesty and glory which He cannot share with another.

e) 1 Corinthians 5:1-8

There was a man in Corinth having an affair with his stepmother. Paul admonished the Corinthian church saying, "Ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he hath done this deed might be taken away from among you" (v. 2). Paul then said when that man was taken out of the church, his body would dissipate in the world, but his soul would be saved (v. 5). God was not going to give the ultimate discipline of death for he put the man out of the church instead. God could have killed him instantly where everyone could see, but God deals differently with a momentary sin of passion than with the flagrant, hypocritical sin that endeavors to steal the majesty of God. Premeditated sins lead to death. It is useless to pray for those who continue to sin willfully.

First John 5:16-17 illustrates that God will answer our prayer in some situations, but not in others. The criterion for prayer is God's will and it is His will that, at times, causes believers to die because of their continual, premeditated sin. John says not to bother praying for such a person. He does not command you not to pray. He says simply, "I do not say he shall pray for it." God answers prayer within His will. In that we can have absolute certainty.

### **Focusing on the Facts**

1. What is one of the great truths of Christianity (see p. 1)?

2. Christians deal in \_\_\_\_\_ (see p. 2).
3. What is the purpose in John's message (see p. 3)?
4. State the progression in John's motive for writing his epistle (see pp. 3-4).
5. John writes that if you \_\_\_\_\_ God, you can have certainty (see p. 4).
6. Of the ten verses quoted on pages 4 and 5, name five certainties that Christians can be confident of (see pp. 4-5).
7. What is the meaning of the word know in 1 John 5:13-19 (see p. 5)?
8. What is the first great certainty of the Christian life (1 John 5:13; see p. 5)?
9. What does 1 John 5:20 tell us about eternal life (see p. 5)?
10. What does John 17:3 tell us about eternal life (see p. 6)?
11. What limits us from being like Jesus Christ (see p. 6)?
12. What three things can you potentially experience as Christ Himself experiences (see pp. 6-7)?
13. What is the second great certainty of the Christian life (1 John 5:14-17; see p. 8)?
14. Explain what the word confidence means in 1 John 5:14 (see p. 8).
15. What are the three conditions for answered prayer (see pp. 8-9)?
16. What does praying according to God's will mean (see p. 9)?
17. What are the two possible interpretations of 1 John 5:16 (see pp. 10- 11)?
18. What are the main problems with those views (see p. 11)?
19. What are the two categories of sin in the Bible (see p. 12)?
20. The criterion for prayer is \_\_\_\_\_ (see p. 13).

### **Pondering the Principles**

1. As page 1 has indicated, the Bible reveals great certainties concerning the Christian life. Take a concordance and look up the usage of one of the following words: "sure," "surely," "surety," "certain," "certainly," or "certainly." Find out what the Scriptures have to say about what you can be sure of. After you have

looked up those passages, thank the Lord for all He has made certain in your life. In a world of tremendous uncertainty, this is a revolutionary assurance of victory. Take these truths and share them with someone you know is not a Christian. Ask God to soften his heart to see these timeless truths.

2. John makes clear his reasons for writing his first epistle: He wants to experience absolute joy (1 John 1:4), the absence of unconfessed sin (1 John 2:1), and the assurance of eternal life (1 John 5:13). Do those qualities characterize your life? Are you experiencing the joy of the Lord? Do you regularly confess your sins to God? Do you have absolute assurance that you have eternal life? If you have answered no to any of those questions, reread pages 3 and 4, and ask God to help you work on those areas in your life and begin to make them a daily reality.

3. Many have said you cannot really know for sure about eternal life. But the Bible says you can know for sure. Eternal life is seen not just in terms of the quantity of time, but in the quality of life as well. Eternal life is knowing Jesus Christ. It is sharing His nature and experiencing His fullness. If you have not thought about eternal life in this way before, take time to thank God for giving you eternal life the moment you received Christ. Ask God to help you appreciate your eternal life in terms of its quality.

4. Many Christians struggle with the area of unanswered prayer in their lives. This lesson mentions three conditions for answered prayer: confession of sin, obedience to the commands of Christ, and submission to the will of God. Take each one and for the next three days do a self-evaluation of your prayer life. As you concentrate on those areas, begin to make a list of answers you receive to your prayers. Contrast the list with your past prayer life and see if there is a difference in your answers to prayer.

#ET