

Facing the Future on Firm Footing

(Part 1)

“Settling the Issue”

(1 John 5:13)

Introduction: The land of what-ifs is a tempting place to go. It is also a dangerous place to be. And chances are, you have visited there.

There are countless “what-if” scenarios, both big and small. But they have two things in common:

1. They are all about the uncertainties we face in life.
2. They don't help.

There are too many uncertainties in life for us to worry about that we have no control over.

Over the next few weeks of January, I want us to spend some time being sure we are starting the New Year, “Facing the Future on Firm Footing.”

Dealing with the knowable things can establish us a firm foundation upon which we can stand and move forward with great confidence! The truth is the decisions we make in life are based on the ideas we have already accepted. Wrong ideas lead to wrong conclusions and take us down dangerous paths. Just as right ideas lead to right conclusions and right paths. The most important decision that we will ever make in our lives involves our relationship with God and His Son Jesus Christ. Believe it or not, this decision will affect every other decision we make in life.

In order for us to have firm footing here, we must once and for all settle the issue. Can one really know? Yes! And this is how we settle the issue.

I. We must reject Satan's lies:

The words "these things" are often wrongly taken to refer to the whole letter.

A. Satan wants us to think salvation comes from us – He does this by launching a series of lies...

1. **Man is basically good** – but God's truth (Rom. 3:10, 23)
2. **The good Lord over looks our faults** – But God's truth (Rom. 6:23)
3. **If we just try hard to be good and do right, God will let us into heaven** – But God's truth (Eph. 2:8-9)
4. **The pain we go through on earth is God's only punishment for sin.** But God's truth (1 Pe. 1:18- 20; Jn. 3:16; *Hebrews 12:5-6*)
5. **We have to have faith in ourselves** – But God's truth (Eph. 2:8-9; Rom. 10:9-10)
6. **I have always been a Christian.** But God's truth (John 1:11-13; John 3:36)
7. **We just cannot know for sure...** But God's truth (1 John 5:11- 13)

B. God wants us to know our salvation comes from Him alone –

1. **What John had just written about God's testimony.** (5:9-12).
2. **He writes that** the assurance of one's salvation always rests fundamentally and sufficiently on the direct promises that God makes to that believer.
3. **John is saying,** one's assurance of their salvation rests on the testimony of God and no one or anything else!

The question is, do we have the Son, and how can I know that without a doubt?

Scripture tells us, when we humble ourselves before God in recognition of our sinful condition, He gives us a divine ability to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and confess and take Him as our own Savior... however to do this...

II. We must recognize our sinful condition:

1. **Every man has a problem with sin!** (*Rom 3:10, 23*)
2. **Our sin will keep us eternally separated from God** – (*Rom 6:23*)
3. **God has provided an escape from our sin debt** (*Rom 5:8; 8:3,32*).
 - a. **On man's side, the gift is simply to be received, not earned** (*John 1:12-13*).
 - b. **A person is saved by believing, by trusting in Christ.**
 - c. **Will not perish** (means will not have a final destiny of "ruin" in hell apart from God who is life, truth, and joy).
 - d. **Eternal life is a new quality of life, which a believer has now as a present possession and will possess forever through Christ**(*cf. 10:28; 17:3*).
4. **God has graced every believer who comes to Him in faith** – (*Eph 2:8-9*)
5. **We must agree with God in heart and mind and mouth** – (*Rom 10:9-11*)
These are not two separate acts but one simultaneous act (we confess with our mouth what we believe in our hearts).
6. **We take God at His Word** – (*John 3:36; Rom 8:16; 1 John 5:11- 13*)

III. We must receive our spiritual re-birth:

In John's gospel we read of a time a religious leader named Nicodemus to listen to Jesus teach him.

A. Jesus told him - John 3:3-4

B. Jesus explained it to him - (*John 3:5-8*)

C. Jesus extended an invitation to him to receive that new birth for himself - (*John 3:16-18*)

1. **Jesus extended an invitation to Nicodemus to repent and believe, receiving His new birth that night.**
2. **Today He stands extending the same invitation** to all who will repent, believe and by faith receive His invitation to a new birth and a new life in Christ.

Conclusion: The land of uncertainty and what if's is a terrible place to live. Dealing with the knowable things can establish us a firm foundation upon which we can stand and move forward with great confidence! This new year you're going to make some important decisions no doubt. But the most important decisions you'll make your whole life is about your relationship with God and His Son Jesus.

Do you know you are a Christian today, and your eternal life is secure because you have rejected the lies of Satan, recognized your sinful condition and received your new birth and life in Christ?

Have you settled the issue once and for all so you can move forward facing this new year on firm footing knowing who have believed in?