

1 John 5:13-21

Concluding Affirmations

13 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. **14** This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. **15** And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.

16 If you see any brother or sister commit a sin that does not lead to death, you should pray and God will give them life. I refer to those whose sin does not lead to death. There is a sin that leads to death. I am not saying that you should pray about that. **17** All wrongdoing is sin, and there is sin that does not lead to death.

18 We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin; the One who was born of God keeps them safe, and the evil one cannot harm them. **19** We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one. **20** We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true by being in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.

21 Dear children, keep yourselves from idols.

Living on a Prayer

Read

Before you start reading today's passage, please find a quiet place and be prepared to encounter the Lord. Let not your heart be disturbed. If there is anything or anyone that has been bothering you, try to let it go. Then take out your Bible and read 1 John 5:13-21.

Think

Verse 16 encourages us to pray for any brother or sister who "commits a sin that does not lead to death", so that "God will give them life." How should we pray for them? Do we group them together with those who commit "a sin that leads to death"? If so, what blind spots do we expose?

Verse 14 promises that "if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us." To better understand this verse, we need to read it with reference to Jn 16:23 and its context. When John wrote this letter, early churches were confronted with 3 main problems: temptation of the world, attack of false teaching, and conflict among believers. God wants us to overcome the world to be faithful to Him (Jn 16:33), overcome falsehood to hold on to the truth (Jn 16:13), and overcome weakness of our flesh to be united in Christ (Jn 17:20-21).

Pray

Do we tend to stand on moral high ground when we pray? Let us ask God to shine His light on us so that we can see clearly where we actually stand:

How are we swayed by the world's values?

How does false teaching dominate our faith?

How much control does the flesh have over us?

After we have seen ourselves more clearly, how should we then adjust our prayers?

Live

Sometimes we complain that people exploit our kindness and generosity. So what? Everyone will need to answer to God when the time comes. Are we not all sinners? Don't we all need to rely on God's mercy? Let us not be judgemental but instead, let us control our tongues, build up and support each other as we struggle to grow to be more like Christ.