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Prayer Meeting Address by Mr. J. Delves at
Ebenezer Chapel, Clapham
on October 15th. 1960.

Reading: I John 5. Hymns: 908, 907

The intention of the Apostle John is to demonstrate before us the deity of the Son of God, that He is the essence of eternal life, the true God, the only-begotten of the Father full of grace and truth. He speaks of being in Christ and of possessing Him. In verse 20 of the passage I have read he says, "That we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son, Jesus Christ." That is, His people are in Him in a union that will ever exist in the purposes of God. John also speaks here particularly about that experimental sense of union made known by the witness of the Spirit of God to our interest in Him and our possession of Him. "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." To possess Christ is eternal life. The possession of Him must issue in eternal life, because He Himself is the essence of that life. John also speaks of believing, this faith, or believing, having as its centre or object the Son of God. This, as we have sung, may show us not only the importance, but also the blessedness of this faith. It is all-important to us that we should believe in Him, although indeed we have to realise that such faith, of a saving nature, must be wrought in us by the Holy Spirit. In verse 1 John mentions this as an evidence of being born of God. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." Superficially this may seem very easy, but it is not just a question of making a statement or coming to a conclusion about this. I would take John to mean more particularly those who have some sweet manifestation of the Son of God in their heart, as He is made known to them in experience; where this is, the new birth must be. He would not be graciously manifested to one dead in trespasses and sins, since faith is necessary to receive such a manifestation. So, where there is such a knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, it bears its own testimony to the possession of eternal life.

John also refers to the power of faith. "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" It is as though he said that as we have faith in Him, our eyes fixed on Him, to hold fast to Him, to believe in Him, to draw from His strength, so nothing can eventually overcome us, nothing in the world, no opposition, whatever it may be. There is a strength in faith, in this sense, to overcome all the opposition of the world, the allurements of the world, the temptations and sins of the world. Other Scriptures say that faith is a victorious grace. Another point is the witness that such have within: "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." The witness here is the assurance of His Deity and divine Sonship. It is an assurance that is a strength to the heart when it is felt in relation to all that He is to us, so that we can rest our souls upon it, feeling a witness to His sufficiency. Sweet it is when we can feel at the same time a witness of our personal interest in Him. Indeed, we may say that when a witness is felt in our hearts to our personal interest that will bear with it a witness to the Person, the Messiahship, the priesthood and the atoning sacrifice of Christ, to everything that He is, so that as we are thus enabled we can lean our whole weight upon Him, "venture on Him, venture wholly, let no other trust intrude."

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