

More About Jesus

Are You Secure?

or

You Are Part of His Family!

I can remember the day each of my children first arrived at my home—most parents probably can. My son arrived in the afternoon. He was eight weeks old when a social worker brought him to our front door and rang the bell. As we answered the door my wife and I saw him for the first time! I got to hold him first! He looked up at me and smiled (I'm sure he was *not* suffering from gas pains!). No boy was more prayed for, more desired, or more loved than he! He was, and still is, my favorite son (my only son)!

Three and a half years later we met our daughter for the first time, at the airport. We arrived early. In suspense, we watched most everyone get off the plane—including several flight attendants. Then she arrived—a little five-week old bundle of energy. The watching flight attendants got misty eyed as we held her, hugged her, loved her, and accepted her into our family. She was, and still is, my favorite daughter (my only daughter)!

After each of our children arrived, the second most exciting day was when we stood before the judge legalizing the adoptions. Up until that time, they were not legally a part of our family—they could have been taken away or we could have given them back (we never even considered it!). After we met with the judge a birth certificate was issued that showed them being born into our family, even though we were not the birth parents. They were now *our* children!

It *would be* nice to report that both of my children are perfect. It would have been nice if they had always told us when they needed to go to the bathroom so they would not mess up their diapers. It would have been nice if they always, cheerfully cleaned their rooms. It would have been nice if there were never any displays of temper. It would have been nice if they were always truthful, always thankful, and always polite. It would have been nice if they always ate their vegetables without complaining, always got along, and always did their homework without being asked. Alas, they were

(and are) no more perfect than I am. They have made their share of mistakes—some even deliberately.

It *is* nice to report that they are both still my children (my favorite children)—loved, prayed for, disciplined, and desired. We knew they would make mistakes ... so do we. We know they are growing in their understanding of what is good, right, and wholesome ... so are we.

We love and accept our children because we have chosen them to be a part of our family. We love them not because they do all the right things or avoid doing all the wrong things—we love them because *they are our children!*

As parents, we expect our children to be growing and maturing. We expect mistakes. We deal with rebellion and disobedience. We teach, we nag, we beg, we discipline—but we never disown. We know that in spite of any difficulties, unless our children *leave* us, we will love them into maturity. In our family there is security.

Many Christians feel a whole lot less secure in their relationship with God than they do in their family—and God is supposed to be the ultimate Father! They feel like they are constantly "in" or "out" of the relationship. Why do so many have such a hard time feeling secure? What does it mean to be secure in Jesus? What is our security in Jesus based on?

"And this is that testimony (that evidence); God gave us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who possesses the Son has that life; he who does not possess the Son of God does not have that life. I write this to you who believe in (adhere to, trust in, and rely on) the name of the Son of God ..., so that you may know [with settled and absolute knowledge] that you [already] have life, yes, eternal life." 1 John 5:11-13 (The Amplified Bible)

Are You Secure?

1. If you were killed in a car accident later today, would you be resurrected with the righteous?
2. Is it possible that you could be kept out of Heaven because of unconfessed sins?
3. How would you define sin?
4. If possible, use more than one translation to read 1 John 3:4. Does this text seem to define sin as disobedience or breaking God's law?
5. In Matthew 22:37-40, how does Jesus summarize the Law?
6. In Romans 13:10, how does Paul summarize the Law?
7. In 1 John 4:8, how does John define God?

In algebra, we learn that two things equal to the same thing are also equal to each other. If $A=B$ and $B=C$, then $A=C$. (The transitive property of course!) If we let A represent the Law, B represent Love, and C represent God; then, based on the above texts, God and His Law are equal. Therefore, breaking the Law (Lawlessness) would actually be the same as separating from God (Godlessness). At its heart, sin is really a broken relationship.

8. According to Romans 6:23 the consequences of sin (separation from God) is death. How does Acts 17:28 help you understand why this is true?

Choosing to separate from God would naturally result in death. It's not that God punishes those who don't choose Him, it's just the natural consequence of separation or "pulling the plug." (An electric light cannot work if it is "unplugged.") Imagine you're trapped underwater while scuba diving. While waiting for help, to make things more exciting, you cut the hose between your air tank and regulator-just so you can watch the bubbles. Whose fault is it if you drown? Is the tank punishing you for cutting the hose?

9. How do Romans 14:23 and 1 John 3:6 define sin?

Once again we see that sin is NOT about bad deeds, but rather, about living outside of a relationship with God.

10. Based on 1 John 5:11-13, is it possible to know if you have (present tense) eternal life? What are the conditions?

Let's say you've always wanted to have a corvette and you marry someone who already has one. Within the context of a normal marriage, you now become a legitimate owner of the corvette. However, if you were to divorce, most courts would give the corvette to your spouse because he/she had acquired it prior to the marriage. Did you ever really own it? Why would you lose it? How would you keep it?

11. If eternal life comes from Jesus, how can it be yours? How can you lose it? How can you keep it?

12. What familiar human relationship does God use to illustrate our relationships to Him?

- Romans 8:15-6
- Galatians 4:47
- Ephesians 1:36
- 1 John 3:2

13. How do “bad deeds” and “failures” affect a child’s standing in a loving home? How do they affect our relationship with Jesus?

A good father knows that unless his child leaves him, he will love the child into maturity. The child’s security is not in his or her performance, but in the love of the father. If you stay with Jesus (have the Son), “He who has begun a good work in you will bring it to completion ...” Phil 1:6 NEV

Good News! If you know Jesus, you can know you are saved and you can know you will become like Him—and you will know Who does both.

Daily Bites

When you find a new friend, you often spend a lot of time together just getting to know each other. You may eat meals together, play together, study together, walk together, laugh together-and spend lots of time talking together! Why not try an experiment this week. Pick one day (or maybe two or three) and for that day make it a point to talk to Jesus about everything you do. Talk to Him when you first get up, as you shower, as you walk from place to place, as you work or sit in classes, as you ... (you get the idea)! Pray about this-ask Jesus to remind you that He is right with you each step of your day! What do you say to Him? Just tell Him what you are doing, how you feel about it, your dreams and fears for the day—talk to Him as a Friend. And then, listen for impressions He may put into your mind.

Remember, you are spending time with Jesus *to get to know Him as a friend*, not just to put in time!

- *Begin each session with prayer* - maybe something like this: “Lord, help me to come to know you better as we spend time together...”
- *Read the passage* - several times noticing as many details as you can.
- *Imagine the setting* - put yourself in the picture. Try to imagine the sounds, smells, sensations.
- *Summarize the passage* - in your own words.
- *Apply the passage* - what message is God giving you?
- *Meditate and pray* - meditate on how this passage makes Jesus more real. Talk to Him about the passage and about using the information you have learned.

Passages for This Week

- John 5:16-30
- John 5:31-47
- John 6:1-15
- John 6:16-24
- John 6:35-40
- John 6:40-59
- John 6:60-71

Elizabeth

Jesus was always my favorite big brother, ever since I can remember. He was about 13 when I was born. They named me Elizabeth, after one of my great aunts, but everyone calls me Beth. Mother says that Jesus was the one who really took care of me, even when I was a baby. I guess that's why I've always loved Him so fiercely. I was his Beth; and He was—well—He was my Jesus.

As a child I was His shadow. I worshipped Him in my own way. He always had time to tell me a story or sing me a song and give me one of His special hugs. He's just that way, always putting others before Himself. As I grew older, I was forever running to father's shop to visit Him. Sitting among the woodshavings, we would talk of high and noble things.

Mostly we talked of Jehovah. Jesus seemed to know so much about Him, not only because He had been taught from the Scriptures, but because He spent so much time with Him. He loved to be in the hills at sunrise and dusk, to talk with Him or observe His handiwork. He learned so much in those hills!

He used to say, "All of creation depends on Jehovah for existence. To the flowers He gives sun and rain; to the creatures He gives food and drink. To us," He would turn and smile, "To us, little Beth, He gives something far richer and deeper and more wonderful than life itself. He gives us love. First we use that love to honor and worship Him. Then, wrapped in His glory, we can use it to make the world a better place. It's the kind of love that enables one to even lay down

his life for another ..." His voice would trail off and He would suddenly be far, far away. Then He would say, "Greater love has no man."

Years passed, and though He remained my thoughtful, loving Jesus—He was something more. In His face I saw a strength and wisdom beyond His years. He began spending more time in the hills. He and Jehovah drew closer, so close that ... well I can't really explain it and I never really understood it; that is, until today.

When Jesus came out of the water this morning, I saw Him kneel and watched the heavens open. I saw the dovelike form. I saw the glorious light in Jesus' face. And I heard the voice say, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." (*Matt. 3:17 KJV*) At last I knew who Jesus really was.

The Baptist said, "Behold, the Lamb ..." (*John 1:29 KJV*) Those are strange words, since lambs are used for sacrifice. What was it Jesus used to say—"Greater love has no man than this...?"

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"A new command I give you: Love one another as I have loved you ... Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends. I no longer call you servants ... Instead, I have called you friends. John 13:34, 15:13,15

Bible Texts

1 John 3:4* “Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness.”

Matthew 22:37-40 “Jesus said to him, “ ‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.’”

Romans 13:10 “Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.”

1 John 4:8 “He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.”

Romans 6:23 “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Acts 17:28 “for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, ‘For we are also His offspring.’”

Romans 14:23* “But the man who has doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and everything that does not come from faith is sin.”

1 John 3:6 “Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him.”

1 John 5:11-13 “And this is the testimony: that 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. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.”

John 5:24 “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.”

Romans 8:15-16 “For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father.” The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,”

Galatians 4:4-7 “But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, “Abba, Father!” Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.”

Ephesians 1:3-6 “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He has made us accepted in the Beloved.”

1 John 3:2 “Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.”

Philippians 1:6 “being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;”

(Unless otherwise mentioned, all quoted scripture is from the New King James Version)

** New International Version*

Credits

More About Jesus

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