

# Knowledge of Eternal Life

(Sermon Notes) By Warren Zehrung 8/26/2017

Billy Graham is a Southern Baptist minister, who rose to celebrity status back in 1949 reaching a core constituency of middle-class, moderately conservative Protestants. Billy Graham **represents** "Christianity" for great many people – even around the world. He was born in Charlotte, NC and is now 98 years old.

It is interesting that Charlotte, NC is where a number of our church groups also now have their Headquarters, including the apostate Worldwide Church of God that changed its name to Grace Communion International - which is now moving there to Charlotte, NC.

In 1970, Billy Graham, world renowned preacher, brought his Evangelistic Crusade to LSU – Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. I had graduated from LSU only a few years before – and I went to hear him. It was a time in my life when I was still searching for the Truth. I had heard Mr. Armstrong on the radio – but I had not yet learned the truth of God's Sabbath Day.

I had been a Roman Catholic all of my life – until as a young adult I had become disillusioned with Catholic belief and practice. All Catholics, like Protestants are taught to believe in **heaven** as the reward of the saved, and an ever burning hellfire – if you did not make the cut.

It was raining and cold that evening, but not enough to discourage an audience of 50,000 people. Many of those attendees answered Billy Graham's invitation to "Give their heart to the Lord" in an altar-call. He spoke on Jesus Christ being our Savior and dying on the cross for us.

During his presentation, Billy Graham asked the audience if they "knew that they were **going to heaven** when they died?" It seemed to me that more than 49,000 people in that group of 50,000 raised their hands and replied "yes!"

Billy Graham added, "You can **be sure** that you are going to heaven." But I was dubious. I did not **know** that I was going to heaven, and I sure did **not believe** that I was going to heaven. And that went double for a lot of the people that I knew – I sure did not think that they were going to heaven either.

There is a prevalent belief among professing "Christians" that Jesus wants you to so great an extent – that you can come to Him "just as you are." No repentance – no change – just an acknowledgment that you are a sinner who needs to be saved. I am not mocking or making fun of Billy Graham. He lives by many good principles – but he is not called of God to know the truth. It is just that **more than** anyone else, his ministry has been **the standard** by which all other evangelists are measured.

Every U.S. President since World War II has met with Billy Graham, beginning with President Harry Truman, and including President Barack Obama, who traveled to Billy Graham's retirement home to meet with him...

... although Billy Graham had publically **opposed** Obama because of Obama's position in favor of **unlimited abortions** throughout pregnancy for any reason.

I remember going to funerals as a young person and the priest invariably prayed the deceased **into heaven** saying, "and He is looking down on us now from heaven."

Besides thinking that that priest did not know the person as well as I did (or he certainly would not have been so positive that his eternal soul was enjoying eternal bliss in heaven),...

... Why did the minister also speak of future judgments and resurrections – as though the person would eventually have to leave those pearly gates and be on trial in a general judgment? It just did not make any sense at all! I believe that those 50,000 people who came out to hear Billy Graham were sincerely searching for answers. But they got the wrong answer when they were told that they were **doing okay** – because they were “believers.” Billy Graham did not define what a “Believer” was for them.

Luke 4:4 And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.

Every word of God is to direct, lead, guide the actions and decisions of our lives – all according Scripture – not the norms and culture of the world.

Mark 1:15 ... The time is fulfilled, and the **Kingdom of God** is at hand: repent ye, and believe the Gospel.

Billy Graham did not even define what the **Gospel** was.

Billy Graham set the bar **very low** for getting into heaven. He made it sound as simple as falling off a log. He talked about knowing Christ and loving Jesus and being members of the body of Christ—without ever explaining what those things entailed.

Billy Graham wants everyone to be in heaven, so much so, that he reduces reconciliation and a Godly relationship to a **feeling** of emotional need in one’s heart. **Billy Graham believes** - and I quote:

“I think that everybody that loves or knows Christ, whether they are **conscious** of it or not, they are members of the body of Christ...

“[God] is calling people out of the world for his name, whether they come from the Muslim world, or the Buddhist world or the non-believing world, they **are** members of the Body of Christ because they have been called by God.

“They may not know the name of Jesus but they know in their hearts that they need something they do not have, and they turn to the only light they have, and I think that they are saved and they are going to be with us in heaven.”

Billy Graham believes that because the alternative would put everyone in “Hell,” and he can’t see a loving God doing such a thing.

His doctrines reduce “Christianity” to a very watered down belief system with little or **no expectations** of its adherents to live Christian lives.

It seemed that everyone believed that heaven was the reward of the saved.

And since Billy Graham held the protestant doctrine of ‘once saved, always saved,’ the throng also **knew** that **nothing** could prevent their entrance into heaven.

It is utterly amazing how the world has been duped by false religion.

Revelation 12:9 The great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, who deceives the whole world.

Brethren, let me ask a similar question of the people of God’s Church.

“Do you **know** that you have **eternal life**?”

In today's sermon we will show beyond a shadow of a doubt that true Christians **know** that they have **eternal life**. It is however absolutely required that one remains a true Christian. Make no mistake about it, God is not mocked by those who say they believe in Jesus so that they can go to heaven. (Galatians 6:7):

God never promised **heaven** as the reward of the saved.

1John 2:20 But ye have an unction [an anointing] from the Holy One [*hagios*], and ye know all things, [that have to do with "The Knowledge of **Eternal Life**."] ]

1John 2:21 I have **not** written unto you because ye know **not** the truth, but because ye **know** it, and that no lie is of the truth.

John says – "I am not writing to you to instruct you in THE TRUTH – because you already know it – don't let a false teacher tell you that you must KNOW a different way.

John is writing to mature Christians who have learned the truth from the apostles – John is not writing to babes in the truth. He is saying – "don't fall for a false teacher who will con you into thinking there is a different way.

John uses **eternal life** as a Synonym – another name for Jesus Christ. The Name, "Jesus Christ" is so closely associated with the idea of **Eternal Life** that the mention of His name should call it to mind.

1John 2:25 And this is the promise that He has promised us, even **eternal life**.

Paul points out that when God calls someone – they are ordained to **eternal life**: When we were called by God we were ordained to **eternal life**.

Acts 13:46 Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you [Jews]: but seeing ye put it [the word of God] from you, and judge [decided for] yourselves [that you are] unworthy of **everlasting life**, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.

Acts 13:48 And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were appointed [*esan tetagmenoi* - **ordained**] to **eternal life** believed.

Paul's point is that the Jews who rejected the Gospel message of Jesus were in effect also rejecting **eternal life**. The beloved apostle John assures us that we do indeed have **eternal life**.

I took the **Title** of today's sermon from these verses:

1John 5:11-13 And this is the record, that **God has given to us eternal life**, and this **eternal life** is in His Son. He that has the Son has [eternal] life; and he that has not the Son of God has not [eternal] life. 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.

Brethren, do you have the **Knowledge of Eternal Life**? There, from the word of God – "You may know that ye have **eternal life**." Brethren, we are talking about **what we know** - and we have "**The Knowledge of Eternal Life**."

1John 5:20 And we know that the Son of God is come, and has given us an understanding, that we may [positively and absolutely] **know Him** that is true, and we are in Him [God the Father] that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and **eternal life**.

**Eternal Life** is the inheritance of the saints. We will see that the Bible repeats that truth over and over. God does not promise universal salvation to everyone.

Romans 2:6-7 God will render to every man **according to his deeds**: To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and **immortality** [never die], [God will render] **eternal life**.

Nominal Christians who possess little true faith would be wise to examine themselves with regard to **eternal life**. For example, **obedience** to God is required:

1John 3:24 He that **keeps His commandments** dwells in Him, and He in him.

1John 2:5 Whoso **keeps His word**, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in Him.

As true Christians we wish to help foster the brotherly concern for one another that is absolutely required of us. We recognize that all too often, genuine care for the brethren, within the Church of God, has not been taught and practiced as much as it is in the gospel record.

1John 4:11-12 Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another... If we love one another, God dwells in us, and His love is perfected in us.

Perhaps God is giving the Body of Christ additional time to grow up spiritually in an area in which we come short. Sure, we know doctrine, we know prophecy, we keep the Sabbath, etc., but there is much more. Paul tells us that we still have a lot of growing to do – and we must **know** Jesus Christ in order to do so.

Ephesians 4:13 Until we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the **knowledge** of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

In this selfish world, we often witness the "every man for himself" attitude that permeates society. We should certainly understand the extent to which Jesus Christ demonstrated His love for us in **giving His life** – but to what extent have we followed His example in demonstrating our loving concern for each other?

1Peter 2:21 For even hereunto were you called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps.

Jesus Christ is "the resurrection and the **life**." Jesus was speaking of **life eternal**.

John 11:25 Jesus said unto [Martha], I am the **resurrection, and the life**: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

Jesus is **eternal life**.

John 8:19 ... Jesus said if you **know** me, you have **known** my Father also.

John 17:2 As thou hast given Him [Jesus referring to Himself] power over all flesh, that He should give **eternal life** to as many as thou hast given Him.

John 17:3 And this **is life eternal**, that they might **know** thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

We have grown up knowing and hearing about **eternal life**. But that was not always an expectation in the Bible. "**Eternal life**" is not mentioned, per se, in the Old Testament. First Biblical occurrence:

Matthew 19:16 And, behold, [A Rich Young Man] came and said unto Jesus, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have **eternal life**?

As the concept of eternal life emerges, Jesus tells Peter how to have **eternal life**:

Mark 10:28-30 Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left everything, and have followed you. And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, but he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and **in the world to come eternal life**.

And then, Jesus issues a stern warning:

Mark 10:31 But, many that are first shall be last; and the last first.

Paul spoke of a Christian laying his life down daily as a living sacrifice.

Romans 12:1-2 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Brethren, every so often I like to quote from emails I receive in response to the Countdown from that week: I want to share this one because it speaks of giving up all that is precious to us – as Paul just illustrated. Quote from today's email:

“From the moment God required Abraham to sacrifice Isaac, Abraham determined to do God's will. How agonizing it must have been for him to lead Isaac up that hill, prepare an altar, and then be completely resolved to follow through. I can't imagine the level of joy God had when that ONE man was offering back to God the most precious thing he could give; his own son. No wonder God made Abraham the father of many nations. What an example for us, since it portends God's even greater sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Not just His death, but Christ taking on the unimaginable burden of every sin of mankind... doing it willingly. And all the time teaching His disciples with love and compassion. How willing am I to do the same, to offer God everything I can, to do His will?

“I have not yet been tested to that extent. I have not yet integrated the faith of Christ to the degree that I must. I pray to God each day to help me grow to that level. I have to spend the rest of my life striving to do so. Time is getting short. We cannot afford to backslide. The love of God is cold in this world, but sadly it is becoming even colder within the churches of God.” End Quote.

Brethren, I was listening to an old tape of Herbert Armstrong this morning and he said in that tape that men had risen to the level of **evangelists** [in God's Church] who were not [converted] or led by God's Holy Spirit. Herbert Armstrong knew that back then – how much more so – is that true today?

Jesus said, “Many that are **first** shall be last; and the last first.” (Mark 10:31).

The apostle John said:

John 3:15 That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have **eternal life**.

The context is believing in Christ crucified and all that entails. Simply saying “I believe in Jesus and I attend His church,” counts for nothing. **Knowing** and **believing** entail **living** and **dying** as Jesus did, and gave us example. That concept is definitely in the Old Testament!

Zechariah 7:9-10 Thus says the Lord of hosts, Execute true judgment, and show mercy and compassions every man to his brother: And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart.

There is a Scripture in Jude that I quote all the time in letters where I am responding to those people who have contacted us – usually by email these days...

Jude 1:3 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the **common salvation** [eternal life], it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should **earnestly contend** for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

Why do we need that same understanding and knowledge that the Church of the first century possessed? What did they believe? What did they know? What happened since then to throw the Church off track?

2Peter 2:1 But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies,... even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

Jesus Christ's own words:

Mark 13:22 For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall show signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect.

1John 4:1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many **false prophets** are gone out into the world.

Brethren, do you believe it? It is very important to understand that there exists an elect people who know and who are **not** deceived.

**Only** the True Church of God has "**The Knowledge of Eternal Life.**"

Our Greek word for today ...*eido* pronounced I-do, (I think.)

Strong's 1492 "*eido*" A primary verb; used only in certain past tenses, the others being borrowed from the equivalent, G3700 and G3708; properly **to see** (literally or figuratively); by implication (in the perfect only) **to know**: - be aware, behold, X can (+ not tell), consider, (have) known (-ledge), look (on), perceive, see, be sure, **tell**, understand, wist, wot.

My blind friend often said "**I see**" = to grasp or understand. Though he could not see at all with his physical eyes.

John 8:14 Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for **I know** whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell [**know**] whence I come, and whither I go.

And there is a **stronger Greek word** that means to know absolutely and positively – that is used in the wrapping-up of these lessons being taught.

*ginoṣkō* ghin-occe'-ko A prolonged form of a primary verb; to "know" (absolutely), in a great variety of applications and with many implications (as shown at left, with others not thus clearly expressed): - allow, be aware (of), feel, (have) known (-ledge), perceive, be resolved, can speak, be sure, understand.

But as we saw – we are not in darkness. We **do** have a unique knowledge and understanding – apart from the world.

As the Worldwide Church of God apostasy and great falling away held: "There are Good men everywhere – in all religions." That is what false teachers say in order to lead us astray.

Genesis 2:9 And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of **knowledge** of good and evil.

1John 5:19 And we know [1492 "eido"] that we are of God, and the whole world lies in wickedness.

1John 5:20 And we know [G1492 "eido" ] 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.

We see Jesus instituting the Footwashing into His Church:

John 13:6 Then Jesus comes to Simon Peter: and Peter says unto Him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?

It was an incredulous remark by Peter, "Lord, You are going to wash my feet – that'll be the day!?"

John 13:7 Jesus answered and said unto Peter, What I do thou knowest [eido] not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.

John 13:12 So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, He said unto them, Do you know what I have done to you?

What lesson was Jesus teaching us with the institution of the Footwashing? We find the answer in verse :34.

John 13:34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

John 13:35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

John 17:22 And the glory which thou gave me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:

Why?

John 17:23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may **know** that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

The whole world is waiting on us!!! They cannot **know** \_ until we are one!

1John 3:1 Behold, [1492 eido – understand and know] what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

1John 3:5 And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.

1John 3:6 Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: [ isn't practicing a sinful life] whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him.

1John 3:13 Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.

1John 3:14 We **know** that we have passed from death unto [**eternal**] **life**, because we love the brethren. He that loves not his brother abides in death.

Not radio, TV, publications, right organizations – but the truth – “we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.”

1John 3:15 Whosoever hates his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath **eternal life** abiding in him.

1John 3:16 Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us: and we ought to / **must** lay down our lives for the brethren.

1John 3:17 But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

1John 3:18 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

1John 3:19 And hereby **we know** that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him.

But sometimes we say “I’ll never make it.” I’m too weak – my sins are too great – I don’t deserve God’s love...”

1John 3:20 For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and **knows all things**.

Hebrews 13:5 for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

We demonstrate our Love toward God by the way we interact with our brother. Do we do ABSOLUTELY everything possible to insure that our brother has every opportunity to be in the Kingdom of God?

1John 2:9 He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now.

1John 2:10 He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.

Are you doing everything possible to get others into God’s Kingdom?

1John 2:11 But he that hates his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and **knows** not [does not understand] whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.

1John 2:12 I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake.

Your sins are forgiven you - for God’s purposes - for His name's sake.

John is showing us that true Christians will not fall for deceptions. Being truly led by God’s Spirit we will follow His principles in our relationships. Do we fully grasp what John is saying to us???

We need to have as our priority [seeking first] the principles Jesus/John is setting forth for us.

1John 4:6 We are of God: he that knows God hears us; he that is not of God hears not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.

1John 4:7 Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is begotten of God, and knows God.

Romans 2:6 [God] Who will render to every man according to his deeds:

Romans 2:7 To them who by patient continuance in **well doing** seek for glory and honor and immortality, **eternal life**:

Romans 2:8 But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, - - indignation and wrath,

Romans 2:9 Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that does evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile;

The very Plan of God, from the foundation of the world, is for the Saints to have **eternal life** in the Kingdom of God.

When the Gospel is heard, and upon repentance and baptism, the Spirit of God enters into the hearers whom God has appointed unto **eternal life**.

The way to **Eternal Life** is through Jesus Christ alone. Not just words and sentiments – but living by every word that Jesus spoke. No one can attain to eternal life **in any other way** than that which God has ordained through Jesus Christ. We have been moved by God to a new status – that of Salvation and Eternal life.

Colossians 1:12 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us qualified to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:

Colossians 1:13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:

Colossians 1:13 is a pivotal verse:

I want you to notice how we are transferred from one state of being to another – from death to life. Paul said it like this in Romans 6:23. The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is **eternal life** through Jesus Christ our Lord.

We see in Colossians 1:13 Brethren, that we are delivered from the power of darkness, and placed into the Kingdom of his dear Son. At the point of repentance, baptism and the receiving of the token of Spirit Life from the Father -- then we are "transferred into the Kingdom of the Son of dear Son.

That makes us a part of the Kingdom! But this is an operation that happens according to the Father's will, not ours. It is passed on; transferred; conveyed; transmitted; delivered; transported; placed into...

The thought here is to be removed from one category and placed into a new glorious state. God has miraculously taken over our lives placed us in His Kingdom.

We live according to the privileges and rules of God's Kingdom – even now while we are in the flesh. At our calling and conversion we were taken out of the world and relocated into the Kingdom of God, and now our citizenship is in heaven (Philippians 3:20).

1John 3:2 Beloved, now are we the Children of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see him as He is.

Titus 3:7 Being justified by God's grace, we are made heirs according to the hope of **eternal life**.

As Christians, we have an inherited "birthright" status through Jesus Christ as the firstborn Son of God.

John 6:39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

Yes, He is the resurrection and the **Life** [eternal].

John 6:40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which sees the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

We are speaking about our being appointed to **Eternal Life**.

We are called to eternal life: We see the concept clearly here in:

1 Timothy 6:12 Fight the good fight of faith, **lay hold on eternal life**, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

We are called to **eternal life**.

1 Timothy 6:18 That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;

1 Timothy 6:19 Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on **eternal life**.

John 6:68 Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of **eternal life**.

John 10:27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

John 10:28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

John 10:29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

John 12:25 He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto **life eternal**.

End: Knowledge of Eternal Life