



Safe in the Arms of Jesus

(1 John 5:18 - 21)

Study Notes Handout: June 17th

Dear children, keep yourselves from idols. - 1 John 5:21

In the Biblical view, anything created - anything at all that is less than God, and most especially the gifts of God - can become idolatrous if it is relied upon inordinately until it becomes a full-blown substitute for God, and thus, an idol. The first duty of believers is to say 'yes' to God; the second is to say 'no' to idols. - Os Guinness, No God, but God, p. 16

Three Affirmations of Faith and a Warning:

1. Affirmation One: Jesus is our Protector and Keeper!

- *We know whoever is born of God does not practice sin because Jesus keeps them safe (vs. 18)*

2. Affirmation Two: Jesus is our Provider and Source!

- *We know we are of God and that the whole world lies under the power of the evil one (vs. 19)*

3. Affirmation Three: Jesus is our Counselor and Guide!

- *We know the Son of God has come to give us understanding to know the true God (vs. 20)*

4. Warning: Jesus alone is truly God and Eternal Life!

- *Therefore dear children, keep yourselves from idols! (vs. 20 - 21)*

Practical Things to Do and Discuss:

- i. God's Word seems to emphasize the positive before the negative. In this passage John shares three affirmations (5:18 - 20) before a last warning (5:21). Other examples in Scripture are found in Gen. 2:8 - 9; Ex. 20:2 - 3; Matt. 5; Prov. 3:5 - 6; Gal. 5:16. Why is this emphasis so important?

- ii. How do John's final words exalt the place of Jesus Christ in our salvation? He is our Protector, Keeper, Provider, Source, Counselor and Guide. He is true God and eternal life. Which of these titles for Jesus are you most thankful for today?

- iii. John Calvin is quoted to have said that the human heart is an idol-making factory. What does this mean? If left to its own devices, what idols come from the factory in your heart?

- iv. What has been one of the key lessons you have learned from our study of 1 John?

- v. Is there a question about something in 1 John that you would like to share with Pastor Terry so he can address it next week in his sermon?