**“Immortality” The Present Truth 4, 8.**

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In all investigation of Bible doctrines it must be borne in mind that the Bible was written by inspiration of God, and must, therefore, be perfectly consistent with itself. If we find passages which seemed to conflict, we must conclude that we do not fully understand them. Besides this, we must always interpret those parts that are obscure and indefinite by those that are definite and plain. This is but reasonable. If we have a friend whom we know to be perfectly honest, and two expressions of his that seem contradictory are reported to us, we do not condemn him until he has had an opportunity to explain. We expect that when we learn all that he said, we will find that the two statements agree. Neither would we take a statement definitely and emphatically expressed, and offset it by words from which, taken by themselves, we might infer something directly the opposite. It is thus fairly that we must deal with the Bible. We are not at liberty to draw, from any passage, an *inference* that is opposed to the plain declarations of the Word. {PTUK April 19, 1888, p. 117.1}

Now we have brought forward texts of Scripture that have no double meaning, which proved that God’s people are rewarded only at the coming of Christ and the resurrection, and that all men are dependent on Christ for eternal life. There are no doubt other texts from which the reader gathers that men are essentially immortal; these will be considered in due time, but in the meantime we ask the reader to let the plain statements that we quote have their full weight. {PTUK April 19, 1888, p. 117.2}

In our last we quoted Christ’s words: “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life.” John 3:36. This is a plain statement that those who do not believe in Christ will not live eternally. The question now arises, In what sense do those who believed on Christ have eternal life now? Let us read the answer: “And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and *this life is in his Son*.” 1 John 5:11. Now turn and read the introduction to Paul second letter to Timothy: “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to *the promise of life* which is in Christ Jesus.” Here we have the answer complete. Eternal life is ours by promise, if we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, through whom alone it may be obtained. But if a young man possesses the writings of which show that he is heir to a certain estate, he will speak of the estate as his, even though he is not in possession of it, and has no voice in its control. {PTUK April 19, 1888, p. 117.3}

When many of Christ’s disciples became offended and left him, he turned to the twelve and asked, “Will ye also go away?” “Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.” John 6:66-68. The twelve believed as Christ had said, that “He that believeth not the Son shall not see life.” If this be not true, what a chance for retort the unbelieving Jews had when Christ said to them: “And ye will not come to me, and that ye might have life.” John 5:40. They might have said, “We have no need to come to you for life, for we are immortal by nature.” And is not this a logical position for those to take who believe that the essential part of man, the real man, can never die? We may not openly repudiate Christ as did the Jews, yet if we say that we already have that which he came to bestow, do we not thereby signify our independence of him? The only inducement that he holds out for our accepting him is that he can give us life. Now if we proudly insist that we have life, do we not treat his offer with contempt, and so dishonour him? So long as we insist that we are not depended on him for eternal life, our professions to accept him have a good deal the error of patronizing condescension. {PTUK April 19, 1888, p. 117.4}

Let us have some more plain declarations. In 1 Timothy 6:12 Paul charges Timothy to “faith, lay hold on the eternal life.” A man cannot “lay hold” of something that he already has hold of. And how should he “lay hold” on eternal life? By exercising faith words in John 3:16, 36. The apostle then charges Timothy to “keep this commandment without spot, and blemish, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ; which in his times he shall show who is the blessed and only potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see.” Verses 13-16. This language was referred to God the Father, for although Christ in revelation is called King of kings and Lord of lords,” it is he in this instance who is going to make known the “blessed and only potentate;” and further, the one here spoken of is one “whom no man hath seen, neither can see;” but Christ has been seen many times. {PTUK April 19, 1888, p. 117.5}