

# (Through the Bible) 1 John 2:12-3:23

by Chuck Smith

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*The book of 1 John teaches us about spiritual development, the importance of knowing Christ, and how to overcome the enemy by living lightly and serving God.*

**Duration:** 1:26:09

**Topics:** "Through The Bible"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of maintaining a proper perspective in the world while not being consumed by it. He encourages the listeners to focus on the eternal things rather than getting caught up in worldly desires and pursuits. The preacher reminds the audience that the world and its lusts will pass away, but those who do the will of God will abide forever. He also references the 73rd Psalm, where Asaph shares his struggle with losing sight of God's goodness when he became envious of the prosperity of the wicked. Overall, the sermon serves as a reminder to prioritize the eternal and not be swayed by the temporary pleasures of the world.

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## Transcript

So we turn now in our Bibles to 1st John, chapter 2, and we'll begin tonight at verse 12, where we left off last Sunday night. The book of 1st John is a book of proofs. It isn't what I say, it's what I am.

And I can say one thing and do another. What I say doesn't count. What I do is what counts.

For if I say that I have no sin, I'm only deceiving myself, the truth isn't in me. If I say that I am walking in light, or if I say I have fellowship with God and I'm walking in darkness, I'm lying, I'm not telling the truth. If I say I know Him and I don't keep His commandments, I'm a liar, the truth isn't in me.

If I say I walk in Him, if I say I abide in Him, then I ought also to walk even as He walked. If I say I'm in the light and I hate my brother, I'm in darkness. Now, John said, I write unto you little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake.

I write unto you fathers, because you have known Him that is from the beginning. I write unto you young men, because you have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you little children, because you have known the Father.

I believe that John is here referring to spiritual development. There are people who have just received the Lord and they are babes in Christ. I write unto you little children, little children in your experience, and

what he has to say to them is that your sins are forgiven.

And hey, that's great, that's where you start. And there are a lot of people who are new in the Lord and about the only thing they know is that their sins are forgiven. You know, they are not really versed in Christian doctrine.

They really don't know too much yet about the nature of God and the nature of man and the nature of angels. Or they don't know much of Christian doctrine yet, but at least they know the important thing. Their sins are forgiven.

And how important it is that we know that fact. That our sins are forgiven. So, that's sort of your infancy state in your... the first realization as a child of God is the fact that my sins are forgiven.

Now, as we grow and mature, then He addresses the state of a young man. You are strong. I write unto you fathers, because you know Him who was from the beginning.

Now again, here is the declaration of the fact that Christ has always existed. This is something that the Bible does teach. In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God and the same was in the beginning with God.

Now, there are those who would try to reduce Christ to a created being and put Him in an angel category. The Jehovah Witnesses try to equate Him to Michael. One of the archangels, the created being of God.

They deny the eternal existence of Jesus. But you know Him who was from the beginning. When Hosea announced His birthplace, Micah rather announced His birthplace in prophecy.

He said to Bethlehem, Out of thee shall come He who is to rule my people Israel, whose going forth has been from old, from everlasting. Now, it is interesting, there are a couple of Hebrew words that are translated everlasting. The one word literally means to the vanishing point.

Now, what that means is that in your mind, you think back as far as you can think. Let your mind go back, back, back. The scientists say, some of them at least, there is a dispute on this, but some of them say the universe is 12 billion years old.

Well, let's go back beyond that. Let's go back beyond the 12 billion years that they say the universe has existed. And let's go say 10 times further back, 120 billion years ago.

Can you conceive of 120 billion years ago? Well, let's go back beyond that. Let's take it a trillion years ago. 10 trillion, 100 trillion years ago.

How far can you go back before you get a vanishing point? Your mind is sort of... Alright, that place where your mind can't conceive of anything before that. I mean, your mind hits the vanishing point. It sort of fades out.

Your mind can't grasp it or conceive it beyond that point. That is the word in Hebrew that is translated everlasting. But there is another Hebrew word.

And this word literally is beyond the vanishing point. So when your mind gets to that vanishing point where you can't think any further back, then beyond that. And this is the particular word that Micah used.

Beyond the vanishing point. The one who existed beyond the vanishing point is the one who will be born in Bethlehem. Who God has ordained to rule over the nation of Israel.

You have known him, he said, who was from the beginning. That which was from the beginning, he introduces the epistle this way. Which we have seen, which we have heard, which we have looked upon, which we have touched.

The eternal God, Jesus Christ our Lord, became flesh and dwelt among us. So I write unto you, fathers, because you have known him that is from the beginning. And then I write unto you, young men, because you have overcome the wicked ones.

So, those who are really in the battle against the enemy and have experienced God's victory. God doesn't put the babes so often in the front lines. He sort of holds them back and lets them learn and lets them develop.

And we grow through the testings and the trials that we have. But as we begin to mature, many times God then allows increased trials to the strengthening of our faith and our trust in him. And that is why the scripture exhorts us, count it all joy when you fall into these diverse testings.

It's part of our growth. Part of the development of our relationship with God. It's the thing that causes our roots to go deeper in him and in the word.

It's sort of exciting when God closes every possible door. Because you know he's going to do something now. He only can do something.

We can't do a thing, you know. And usually that's, you're in a pretty good shape when God has closed every door. Because now you're going to give up.

Because there's no place to turn. You just turn to God and say, well God, it's impossible, it can't be done. And then he'll show you what he can do.

He has the opportunity. We heard, it's not a scripture, it probably should be. Man's extremities are God's opportunities.

I thought that was a scripture for a long time because I heard it so much. But there's a lot of truth to that. God works so often when we've come to the end of our resources, our genius, our devices.

And when we give up is often the time when God then does his work. And often times he does not do it until we get to that point. For the reason that if he would act prematurely, we would be apt to attribute it to our device that we had worked out.

And then we would write success formula books. For we know how to do it now. We've got it all set out in a formula and we can teach people how to work the right combination and open the doors of everything.

And so God lets us get to that place of desperation, hopelessness in ourselves. That when he works, all we can say is, I can't believe what God did today. I write into you young men because you've overcome the wicked one.

And then he goes back and he goes through the same progression again, saying the same thing to the little children, only declaring unto them this time. I write into you little children because you have known the

father. And then I write into you fathers because you have known him that was from the beginning.

Just declares the same thing to them. But then with the young men he changes. I have written unto you young men because you are strong and the word of God abides in you and you have overcome the wicked one.

So first of all, he just says you've overcome the wicked one. Now he gives you the secret of their strength and how it is that they overcame the wicked one. I write into you young men because you are strong because God's word abides in you.

And that is always our strength against the enemy. None of us are immune from the attacks of the enemy. I don't care how far you progress in your spiritual experience, in your relationship with God, you will, as long as you are in this body, not be immune from Satan's attacks.

You never grow beyond temptation. In fact, many times the more you grow, the greater is the temptation that the enemy lays before you. You never grow beyond the point of being tempted.

You never grow beyond the point of struggling with the enemy. Being in conflict with Satan. But I write unto you young men because you are strong because the word of God abides in you.

And that's the secret of my strength in overcoming the enemy is the word of God abiding in my heart. Thy word, David said, have I hid in my heart, O Lord, that I might not sin against you. The power of the word in my heart against temptation, against sinning against God.

When Satan came to Jesus with the temptations to the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eye and the pride of life, Jesus answered those temptations with the word. It is written, Jesus said. And the secret of his strength in overcoming the temptations of Satan was the word of God abiding in you.

Now, there are many times when a person gets tripped up by the enemy. And it is the time when there is a dearth of God's word within your heart. Satan likes to see us so busy in so many things that we don't have time for the word.

And our soul becomes sort of parched for the word of God. And I'll tell you, at that point, you are very vulnerable to the attacks of the enemy. Oh, how we need to be strong in the word that we might be able to overcome the wicked one because God's word abides in us.

Now, John joins us. Love not the world. That is, the materialistic world around you.

Neither the things that are in the world. If any man loved the world, the love of the Father is not in him. Now, this is a pretty strong statement.

And we better give it careful attention. If any man loved the world, the love of the Father is not in him. Jesus said, no man can serve two masters.

For either will hold to one and despise the other, love one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. You cannot.

Not you should not. You cannot. And mammon, of course, is that worldly materialistic things.

The monetary system of the world. You can't serve them both. Now, John defines for us what he is meaning by the world.

For he said, for all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life is not of the Father, but is of the world. When Satan comes to tempt, you can be sure that the temptation will fall in one of three categories. Either in the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, or in the pride of life.

Those are the three areas where Satan will attack. Go back to the Garden of Eden when he came to Eve there in the garden. Hath God said that you can eat of all of the trees that are in the garden? Yeah.

All except the one in the midst of the garden, the knowledge of good and evil. God said that we should not eat of it. For in the day that we ate of it, we would surely die.

Oh, you won't die. God knows that in that tree lies the knowledge of good and evil. He is trying to protect himself to keep you from becoming like God.

And when she saw that it was pleasant to the eyes, beautiful fruit, that it was pleasant to the taste and it could make her wise as God, she ate the lust of the flesh, great to eat, delicious. Lust of the eye, beautiful to look upon. And hey, it'll make me like God.

Pride of life. And Satan tripped her up. Basically, when he came to Jesus, command the stones to be turned to bread.

The lust of the flesh. The promise of all of the kingdoms of the world, the pride of life. And of course, cast yourself down.

He will give his angels again the pride of life. Do something spectacular. Draw attention to yourself.

These are the areas where Satan will attack you. These are the areas of the world. Now, today we are living in a day and age in which I feel that Satan is attacking in these areas in a greater degree than ever before.

Jesus talked about evil days shall wax worse and worse. And because the iniquity of the earth will abound, the love of many will wax cold. The iniquity of the earth is abounding as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be at the coming of the Son of Man.

Days of Noah, eating, drinking and all. And hey, we've got a day and an age in which the opportunities of fulfilling the lust of the flesh are just myriad. And the lust of the eye.

Satan has opened the floodgates of lustful material. Magazines, billboards, movies, where there seems to be no holes barred. Anything goes.

And these things designed to inflame the passions. To start your mind thinking in these ways of the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eye. And they're working together.

Creating desires for fleshly fulfillment that is outside of the confines that God has established. Many men love the world. The world system.

The things that are going on. The love of the Father is not in them. There's a great inconsistency today.

As so many Christians are taking and abusing their Christian liberty. Presuming on the grace of God. And are trying to join with God and join with the world.

And make Christ one with Belial. You can't do it. You can't mix light and darkness.

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. For he who has the love of the world in his heart has not the love of the Father. Pretty strong words.

You better examine your own heart. Do I have a love for the world in my heart? Am I attracted to worldly things? Am I, you know, moving in those directions? If I have the love of the world in my heart, I have not the love of the Father. For all that is in the world.

The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life. Is of the world and is not of God. Now, he gives to us then the rationale.

The world passes away and the lust thereof. Hey, if your life is bound up in worldly things. The lust and the desires and the love for the world.

If that's where your life is, know that it's going to pass away. The world passes away and the lust thereof. You're investing in things that are going to perish.

But he that doeth the will of God abideth forever. That's great rationale. You see, our problem is that we so often lose sight of eternity.

As we are in this world, we get so involved in the worldly things. That our vision becomes clouded and we lose the sense and the consciousness of the eternal. And when you lose the consciousness of the eternal.

Then Satan can just really do a trip on your mind. The 73rd Psalm. Asaph speaks about that trip that Satan did on his mind.

When he got his eyes upon the world and the people in the world. He said, now I know that God is good. But when I sought to understand a few things.

I was almost wiped out. Because I began to look at the prosperity of the wicked. I began to see how they got along.

And you know, they didn't seem to have any problems. And this and that and the other. And Satan just really started to put a real trip on him.

And he said, when I sought to know these things. I almost slept. He said, I said, hey, it doesn't pay to try and serve God.

It doesn't pay to try and be good. When I sought to know these things. I almost slept until I went into the sanctuary of God.

And then I saw their end. In the sanctuary of God, his vision was corrected. And he got sight now of the eternal.

And that's why it's so important that we come into the sanctuary of God. Living in this materialistic world. It's so easy to just get caught up in the whole worldly flow.

And we lose sight of the eternal. But it's important that we come into the sanctuary of God. And we be reminded again.

That the world is going to pass away in the lust thereof. But he who does the will of God is going to abide forever. So that we get the right perspective on those things that we are drawn to or seeking after.

That we keep the true perspective. That we don't get involved in those material things that are going to pass away. But we keep our hearts on those things that are eternal.

And that should always be our experience in the sanctuary of God. The correcting of the perspective. Where we come again into the sense and the consciousness of the eternal.

Now there's where, of course, our problems lie as God deals with our lives. Because as God deals with our lives, He always has the eternal in view. And when I have only the temporal in view, many times my view differs from God's.

And I say, God, what are you doing? You know, God, how can you say you love me? God, if you love me, why is this happening to me? It's because I have my eyes on the temporal, material advantage. And God is looking at the eternal plan and the eternal advantage. It's important that we step back and we get the long view.

And realize that the world is going to pass away in the lust thereof. He who does the will of God abides forever. Little children, it is the last time.

And as you have heard that Antichrist shall come even now, are there many Antichrists whereby we know that it is the last time. Jesus said in the last times there will be many false Christs that will arise. Many men declaring themselves to be the Savior.

Now, that happened in John's day. And John took that as the sign that they were in the last times. But you know, I am convinced that it is God's desire that we all in every generation believe that ours is the final generation.

I think that that is something that God wants to keep in the consciousness of the church. That this is it. That the Lord is coming soon.

Because I really believe that this is one of the most purifying influences within the church and one of the things that helps us to keep perspective almost more than anything else is the realization that the Lord is coming soon. What difference does it make the Lord is coming? Hey, He's coming soon. I'm very convinced that the Lord is coming within the next 20 years for me.

I'll be extremely shocked if He doesn't come within 20 years for me. And hey, that's getting pretty soon. Almost shockingly soon.

The Lord is coming soon. Sooner than what we realize or think. Now, I personally also believe that He's coming for all of us very soon.

Even you young people. I believe that we are at the time of the end. And I do believe that God wants me to believe that.

And God wants that to be in the consciousness of the church. Now, I do believe that there is much more reason to believe that today than there was to believe that 25 years ago. I believe that things have happened in the last 25 years and the development of certain technologies that make biblical prophecies now far more realistic than they could have been 25 years ago as far as their fulfillment was concerned.

I really believe we're getting down to the wire. I believe we're in the last time. John believed he was in the last time, but I do believe that God intended him to believe that as He intends all of us to live in the awareness or consciousness that at any moment the whole program can be interrupted so that you don't get too attached to things.

That you live lightly. As Paul said to the Corinthians, and he also believed he was in the last times, and writing to the Corinthians in light of believing that this was it, he said, the time has come when they that are married should be as though they weren't married. That is, your first priority should be that of serving God rather than pleasing your wife.

When our every contact with the world, he said, should be just as light as possible. That's the way we should always live, with a light touch with the world. Don't get so rooted.

Don't get so bound up in the worldly system that you're not ready to just drop it at a moment's notice at the blast of the trump of God. So, there were antichrists in those days. We are looking for the antichrist to soon come.

But here it is plural. There were many antichrists. Now, John says concerning a lot of these who had turned against Christ that they went out from us.

Some of them had even become a part of the fellowship of the church for a time. And they went out from us, but they were not of us. For had they been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us.

But they went out that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. You know, it is a healthy body that is able to purge the poisons from its system. And when a body gets so weak that it can no longer purge the poisons, it will soon die.

So, it is a healthy body that is able to purge itself of poison. They went out from us, but they weren't of us. For had they been of us, they no doubt would have remained with us.

But they went out from us that it might be made manifest that they were not of us. But you have an unction or an anointing from the Holy One and you know all things. Now, we mentioned that there are two Greek words for know, ginosko, which is knowledge by experience.

Experience and then oides, knowledge by intuition. What would you believe that this particular Greek word would be? You have an unction from the Holy One and you know all things. You know all things by experience.

Have you experienced everything? I haven't, and I'm glad. A lot of things I haven't experienced and I don't desire to experience them. So, no, I don't know all things by experience, but I do know them by the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

You have this anointing of the Holy Spirit in all things. There is an intuitive knowledge of the Spirit that comes to us. And it's an interesting thing and it's almost a difficult thing when you have the intuitive

knowledge of the Spirit and you're dealing with a person that doesn't, you're absolutely amazed that they can't see it because it's so clear.

This is one problem we've often had, is when God gives to you an understanding, a knowledge, and you can see it so clearly and you try to explain it to somebody and they say, no, no, no, it's not that way, and they can't see it. And you say, it's almost frustrating, but the Spirit gives you an edge. And a lot of times you know things and you can't really tell how you know them.

Well, how do you know that? I don't know, I just know it. Oh, you can't know that? Well, I do. You have an anointing from the Holy One and He gives you this intuitive knowledge of people many times, of circumstances, and of course in this particular instance, it is of people, they went out from us.

And this intuition, you knew that they weren't really up. Now, I have not written unto you because you know not the truth, but because you know it. And that no lie is of the truth.

Again, both of these words are oides in Greek, knowledge by intuition. We know the truth. How do we know the truth? Because the Spirit of God has planted the truth in our hearts.

We know that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. We know that He died for our sins. Try to explain that to someone who hasn't had the work of the Spirit within their heart.

And all of the doubts and all of the misgivings and everything else. So, you know. Thank God you know.

You know by the work of the Spirit within your heart. Thank God His Spirit worked in your heart or you wouldn't know. You'd be just like the others.

Lost in the darkness of your own ignorance. I've not written unto you because you don't know the truth, but because you do know it and that no lie is of the truth. And who is a liar? But he that denies that Jesus is the Messiah.

As I say, you know that. You know that Jesus is the Messiah. How do you know that? Because the Spirit of God has borne witness to your heart of this truth.

But a lot of people don't know this. They believe a lie. Those that deny that Jesus Christ or Jesus is the Messiah, he is an antichrist that denies the Father and the Son.

Well, I believe in God, but I don't know why Jesus is necessary. And I don't really believe much. You know, I think Jesus is a good man.

Yeah, he was a prophet and all. But no, no, no. You can't pass him off as a good man.

There's too many inconsistencies there. You see, if he wasn't the Son of God, then he was a liar. And how can you say a liar is a good man? He was a fraud.

He was a deceiver. How can you say he was a good man? You see, he was either God manifested in the flesh or he was a deceiver and a liar and a fraud. And thus he wasn't a good man.

He was one of the worst charlatans who ever came down the road. If you deny the Father and the Son. Now, whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father.

Well, I believe in God, but I don't believe in Jesus. No, you don't really believe in the Father. Jesus said, I am the way, the truth, and the life, and no man comes to the Father but by Me.

Now, a lot of people claim to believe in God. And I don't doubt their claim. I just don't know what God they believe in.

You see, there are a lot of gods. David said, the gods of the heathen are many. So, a person says, hey, I believe in God.

You know, supreme being. Who does he believe in? I don't know. When Jesus talks about the Father, he's talking about the eternal God, the creator of the heaven and the earth.

Yeah, yeah, that's the one I believe in. Not if you don't believe in Jesus. You see, if you don't have the Son, you don't have the Father.

If you don't have the Son, you can't come to the Father. No man can come to the Father but by Him. So, the only way to the God who is revealed in the Bible is through Jesus Christ.

Now, there are many Jewish people today who say, well, we just pray to God. We don't need Jesus. Well, then, I don't know which God they're praying to.

Because the God even of their own Old Testament required that before they could come to Him, they had to offer a sacrifice and get rid of the sins by the animal sacrifice. Oh, well, I just come to God with my good works and I just believe that God accepts me because of my good works and my sincerity. Well, your God may, but He's not the God that's revealed in the Bible because He said, your works are like filthy rags.

In His sight, He has no interest in your works. The just shall live by faith and not faith in your works, but faith in His work. So, there is a bond between the Father and the Son that you cannot have one without the other.

To deny one is to deny the other. To receive one is to receive the other. They go together as a package and you can't separate them.

Now, the King James translators there in verse 23 added, he that acknowledges the Son has the Father also, but that's just an addition to the text. You notice it's in italics, which indicates it to be an addition to the text and they're just trying to complete the thought, but the thought is complete enough without their addition. Whosoever denies the Son has not the Father.

Let that, therefore, abide in you, which you have heard from the beginning. For if that which you have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son and in the Father. So, in the beginning of their faith, they were taught that Jesus Christ was the Son of God.

He came to be the Savior of the world. Now, hold fast to that. Let it abide in you.

For you will continue both in the Son and in the Father. And this is the promise that He has promised to us. Even eternal life.

God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life. And Jesus said there in John 3.36, He that hath the Son of God hath everlasting life and he that hath not the Son of God shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him. I

am the resurrection and the life.

He that believeth on Me, though he were dead yet, shall he live. And if you live and believe in Me, you'll never die. So, the promise that He has promised us is eternal life with Him in God's Kingdom.

That's the hope that I have for now. I plan to spend my eternity with Jesus Christ. To forever be with the Lord.

Wherever He is, there's where I'm going to be. These things, He said, have I written unto you concerning them that would seduce you. But the anointing, the anointing, same word, that you have received of Him abides in you and you need not that any man should teach you, but as the same anointing teaches you of all things and is truth and is no lie, and even as it has taught you, ye shall abide in Him.

Now, in the declaration that you have need that no man should teach you, but the Holy Spirit would teach you, and Jesus promised that. He said, but the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, which the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have commanded you. And for you to really learn anything takes the work of the Holy Spirit within your heart.

Now, the interesting thing is, though I may be teaching you God's Word and God's truth, and some of you are seeing it and understanding it and it's being clarified, and you say, wow, yeah. And others are saying, what in the world is he talking about? When's this thing going to get over? I want to go to Bob's. And what's happening? With some, the Holy Spirit is teaching.

You couldn't learn unless the Holy Spirit... Even though you're hearing truth, even though you read truth, you read the Word of God, unless the Holy Spirit teaches you, you can't really comprehend or understand it. The natural man does not understand the things of the Spirit, neither can he know them. They are spiritually discerned, but he that is spiritual understands all things.

Now, what John is not saying is that we don't need teaching or men to be teaching the Word of God. For Paul says that the Lord has placed in the church pastor-teachers. And God would not place them there unless we needed pastor-teachers.

But though I may be called as a pastor-teacher and may be teaching the Word of God, you can't really learn the Word of God except the Holy Spirit bear witness to your own heart of the truth and plant the truth within your heart. So, the teaching really comes from the Holy Spirit. That which, you know, really sticks in your heart and abides in your heart.

It's an interesting thing that I learn even from my own tapes. And a lot of times as I'm listening to my tapes, I say, did I say that? It must be. That's my voice.

I don't remember saying that. Hey, that's good. That's rich.

Because of the anointing of the Spirit and the gift of teaching. And so, that's what John is saying here. We need the Holy Spirit to teach us all things.

Our hearts need to be opened to the Spirit of God. We cannot learn the things of the Spirit apart from the work of the Holy Spirit in teaching us. That is why whenever we open the Bible to read it, we should pray, Lord, You teach me.

Let the Spirit of God just instruct my heart in the way of truth. And now, little children, what does it teach you? Abide in Him. That's the message.

Abide in Christ. Now, little children, abide in Him. That when He shall appear, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him that is coming.

Now, if you abide in Christ, then you will be walking as He walked. I wonder just what I will be doing when the Lord suddenly, in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye, calls me home. Raptures His church.

What will I be doing? Well, I'll tell you, I know what I don't want to be doing. Honestly, now really, to be honest with you, I hope I'm not watching a football game on TV. Especially if the Rams are losing to the Giants.

No, I would think that that would be sort of a waste of time. And I think, oh, no, I don't want the Lord to catch me wasting time. Even more than that, I hope I'm not watching a team.

Now, I would prefer that I be probably here preaching when the Lord comes. Hey, alright, look where I am already. Now, we need to live in the awareness that the Lord can come at any time.

You don't want to be ashamed at His coming. Whoops, Lord. The Bible tells us to redeem the time.

Buy up the opportunities. Take advantage of the time that God gives us. That we might have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.

For if you know that He is righteous, do you know that He is righteous? How do you know that He is righteous? Oedipus or Gnosko. We know that He is righteous by the Spirit, intuitively. Then ye know that everyone that doeth righteousness is born of Him.

How do I know that? Because I can see them. And by experience, I know those that do righteousness are born of Him. So you have the Oedipus and the Gnosko both in the one verse there.

Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God. I love that verse. Behold, what manner of love God has bestowed upon you that you should be called the son of God.

What glorious love that God should adopt me as His son. That God should claim me as His son. That God should call me His son.

What manner of love God has for me that He would call me His son. Therefore, the world does not know us because it did not know Him. Beloved, now are we the sons of God and it doesn't yet appear what we're going to be, but we know that when He appears we're going to be like Him, for we will see Him as He is.

Now, we should not look for the rapture to make a tremendous transition and change in our lives. You know what I would hope? I would hope that I could be in heaven for an hour before I realized it. That I walked in such fellowship with the Lord, such communion with Him.

Live so close to Him that suddenly I say, man, the air is clear, isn't it? Where am I? Hey, this is heaven, you know. And you'd be there an hour before you ever knew it. That there would be no real radical change.

And people are looking for real radical changes to take place. But you know, the Spirit working in our heart day by day is conforming us into the image of Christ. And we are being changed from glory to glory into the same image by the power of His Spirit working in us.

So that there should not be some dramatic radical change when we then come right into the actual presence of our Lord in glory. You see, what will we be occupied with when we get there? Just loving Him and fellowshiping and worshipping Him. Sharing with Him.

What should we then be occupied with then? Just loving Him, serving Him, worshipping Him. It shouldn't bring to pass a real radical change. You know, a hundred and eighty degrees.

Running in my flesh hard as I can this way and then rapture, you know. Back now the other way. Just that transition right on in.

Now we are the sons of God. It doesn't yet appear what we're going to be. You know, the Bible is interesting in that it doesn't give us that much insight into just what heaven is going to be like.

And the reason why is because there are no words that can describe it. That's what Paul said of his experience. I was caught up into the third heaven and hey, I heard things that it would be a crime to try to describe them in human language.

I'm not going to even try. It would be a crime to try to describe them. There is no human language that can express these things.

So because language is limited and is incapable of really expressing the fullness of the glory, the beauty, it just remains not described for us. Eye hath not seen. Ear hath not heard.

Neither hath it entered into the hearts of men those things that God has prepared for those that love Him. But God has begun to reveal them to us by His Spirit. Now, there are occasions when I have a taste of heaven.

The special work of God's Spirit within my heart and I'm carried into an ecstasy. I experience a joy that's indescribable, full of glory. I feel a deep, glorious peace that I can't describe.

Spirit of God beginning to reveal to me some of those things of the heavenly scene, but yet so far beyond anything that words could describe. What if you had a child that was blind and you tried to describe the sunset that we had last night with a child who has never seen the oranges and the reds and the clouds and the beauties fading out into the light blues and the pinks and all. How could you, with words, adequately describe the beauty of a sunset? It defies description.

So the heavenly scene defies description. The Bible doesn't attempt to. It just tells you, hey, it's glory beyond anything you could ever believe or imagine.

It doesn't yet appear what we're going to be. Paul said, some of you will ask, how are the dead raised? With what body will they come? And he doesn't really seek to tell us too much about the body only in the fact that it's going to be vastly superior to the body that we have. We are planted in corruption.

We're going to be raised in corruption. We are planted in weakness. We're going to be raised in power.

We are sown in dishonor. We're going to be raised in glory. We're planted as a natural body.

We're going to be raised in a spiritual body. There's a natural body. There's a spiritual body.

As we were born in the image of the earth and been earthly, so shall we bear the image of the heavens. When you put a seed into the ground, it dies before it comes forth into new life. And the body that comes out of the ground isn't the body that you planted.

All you planted was a bare grain. God gives it a body. It pleases Him.

So is the resurrection of the dead. New body. Not going to be the body I planted in the ground.

I'm not going to have gimpy knees. I'm not going to have bad eyes. I'm not going to have a bald head.

I'm not going to have wrinkles. Glorious new form. I don't know what it is.

It does not yet appear what I'm going to be. That doesn't bother me. I know this.

I'm going to be like Him. Hey, that's all that matters. I'm going to be like Him, for I'm going to see Him as He is.

Now that's my hope tonight. I'm going to be like Him as I see Him as He is. And every man who has this hope in him purifies himself even as he is pure.

This to me is one of the most purifying hopes within the church. Because if Jesus is coming at any moment, I'm going to be changed to be just like Him. I'm going to see Him as He is.

And so that keeps me from doing a lot of things that I might otherwise do. From getting involved in a lot of wasted time that I might otherwise get involved in. Because the Lord is coming soon and I want to use my time for His glory.

Keep myself pure. To be fully pure. Whosoever commits sin, now this word commit should be translated practice as sin.

Or living in sin. Whosoever is living or practicing sin is transgressing the law for sin is lawlessness. And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins and in him is no sin.

Now, I pointed out in chapter 1 that the sins plural refer to the fruit. Sin singular refers to the nature of sin in us here in 1 John. So, the sin singular, herein far as Christ is concerned, in him is no sin.

That is, there was no nature of sin. We have a sinful nature. If I try to deny that, I'm only deceiving myself.

The truth isn't in me. If I say I have no sin, I don't have a sinful nature, then I'm only deceiving myself. If I say my sinful nature has never borne any fruit, I've never sinned, then I do even worse.

I make God a liar now. But Jesus did not have a sinful nature. He was born of God, conceived of the Holy Spirit.

He died, as Peter said, as a lamb without spot or blemish, spot and inherent defect. He didn't have the inherent defect. Nor were there any acquired, the blemishes.

I have both. I have spots and blemishes. I have the inherent sin, nature of sin.

And it has produced too much fruit. So, thank God for the blood of Jesus Christ. Having confessed my sins, He's faithful and just to forgive me and to cleanse me from all unrighteousness.

So, whosoever is practicing sin is transgressing the law. For sin is the transgression of the law. And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins.

He came in order that He might die for my sins, that He might take away my sins and my guilt. And in Him is no sin. Nature.

Whosoever abides in Him does not practice sin. And whosoever practices sin has not seen Him, neither known Him. Pretty powerful words.

It causes us to examine our own lives. If I am living a life of practicing sin, I really don't know Him. I really haven't seen Him.

If I really know Him, then I'm going to be free from the practice of sin. Little children, let no man deceive you and don't deceive yourself. He that doeth righteousness is righteous even as He is righteous.

Now, Christ our example in purity. Every man that has this hope in Him purifies himself even as He is pure. He is our example in righteousness as He that doeth righteousness is righteous even as He is righteous.

He that is practicing sin is of the devil. For the devil sinneth from the beginning. And for this purpose, the Son of God was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil.

So, again, don't deceive yourself. If you are practicing sin, living in sin, you're not of God. You're a part of that rebellion against God led by Satan.

Whosoever is born of God does not practice sin, for His seed remaineth in him and the word His there in your Bible, if you capitalize that, because it refers to Jesus Christ. His seed remaineth in him and he cannot sin because he is born of God. You see, I have been born now of God.

I have been born again. This is what Jesus was talking to Nicodemus about. He said, hey, fellow, you got to be born again if you're going to enter into the kingdom of heaven.

He says, how can I be born again? I'm an old man. I can't go back to my mother's womb and be born. He said, no, that which is born of the flesh is flesh, but that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Don't marvel when I say you've got to be born again. Born of the Spirit. The new birth.

Now, born of the flesh, I was born a sinner. The nature of sin. And because of the nature of sin, there was the fruit, a sinful life.

Now, I have been born again. Through the work of Jesus Christ, being born again, I have now a new nature. And when I do something that is untowards, mean, ugly, nasty, I can't say, oh, you know, that's just my old nature.

Irish, you know. Because I have now a new nature. I've been born again.

So that doing the righteous things becomes natural. Sin becomes unnatural to the child of God. Now, it doesn't mean I don't sin, but it does mean that it becomes an unnatural thing to me.

Doing righteousness becomes the natural thing of my life. Doing the right thing comes naturally. The nature of Christ, His seed abides in me.

And I can't practice sin. It's opposite to my new nature. It's opposing my new nature.

I may fall into sin, but it's so opposing to my new nature that I'm miserable. I'm uncomfortable. And I come right out of it.

I say, Lord, forgive me. I was a fool. I was blind and foolish.

Oh, Lord, forgive me. I can't be comfortable living in sin. It's miserable because of my new nature.

I'm out of character now with the new nature that I have in Christ. And so, we are what we are by nature. That's why you need the new nature.

That's why Jesus said you've got to be born again. Now, a pig is a pig by nature. There are certain natural inclinations of a pig.

He would be very uncomfortable in a different environment than what his nature calls for. Now, by nature, he loves to get in a mud hole and just, you know, oink and scoot around in a mud hole. Stinky, smelly thing by nature.

He enjoys it. Now, you take him out of the mud hole, wash him off with deodorant soap, cologne him and bring him into your parlor. Now, this isn't natural for a pig.

He would be very uncomfortable in your living room. He would go rooting around looking for a way to get out. Want to get back to the mud, the smelly mud pit.

I like it. It's my nature if I'm a pig. That's why Reformation doesn't work for people.

It takes more than Reformation. It takes a change of nature. That's what the Gospel offers.

That's what the Gospel offers to us. It doesn't say, come on, clean up your act, you know, reform. No, it says, be transformed.

Have a change of nature to where doing righteousness becomes the natural thing because his spirit, his seed is now abiding in me. A new nature through Jesus Christ. His nature planted in me.

And that is why the unconverted has such a difficulty many times in making the decision to turn his life over to Jesus Christ because he sees the Christian and he says, I could never live that way. Why? Because he's a pig. And he's happy in the mud.

And he cannot imagine living a life of cleanliness, a life of purity. That's so totally opposed to his nature. He feels he would be extremely uncomfortable in that environment.

And Satan oftentimes uses that as a weapon against the person making the conversion. I could never live that way. You know, I've seen, you know, I have this light and I would like to live that way.

And I, you know, but hey, that's not for me, man. I just couldn't do it. Of course you can't.

We couldn't if there weren't a change of nature. But we've been born of God. His seed now abides in us.

I have a new nature. And I cannot practice sin in this new nature. Now, if you're comfortable practicing sin, then you don't have the new nature.

Oh, but I raised my hand and went forward to Billy Graham because I said, I don't care. You know, you're not really born again unless there's a change of nature. Now in this, the children of God are manifest.

This is how you know if you're a child of God. And the children of the devil are manifest. Whosoever does not righteousness is not of God.

If you're not living a righteous life, you're not of God. I don't care what you may profess. Neither he that doesn't love his brother.

For this is the message that you heard from the beginning that you should love one another. That's the heart of the gospel message. Remember, the lawyer came to Jesus and said, what's the greatest commandment? Jesus said, thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, with all thy strength, and thy neighbor as thyself.

And in these two are all the law and the prophet. What did he teach us? Love one another, even as I have loved you. If we don't have love for each other, then we are not of God.

We don't have the new nature. For he that loves God loves him that is begotten of God. That's part of the nature.

The message we've heard from the beginning, we should love one another, not as Cain, who was of that wicked one and slew his brother. And why did he kill him? Because his own works were evil and his brothers were righteous. And so marvel not, my brethren, if the world hates you.

Because your deeds are righteous, theirs are evil. They'll hate you for that. You make them feel guilty.

They don't like to feel guilty. They hate you. Always doing the right thing.

You're a goody-goody. You think you're better than everybody else, don't you? No, they hate you. I'm amazed that when a person, say, finds a Brinks bag in the highway, \$20,000 in it, and they take it down to the police department and turn it in, you know that they get all kinds of hate mail, threats on their lives and everything else.

People call them up and harass them, tell them what fools they are and how stupid they were. And people that do those kind of things get all kinds of harassment. The world hates a righteous person.

Marvel not that the world hates you. Now, we know, Oedus, that we have passed from death into life because we love the brethren. And he that loveth not his brother abides in death.

Now, how do I know that I passed from death in life? Because I love the family of God. I love the brethren. Jesus said to His disciples, by this sign shall the world know that you are My disciples, that you love one another.

That's the greatest witness to the world is the love within the Christian body. They know that you are really Christians because you love one another as you do. Hey, not only is it the proof to the world, but it's also the proof to yourself.

How do you know that you have passed from death into life? Because God has given you such a love for the body of Christ, those within the body of Christ. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer as Cain. And you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

So hereby we perceive the love of God. How do you know God loves you? How do you know what you know? Now, I know God loves me. How do I know God loves me? Because He laid down His life for us.

That's how I know He loves me. Again, as we mentioned before, whenever God wants to prove that He loves you, He always points to the cross. He never seeks to make proof of His love in any other way.

He doesn't try to prove that He loves you by the circumstances of your life, always being good and prosperous and happy and rosy. Whenever you begin to doubt the love of Christ or the love of God, turn and look at the cross. There's the proof that God loves you.

God's the love that He gave His only begotten Son. Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

Love one another even as I love you. Greater love is no man than this. And a man will lay down his life for his friends.

You are my friends, Jesus said, if you do what I command you. And He laid down His life for us. We ought to have such love for each other, for the body of Christ, that we would lay down our lives for each other.

Jesus said to husbands, love your wives even as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it. God help us. May God work His love in our hearts.

But whoso hath this world's good and sees his brother have need and shuts up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? Now coming to practical examples. You've been blessed, you've been prospered, you have a lot of world's goods. And now you see a brother in Christ who is in great need.

And you don't reach out to help him in his need. How can you really say that the love of Christ abides in you? Oh yes, I love him. Poor brother.

I feel sorry for him. I love him so much. I feel so sorry for him.

Not having any turkey this Christmas. Well, that's a shame, you know. Has to eat a big Mac for Christmas.

You know, that's terrible. Oh, but I love him. Oh, I love that man.

No, no, no, you don't. You can't really love them and shut your heart up in their need and be cold and calloused concerning their need. How does the love of God really dwell in you? How can you say God's love dwells in you? Little children, let us not love in word.

That's easy, isn't it? Oh, I love the world. It's just people I can't stand. You know, and it's easy to profess love.

Oh, I love you so much. And was it Shakespeare that said, thou protested too much? I always get a little suspicious when people, every time they see you say, oh, I love you so much, brother. I had a fellow that was saying that to me around here for a long time.

And then he did his best to put a knife in my back. Oh, he loves me so much. Yes, yes, yes.

Loving in word, that isn't where it's at. Let's love in deed. Let's show our love by what we do.

Not by our words only. It's good to express it, but it's better to show it in our deeds, in reaching out, in helping, in giving a call, in giving a word of encouragement, in giving support financially if necessary, to reach out in love, to touch each other and to help each other. Let's love in deed, but that's love in truth.

And hereby we know that we are of the truth. How do I know that I'm of the truth? Because I love in truth. I love in my deeds.

And that's how I know that I'm of the truth. And it gives assurance in our hearts towards him. For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart and knows all things.

Now, sometimes our hearts do condemn us and Satan oftentimes condemns us. And there are people that are suffering under the condemnation of Satan out of their own heart. There are people, and I feel sort of sorry for them, they always go away castigating themselves, saying, why did I say that? Oh, why did I say that? And they can't sleep at night because of what they said that night when they were together with their friends and they're afraid that, oh, I've said the wrong thing, nobody's gonna love me anymore.

And there are people that have that kind of a nature that they just are troubled by things like that. and their hearts often condemn them. But if our hearts condemn us, God's greater than our hearts.

You know, I am convinced that I condemn myself for a lot of things God doesn't condemn me for, because God has justified me. Paul said, Who is he that condemneth that is Christ who died, ye rather is risen again, and is at the right hand of the Father, making intercession for us? There is therefore now no condemnation to those that are in Christ Jesus. If our heart condemns us, God's greater than our heart.

And we have confidence toward God. If our heart condemns us not, we have confidence towards God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.

Now, there are a lot of people that take that first part as a promise. Whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him. But they don't finish the verse, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.

You see, there are some fascinating, sort of broad promises given to us on prayer. Jesus said, And whatsoever things you desire when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you shall have them. Now, people just take that, and they start then preaching these sermons on faith, and hey, you can have anything you want.

You can have a Mercedes, you know, live on Nido Island, or you can... Faith. That's all you need is just faith. Whatsoever things you desire, do you desire it? Then believe, and you'll have it.

Who was Jesus talking to? The multitudes? Nope. He was talking to His disciples. What constitutes being a disciple? If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.

That needs to be stamped over the top of that. Whatsoever things you desire when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you shall have them. Deny yourself, take up your cross, follow me.

What does that mean? It means your prayers will only be on those things that are for His glory, and for His kingdom, and not to satisfy your own desires of making a big splash in a Mercedes, or whatever. We have this confidence when we keep His commandments, and we do those things that are pleasing in His sight. Then we have power in prayer, because our prayers are not directed towards our self-interest, and self-aggrandizement, but our prayers are on the things of His kingdom, and things for His glory, and things whereby others may prosper, and be blessed.

And this is His commandment. Oh, now He's talked about a lot of commandments, and He's going to be talking more about commandments, and keeping the commandments. What is the commandment? That we should believe on the name of His Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another as He gave us commandment.

That's all. He doesn't give you ten commandments, a long list of do's and do not's. All He says is just believe on Jesus, and love one another.

I'm glad that He reduced it down to such simplicity. I'll never forget it. It's easy to remember to just believe on Him, and to love one another.

He doesn't lay a long burden and list on me that I have a hard time fulfilling. Just do this. Believe on Jesus, and love each other.

And He that keeps His commandments, dwells in Him, and He in Him. And hereby we know that He abides in us. How do I know that He abides in us, or in me? By His Spirit, which He has given me.

God has filled my life with His Holy Spirit. I know He abides in me. Hereby I know, by the Spirit that He has given.

So, next week we'll finish 1st John, as we go into chapters 4 and 5. Then, we'll take 2nd and 3rd John, and perhaps Jude in one evening. Enter into the book of Revelation for about, what, ten weeks maybe. So, that means about March or so, we'll be starting over in Genesis again.

Through the Bible, it's exciting. We learn about God, as He has revealed the truth of Himself to us. And now may the Spirit of God teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance those things that He has commanded us.

You remember to just love God, and believe on Jesus Christ. And may the love of Christ be perfected in your life. May it increase, and may it grow, and may God help you to maintain the proper perspective in the world, but not of the world.

Your every touch as light as possible, because the world is going to pass away, and the lust thereof, that he who does the will of God will abide forever. God help us to be interested and occupied with the things that are eternal. In Jesus' name.

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