

The Holy Spirit's Power and Our Effort - Part 2

by Francis Chan

Francis Chan emphasizes the importance of actively pursuing spiritual growth and the dangers of spiritual nearsightedness in understanding our faith and salvation.

Duration: 49:43

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:1

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Sanctification"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of diligently pursuing qualities of faith, virtue, knowledge, self-control, steadfastness, godliness, brotherly affection, and love to ensure a secure entrance into the eternal kingdom. It addresses doubts about salvation, the need for perseverance, and the assurance that comes from living a transformed life in alignment with God's will.

Transcript

I love that song. How he loves us. You convinced of that this morning? Like that he's just crazy about you.

I uh, I I don't know how you did with last week's message, you know, I prayed for that steadfastness that we talk about in scripture, you know, the scripture asks us, you know to pursue these qualities and as I've done that it's just You ask for those trials and then they come, you know It's been that kind of week and going god. That's what I asked for and make me strong through it's it's weird how Your mind sets everything isn't it? It's like when you think okay god I actually want some trials in my life and I want to stand through them and I want you to make me stronger through them and so then they come and it's like Okay, there it is. I'm gonna pull it off.

I'm gonna do it I'm gonna do it and get through the week and you go. Wow, that was cool. Actually that was okay That was okay.

We made it through and I go god, you know what? Bring it on a little bit more a little bit more not too much more, but it's okay. It's okay And even that is a sign that he loves us, you know Just the answered prayer to say god Go ahead Bring some trials and then strengthen me through it And make me the person you want me to be and so it's been such a great week that week this week um I'd like to pray again. I'd like to uh I should have done this last week and I should do this more often than once a year, but I'd like to pray for our troops Sometimes it's just so easy to forget.

Isn't it? You know those of us who haven't served in the military and haven't been at war You know, it's hard to even comprehend guys being at war right now while we're at mcdonald's You know what? I mean? It just And I forget so so would you guys join me in a word of prayer? Father it's hard to just throw up a blanket prayer For all of these people overseas and I wish we could pray for each one by name and Just know their lives know their hearts know what's going on because each one's got a different thing going on in his head But father, you know them all you know them better than anywhere else And I ask that you would draw them to you In the midst of their fears Insecurities god that they wouldn't run to other things, but they would run to you dad, we thank you for their heart to serve the country and And yet lord, I pray that you would add to that just a heart to serve you For those who don't know you that they would understand you and live their lives for you and for your glory I gotta pray for everyone in this room. Whatever battle they're fighting god, just that They would see that you're the answer to everything you really are i'm not trying to be simplistic you just really are Nothing makes sense without you Help us all to get that in jesus name. Amen Let me give you a couple warnings before I get started today, um, it went an awesome awesome service last service But let me just say this Stick with me.

Okay through the whole talk Okay, typically you can hear a message and you can doze off for a little bit and catch five minutes here and go Oh, that was good, you know and because that's the way I think you know, it's like just add just grab whatever you can and go um But this is one of those messages where you gotta track with me the whole way Because it'll be very easy for you to grab something in the beginning And just have your mind go nuts and you know, just run off with it all This is what he said. I'm gonna listen to what I say all the way through Okay, I know i'm gonna i'll make it quick so you guys can stay focused. I I don't I don't focus Well, I i'm i'm not even focused right now.

Okay, so it's just this is this is going to be hard But it was it was a great great service and there's just a lot a lot of really important truths But here's here's the reason why it may be difficult. It may sound different um from what you were taught and And that's a scary thing to say And that's why I want you to observe the scriptures and look at the scriptures that i'm bringing up. Okay Um and and evaluate for yourself if what i'm saying isn't true Because I know there'll be some arguments with this but I I ask you to make them biblical arguments And show me scripture that will contradict anything i'm saying Because i'm telling you it's some of this is going to be new to you new ground to you And as I study that I realize you know I'm, not strong enough on some of this as I ought to be and you need to know I take this morning very seriously.

I have prayed a lot for this morning. I have fasted for this service And said god we got to get this we got to understand this so don't let any words come out of my mouth that are untrue Make this biblical make this make this just clear And help the people stick with me through this whole thing because it's it's important stuff So would you stand with me as we read the word of god? Do you understand why we stand just just you know I want to do this every so often just to remind you of the reverence for god's word Someone's telling me last service. They sat in front of some 16 year old girl and she's like Oh my gosh, i'm so tired.

I don't want to stand You know, it's just like this But do you understand why we do this? It's it's uh, I know you're tired. You don't want to stand but There's a reverence I want us to have for the word of god And remind you that these are not just A person's opinion. We didn't come in a room to get someone's opinion on something We just want to see it in black and white.

What did god say? And this is what we studied last week. Remember we didn't get through the whole passage, but this is the part we got through for second peter verses chapter one verses five through eight

For this very reason make every effort to supplement to supplement your faith with virtue And virtue with knowledge and knowledge with self-control and self-control with steadfastness steadfastness with godliness godliness with brotherly affection brotherly affection with love For if these qualities are yours and are increasing they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our lord jesus christ For whoever lacks these qualities Is so nearsighted that he is blind Having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins Therefore brothers be all the more diligent to make your calling and election sure For if you practice these qualities you will never fall For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our lord and savior jesus christ Father help us to understand this god unpack this for us help us to just in our minds in our hearts Just to consume this And god guide me now. I don't want to say anything.

That's untrue In jesus name we pray amen How did you do this week with uh, you know, that this being making every effort remember says make every effort Toward pursuing those character qualities think back during your week Was it something you were passionate about it? It's something you were really seeking and you're making every effort because you wanted those qualities so badly See because as I studied this one of my concerns the deeper I got into this is how we make things uh So optional and I and I I need to come up with a better word by tonight But optional is the best word I can think of is we we you know as as christians, you know Everything's just kind of optional. Do we need to pursue what we said last week? Yeah, not really I could probably go to heaven without doing those things, you know, it's just this you know And and yet when I read the bible i'm going I don't think it's nearly as optional as we think it is uh, for for example following jesus We can say that that's optional right? I mean it's your choice either you follow him or you don't right? Either either you believe they died on that cross for you. I rose again and choose to follow him or you don't it's everyone's option But is it really optional? Because if you don't follow him you spend eternity in hell That's your choice you know what I mean like like it's it's I know it's a choice, but I I couldn't put I I was thinking all week like what is the word? How do I explain that but we're so casual about this and then when it comes to these character qualities Like I said last week, you know, the bible commands us make every effort towards this Okay, maybe if I if I got time for it We're so casual about these things and i'm going gosh the more I read this.

I don't think it's that simple I don't think we can just simply dismiss. I understand the freedom we have in christ But you'll see as we study this passage. Is it really that optional? Yeah, you know if you do these things you won't live an unfruitful life But but let's look at the passage look at verse 9 verse 9 I'll put it on the screen.

It says for whoever lacks these qualities. Okay, the qualities we were talking about, you know, the steadfastness the the love the brotherly affection Whoever lacks these qualities is so near-sighted that he's blind Having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins Okay, I I love this word near-sighted Whoever lacks these qualities. I never noticed that that word was in the bible I never really thought about it.

But the more I studied the more I just loved it You guys know what it means near-sighted that means you can see something right here But you can't see it anything beyond that and it's so funny. I'm at that age now Well, you'll notice me every once in a while. I'll go like this Paul and you know, it takes me a second to get it to that right spot But that idea I always laughed and thought that's so lame.

What are they doing up there now? There it is paul an apostle christ, but i'm not getting glasses yet i'm holding on um It's this The the idea of near-sighted though. I I love that description Um, because you can

see something that's right in front of your face, but you can't see something That's 10 feet ahead. All you can see is right here And and and when you think about it, he says whoever lacks those qualities we talked about he says you're near-sighted You're so near-sighted you're blind Okay now near-sighted Isn't this the cause of most of our sin? Near-sightedness Because all you can see is right here.

There's something Tempting you and it's right in your face, right? And you just think man if I do this right now, all you see is right now this moment And you know, it would bring you pleasure You think man if I take this pill right now, I know how good it would feel and that's all I see right That's all I can see right now If I just smoke this if I drink this if I go on this on this on this website I know it's going to bring me just pleasure immediately If I jump into this relationship That's right there in my face. It will bring me pleasure And you're not thinking but what am I going to feel right afterwards? And what will my wife feel the next day? And what will my kids feel for the rest of their lives? And what will I regret for all of eternity? But you don't see that you just see right now You're so near-sighted That you're blind You you don't understand man. You you look and you can't see heaven Man You can't see this idea of forever the fact that this could be my last message this could be my last breath Every breath man That's a gift from god and I don't know when it's going to be over in the moment It's over then comes eternity eternity forever forever, but you don't see that you just see oh, but this next breath.

I really want to enjoy it You you don't see a man if we you know, I heard one pastor years ago go man if we could just dangle people over hell for 15 seconds You know can imagine the change if we could just see eternity just like I mean can you imagine? I mean the way the bible describes it of utter darkness I've never been a place to just pitch black And then then this then this fire and this constant, you know, he says people wishing that they could die, but they can't And this weeping and gnashing of teeth and absolute darkness forever You can't see that That's all you see is right now And and you can't see heaven. You can't see what I was talking about last week where god says look no eye has seen No ear has heard. No mind has conceived what god has prepared for those who love him He goes you don't even get how good it's going to be No one has ever seen no one's ever heard about it No one's really gotten in their head how great it's going to be those who love god man You are so set.

It's gonna be so good. So so so good, but you can't see that You don't see the future You know, you don't see how good it be How bad it could be all you see is I just know for the next 30 seconds. This would bring me so much pleasure And he says, you know, you're so nearsighted you're blind That's what they do with advertising right they just get you to feel that moment man you imagine driving off the lot in this You don't see the next 12 years of payments You know And the regret you're going to feel and all the other things they could have done because right now It's going to feel good to drive off the lot.

And so you do it and you regret it for years, right? And and it says it's that same idea. It's it's man what You guys maybe right now some of you guys are So nearsighted you're just looking at something that's bringing you pleasure And you're not going to stop it And you can't even see what's ahead and the potential of eternity And you'll forsake this relationship with god and whatever else because That's all you can see It says Having forgotten so nearsighted. He's blind having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins He says did you forget what happened to you? Do you remember you remember when you didn't know god and you were just stuck in all that junk and none that fulfilled It just it just wasn't there Did you forget that you were cleansed but the idea of being cleansed from your sins, you know So often in church, we'll talk about how you're forgiven from you're cleansed from the penalty of your sin You're saved from the penalty of your sin.

You don't have to go to hell now. That's not what the scriptures teach The bible teaches yes, you're saved you're forgiven of that, but it says that you're saved from the sin itself In other words, you don't have to go back to that you've got a new power now you've overcome those things In fact those who who are believers are overcomers You don't you don't get stuck in that because you're a new person now And that's why you have this new heart that says, you know, deliver me from evil. Leave me not in something I don't want that I don't see this thing.

This thing is right in front of my face. I don't want it god. I want you more I'm seeing the future.

My eyes have been open. Leave me not into this thing. That's right here Deliver me from that I want to run from that Maybe but some of you you're so You're so nearsighted that you're blind and that's a scary word blind Because where in scripture do you see that word being used for a believer? I mean what I read in the scriptures is that there's the natural man who cannot see the spiritual things they're blinded to it, but then the believer god opens their eyes and lets them see This whole world and you accept these spiritual truths If you have your bibles Well, actually, no, we got it second peter verses 220.

Um 322 You can turn the next page in your bible too if you want, but it says this Because I think this describes it. Well listen to this for if After they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of our lord and savior. Jesus christ They are again entangled in them and overcome The last state has become worse for them than the first Okay, wait, wait, stop stop stop right here.

Okay stick with me. Um Remember the last passage when we talked about being blind now you're thinking wait, but you're saying if they're blind and they're not saved Are you questioning their salvation? And i'm going okay. Well, look at what he says in the next chapter He's saying wait those who who somehow have escaped the defilements of the world and then they're entangled in again In them and overcome The last state has become worse for them than the first What does that mean to you? So let's read on for it would have been better for them Never to have known the way of righteousness Than after knowing it to turn back from the holy commandment delivered to them What the true proverb says has happened to them the dog returns to its own vomit And the sow after washing herself returns to wallow in the mire It's interesting passage, isn't it? At first he's talking about being blind and now he's saying wait a second So those people who kind of got it they understood what jesus did for them But it says but then they go back to where they were and they're overcome and entangled in that sin that mess again He says they're actually in worse shape than before they ever heard Okay, and I know this strikes against some of you that have have said wait But I thought once I became a believer I could do whatever I wanted to do.

Don't I have that freedom in christ? Yeah, but the bible says If you go back to this though Then you you never really got it In fact, it would have been better if you had never heard because now you heard you knew the truth and you decide to go back He says you're in worse shape than before you first heard He goes in fact, it would have been better if you'd never known the way of righteousness See some of you You know the truth and you've you've gone back you've gone back to all the ways and it describes you He says this is what happens. You're like a dog that returns to its vomit Did you forget you were cleansed? Did you forget all this stuff? You know and you remember when you threw up and you're like, wow, that's disgusting And you walked away and you started to follow christ And then as you you see the truth of christ and you look at your vomit you go I'm gonna go back and lick that up that that's He says that's what you're doing And he says that's worse than if you never heard They're like you never got it And these are scary passages to me aren't they I mean it just it creates this this this weird like a Thing where the bible is bible is clear. You know, we we like to give people assurance of their salvation, right? Like if someone's

downing their salvation, we want to be quick to say.

Oh, no. No. No.

No. I know you're saved because I don't know that that's our job Okay, when I look at the the scriptures It's saying look at the fruit of your life Just here let's go to the next verse next verse this will make it clear verse 10, hopefully Therefore brothers be all the more diligent to make your calling and election sure For if you practice these qualities, you will never fall Have you ever thought of this idea therefore brothers? Okay, because you don't want to be the spiritually blind nearsighted person He goes therefore Be all the more diligent and again this word carries with it a sense of urgency You remember last week make every effort now It's saying be all the more diligently go after this and and this is a command make your calling and election sure Make sure of your salvation But it doesn't say make sure by looking back at a decision that you made The way that you make sure of your calling an election is by practicing these qualities See have you ever thought of this idea that we are called to be all the more diligent to make our You understand we talked about this someone's calling an election election means you were chosen. We were chosen by God, right? We wouldn't be here unless we were chosen by him.

We're called by him But he says you know what make make sure you really were And the way you are sure is is not by looking back at some decision you made It's by practicing these qualities and going. Wow. Look at how the holy spirit's changing me Doesn't everyone in this room Want to be 100% sure that they're going to have it right who doesn't want that We want it now Many people in the room many of you believe that once you truly decide to follow jesus You can't lose your salvation You believe that a believer is secure.

I do too. Okay But some of us who believe that doctrine Some of you are not sure Whether you're really saved let me help you with this because the security of a believer You know the the thought that you know what if i'm really saved that god saved me If he if he called me he'll justify me. He'll glorify.

He'll take me through that whole process And you'll look at that and go. No, that's a truth and that is a truth There's a security in being a believer that he who began a good work in you He'll finish it. He'll bring it to completion So you can be secure in that there's a there's there's a truth see the security of a believer is an objective truth But the assurance of your salvation is subjective Does that make sense? You see see that this doctrine of the the assurance the the doctrine of security of a believer.

It's just a true fact But for you to be assured of your salvation, that's something that's subjective See that's something where you have to be diligent to make your calling and election sure to to get that assurance for yourself See if you're not living a godly life and you're not close to jesus and you're not following him You're going to lie in bed at night and wonder if you were ever really born again That's just going to happen That's the result of that type of lifestyle As you lay there and go Has I ever changed is the holy spirit because the bible says the holy spirit is the seal of our salvation Right But if you never experienced the power of the holy spirit, how do you know that you have them? now some of you Your mind's jumping to the verses, you know about eternal security, right? And first one that jumps to your mind is first john 5 13 And first john 5 13. That's that's a great verse. Let's turn to it First john 5 13 says this Listen most of you guys have this memorized because you were taught this is how you can be secure God doesn't want you insecure.

He wants you to know that you're saved Look first john 5 13 says so he says I write these things to you who believe in the name of the son of god That you may know that you have eternal life Right because

does god want to secure, you know insecure like I don't know if I have eternal life I don't know if I have eternal life. No, I mean according to this verse. This is the verse we quote, right? Look, he says I write these things.

Do you believe in the name of the son of god? Why why did john write these things so that you? may Know so you can know beyond a shadow of a doubt that you have eternal life. Great. Great.

Great great verse but Let's look at this verse in context What does he say because he says I wrote these things I wrote these things here in first john so that you may know That you have eternal life. Well, what are these things that he wrote? Let's look at the book of first john first john chapter one. Let's kind of go through it What did he write first john chapter one verse six? What does he say? He says if we say We have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness We lie, and we don't practice the truth But if we walk in the light as he is in the light We have fellowship with one another and the blood of jesus his son cleanses us from all sin If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us But if we confess our sins he's faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness If we say we have not sinned we make him a liar and his word is not in us chapter two verse four listen closely whoever says I know him but does not keep his commandments is A liar and the truth is not in him But whoever keeps his word in him truly the love of god is perfected by this We may know that we are in him whoever says he abides in him Ought to walk in the same way that he walked Verse 9 whoever says he's in the light and hates his brother Is still in darkness Whoever loves his brother abides in the light verse 15 Do not love the world or the things in the world if anyone loves the world The love of the father is not in him chapter 3 verse 6 Listen to this no one who abides in him keeps on sinning No one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him verse 8 whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil For the devil has been sinning from the beginning the reason the son of god appeared was to destroy the works of the devil No one born of god makes a practice of sinning For god's seed abides in him and he cannot keep on sinning because he's been born of god And by this it is evident who are the children of god and who are the children of the devil Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of god nor is the one who does not love his brother Verse 15 everyone who hates his brother is a murderer and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him Verse 17 if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need yet closes his heart against him How does god's love abide in him? chapter 4 verse 7 beloved Let's love one another because love is of god and whoever loves has been born of god and knows god Anyone who does not love does not know god because god is love Verse 13 by this we know that we abide in him and he in us because he's given us of his spirit Verse 20 if anyone says I love god and hates his brother.

He's a liar For he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love god whom he has not seen verse 4 Everyone chapter 5 verse 4 everyone who's been born of god overcomes the world And so then you get to verse 13 where it says you understand why I wrote all these things so you can know Whether or not you really have eternal life So you can look at your life and go man. That's totally me. I can't keep sinning man Every time I sin, I feel like crud, you know, I just gotta change I can't I can't go on in that pattern that shows me the holy spirit's in me man These people I would normally hate I love them.

I have that love. I don't hate my brother, man I have this bond no matter who they are. I hold onto them man.

That shows me that i'm really saved You see all these things and he says man, but if you're just saying that you know god, but you don't obey his commands He goes you're a liar But you go wait a second. I'm obeying his commands. Look at who who I used to be and look at me now Of course i'm a believer But do

you understand the assurance? It's because you go wow, I can look at these things and know that i'm a believer Because i'm living to these things and that's why he says you know what make Be all the more diligent to make your calling and election.

Sure Because if you practice these things you'll never fall You pursue these things and that's the assurance Now and absolutely if you've been saved you'll you'll start seeing these things in your life When I uh when I bought my current house In the front yard, there was this little twig That was just kind of sticking up out of the ground Saying what what's that? She goes. Oh, it's an orange tree All right lived there a few years now I think shot up beautifully Tons of oranges on it. Oh, here's an orange tree That that's what scripture's saying It's saying you'll see the fruit of it It's like you can come up to me and go.

Hey, i'm a believer. I'm a follower of jesus christ. I'm like All right, maybe Then you start seeing all these qualities and you see all the changes you go.

Wow, you really are Seeing you go to bed at night and you look at all the qualities and going man. I'm a new person I I experienced the holy spirit today. This is great And that's where our assurance comes from.

See how it's object. It's subjective It's an objective truth, but for you to get that assurance and and and Again I understand man. I the reason why I fasted and prayed for this weekend knowing what I was going to talk about was I I definitely don't want anyone in this room.

I don't want those of you who are believers To walk out and go i'm not a believer. See I don't want that to happen at the same time I don't want those of you who aren't true followers of jesus to walk out believing that you are And that's why I pray I go god. No one can give a message that's that's gonna be that perfect And that precise and get to everyone's heart.

That's something you're gonna have to do Because the bible says there are some people who are shocked at the end I don't believe there'll be many. They'll be shocked that they get to go to heaven But the bible says that there'll be a lot of people that are surprised You know, matthew 7 says they're gonna say to me on that last day. Lord lord What are you talking about I did this I did this I did this And he's gonna say depart from me.

I never knew you That scares me like but they thought He says when the son of man returns Matthew 25 he's just gonna separate everyone and he's gonna say to the left. He goes. You know what? I I was hungry and you didn't feed me.

I was thirsty. You didn't give me anything to drink And those people are gonna be surprised What are you talking about jesus I I never saw you And jesus and you know what whatever you didn't do for elisa is you didn't do for me Just like he says there in first john when you have the goods and you don't care For for people who are in need he goes. How could the love of god be in you? But they're surprised And I don't want that that's why that's why I prayed I go god I don't want this and I don't want this I just want truth Man and some of these verses that I was taught when I was young.

I wasn't taught them in context Did you ever see that in first john 5? Did you ever think about taking in context with the book and how over and over he says? Well, this is how you know, this is how you know, this is how you know, this is how you know I wrote this so you would know Like oh that makes sense You know Rather than just taking that one verse out and go Oh god wants us all to be secure because let's face it We've used that verse to to make people feel secure because we don't like I don't like when people

feel insecure But i'm not the one to fix that and we want to change that and sometimes we'll even try to make someone Secure that we have our doubts about And i'm just realizing that that's not my job This is this is something you'll get if you diligently make your calling an election. Sure You pursue these qualities like crazy and you know what you will be sure You'll see it happening in your life and you go to bed at night and go man i'm good things are cool This is an amazing thing with god. I can see the future.

I i'm just not not you know what I mean Like I can see i'm not nearsighted. It's you know, like wait, I don't see the future, you know, maybe i'm not safe No, that's not what i'm talking about. You know what i'm talking about? Um, but it's it's if I never if if you practice these qualities, you'll never fall.

No one wants to fall right? This word for fall means it's it's uh, it's a completed action. You just you're just down there You're not you're not coming back up you you you you just fell It's it's it's uh, it's kind of like that seat the soil remember the parable the soils and there were different soils there was the The the hard path which would be like a sidewalk and you throw seed on there Like some of you guys are like the sidewalk I could say whatever and you're you're just not listening But then he says there's other type that's called the rocky soil and it's it's not really soil It's it's like these rocks with a little bit of you know, uh top dirt thrown on there You know that the root never gets in and so something springs up but the bible says the moment that the trials come It's gone. It wilts.

It's it's over with that's why first peter 1 7 talks about the tested genuineness of your faith You see there's a tested genuineness where if it's really rooted in good soil the trials will come that You'll be steadfast. You'll hold it up But but some of you the only reason why you're still here is because you haven't really been tested And the moment life starts getting too difficult you're going to walk away from god And you'll see that you were never that good soil See and and and yet we'll want to make those people feel secure and i'm looking biblically and go no That's that's part of the deal. Like we we're gonna feel it if you're not following jesus.

You're gonna feel insecure now I understand something and I know some a lot of you already do understand this, but I just want to make sure we all get Okay The bible teaches something that we call the perseverance of the saints That those of us who truly believe We're going to believe till the end Okay, so a true believer is going to make it to the end with his faith intact He's going to grow closer to god. That doesn't mean we'll have little slips here and there but You know We're gonna we're gonna make it to the end Let me let me show you some verses first first corinthians 15 First corinthians 15 1 to 2 says now I would remind you brothers of the gospel I preach to you which you received in which you stand And by which you are being saved if You hold fast to the word I preach to you Unless you believed in vain next verse hebrews 3 6 and we are his house if Indeed we hold fast our confidence and our boasting in our hope hebrews 3 14 we have come to share in christ if Indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end Colossians He has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him if Indeed you continue in the faith stable and steadfast not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard Matthew 24 and because lawlessness will be increased the love of many will grow cold But the one who endures to the end will be saved Mark 13 and you will be hated by all for my name's sake But the one who endures to the end will be saved You see this in scripture. It teaches those of us who believed man You're secure and you're gonna make it to the end.

God's gonna he started working you he's gonna finish that work He called you he's gonna justify you. He's gonna sanctify. He's gonna glorify It's all done.

You're gonna stand to the end. So if you don't stand to the end, what does that tell you? He says at the end understand it's going to get hard the trials are going to come he says lawlessness Lawlessness will increase. Do you see that at all in our world where people are saying? You know what? He can't tell me what's right for me, and he can't tell me I can't do that Don't don't give me this law stuff I he can't command me and he says in the end people are going to start hating you for the stance that you take So you say wait, you believe that you're one of those you actually believe that that's morally wrong He goes but the person you know as people hate you more and more because the one who makes it to the end He's coming in he's saved.

This is the same thing that the scriptures are teaching here. You know, let me say something at this point And again here this whole thing and maybe you've never heard a pastor say this to you there are times When I Francis Chan Doubt my salvation And there have been times in my life When i've even doubted the existence of god now I can look back at those times And I may have them in the future But every time I have those doubts about my salvation And even the existence of god at times It is always when I have not been strong in my prayer life Because when I'm praying And i'm reading the word of god and i'm pursuing what he wants The way he answers my prayers It is so blatantly obvious And this is not just this, you know crutch that i'm trying to make up. No, this is reality I mean during those times when I am tight with god and i'm walking with him and I am praying like crazy I'm seeing you can't tell me that god doesn't exist.

I would look at you like you're crazy Like your mom doesn't exist, you know, I mean, what are you what are you talking about? You know what I mean? Gosh, you know, it's like no you made it up. You made her up. It's just it's this is this is it Like there's there's no way I know I know beyond a shadow of a doubt man.

I am his he is mine The spirit's crying out abba father, man We are we are just so tight and there is no doubt and the answered prayer everything else where I just go Oh, man, I know I know. Thank you john. I know that i'm saved.

I know I have eternal life Then i'll stray a little bit And I won't be so close to god And I won't be praying And i'm not pursuing diligently and and i'm working hard towards or making sure my election is i'm really i'm saved And those doubts start creeping in So you guys know what i'm talking about See so you understand it's this this thing where he says so man don't do that he goes Diligently pursue these things and you won't fall Go after it And then he finally he says in uh in verse 11 And close with this he says for in this way There will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our lord and savior jesus christ For in this way, I love this for in this way, there'll be richly provided for you An entrance into the kingdom it's talking about When you die And coming to the presence of god and entering what we call the kingdom of heaven However, that looks this eternal kingdom That there would be an abundant or a rich entrance Okay, i've never really thought about this a whole lot but man was I thinking about this week Have you ever have you ever thought about? The reception you're going to get When you get to heaven Because the bible teaches We don't just all go in the same way. I mean, we're all saved by his grace. Absolutely But you know like first corinthians talks about depending on what you did on this earth and how you lived your life Some of everything you did could be burned up It's going to be shown to be wood hay and stubble and it talks about how you yourself would be saved But it says but as though through the fire It's almost like you went through the fire and you come out and you got nothing left.

You know, you're sitting there Everything just you just smell like smoke and you got nothing to show for your life It's like oh hi guys, you know versus the person Who really did things for the for the sake of the lord for his glory for his majesty You suffered and everything else and you put up with it and you stayed

firm until the end and you were just going after it He says you you pursue these qualities and you won't live an unfruitful life where everything's burned up In fact, you're going to pull it off. You're not going to fall you'll get to the end and you'll have a rich Entrance into the kingdom and and i'm willing to bet I would I would bet my house on this that uh Many of you have never even thought about this because you're so insecure about your own salvation That you would be happy just to get in at this point And that's all you think about You don't think about this entrance. It's like Kathleen's here.

Yeah, you know, it's it's not like this man. You know what she did when she was down there You know, it's not like this whole You're not even thinking about that. You're just going Man, I don't I don't even know if i'm one of those that are in I don't see the fruit in my life I don't see it man.

I'm stuck in this this this and you're stuck in that insecurity And and and i'm not here this morning to tell you. Oh, no. No, don't worry about that.

You're good. You're good. You're good Because that never works.

Anyways, no one else can assure you of your salvation You know, even if I did sit down and show you all these verses It's still you'd go to bed at night or anytime you'd open up the word of god and go. Oh, that's not me Oh, that's not me either. That's not me and And you're just like wow, I wonder if the change ever happened Look, that's that's just the way that's the way it's designed If you're not living for him, you don't see the fruit you are going to question And god doesn't want us to live that way.

That's why he says just go after it And if you go after you're never going to fall you'll stay until the end Because that's what my saints do and he says besides i'm doing this work in you I'm the one just know me stay close to me and i'll give you all of these things Remember, he's the one that's given it to us. He granted us by his divine power Everything that pertains to life and god, this is an amazing passage You know and he says so man so diligently pursue those things you pursue those things You won't fall you pursue those things. You won't be you won't be so insecure your your your election your calling You'll be sure of it and not only that but when the end comes man, there's going to be this rich reception for you And you go man, that's awesome.

So let's follow the word of god. I I just love it. I love it I love I love I love the word of god I I struggled, you know as I as I thought through all this stuff.

I said, okay, how do you end something like this and uh, and I really don't know because I'd love for you all to walk away secure, but that's not something that I can make happen You know It really is whether you are diligent to make your election and calling sure So that you can live with peace you can live with grace and you can just know like john says that you have eternal life But i'm gonna have the worship team come up and we're just gonna close with a song and And and and during this time see I don't I don't know What it is in your life that you got to do that You maybe maybe there's some things in your life that you've just been like you the word came alive like wow I am nearsighted. That's all I see right now, but that's not what god wants from me I'm going to diligently pursue those other things. So I quit feeling this insecurity of wondering who I am I'm going to pursue these and put to death the deeds of the flesh So then I can look back and go man, of course i'm safe Look at all that stuff.

I just walked away from look at me. I'm a new person. My baptism was real I really did die to my old self and I decided to walk again in this newness of life But some of you today, maybe maybe you've never made that decision to follow.

Jesus never really meant it You look at your life and you go. I don't see any of that I don't see that. I I'm like the guy that wore the dog that went back to his mom and i'm still stuck in this And the bible says i'm in a worse shape than I was when I first started Because that's not what god wants for you It doesn't matter what you've done at this point.

You got to understand this don't listen to my message go Okay, I better get myself together so that I can be a christian. I better get myself together so that I can get baptized No, it's the exact opposite You become a christian and you let the holy spirit come into you so that you can become this person That baptism was the first step of saying, okay, you know what? That's what I want. I don't want that I want to be saved from that.

I want to escape that so give me the power to do so And I will publicly get in front of everyone and look my decision is real. This is embarrassing for me I don't like to get in front of crowds, but i'm gonna do it because I don't I don't care You know what? This is so important to me and i'll show everyone i'm gonna die to my old self I'm gonna follow jesus I want his holy spirit in me and I want to start living the way he wants me to And I want to live a life where every night when my head hits the pillow I go man, I know I know who I believe And I know that he saved me and I know that his child i'm his child and my spirit's crying out abba father Don't leave here with that insecurity If you have it be diligent To make this week differently

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