

A Measure or Gauge for Our Lives

by Mose Stoltzfus

Mose Stoltzfus emphasizes the importance of using God's Word as a measure for our lives to ensure we are living in truth and bearing spiritual fruit.

Duration: 1:19:20

Topics: "Revival"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the need for missionaries to reach out to people in various communities who are in need of salvation. He encourages believers to share the message of Christ with others and declares that this is a sure sign of their conviction in their faith. The speaker also highlights the importance of knowing and understanding the product being sold, using an example of a salesman who was unfamiliar with the carpet cleaning machine he was demonstrating. Additionally, the speaker addresses the issue of worldly prosperity and challenges listeners to examine their love for the world versus their love for God. The sermon concludes with a story of witnessing in New York City, where the speaker describes a girl walking a boy on a dog leash as a representation of the state of the world.

Transcript

Amen. Well, Christian greetings to everyone in the worthy name, that great name, Jesus Christ. We still love that name and trust that we will ever love it.

Well, I've been blessed much today by the interaction that we've been able to have with God's people. We had breakfast this morning with a few of the local brethren and some from Brunson and that was a blessing. And then to be here this afternoon and the intermission here over supper time has been another one.

My, it's so sweet for God's children to gather together that know each other and love each other and have that common bond in the Spirit of God. That is an amazing thing. I've seen it over the years, halfway around the world, that I've been to places where you can connect with people in the Spirit in a moment.

In a moment. And that's the way it has been here and I just rejoice in that. Well, sometimes I feel like it's time maybe to switch from milk to meat in meetings like this, but we know there are new people that are coming in toward the weekend here and I think we will give another message that I believe is milk, basically, but also something that I believe that all of us Christians, at least I for myself, need to take a look at from time to time.

And that is, I would like to look at God's Word as a measure or a gauge for our life. Now, if you want to tell me or think with me just for a little bit, what's the first thing you have to know in order for me to help you find your way to a certain place? Somebody want to venture to say, what's the first thing you have to know? You have to know where you're at. If you don't know where you're at, I can't tell you where you're going, where you need to go.

And I think that is what we want to look at tonight. I have a number of points from one of the answer books to this question. You know, in the back of the book, we usually find the answers.

And that's the way it is with this great book I have up here, the Word of God, and I call that 1 John. Let us turn our Bibles to the book of 1 John, answers in the back of the book, or what I'd rather look at here tonight as a measure or gauge for our life. And the reason I say I need to do this at times, it's very important that we need to examine whether, even those of us who have been Christians for a number of years, whether the proper fruit is coming out of our lives.

The Bible warns us very specifically of a person that the Word of God is choked out of their lives and they become unfruitful. It doesn't say that they've never had any fruit. It simply says, he becometh unfruitful.

And that is something that looms up to me and to my heart and mine from time to time, and I recognize when I read a scripture like that, that it is actually possible that we become so routine and ritualistic in our Christian life and experience that nothing is happening. We haven't won a soul to Christ for the last 5 years. We are not praying for the salvation of somebody's soul.

We are not actively involved in helping people to find Christ. We just kind of go to work and come home and do our thing and read our books and do our pleasures and go to church on Sunday and have about enough religion in our lives to somehow pat us on the back that we are not a heathen and we are not all that bad, you know, but we have become unfruitful in our lives. So, tonight will you examine with me a list of questions that we want to ask out of this great book, 1 John.

I don't know how you look at that book, but I like that book because I like things black and white. As you know by now, I've kind of given myself away. I don't like the grey.

I either like to know whether I'm in or whether I'm not in or whether I'm saved or whether I'm lost or whether I'm going to heaven or not going to heaven or whether I'm progressing in my Christian life or not. That's seemingly the only way I know how to live or how to be, and so it's not in perfection, but I like when things are black and white and that's the way it is in 1 John. And I believe in reality.

We live in a grey world today, but I can tell that I can sense that one of these days this grey stuff is going to get blown out of here and we're going to be black and white. We're going to know whether we're in Christ or whether or not. We're going to either follow Christ and lose our heads for it or be persecuted and be persecuted or else we're going to follow the Antichrist and take the mark of the beast in order to have our jobs and have some bread to eat and continue going on in life.

You know, that's ultimately what the Bible says that things are going to come down to in the end. We're going to have to decide whether we're going to follow Christ or the Antichrist and we're going to have to decide whether we're going to take the mark of God upon us or the mark of the beast upon us. And the grey is all going to evaporate.

So if you're hanging in grey, I tell you, you better get out of it now because one of these days you're going to have to come out of it. You're going to have to show your colors and get down off of the fence and decide where you're at and where you're going to be. But it is of utmost importance tonight that we find out where we're at.

And that simply is a simple thing in light of the Scripture. It simply means to apply the Word of God in an honest and open and practical way in our lives so we can tell whether we're going forward or backward, whether we're saved or whether we're lost. And I think it's good for us sometimes to give ourselves a bit of a test and a check mark, you know, to see where we're at.

That's how we find out, you know, we have a lot of gauges in order to find out where things are at. Our forefathers, they got into some dangerous times when they used to do their threshing with a steam engine and they didn't have a proper gauge on their boiler in order to indicate the pressure. And there were more than one time that they were firing that boiler and the gauge was off or the gauge was stuck, you know, and the relief valve was stuck and that steam boiler blew to pieces and took men's lives with them.

And it becomes a very, very dangerous situation. We have a tire. We put a gauge on the tire to see what it needs there.

Now, we have some other signs when we know what it needs there sometimes, but often when we want to be right, we put a gauge on there to find out where we're at. And that's simply what I believe that God wants us to do with His Holy Word. God has given us the written Word of God as a gauge of truth and right, as a gauge of life or no life, and for us to sense and to know where we're at.

I can give you a thousand road maps this afternoon or this evening, but if you don't know where you're at, no road map in the world is going to show you the way where to get anywhere. You first have to discover where you're at before you can find out where to get to Fort Wayne or to anywhere else in the world. All right, let us turn our Bibles to 1 John chapter 1 and begin to look at some of this.

And I'm going to start in chapter 1 and end in chapter 5, and I can't put all the gauges here. John has a lot of them in these five chapters, but I'm going to pick some of them out and expound on them in order for us to bring that gauge upon our lives. Now, in 1 John chapter 1, we're starting to read in verse 5. Then this, then, is the message which we have heard of him.

And declare unto you that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. Did you know that? God is light, and here is no darkness at all. And if you want to take the whole verse for what it means, then you have another test whether you know this and know it good enough that you are declaring it to someone else.

That's what John did. John says in verse 5, this, then, is the message that we have heard, and I believe there's a lot of people sitting here who have heard the message, but I'm wondering whether you've ever turned around after you've heard the message and declared it to someone. Because that is a sure mark that you're convinced of your product.

You know, we have some awful weak salesmen around for Christianity because they don't declare it. I always like when a salesman knows what he's talking about. I had a corporate cleaning machine brought out to our church center there at effort not too long ago, and an old man brought this machine out and I had to help him get the thing running and tell him a little bit, maybe try to help him make this thing work.

He didn't know this machine very good, and he was sent out by the company to represent it and to demonstrate it for me, and I had to help him get the thing running. He didn't know where all the switches were, all the buttons, whatever, and I was so discouraged in the first 15 minutes that I thought, I for sure probably will not buy this machine unless I can figure out it does the job that I want it to do without him telling me, because he was not sold on the product. He didn't know the product.

And yet, that's what we have in Christianity far too much. There are such cheap and weak salesmen around, and they come out and they don't even know which buttons to push to make it work. But I want to tell you, that's the way it ought to be.

We need to have something to declare to a lost and dying world, and we declare it. We don't suggest it. We don't hint of it.

We don't whisper it. We declare it. And you know there's a difference to those words.

So, 1 John does that here, and I think that's right. We need to have something to declare. But then also, it is that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.

God is light and in Him is no darkness. All the religions of the world, whether you go see a Mormon or a Jehovah's Witness, he would paint the Lord Jesus not to be total light. And a Jew or many others likewise, well, he was a good man, he was a prophet, but he was not the Son of God, and you know they paint him half dark.

Well, that's impossible. If he's not the Son of God, if he's not the only begotten Son of God, then he lied. In Him is no darkness at all.

If He is truth, then He is entirely truth. And you don't need to doubt one word He said. And that's the way it is, incidentally.

He's God and He cannot lie. And what He speaks is the truth. No darkness at all.

Now, verse 6. If we think that we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth. Now, that is not a small test. We better hold that gauge up and check ourselves as to what kind of a pressure is going on inside of us when a Bible healer says on the authority of the Word of God that if we say that we have fellowship, if we have a lit profession, and we don't even say that, you know, we just say we're a Christian.

And I don't know what that means in America anymore, in Canada. It doesn't really mean anything for the most part in our society. It is so weak.

But if we say we are a Christian and we have fellowship with God and we walk in darkness, then we are lying. If you say you have fellowship with God tonight and you are practicing witchcraft yet and curious arts that come from the netherworld, the satanic world, then you are in darkness and you are lying. You cannot say you are a Christian and go have your arm pumped to see whether some vitamin is good for you in the act of kinesiology or have some other witch doctor try to declare what's wrong with you by divination.

You can't do that. You can't have any part of that darkness. You need to get out of that man's office and go home and never go back again, you see.

There needs to be a sharp line between light and darkness in the Word of God. And that is such a sad subject today. There are so many people who claim they are Christians and they are milling around in darkness, in devilish music, in all kinds of satanic strongholds.

They are using prescription or non-prescription drugs which are mind-altering. And those things have to do with darkness, not light. Now don't say, God says, don't say that you walk in the light and that you have fellowship with God and then turn around during the week when nobody is watching and walk in darkness.

If you do that, the Bible says you are lying. I didn't say it. Not originally.

I am only saying what God says. And we must learn that God is truth and in Him is no lie. And when He says it, then we better change our theology to believe what God says and adjust all of our life according to it, you see.

And that is a challenge to me as well as to you. I tell you, we don't have the option. We are not talking, it's a little bit more discipleship tonight maybe than experiential salvation, but we don't have that option to have an experience of salvation and say, we have fellowship with God, we are born again, we are saved and all that, and walk in darkness, in satanic darkness.

And yet I don't know hardly anymore there are few leftover churches left in America who will not use the devil's music in their church services when they would all say they believe in God. And I say they are liars, they are in darkness, they obey not in the truth, and they are not having fellowship with God because God will not come down and show up if you worship God or try to worship Him with the devil's music. God can't handle that.

You'll offend the Spirit. He will leave if you play the devil's music and call it praise and worship. Mark it down.

This thing is coming down to a head. Recently I picked up a book by a Luciani, I believe his name was, something like that. I have the book in the motel.

Can't say the man's name. He just came out of contemporary Christian music and he laid this whole thing bare to the line, what his own experience was and how the devil and wicked evil spirits and sensuality came upon him in the praise and worship practice and service in the Sunday morning in his church for years until finally he woke up and recognized what was happening, renounced the whole thing and left it. You cannot have contemporary Christian music where you are.

It's like the African said when he came to the missionary's house and his teenagers were playing contemporary Christian music. You know, the African said, how come he's calling up the demons? How come the missionary's son is calling up the demons? He knew what kind of music it was. But that's just one.

I'm just throwing a few things out there. This is the scrutiny that you and I must come under as we search God's Word in order that we know whether we are on track or even whether we're going to the right church or not. I tell you, if you're going to a church that's playing contemporary Christian music, the devil's rock music with Christian words, you need to get out of that church and find one that sings hymns and spiritual songs and does not play the devil's music with it.

Good examination for the evangelical world, I would say. I would say, amen. But God is going to ask that of us.

He's going to put us to the test there. And I believe that those that are people that are innocently and ignorantly perhaps and have not understood this light right away when they become a Christian. But I say for the most part, I have to tell you that the inner witness of the Spirit of God in your lives, if you're a born-again Christian, ought to scream when the devil's music shows up inside of you.

You don't always have to scream out loud maybe, but I think it would be good if you do that too sometimes. Let everybody know that you're out of here if that's going to happen. I think that is no small thing.

The sick sensuality and devilish music that is being played in the churches. It's not of God. Next, in verse 7, if we walk in the light as He is in the light, notice the connection.

We need to walk in the light as He, Christ, is in the light. We have fellowship one with another and the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanses us from all sin. And I believe that is saying that there is an ongoing cleansing power that works in our lives if we are walking in the light that we have and that God gives us.

We do not have all of the light immediately when we are converted. God gives us light and increases that light as we are going on and we grow in our Christian life and experience. But I want to tell you, if you walk in the light that God has shown you in the Word of God, the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses you from all sin and you are saved in Him.

But if you don't walk in the light and you go against that light and you walk in darkness, then something drastically is going to happen to you. And you are not going to grow and you are not going to prosper in your Christian life and experience. Alright.

Beautiful verses. Verse 8. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. Now that's another one.

It's plain and simple. Black and white. There it is.

Multitudes of people have done it over the years. Had an experience with God. Believed they had a total eradication of the old man.

There is absolutely no fight left with the devil, with sin, with the flesh, with the world. And said, I am free from all sin. There is absolutely no sin in me left anymore.

If you say that, he says here, you are deceived and the truth is not in you. If you do not see the fight, if you do not see the war that we are in with the flesh, with the world, with the devil, then it's very clear that you don't understand the Christian life. That's what he said.

This is John now. This is the answers in the back of the book. This is what the standard, this is how God is trying to clean up the fog that is going on in Christendom.

It was like when this book was written, He knew what we would face in the year 2003. Isn't it? Just like He knew what we would face. And He wrote that thing and it just goes right down in all the doctrinal garbage that we have to wade through and swim through in order to stay straight and to keep our lives in the light

and in the truth of the Word of God.

But, here it is. And God is good to us tonight in giving that to us. Bless His name.

Well, that's right. We have that crystal clear according to that. Alright, let's go to the second one.

It is in chapter 2, verse 4. In chapter 2, verse 4. I have that written down wrong here. I had chapter 3, but it's in chapter 2, verse 4. It says in verse 4, verse 3 says, Hereby we do know that we know Him if Sergeant If stands up and says His name, if we keep His commandments. Now, first of all, I wanted you to see here that you have a clear test in just looking at the context of the verse, Hereby we know that we know Him.

Isn't that interesting when our preachers tell us you can't know? And the Bible says we not only can know, but we can know that we know. No wonder we need to get an English Bible, right? You fellows. You Germans.

That's right. Because we are told you can't know. Nobody can know that they're saved.

And all at once we find out we kind of stumble across these precious scriptures in the English language that we can know that we have eternal life and not only that we can know, but we can know that we know. And I say, I don't know how to get any clearer, any surer than that. Here again, black is black, white is white.

We can know whether we are in Christ or we are not in Christ. We have that ability to search that out by the written Word of God. Let me lift up this great book.

I tell you, it will guide your feet, it will guide your life from here on until the day that you die, if you let it. If you are grounded in the doctrine of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being your chief cornerstone, you can be saved. And you can have the assurance of not being deceived.

I believe that. God is able to keep us from falling. I do not believe in this save, loss, save, loss ten times a day that some people are accused of.

I believe of a security in Christ, a clear direction, a knowing where we are going. And I also believe that we can be so tenaciously attached to the Word of God in prayer and asking God to show us the truth that we will not be deceived. And I know that that may be a little risky because we can say a man who is deceived does not know he is deceived.

And that is true. But if you will not depart from the Word of God and wanting to know the truth from this book, through prayer, asking God to show it to you and reveal it to you, you will not be deceived. God promises us that.

It is when some extra-biblical revelation comes in. And let me just elaborate on that because we have tons of it today in the form of books and tapes and radio and television and videos and what have you where men say, God told me, and they have no evidence that the Bible agrees with what God told them. And they can say all night long and all day long that God told me and God showed me, but I tell you, if it does not correspond with the Word of God, it was not my God that I am preaching about tonight.

It was some God with a little g maybe that told you or that showed you, but it was not the God of heaven. And it was not Jesus of Nazareth. It was someone else.

And I want to tell you that is possible. You can find other gods that will talk to you. And other gods that will give you dreams.

And that is another one. You know, the people in Indiana are highly dream oriented. And be careful.

God has spoken to many a person through a dream and that is in the Bible. But you have got to be careful that the dream corresponds with the Word of God. If it does not, throw it in the cornfield.

You do not want to go after a dream that is not substantiated and does not give you the same voice as the Word of God. When I was young, I do not know how about you, but when I was young, we were taught that if you keep a letter from Magdeburg, Germany, and you display it on your wall and publicize it, you know, where an angel came down and gave this message in Magdeburg, Germany, there is no lightning or thunder will strike into your building. But my father came to the glorious realization that if that would be true, it would be in the Word of God.

And he burned the letter. And my relatives would have thought lightning might have struck the next night. You know, they would have been so fearful of it.

But it never did as long as my father lived. He never had lightning hit his barn. And he defied that letter.

That if that would be true, Jesus would have told us. But it was an extra biblical revelation. And that is what is taking much of Christianity down the wrong road.

Watch the Christian bookstore. It's not so Christian anymore. Watch the videos.

Watch all those new ideas that are coming around where people claim they have a revelation from God and God has shown them some new thing. And we examine it with church history and the Word of God. It's never been known, never been done, never been believed that we've heard or read about.

Watch out. It's probably one of those that belong in the cornfield too. Be not deceived.

Don't you be deceived. In the last days, one of the signs of the last days is major deception. Major deception where people will rise up and declare fantastic things.

And we have that today. We were just reminiscing over that over breakfast this morning and how we can hardly keep up when we can't. We can hardly keep up with a flood of those kind of things coming in upon the Christian world and books being circulating around and literature and what have you.

And it's just one after the other. Those kind of things come out. Groups of people think that they have found a superior level of all time in the Christian church in methods of healing or in understanding how the Christian life works through the interpretation of the tabernacle or how to make money and how to take the curse of poverty off of your pocketbook and off of your checkbook and off of your business and on and on and on this stuff goes.

And that is never in the Bible those things that they claim. May God help us and keep us free from deception in these last days. But here we have this point that if you love God and you can know that you know Him if you keep His commandments.

And here is a very, very simple truth. You cannot separate knowing God from keeping the commandments of God. Don't you come to that Christianity that believes that once you know God that nothing else matters

in the Bible and that the commandments of God are not important.

They're kind of there for our option, you know. You can take them or leave them, but they're not really important. All that matters is you love Jesus in your heart and that's all that matters.

And they make it sound other, strange, different, and like the commandments would not be part of the law or commandments of God or the Word of God like it's some other book that's written. But that's not what John says. John says very clearly whereby we know that we know.

In other words, the package of assurance or the essence of assurance of salvation is encapsulated in heartfelt obedience to the Word of God. And there are not many people who want to hear that today. Not many at all.

You go through the Christian church, the Christian community, the Christian world, that's not what they're saying today. That's not what they're believing. But that's why I believe that when you find a commandment of God in the Word of God, then you ought to set your heart to do it after you're a Christian.

Not before then it becomes dead letter and all of that. But once you've been born again and God has washed you in His blood, then how do you maintain that assurance that you know that you know that you're a child of God? It's simply by whether you have a heart to obey everything God shows you. And then you know you're a Christian.

And you can have the assurance. And you can believe you're on your way to heaven. But if you have a heart that, I don't like this.

I don't like disobedient stuff. That's legalism. That must have been for them back there.

I don't want to hear it. I don't want to do it. I don't want to believe it.

You're probably a liar. The truth isn't in you. Examine yourself.

Put up the gauge. Know where you're at. That's what he's saying.

Alright. He that saith, verse 4, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. God says.

God says. If he says, I know him, I'm a Christian, and keepeth not his commandments, he's a liar. And the truth isn't in him.

Number 3. Chapter 2, verse 9. He that saith, he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother, abideth in the light, and there is not occasion of stumbling in him. Now, I believe that it has to do with the Christian brother, not your earthly brother.

Now, I believe we should also love our earthly brothers, our brothers in the flesh, but there are sometimes major discrepancies in belief and doctrine coming there where it's not as easy to love there. And we still have the commandment that we should love on our part, but as far as having that communication, it's not always possible in the flesh. But with the children of God, God is saying, your brethren, you cannot hate God's children.

You cannot move against God's children. You cannot cast your vote against God's children to put them out of the synagogue. Now, if you're a Christian, you can't know a way that is going to be a test in your Christianity.

If you can sit in those churches and put out the Christian and put out the man who has assurance of salvation, who has been born again and has the change in his life, then you forfeit your own Christianity. Then you've simply given yourself away. Because we have a relationship no other group of people have on the face of the earth.

We are brethren. We are brethren closer than our earthly brethren. We know each other.

We understand each other. I was once in Russia and I met some brethren there, never knew of them, heard of them before in my life. I walked in there and within five minutes, I knew they were my brethren and they knew I was one of theirs.

You know, it was during communist years, back in 1988, they didn't suspicion me and I didn't suspicion them. They didn't think, what's this, some kind of a KGB fella coming in looking like this, you know, to check out what's going on in here. They never asked me a question concerning that.

They knew. They knew. And I knew.

We have that secret connection in the spirit. Our spirits bear witness one with another. We know he's a brother.

He knows we're a brother. And we have that connection and the world cannot figure it out. Sometime ago, we experienced that back home in our fellowship.

We had a sinner who sat in the back for a number of weeks. He was a wayward son of one of our families who had just moved into the area and they brought this rebel boy along and he was a sinner. He never was a Christian.

He never was a believer. And he would stand in the back of the church and watch us. And he would watch us connect with total strangers.

Somebody would come, you know, like you people are. Some of you I never met until this weekend. And you know how it is.

We meet each other and something clicks and we know each other and we know we're brothers and we greet each other like we are long lost friends, you know. And this sinner sat back there and he scratched his head and he couldn't figure out how do those people know that. And I tell you, I just rejoiced in my heart that such a testimony is possible in the Christian church and that's the way it ought to be.

And God is simply exemplifying this by 1 John in chapter 2 here when he says in verse 9, He that saith he's in the light and hates his brother cannot stand him and begins to make many derogatory statements against the true brother in Christ. He's in darkness even until now. He's never been a Christian.

He's in darkness even until now, it says. If he doesn't love God's children, if he just hates his brother. And you know, you have that.

You know, you know it. Some of you fellows that are going around here witnessing and I know it. You can go into certain places and people despise you when you walk in their door.

They don't want you there. They're terribly uncomfortable with you. They can't wait till you leave.

They don't want to be rude sometimes, but they don't love you one iota. You know, you can tell it. You can feel it.

But when you're a Christian, you must love the brethren and stick up for them and stand up for them and enjoy them and bless them and have fellowship with them. And I know it gets a little gray sometimes and we hardly know what some people are that are claiming all kinds of things and yet don't have the fruit. And you know, it gets out there where God's going to have to clear it up for us and I know He will one of these days, but for the most part, like I say, I didn't have any problem in these meetings at all.

You've come in here and I've never met you before, some of you, and yet I just didn't have any problem at all to know that you're God's children. And I thank God for that. That isn't in my expertise.

That's just simply a witness, a gift from God that He gives us children. And we have it. If we walk in the light.

If we walk in the light. That's one of the great things that God gives us. Alright, number four.

Chapter 2, verse 13. I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known Him, that is, from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, young men, listen to this.

I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. Did you ever notice, I'm sure you have, in the seven churches of Asia, how our Lord Jesus, through the Apostle John, writes that message to the church and over and over again says, to Him that overcometh. He's going to sit with me and wear a white robe and give a name above every name or some, you know, all kinds of rewards there that are given.

And that is a blessing to the Christians so beautifully here. But He gives us the text, young men, young men, I write unto you, because ye have known Him, once you know Jesus from the beginning, I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome Satan, overcome the wicked one. You had a battle.

He had a hole in your life. You might have been in rock music when you were in your sinful life. You might have been on drugs.

You might have been in all kinds of other evil and wicked habits that were devilish and evil and satanic. But you have overcome the evil one. Those things are gone.

You have had a power that is not your own. And that is a mark of a true Christian, one who has overcome the wicked one. And if you don't have any evidence of your being able to overcome the devil, if you are still bound in sin and you can't stop sinning, then John says, through the Holy Ghost, that you're not a Christian.

You've got to start over. You've got to go back to the drawing board, back to the Word of God, back to repentance and get what has been missing in your life. I had missed also in verse 9 about heeding his brother.

I just wanted to mention, are you free from bitterness and hatred in your life? One of the big challenges of a professed Christian today is bitterness. We constantly meet people that are just filled with bitterness. They're in the Christian church for years.

And they are so bitter. But God says that is not allowable. We cannot have bitterness and be a Christian.

And so we, again, in the gauge and the test or the measure that God gives us to know where we're at, tonight we must decide or discern whether we have someone in our lives that we cannot forgive. I know they might have been terribly mean to you. I know they might have messed you up as a child.

We have a lot of that today in the world. And people are exceedingly bitter over those experiences. But by the grace of God, you and I must come to the place where we can let them go and release them to God and let God deal with them and forgive them.

Well, you might say sometimes that I try to help people with this. I don't think I feel like forgiving them. I don't care whether you feel it or not.

Get on your knees before God and say, I do it. I forgive them. And watch what will happen.

You'll get a power from God to finish the work. And this is also something we have to be careful of in our ongoing Christian life. Because sometimes it wants to come back up again.

We think about it again and we remember what that individual did to me and we still don't think it's fair. And they built us out of a lot of money and maybe they got the birthright, so to speak, and weaseled away from us, you know. But we simply have to let it go.

To forgive means to send it away. To release it. To let it go.

Send it away, my brethren, my sisters, if you are plagued with bitterness or hatred and unforgiveness tonight. Alright, the fifth one. It's over in chapter 2 also.

In verse 15, we have the Scripture here, Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. I'd like to ask you a question.

How much of perfected Christendom in America that even in a fraction of a manner believes that verse? Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. And if you do love them, the love of the Father is not in you. You tell me, who believes that today? Isn't that a test? My! All this nice stuff that the world lays out before us, and all of the pleasures, and all of the riches, and all of the pomp, and the fashion, and the position, and the love of money, and all of those things that we face today, and the Bible says you cannot do it, you cannot have it, if you do have the love of the world in your heart and life, then the love of the Father is not in you.

And if you want to argue with that, then get on your knees and argue with God on it. He said it. I didn't.

I only repeated what He said. But that's what He said. I'm just challenging you to I believe that tonight.

Do you believe that when you go to the shopping mall? Do you believe that when you go shopping for a car, and a truck, or a tractor, or a garden tractor, or any other thing you want to buy? Do you believe that if you love that world, and that thing has the whole of your heart, and you have passion on that thing, that it has the whole of your heart? And yet, it's so prevalent today. People are all wrapped up in pickup trucks,

and in certain engines, and houses, and clothing, and all these things, and they are not love, not the world, neither the things that are in the world, and that's why I emphasize that word things. Now don't start preaching on things, but the Bible mentions things.

And they drown men, and their love of the world comes back into their life, and it chokes out the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and powerful Christianity, and exemplary Christianity. Many people today can't be an example because they have such a love of the world. And I don't understand.

I don't understand. We live in a world when it's a desperate need to preach the Gospel, and to send missionaries. We have nearly six billion people on our hands, and about three of them haven't heard the Gospel.

We have people in the United States who haven't heard the Gospel. We have all those needs, and yet people can spend \$500,000 on a house because they've prospered in their business. Where does that come from? What is it? God help us.

Do you love the world? Or do you hate the world? And I have to give you this little story. It's a good one, but sometimes that just gave away some of the young people in our community. You know how it is.

They want a night at the fair or a couple and have fun. We're out there preaching the Gospel. One of our brethren used to make this practice years ago when we'd go out to New Holland or Ephrath at the fair and ask these young people standing in line for the ferris wheel and gambling away, maybe throwing balls at something.

Do you love the world? Oh, nobody knows what to say. What are you doing here? Do you hate the world? Then why are you here? And I think we can ask ourselves that question a lot more than just going to a fair. I just used that as an illustration.

But we get speechless, and we have to hang our heads in shame because of our hours and hours of ball playing and vacationing and pleasure seeking and printing away time. And the worst part is there is no time for God. There is no fire burning and you haven't witnessed and talked to somebody else or led a soul through to Christ or even tried to for the last year.

8,000 and some hours have gone away and you have probably spent 50, 100, 200, 300, 500 in unnecessary things and have not done the great lacking work of God. I started talking to people here about some of the needs I see down in Bern. I look at what happened there in the last year and here in Allen County and over in Ship Shawana and these places.

And I said, these places need missionaries. They need missionaries that are simply out visiting people and telling people there is a way out of their dilemma. There is a way out of your depression.

There is a way out of your medicine bottle and your sin and all these things. And sit down with people in their living rooms and tell them to plan a salvation and get them on their knees to accept Christ as Lord of their life. And for those who do it, I mean the sky is the limit and there is all kinds of opportunity like that.

People are waiting for somebody to come and tell them the Gospel. And we're playing ball over and over and over again. If you have an occasional recreation game, no problem.

I have no problem with playing ball a little bit with children or with teenagers or whatever and just having an exercise game. Bodily exercise does profit little. But my problem is the amount, the time, the percentage of it.

It's like the old thing, the old church practice used to be about five minutes of prayer before the ball game that God would bless us and then four hours of competitive sports where we get mad at who wins and who loses. There's something so wrong, brethren. There's something a little wrong.

I know it's a little comical maybe, but it is so wrong. I hope you take it home and you think about that thing until it moves you to action in your churches, in your homes, in your lives. And you begin to balance this stuff out and get busy for God.

Get busy for God. Number six. Chapter 2, verse 20 and 27.

Verse 20 says, But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. Maybe that's some of the problem that we don't have that unction. And then 27 says, But the anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you.

Ye need not that any man teach you, but as the same anointing teaches you in all things is truth and no lie. And even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in it. Now at first glance, when you look at these two verses, you might get the idea that you don't need any teachers, you don't need any preachers in your churches.

That is not what that verse means. It simply means you don't need to have to be taught everything by men. You can be taught some things by men, but for you to sit here in Indiana and wait till the ideal teacher comes around to teach you what the truth is of the Word of God, no, you don't have that, need to do that.

That is a blessing when they come around and teach you the Word of God. But you have a teacher that lives inside of you. If you have the anointing of the Holy Ghost upon you, and He will guide you into all truth, and He will reveal and teach you the truth and right things, and how to live, and how to walk, and what to do in many a situation.

He is the greatest teacher there ever was. And we must have that anointing. We have that anointing upon us.

Young people, 16, 17, 18, get that anointing from God. And what I simply wrote down in here in this text is that we have a source of wisdom from God through that anointing revealing and showing us the Word of God. And God speaking to us through His Word and through our relationship with Him, nothing that deviates from the Word.

I think God can speak to us without the Word, but predominantly I think He speaks to us through the Word. And there we have an anointing, and we grow, and we see light, and we understand, and we are able to discern things that we don't have of ourselves. It's an anointing that comes from God.

And it's a test. If we have that, you're going the right way. If you don't have that, and God never... Like people come to me numerous times and they say, well, when I open the Word of God, it has nothing in it.

It's just like, it's a dead letter to me. I don't get anything out of it. And of course, I don't think they're born again if nothing happens when they read the Word of God.

That quickening has not yet taken place by the Holy Spirit to make them a child of God. Alright. We have a source of wisdom that is unknown before.

Before we are a Christian, we didn't know this strength. We didn't know this wisdom. And now once we see things, and I love to see that in newborn Christians.

I see it all the time. Somebody gets born again, and oh, once they are so excited, they've been sitting down reading the Word of God, and God is showing them all kinds of things. And it is an amazing thing to see them have that source of wisdom.

Alright. The seventh one I have in chapter 3, verse 3. We have, and every man that hath this hope in him purifies himself, even as he, Christ, is pure. That's what it means.

Every man that hath this hope, and it's the hope that... Let me just read it to you. Verse 2, Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. Therefore, we say, and every man that hath this hope in him purifies himself, even as he, Christ, is pure.

The hope of eternity! Every born-again Christian that has been filled with the Spirit of God needs to have the hope of eternity in his life. That cannot forget heaven, cannot forget truth, cannot forget eternal life. There is the hope of eternity, and it's a lively hope too.

Not a dead one, not a vain wish or something like that, but the hope of eternity is in the breast of every true child of God, and He doesn't fear in an accident or trouble or sickness like the other men fear. All of us, I believe, have enough of flesh in us that there are times we would maybe rather live than die, and the body still wants to live and tries to protect itself, and that's all right and good. But we ought to have it.

And I had that experience one time when a tow motor fell on me, and it was amazing, you know. I did not panic. I thought, well, this is it.

But I remember I did not think, oh, I'm not ready. I have to do a whole bunch of things and all that. And I survived at that time because my head wasn't crushed, but my body was, and God brought me out of it.

But I remember the thoughts when the thing came falling down on me, and they were not of despair. And I want to thank God for that. And I believe that's something the Christian ought to have.

The hope of eternity upon his life. The hope of eternity. And who has this hope? And it makes such a big difference.

If you're living for here and now, and you're living for today, and you're living in this world, then you don't have this hope. This thing is not beating in your breast. But you have a hope of heaven, and heaven is in your mind and in your heart and in your thoughts.

Then that will affect your life. Like it says here, he that has this hope in him, it purifies him. Because he wants to be ready to meet God.

And if he has that hope of meeting God face to face, then that has a purifying effect in our life. If you have the hope of eternity. But if you don't have the hope of eternity in you, then it doesn't have that purifying effect and you live in sin.

Alright. Chapter 8, verse 3. Oh, excuse me. Number 8 here.

Point number 8. Chapter 3, verse 8 and 9. He that committeth sin is of the devil, for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him.

And he cannot sin, or he cannot live habitually in sin or practice sin. He is born of God. Because he is born of God.

Simply saying here that there is an overcoming of sin in our lives. If we have been born again, the Bible says we, the devil, he is the source of sin. He sins from the beginning.

If we are born of God, we cannot habitually practice sin, I think is what it means. It does not mean you can ever commit a sin. That is possible.

But you cannot habitually commit sin and live in sin without any conscience in it and all of that, like the sinner does. No, because that is of the devil. And the Son of God was manifested to destroy the works of the devil.

And one of the works of the devil that God wants to destroy is that sin in our lives. I think that is good news. I tell you, I think that is good news.

You got an evil habit? You can stop. You are bound by sin? You can get loose. You feel like you have a chain around your neck? These young people these days on the street, they make it real vivid, don't they? They are displaying it just like it is.

One of our groups back east was in New York City the other day. And you know, you go to Washington Square Park or Times Square or somewhere to witness and pass out tracts and set up there and testify. Well, they had a girl had a boy on a dog leash.

And he was on his hands and knees with his tongue hanging out. Simply, and I thought that was a perfect picture of just how it is. It was as honest as could be.

Plus, you see them with chains hanging all over them. You know they are. They have metal studs and bracelets and anklets and all that.

And they look like they are walking around with handcuffs and leg irons on them. You know, from all the iron they have on them and stuff like that. And they think this is cool, you know, and all that.

Walking around like that. And they are just giving themselves away. They are in bondage to that degree to the devil.

And Jesus came to set them free. And I say they are following the devil just like literally he was following that girl with a dog leash and a collar around his neck and going around on his hands and knees with his tongue hanging out. That is exactly where the devil has the teenagers of America tonight.

Many of them. With the music, with drugs, with immorality, with fashion, with pride and many other sins. It's so, so sad.

And they just seem to love to have it so. I was sitting in the car a little bit ago and trying to collect my thoughts and some of these points before I get up here and preach. A couple of people went by on a bicycle, you know.

And he yelled out. And he didn't see me sitting in the car, but just got even with the car down here. He yelled out, just so all you people know, if God doesn't love you, Satan will.

Satan loves you. He was going as he went a little further. Well, that's where they're at.

They have not experienced the love of God so they have gone to the devil. And I suppose he gives them a little whatever you call it. I wouldn't call it love because love is of God.

But I know one thing, he doesn't open the house of his prisoners according to Isaiah 14. And I also know that he'll take them to hell with him. But they don't seem to be worried about that.

They are totally deluded and that is sad. We could just weep for people who have that concept and idea of life. But that's the way it is.

Alright. Our ninth point is chapter 3, verse 14. We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren.

He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. I already talked about hatred, about love. I just wanted to show you how clear this is.

Here's another one. We need to know. We want to know.

Well, have I passed from death unto life? Well, you can tell, you can know whether you have passed from death unto life if you have love for the brethren. You can't love your brethren? I was in Fort St. John, British Columbia here about five weeks ago or six weeks ago or so. And it was so interesting.

A young fellow came out of a traditional dead Mennonite church out of Alberta about an hour and a half away and he came over there with his wife. And he was excited and was joyful and he was meeting us, you know, and he was full of smiles. I preached the message that morning and I saw his poor wife sitting there and I saw, this lady is not connecting around here.

And I just thought it as a passing thought, you know, and we had a fellowship meal there in that little building. And afterwards he was rejoicing and I went up to him and I said, is your wife a Christian? And he said, I don't think she is. I don't really believe she is.

I said, she don't look to me like she's connecting around there. Well, the sister started talking to her a little bit, you know, and asked her whether she has assurance of salvation. She said, no, I don't have assurance of salvation.

Well, she said, would you like to talk to Brother Moses? I think I can arrange for him to come back and talk to you. And she said, yes, I'd like that. So they arranged a little room there in the back of the kitchen, you know, and they got her in there and they got me back in there and I said, well, how can I help you? And she said, I'm not connecting around here.

I don't connect with what's going on around here. I said, I noticed. And she said, everybody sees through me.

And I just fell her down on her knees to repent of her sins and accept the Lord. And she got out of there and she knew the Lord Jesus. And he called me a couple weeks later and he had a brand new wife and he was so excited.

And God had so visited that lady. But that's it. She wasn't connecting.

I knew it when I saw her sitting there. She knew it when she saw that she wasn't connecting with anything going on in that little group that was going on down there. But she can connect now because she found the Lord Jesus Christ as the Lord of her life.

Praise His name. But anyway, when we are Christian, we connect with God's people. Alright.

Number 10. And we'll soon be done here. Number 10.

Chapter 3, verse 20. Oh, the gauge of God's Word. Oh, the measuring stick of the Word of God.

Oh, the road map that we can test ourselves and see where we're going. Alright, verse 20. For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart and knoweth all things.

Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. Now look at that. That is so precious.

If you squeeze out of that thing what it really means, it simply says, when you lay down on your bed at night and the children are all sleeping and everything is quiet, where are you at then? We had a brother give testimony this morning how he was so fearful that he used to go down to his father and say, I can't sleep. I'm afraid the Lord will come tonight. When everything gets quiet, then take inventory of your heart with God.

Commune with your heart, as David says in Psalms numerous times. And he says here, if your heart condemn us, if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart and knoweth all things. He's simply saying that if we let God speak to us in the privacy of our hearts, in the privacy of our lives, when everything is calm and quiet, somehow God comes to us and witnesses to us where we're at.

I've had experience already in my preaching that I get reprov'd for something I say when I go to bed on a Sunday night or a night after a meeting. Something comes to my mind. I say, why did I say that? I shouldn't have said it that way.

You know, that wasn't quite right. God speaks to the quietness of our hearts when we quiet our hearts before God. If our heart condemn us, accept the condemnation.

If our heart doesn't condemn us, and the Bible says here, then we have confidence toward God. Then we have assurance of salvation. If you don't ever have your heart condemn you when you get quiet, then you probably are right with God.

Unless your conscience is so seared with a hard iron like the man we had here on Tuesday night or so. His heart was so hard, it was like stone. And I don't know if his heart speaks to him much anymore.

Very, very little. But it did a little bit when he sat in a meeting on Tuesday night. Praise God, even though he's living deep, deep, deep in sin.

But I remember we were witnessing some young boys in a buggy one night and one of our brethren got up and held the horse at the bridle, you know. And the other one was back in the buggy talking to him. We were trying to hold him there for a little bit.

He had come into the churchyard and was just kind of fooling around, you know. And so we decided we'd witness to this young man. And so we held the horse there and talked to him.

And I said, what do you do when the music stops? I think is the way I said it. And he said, get it going again. He hated that quietness.

And the reason is because he was guilty before God. And that his heart would condemn him when the music would stop. And so he would crank it up again and hope to fall asleep maybe until the thing would stop again so his heart wouldn't condemn him so bad.

And see, that's the way it is. People who are not clear in their conscience, they like noise. They like action.

And they keep it going until they're so dead tired they just fall asleep because they don't want quiet time. Because their heart condemns them. But if your heart doesn't condemn you, then you have confidence toward God.

And the Bible clearly would say that's a point of assurance of salvation if you have a heart that don't condemn you. Now, do it reading the Word. If you never open your Bible, you may not condemn it quite as much.

Although God can speak to you without a Bible. I know He has to me. I mean, in years gone by, He still does to people today.

But He speaks louder when you read the Bible. So read your Bible and then commune with your heart whether your conscience is quiet. And if it's not, then make it right.

Point 11, chapter 4, verse 18. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

Oh, the problem with fear. In much of my ministry, among the plain people especially, I would have to say, but I think the same is true for many others, is an incredible, incredible fear of man. I have visited people and sat down in their living rooms and talked to them about the Lord, and their stomach was in a knot and their fists almost likewise with fear.

Fear of the preachers. Fear of the elders. Fear of the next door neighbor will find out that I had you in my house or talked to you or opened myself up like this.

And they literally are... That lady was paralyzed by fear. And she was a professing Christian. I so pitied her.

She was in bondage in a church where she should never, never have been. But that's where she found the Lord and she was still there. And I tried to encourage her and tried to say, you don't have to be afraid.

You don't have to be afraid at all. You know, what do you have to be afraid of? They can kill the body and you don't have to be afraid. The Bible says, fear him who is able to kill after he has killed you and put both body and soul in hell.

That's what the Bible says. Fear him. Don't fear what people will do.

They can kill your body but they can't touch your eternal soul. But yet she said, I don't want to be like this. I don't know why I'm this way.

And of course we got her out of that situation and she moved away and they built another house and settled down in a Christian church and she got away from that whole situation and she just can't believe it that she had lived in that kind of affair. And she was a widow, you know. But it's so sad.

I see so many people gripped by fear that they're so afraid of doing what's right. God is the one who watches in heaven. Fear Him.

Don't fear the people. Don't fear your preachers like that. That's not right.

But anyway, there's no fear in love. If true love exists, we're not afraid of each other. No way.

That whole relationship, bringing fear upon your members like that, that's cultish. That's not the true church of Jesus Christ that brings that fear. I think there's a sense of fear should be in our lives when we do wrong, but we should not have fear.

There's no fear in love. Perfect love cancels out fear. Fear has torment.

Fear has torment. He that fears is not made perfect in love. So examine your heart and your relationships, whether you're living in fear of people tonight or whether your confidence is in the Lord Jesus Christ and all fear is gone.

And that includes fear of the dark or fear of the devil. Don't walk around in life being afraid of the devil or afraid of the dark. I used to be so petrified of the dark when I got converted at 15 years old.

I remember one of the things I remember of it. When I walked outside after I was converted the next week or two, I recognized I'm not afraid anymore of the dark. I used to run into the house and thought something might get me, you know, and all this stuff.

That childhood fear that was after me, I'd run down the attic step because I thought there was something lurking under the roof that would jump out and get me. But when I got converted, I wasn't afraid anymore. I could walk in the dark, almost pitch dark, barely see where I was going, and I wasn't afraid.

It's just that difference, you know, when we're at peace with ourselves, at peace with our God. And then the last one, number 12, we have chapter 5, verse 9 and 10. Like I said, there's a lot more.

If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater. Now look at what this says. For this is the witness of God which He hath testified of His Son.

He's simply saying, if we have two witnesses in a common court, and that's the way it was then, and that's the way it is now, we can judge a man. If we have witnesses that He did it, and especially two, and the Bible teaches that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established. You know, if

you have a couple of witnesses that a man did a certain thing, you can judge him.

The country, the court, will take those witnesses' words and say you're lying and not believe you when you have two witnesses against you. You're done. Well, He's saying here, God is saying to 1 John, if we receive the witness of men, and we do, He's saying the witness of God is greater.

The witness of God is greater, for this is the witness of God which He hath testified of His Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness of Himself in Himself, and the witness in yourself is greater than the witnesses of men. He's simply saying that God gives that powerful a witness through giving His Holy Spirit in the lives of people, that they know that they know that they're a Christian.

It's a stronger witness of God than if two men would witness that they were there when you got the Holy Ghost. He that believeth not God hath made him a liar because he believes not the record that God gave of His Son. I should speak maybe a little about faith in this, but just to mention it here in closing, if you have the witness of God in your heart, it is because God has given the record of His Son to us, and when we believe that, that does it.

That's almost always where the spark of eternal life, the quickening of God comes into your life when you reach out by faith and believe it. It's so simple, most people miss it. Just simply reaching out and saying, Lord, I believe.

I accept that. You did die for me. You did atone for my sins.

You did say if I trust in You, You will save me. You did say if I confess my sins, You will forgive me. If you do that and believe that record that God gave His Son, you have eternal life.

That's usually that connecting point when we reach out by faith. I can offer you a gift all night long here, but it's not yours until you come up and take it. It's not yours if I offer it to you.

Christ can offer the gift of salvation to you for 20 years. It's not yours until you believe it and take it. Well, may God add His blessing tonight again as we close this message.

Where are you at? Where are you at? That is the question in this tent tonight. I believe many of you are born again Christians. But I also believe in a crowd this size.

There are some of you who don't know where you're at. And there are some of you who know that you're not where you need to be. You know you're not with Christ tonight.

You know you don't have those points. They are not a living reality in your life. You don't have assurance.

You have a lot of fear in your life. You fear men more than you fear God. You have not overcome sin.

You don't love the brethren. You still love the world. Whatever that situation is, we're going to sing a song of invitation to Him.

If you want to respond tonight to get that matter clear and have your conscience clear before God and to lay all those things that you have been making checkmarks in your heart, I don't have that. I don't have that. And when I get right with God, you come and get right with God.

What's our song tonight? Page 45. Shall we sing? Let me stand together. Those of you who can, if you have children on your lap, that's fine.

But those of you who can, shall we stand together as we sing? If you would like an invitation, a public opportunity, come up here and kneel and yield yourself to God and ask for help, somebody to counsel with you. We have three counseling rooms out in the trailer. We'll pray with you and guide you.

Or if you want to visit in your home to further explain this thing in a personal way and have your questions answered, make arrangements with us for something like that also. Shall we sing? Will you come? Anyone who wants help tonight, wants to get saved, wants to get clear with God. Shall we pray? Father in Heaven, we want to thank You again for the preaching of the Word today and many things that You've brought our way.

Can we just open the door, Lord? Where are we at? I pray that You would show us and You would guide us in all these things. Thank You, Father, for bringing these people here tonight. And just pray that as they go home they may ponder upon their hearts.

Let us all be honest with You. Give us a good night's rest and prepare us again for a day of messages and fellowship tomorrow, morning and afternoon. And Father, we just look to You.

Guide our steps, guide our lives into all truth. May we be found, accepted, not deceived in that last and final day. We pray in Jesus' name.

Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/29/SID29450.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/mose-stoltzfus/a-measure-or-gauge-for-our-lives/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net