

# Studies in 1 John-05 1 John 3:10-24

by William MacDonald

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*The children of God and the children of the devil are manifest through their behavior, and righteousness is the practice of a Christian's life.*

**Duration:** 45:51

**Scripture:** Matthew 10:24, 1 John 1:8-10, 1 John 3:4, 1 John 3:9, 1 John 3:17-18, 1 John 3:24

**Topics:** "Christian Living", "Financial Stewardship"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of the word of God as an authoritative and timeless source of guidance. He prays for the word to be applied to the hearts of the listeners in their present context. The speaker then discusses the significance of how Christians handle their finances, stating that it is a test of their Christian life. He highlights the importance of showing love and mercy to those in need, emphasizing that true love is demonstrated through actions, not just words. The sermon concludes with an announcement about a guest speaker who is involved in ministry among Spanish-speaking people.

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## Transcript

from Fairhaven named Dave Reeve will be here to speak to you. Dave is an unusual young fellow, he and his wife, and they have two or three little kitties, little ones. Dave has a great interest in work among Spanish-speaking people, and he recently moved from San Leandro down into Oakland to a Spanish-speaking section of Oakland, and has started a work there for the Lord among those people.

He hopes to eventually go to the foreign field. So I hope you'll come and encourage him, and if anybody would like to entertain the family, please let me know, and I'll let them know too. 1 John chapter 3, and we'll begin reading in verse 10 to the end of the chapter.

In this, the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest. Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother. For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another, not as Cain, who was of the wicked one, and murdered his brother.

Why did he murder him? Because his works were evil, and his brothers righteous. Do not marvel, my brethren, the world hates you. We know that we have passed from death to life because we love the brethren.

He who does not love his brother abides in death. Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. By this we know love, because he laid down his life for us.

And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. And by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.

For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God, and whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. And this is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.

Now he who keeps his commandments abides in him, and he in him. And by this we know that he abides in us by the Spirit whom he has given us. Now before looking at that passage, I'd just like to review a little of what we said last week about verses 4 through 8, because it's a very difficult portion of scripture.

And if you just read it carelessly, it seems to say that Christians are sinless. That if you're really saved, you don't sin. But John has already showed in chapter 1 verses 8 and 10, and in chapter 2 verses 1 and 2, that Christians do sin.

And if they say they haven't sinned, if they say they don't sin, they've deceived themselves, and they've made God a liar, because he says that we do sin. And yet you read verses in this passage, and it certainly sounds that way. Verse 4, whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness.

And you know that he was manifested to take away our sins, and in him is no sin. Verse 8, he who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. Verse 9, whoever has been born of God does not sin, for his seed remains in him, and he cannot sin because he is born of God.

And we explained last week that really the solution to this problem lies in the tense of the verbs, and the tense of the verbs here is present continuous. It's not speaking about an act of sin, but it's speaking about the practice of sin. It's speaking about habitual sin.

It's speaking about sin as the dominating thing in a person's life. And you know there is such a thing, and the world is conscious of that. The world is conscious of it.

I remember when I was in the service, there were fellows there who were really outstanding Christians. They showed it by their lives. They didn't necessarily talk about it a lot.

They showed it about their lives. And you know what they were called? They were called Holy Joes. That was the expression that other fellows used for them.

Sometimes they were called deacon. It was just a nickname that was attached to them, deacon or Holy Joe. Well all I'm saying is that the world knew that those fellows didn't practice sin.

They also knew that they weren't perfect. It didn't take long to find that out. But they knew that there was a difference between the lives of those Christians and their own lives.

And that's what John is talking about in verses four through eight here. I just mentioned that in case this passage is perplexing to people, I imagine that people could be unsaved, could be non-Christians, and they read something like this and say, man, no use. I could never be a Christian.

I could never come up to that then. But you know the secret of it is that when you do become a Christian, you receive a new life. That's what it says in verse nine, whoever has been born of God does not sin, for his seed remains in him.

A birth takes place, and the person receives a new life, the life of Christ. And that's really what makes the difference in a person's life, that he's indwell by the Lord, Jesus Christ, and Christ is living out his life through the believer. Well we mentioned before that John is thinking about the test of reality in a believer's life.

How can you know if you're really safe? And in this book there are several tests of life that are given. We saw one in chapter two, the test of obedience. If a person is a Christian, he characteristically wants to obey the Lord, because the commandments of the Lord are the things that his new nature really wants to do.

He wants to obey the Lord. He loves the Lord. Jesus said, if you love me, keep my commandments.

Another test is the test of love, and we'll be thinking about that today. Another test is the test of righteousness, and that's in our passage today. Another is the test of sound doctrine, the confession that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

Every believer has that confession. And then another test is the faith that overcomes the world. Faith that overcomes the world.

It's a very interesting book. You might read about love in chapter two, and then you'll read about love again as a test of life in chapter three and chapter four, and it's all intermingled. Somebody has compared the book of 1 John, and this is helpful to me.

It's a difficult book to outline, but they've explained it as a spiral staircase. You can't use the word spiral without using your fingers, too. Nobody could.

If I asked you what's a spiral staircase, you would have done that. Well, in a spiral staircase, you see the same things, but you see them from a different aspect all the time. And that's what you have in 1 John.

And you'll see that interweaving of the tests of life in this book. Okay, let's look at verse 10. In this, the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest.

Looks like all humanity is divided into two classes, doesn't it? Children of God and children of the devil. You become a child of God when you put your faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. You become a child of the devil by imitating his behavior, by acting the way he acts.

Now, how can you tell the difference? Well, it says here, in this, children of God and the children of the devil are manifest, whoever does not practice righteousness. I'm glad for that word practice in this version of the Bible. It says whoever bears out what we've been saying.

It's continuous behavior. It's habitual behavior. It's characteristic behavior.

And it's true of a Christian that righteousness is the practice of his life. Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God. Now, I mentioned before that there's righteousness toward God, and there's righteousness toward our fellow men, righteousness in our own lives.

If you want to be righteous before God, you listen to the gospel. It responds in your life. You repent of your sins, and you receive the Lord Jesus Christ as your Lord and your Savior.

And that's where righteousness has to begin, doing the right thing. But then, it's an interesting thing that when a person is saved, he begins to think in terms of righteousness. Temptations come up to him in life, in school, in the business world.

It's a home for all kinds of temptations to fudge, to cheat, and all the rest. And he might yield to that temptation. When he does, he goes through an agony of guilt that he never had before, evidence of the new life that's within him.

Now, we've just come through a period known as the income tax period. I want to tell you, there are all kinds of temptations to cheat on an income tax, aren't there? And I don't doubt that Christians have been tempted in this way. They say, no, I can't do that.

I want to tell you, friends, oftentimes it's costly financially to be a Christian. I mean, it's worth the cost, don't misunderstand me. But it's costly financially to be a Christian.

If you were just willing to sign your name to something that isn't quite true, you know, in some ways it's more costly not to be a Christian, isn't it? Somebody said to a servant of the Lord once, I can't become a Christian, it just costs too much. He said, have you ever thought of the cost of not being a Christian? Eternal death. Then not only income taxes, but building permits, you know.

People don't believe how corrupt our business world is. It would be very hard to become a millionaire today, honestly. Very hard.

You want to really adhere to the laws, it would be very, very difficult. Traffic laws, I wish I hadn't mentioned that. Traffic laws.

Tom is sitting right here in the audience. But it's a temptation, isn't it? Temptation. These Hollywood stops, is that what you call them? California stops at a stop sign.

You look through your rear view mirror. Bribery. Cheating on examinations.

Somebody had said, if all the diplomas in this country that were earned dishonestly were returned, the colleges wouldn't have enough warehouses to hold them. But these things are a problem for the great. Beforehand, he didn't think anything about it.

But now that he's saved, the old seesaw's working in his mind. Padding expense account. And yet, you know, to be a Christian, it saves you from oceans of trouble.

I often think of that insurance man up in Washington years ago. He got the policy to ensure the Tacoma Narrows Bridge. And he knew very well that bridge, nothing could happen to that bridge.

I mean, it was a brand new bridge. It was made so well, nothing could happen to it. And so he never turned in the premiums to the company.

Just put them in his own pocket. One day, the wind started to blow. And the wind set up a vibration on that bridge.

Pretty soon, the bridge could have taken and collapsed into the water. Cost him a lot, didn't it? Cost him jail. That's what it's talking about here.

Characteristically, a Christian seeks to do the right thing, even if it costs him something. In Psalm 15, it tells about the just man is the man who swears to his own hurt and changes not. He says, well, I'll sell the house to you for so-and-so.

And then somebody comes along and offers more. He says, no, I can't accept your bid. I've already promised it.

What did you say? There was no contract made. Doesn't make any difference. He gave his word.

He swore to his own hurt. He won't change. So that's what it's speaking about here when it talks about the practice of righteousness.

And whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, neither he who does not love his brother. Almost as if the two are linked together. A righteous thing to do is to love your brother.

Well, once again, this is an instinct that's born in you when you're born again, when you become a child of God. This is one of the ways you know whether you're a believer or not, your attitude toward the people of God. For this is a message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.

This is a message. This was the teaching of the Lord Jesus from the very beginning of his public ministry, and it was the teaching of the apostles too, that love should be the hallmark of the child of God. And once again, it's not something you can whip up in your own strength either, is it? Something you can encourage.

It's something you can practice, but that love is placed in you by the Holy Spirit of God. Not as Cain. Now he goes right back.

It's so interesting. The first family on earth. Murder.

Incredible, isn't it? The very first family that ever lived on earth, and there was a murder committed in that family. Not as Cain, who was of the wicked one, and murdered his brother. Well, let's turn back to Genesis chapter 4 and read just what happened there.

Genesis chapter 4, and verses 3 through 8. Genesis 4, 3 through 8. And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the Lord, and also brought of the, Abel also brought of the fatlings of his flock, and of their fat. The Lord respected Abel in his offering, but he did not respect Cain in his offering. Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.

So the Lord said to Cain, why are you angry? Why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? If you do not do well, sin lies at the door, and its desire is for you, but you should rule over it. Now Cain talked with Abel, his brother, and it came to pass when they were in the field that Cain rose against Abel, his brother, and killed him. Now it doesn't say it in the Bible, but it's obvious that God taught, probably through Adam and Eve, taught Cain and Abel there's only one way for a sinful person to approach God, and that's on the ground of a sacrificial offering, an offering by the shedding of blood.

Well, Cain didn't like that. He didn't like to be, he didn't like to be a recipient of charity. He said, I'll earn my own way to heaven.

He brought of the fruit of the ground. Abel said, well, I don't understand all the ramifications of substitutionary theology, but I'll do what God said. I'll kill an animal, and I'll bring that animal.

Blood has been shed to the Lord. The Lord respected Abel in his offering, but Cain was furious. Why was he furious? Well, he didn't like it that his brother would be accepted, and he would not be accepted, and so what did he do? He murdered him.

He murdered his own brother. He hated his own brother. Notice it says, why did he murder him? Because his works were evil.

No, his works is plural. His works were evil, and just not one act, not a committal of an act, but the practice of his life. Now, if you don't read that in the book of Genesis, never mind, it tells you here in 1 John that that was the case.

He was just a wicked fellow, that's all. He characterized his life, and his brother's righteous. Now, he draws from that, look, if Cain hated his brother, if it's the dislike of the unlike, don't be surprised if the world hates you when you become a child of God.

Sometimes I think we should tell people before they get saved that they can expect to endure the scorn of the world when they get saved. I was most interested to read in Time Magazine this week a quote from a justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. His name is Antonin Scalia, and he was speaking at a prayer breakfast, a Baptist prayer breakfast in Mississippi, and he said, we are fools for Christ's sake.

We must pray for the courage to endure the scorn of the sophisticated world. Wow. Can you believe that a justice of the Supreme Court said that? We are fools, we Christians, I didn't know he was a Christian.

That's what he said, we are fools for Christ's sake. We must pray for the courage to endure the scorn of the sophisticated world. And you know, when you think about it, you have to realize that that's the only way it can be.

The world, how did the world treat the Lord Jesus? Well, out of scorn. Turn back to Matthew 10, 24. Has the Lord Jesus prepared the disciples for the very thing that John is talking about here? Matthew 10 and verse 24.

The Lord Jesus says there, a disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. It's enough for a disciple that he be like his teacher and a servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house be else above, how much more will they call those of his household? I'll never forget a day I was in an English literature class in college, and I, at least in a break or something, I witnessed a fellow next to me, he was quite a bit older than I was, and he turned to me, and I'll never forget the scorn in his voice.

He said, what are you, a Christer? I mean, that statement was absolutely filled with venom. And I said, yes, I am. I had never heard that expression before, a Christer.

He said, what are you, a Christer? That's what the Lord is talking about here. Look, all the world gave to the Lord Jesus was a manger across the grave. And we can't expect the world to give us a crown.

We can't expect. In fact, the Lord Jesus warned, beware when all men speak well of you. Very dangerous.

But all people speak well of you, because I think it means we haven't been faithful to the trust that he has committed to us. We know that we have passed from death to life because we love the brethren. We know.

Remember, I told you this epistle has the Gnostics in mind, people who profess to have exceptional knowledge, you know, and try to make other people jealous that they didn't have that knowledge. They profess to be the only ones who were right. But John comes back with that word, no, we know.

We have passed from death to life because we love the brethren. And any person who is truly saved, looks within his heart and recognizes that now that he's saved, he's very comfortable when he's in the presence of Christian people. And when he has to go back into the world, let's say in a social event in the world, he feels like a round peg in a square hole.

It's true. It's very, very true. We have an expression, a fish out of water, a fish out of water.

So that's the way a Christian feels. When he's with the Lord's people, he can relax. When he's in a social contact in a crowd with the world, he's uptight most of the time, unless he's witnessing for the Lord.

Then the Lord can give him a real relaxation. We know that we have passed from death to life because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death.

Some versions of the Bible have he who does not love his brother. Others just say he who does not love abides in death. And what it's saying is that if this is not true of a person, it means that he never was genuinely saved.

He might have a profession of salvation. He might be churchy, might be a church member, but he doesn't have this attitude toward the people of God. It's definite proof that he never was saved.

Whoever hates his brother is a murderer. You know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. What that's saying is that hatred contains the motive for murder, doesn't it? Murder starts up here in the mind.

That terrible animosity, that bitter feeling toward another person in which he wishes that other person was dead, and then he goes to implement his wish. And this is exactly what the Lord Jesus taught, isn't it, in Matthew chapter 5 in the Sermon on the Mount? Matthew chapter 5 and verse 21. Matthew 5, 21.

You have heard that it was said to those of old, you shall not murder. And whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment. But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother, now some versions have without a cause.

Those words probably shouldn't be there because any murderer could use those words as an excuse. He said, well, I had a cause to do it. So I prefer the manuscripts that leave that out.

I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment. Whoever says to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the counsel. Raca means kind of empty-headed.

But whoever says, you fool, shall be in danger of hellfire. And what the Lord Jesus is talking about there is, control the thought life, huh? Control the thought life. And if you control the thought life, you control the action.

Control the fountain, and you'll control the stream that flows from the fountain. No murderer had eternal life abiding him. That doesn't mean that a murderer can't be saved.

There are going to be a lot of murderers in heaven. A lot of them. Murderer can be saved.

But it means that if this is the way a man has lived, and this is the way he dies, with that sin unconfessed, he is not saved so. By this we know love. This is marvelous.

By this we know love. And then he goes right back to Calvary. The greatest demonstration of love in all the history of the universe took place at the cross of Calvary.

In the Old Testament, you see the wisdom of God. You see the power of God in creation. But you really have to come to Calvary to see the love of God.

That's what it says here. Because he laid down his life for us. I tell you, there are tremendous, tons of meaning in that verse.

Take the word he, and think about that for a while. And then take the word us, and think about that for a while. And then read what goes between he, the Lord of life and glory.

Us, sinners who were lost, helpless, hopeless. Laid down his life. He laid down his life for us.

That's love, dear friends, isn't it? And there wasn't anything in us to call out his love. There wasn't any reason why he should love us. No hope of gain whatever.

No hope of gain whatever. He loved us because he loved us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

This is probably the most heroic demonstration of love that a Christian can make. To lay down his life for the brethren. A lot have done that too.

A lot of Christians have done exactly that. They've laid down their lives for the brethren. And we can do it in a lesser sense than pouring out our lives in day-by-day service for our brethren.

But of course, the extreme would be as the Lord Jesus laid down his life for us to lay down our lives for one another. But then he goes in verse 17 from the heroic to the everyday, I think. I think verse 16 would be the most heroic demonstration of love that we could show.

But 17 brings you right down to Main Street, doesn't it? Brings you down to where we live. Whoever has this world's goods and sees his brother in need and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? I was talking to George Verver on the phone recently. He said, that's one of the strongest verses on discipleship in the New Testament.

And it is. A very searching for it. And it's really saying that one of the tests of my Christian life is what I do with my dollars.

That's what it's saying. A lot of people don't think that. They say, well, what I do with my dollars is my own business.

And if I get a raise, I buy a power speedboat or something like that. That's not the way it is. That's not the way it is.

If any man sees his brother in need, shuts up his vows of mercies from him, the King James says, how does the love of God dwell in that person? In other words, if I'm really constrained by the love of God, if the love of God is within me, I want to go out and help that person in need, that brother in need. So not necessarily in heroic actions. I think that the greater in verse 16 includes the lesser in verse 17.

My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. Word. In word or in tongue.

Sometimes you go into a store and a lady waits on you and you give her money and she gives you the change and she says, thank you, darling. Darling, you never met me before. Or some other woman might say, thank you, honey.

Honey? I don't even know who you are. I don't even know your name. In word and in tongue.

But in deed and in truth. It's not enough to say, go and be warm. Go and be fed.

Go and be clothed. It's not enough to say that. You have to do it in deed and in truth.

And by this we know that we are of the truth and shall assure our heart before him. It gives a measure of assurance for a child of God when he can see the Lord working in his life this way. When he can see himself acting in a supernatural way.

You know, it's not natural to do what we're talking about here. It's not the natural thing to do. And when a child of God can look and see himself and say, is that me? Is that me doing it? I didn't do that before I was saved.

Well, it gives you a measure of assurance in your heart. I don't think that's the main basis of assurance. The way I know I'm saved is because the Bible says so.

It says all who come to Christ in simple trusting faith can be saved. 1 John 5, 13, These things have I written unto you that believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may believe in the name of the Son of God. I base my assurance of salvation first and foremost on the testimony of the Word of God, not on my feelings.

But there is a subjective assurance of salvation. That is something in myself. When I can detect changes in my life.

Some of you know the story of Eric Shorkin, who's coming back on the 21st, Lord willing. Before he was saved, you know, he had that motorcycle with Hellbound painted on the side of it. And a picture of the devil with his pitchfork and horns and all of that.

And Eric got saved and went down to Mexico. And he was telling Jim McCarthy, you know, since I got saved, I've been trying to sell that motorcycle. I can't sell it.

And Eric said to him, I mean, Jim said to him, Eric, would you sell a motorcycle with the word Hellbound on it to anybody? Eric said, I never thought of that. So he came back from Mexico and he started working on the paint job. And he was able to take off, it's almost miraculous, he was able to take off Hellbound and the devil and the pitchfork and the tail and the horns and all the rest and leave the original surface unscathed.

And he said, God is working in my life. That was the first way in which Eric realized that God was working in his life. In other words, he noticed a change.

The second way happened the next day. The bike sold for the price he was asking. As soon as he had removed that, I said, okay, Eric, I'll buy it for you.

And the motorcycle was sold for the price Eric was asking. He had many other instances of God working in his life since then. Hard to tell people beforehand about this, isn't it? You almost have to experience it to know how real it is and how true it is.

By this, we know that we're of the truth. To be of the truth means to be a believer in the Christian faith and shall assure our hearts before him. Before him means in his presence.

Now, verse 20 might be understood in two different ways. If our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart and knows all things. Now, that verse can mean greater in compassion, or it could mean greater in judgment.

Let me explain that to you. I might read this and I might read these passages of Scripture and say, my heart really condemns me. I'm not measuring up to 1 John.

And you can think of some instances of where you haven't really been true to the Lord. Well, John could be saying here, your heart condemns you. God knows a lot more about you than you know about yourself.

He's greater in judgment. Or it could mean greater in compassion. A person might be very sensitive before the Lord and read these passages of Scripture and say, wow.

I just feel that big. You know, I read these passages of Scripture. Never mind.

God is greater in compassion. And he knows, he knows all things. For instance, he knows that you love him.

Remember how he asked Peter, after Peter had that terrible backsliding, that terrible time. He said, Peter, do you love me? Peter says, Lord, you know I love you. He says, feed my sheep.

Feed my lambs. Feed my sheep. Even if our heart condemns us, there's a remedy.

And that is, confess anything that might be sinful in our lives and receive God's forgiveness. If our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart and knows all things. Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God.

Now, any Christian can have an uncondemning heart before God. And that is through confession. Through confession.

If we confess our sins, be faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. But of course, when you confess your sin, you have to accept, appropriate the forgiveness of God. You have to believe that because you confessed it, God has forgiven you.

He has given you paternal forgiveness. And that gives you confidence in prayer. And what it's really saying in this and the next verse is that when I walk with the Lord, all sins confess.

I'm walking in obedience to the Lord. I'm abiding in the Lord. I'm walking in fellowship with Him.

There's nothing between my soul and the Savior. I can ask according to His will and He'll answer my prayers. Whatever we ask, we receive of Him because we keep His commandments and do those things

that are pleasing in His sight.

Notice, there are some conditions to answered prayer, aren't there? You say, well, that sounds like a carte blanche. Well, there are conditions to answered prayer. You have to be walking with the Lord, have to be in fellowship with the Lord, have to be obeying His commandments, keeping His commandments, doing those things that are pleasing in His sight.

And incidentally, God's answers to prayers are not always immediate. Neither are they. Not always immediate.

I think sometimes when we're first saved, God gives us some spectacular answers to prayer. Like I was talking about Eric. I mean, that was spectacular, wasn't it? That God is working in my life.

But then as you get older in the Christian life, you learn another lesson. That is to be patient in prayer. To believe that God is working when you pray, sometimes you might not even live to see the answer of it.

But the answer will come nonetheless. And this is His commandment, that we should believe on the name of His Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another. It's interesting to me how John combines doctrine and duty in this verse.

Doctrine, believe on the name of His Son, Jesus Christ. Duty, and love one another as He gave us. And of course, that's the way that God works.

He first of all says, get your doctrine right, then go out and live it. Doctrine is very, very important. In the evangelical world today, it's being downplayed.

In this mad race for ecumenism, they say, well, doctrine divides. It's better not to put emphasis on doctrine. And of course, the result of that is just an absolute weakening of the great fundamentals of the Christian faith.

But God puts a great emphasis on doctrine. Here, of course, believing on the name of His Son, Jesus Christ. Believing in the name is the same as believing in the person, isn't it? The name stands for person.

I was in school, I was taught a noun is a word used for a name. A noun is a word used for a name. Name is used for the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

When you believe on Christ, you believe in His name. When you believe in His name, you believe in Him. And of course, that's the belief that produces salvation.

And then the result of that is loving one another as He gave us to men. One of the things that astonished people in the early days of the Christian faith was how these people loved one another. They astonished them.

It was so unlike the pagan world that it stood out very, very prominently. Now, he who keeps his commandments abides in him. This means habitual behavior.

Abides in him. That word abides is a difficult word. I think it leaves a very vague, intangible idea in many people's minds.

I think one of the easiest ways to nail it down is to remember that to abide is to obey. When you obey the commandments of the Lord, you're abiding in Him. When you're abiding in Him, you're walking in fellowship with Him.

How can two walk together except they be agreed? It means you're agreed. It means that the spirit of God is not grieved by some sin in your life. So, he who keeps his commandments abides in him.

That's it. Keeps his commandments. That's obedience.

If you're an obedient... And it's really good to have a very sensitive heart. The Word of God in that regard. It's good to see it in the Word and believe it because it's there in the Word.

I've often said the great principle of interpretation of the Bible is, if the first sense makes sense, don't look for any other sense. So, have a sensitive conscience toward the Word of God. And when you do, you abide in Him.

He abides in you. Now, in one sense, He always abides in us. The Holy Spirit, the Lord Jesus comes in and dwells in my body when I'm saved.

But, you know, He can abide in my body and not feel at home there. He can abide in my body and feel grieved there by things that are not pleasing to Him. And I think that's what it means here.

He who keeps his commandments abides in Him, and He in Him. I think He feels at home. He's happy to be with a person like that, although He's with every child of God.

And by this we know that He abides in us by the Spirit whom He has given us. When a person is saved, he receives the Holy Spirit forever. Forever.

We're sealed by the Holy Spirit until the day of redemption. He's given us the earnest of the Spirit until the day of redemption as well. And the Spirit of God witnesses to our abiding in Him.

When I read this, I always have to remind myself that the primary way in which the Holy Spirit witnesses to us is through the Word of God. I don't deny, I've already said that there's a subjective way in which we are assured before God, but there's an awful danger in putting too much emphasis on your feelings, because your feelings can deceive you. People in the Mormon church say they know it's true because of a burning in their bosom.

But that's not dependable, a burning in your bosom. I want something authoritative. I want something that'll say the same thing today that it said yesterday.

That's the Word of God. That's the Word of God. Now, two weeks from now, Lord willing, we'll go on with chapter four, hoping to get through the book and maybe the next two officials before we stop in May.

Shall we look to the Lord in closing prayer? Father, we never cease to be amazed how contemporary your Word is. It was written a couple of thousand years ago, and yet it speaks to us today in San Leandro in 1996. And we just pray that by the Spirit of God, the Word might be applied to our hearts today.

We know that He, in His wonderful way, can give some morsel for every person, no matter what the need might be. We ask that that might be the case today. In the Savior's name, amen.

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