

# When Our Heart Condemns Us

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[ 0 : 00 ] So it's just cool. Really cool. Really real. Okay. So, all right. What are we doing here today? We're in 1 John 3. 1 John 3.

Remember that John is showing us his whole purpose for this whole letter is, I'm writing to you who believe that you believers may know that you have eternal life.

How do I know with certainty? How do I know with assurance that I have eternal life, that I've truly been saved, that what I have is real and authentic?

Okay. So he's going through it. So he measures it by some different things. One test is, do you walk in the light? You know, as you walk in the light, do you bring your sins with you and he cleanses you?

I don't hide from the light. I walk in the light versus walking in the darkness. Second one is, I love my brother, right? I love my brother, not hate my brother. And then third is the test of truth.

[ 1 : 03 ] Do I confess Jesus or deny Jesus? So we're on the second round. We saw at the beginning of chapter 3 that instead of calling it walking in the light, he calls it practicing righteousness.

It's still how we walk. And then beginning in 311, he talked about the second test, loving our brother. But this time he deepened it. He surprised us by telling what this love looks like.

So it's not love of our own definition. It's not love that we put our own boundaries on. It's love that God defines. It's love that means sacrifice, laying down my life, right?

It's an ultimate price. But then he gave a practical picture of it in verse 17, 317, that this is how you know, right? Verse 16, this is how you know what love is.

He laid down our life for us. And so we ought to lay down our lives for others. Well, how does that look? Verse 17. But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how can God's love abide in him?

[ 2 : 06 ] So laying down my life can be as simple as my brother has a need. I have what he needs. I give it to him instead of close my heart.

If I close my heart against my brother, John says, you're as much as a murderer. Because you're actually taking life from him. You're withholding your goods, your life, even though it's just an earthly possession at that moment.

It's still life for that person, right? So then he says, sums it up in verse 18. We'll read from here, from verse 18 through the end of the chapter.

So if you're able, please stand. As I read from 1 John 3, beginning at 18 through 324. Little children, let us not love in word or talk, but in deed and in truth.

By this we shall know that we are of the truth and persuade our heart before him. For whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart.

[ 3 : 16 ] And he knows everything. Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God. And whatever we ask, we receive from him.

Because we are keeping his commandments and we are doing what pleases him. And this is his commandment that we believe in the name of his son, Jesus Christ.

And love one another just as he commanded us. Whoever is keeping his commandments is abiding in God and God in him.

And by this we know that he is abiding in us by the spirit whom he has given us.

So it reads, let us pray. Father, grant us eyes to see and especially hearts to receive your truth.

What John says and has been saying is very convicting and very honest.

[ 4 : 23 ] Thank you that he defines what's real in Christianity from what's not real. And thank you, Lord, that he gives us measurements by which to look at our own lives.

Not to guilt ourselves, but to measure. And so, Father, help us today. As John seeks in this passage to encourage us and give us assurance.

Help us to pick that up. Help us to get it. We pray in Christ's name. Amen. Please be seated. So, do you ever have random thoughts?

You're just, you know, you're just kind of sitting there and all of a sudden you think weird stuff. I mean, sometimes it's silly, absurd. It's just random. No?

Just me? Like, you're sitting there. You hear that phrase when a door opens. One door closes, another one opens. Do you ever think, well, when one door opens, another closes, you might be in prison.

[ 5 : 28 ] But that's just me. Maybe, do you think, you know, you hear the age 60 is the new 40. Right? But I think age 60 is the new 40.

Nine's the new midnight. Right? So, I don't know. You get up in the morning and it's supposed to be a nice new day. Right? And you're looking forward to it.

And then you think, I'm off like a herd of turtles. So, yeah. Do you ever feel like the older you get, the earlier it gets late?

Isn't that weird? I used to be able to stay up. Now it's like nine. It's like, oh, nine. Oh, damn. Nine was when I would wake up. So, this is random.

So, when I say the other day, I could be referring to any time between yesterday and 15 years ago.

So, when I say the other day. Have you ever thought about having your patients tested?

[ 6 : 35 ] And you think, okay, I'll come out negative. Right? No? All right. Oh, here's a fun one. This is fun to think about. So, when you're sitting in public and a stranger takes a seat next to you, like you're at the airport or something, and a stranger comes sitting next to you, just stare straight ahead and say, did you bring the money?

Just to see what happens. It's just kind of random. So, when you ask me what I'm doing today and I say nothing, it doesn't mean I'm available.

It means I'm doing nothing. Okay? All right? So, I finally got eight hours of sleep. Took three days, but, you know, whatever. You ever see an athlete?

You know, they just run like the wind. Right? So, me, I run like the winded. So, Eric Little.

Remember Eric Little in Chariots of Fire? Right? When I run, I feel his pleasure.

Something like that. That's a terrible accent. When I run, I feel his laughter. Right? So, you ever hate it when a couple's arguing in public and you miss the beginning and say you don't know who's right?

[ 7 : 54 ] Right? All right. I got to quit here. So, some people, some people you think, okay, when you ask for directions, right, don't use words like east.

Right? Right? When you're asking for directions, say, don't tell me east or west. I don't know who I'm thinking of when I think of that. Oh, maybe this is you. This is very random.

This is you. You might think, don't bother walking a mile in my shoes. That would be boring. Spend 30 seconds in my head. That'll freak you out.

Right? My luck is like the bald guy that wins a comb. All right. That's it. I was trying to segue a week, right?

Okay. So, random thoughts. What about our thoughts that are guilty thoughts? In this text, John says, when our heart condemns us.

[ 8 : 59 ] When my own heart condemns me. Remember what heart means in scripture? Heart is not feelings. Heart is thoughts. Biblical thinking, the heart was the thought.

The mind. Okay? So, when my thoughts condemn me. Accuses me. So, you ever thought these things?

I'm really not worthy. I failed Jesus again. Why do I still give in to sin?

To anger? To lust? To escaping? Why am I so inconsistent?

I'm not patient enough. Oh, I never pray enough. I certainly don't love like I should. That was love. That was pretty feeble.

[ 10 : 02 ] And so, I think I'm a terrible Christian. This is what John is addressing.

When our hearts condemn us. When our hearts accuse us. When our hearts blame us. What do I do? I believe every true Christian will be troubled by guilty thoughts.

Especially as we come through, walk through the first letter of John. Because John has been shooting straight. He doesn't kind of, oh, maybe this, maybe that.

He says, no, this. This is how you know. This is light. This is dark. This is brother. This is enemy. This is love. This is not love, which means you're a murderer.

I mean, John is extremely convicting. Especially two weeks ago when we talked about what really love looks like, right? And what John says, if you don't love, it means you're hating and you're murdering.

[11:15] And I thought I just wasn't loving. I just was being passive. I said, John's saying by my passivity, I'm actually hating. And my motives are similar to one who hates and murders.

Because I want to ignore them. I want to get rid of them. I don't want to care for them. Right? So John can leave us feeling like I just don't measure up.

I'm a failure. I'm seeking to walk in the light, yet I still struggle with my sin. And I'm practicing righteousness. I love that he uses the word practice.

Because we're practicing. We're not there yet. We're not perfect yet. But we're practicing. But even then, I feel like my practicing is very feeble. Very weak.

And false. And he calls us to love our brother by laying down our life. And literally to lay down my soul. Right?

[12:17] To lay down my affections and feelings. To lay down my self. Self-denial. And to love like Jesus is so hard. It's absolutely unnatural.

It's not what comes naturally. So how can I ever be a true Christian? And that's what John is addressing. How do I know I'm a true Christian?

And he gives us these measurements. And these measurements are so high. And so he knows. He gets it. That we feel like I can't measure up.

So he wants to take a step back here. And give us some encouragement. Okay? I want us to hear it as encouragement.

So instead of being troubled by our guilty thoughts. He wants to encourage us to trust God over our doubts. And what our heart is condemning.

[13:16] So a Christian. A true Christian. Can overcome thoughts of self-condemnation. We can overcome our guilty thoughts. For two reasons.

One. Because God is stronger than our heart. He is stronger than our thinking. And that's what he's getting at in verses 19 through 22.

And the other reason we can overcome this. Is because God has given us a Holy Spirit to dwell in us. So in verses 22 through 24.

That's what he focuses on. How do I defeat my defeating thoughts? How do I overcome my self-condemnation? My accusing and blaming myself.

I'm so bad. I go to God. And I believe what he has said. Do I believe my thoughts?

[14:16] Or do I believe God's thoughts? Right? So here we go. So two reasons. Verses 19 to 22. First reason we can overcome our doubts.

Our self-condemnation. Even if they're real self-condemnation. Okay? Is that a Christian can take his guilty thoughts to God for reassurance.

God is stronger. A Christian can take all those guilty thoughts. All those. Whether they're real or not. Guilty thoughts. I can take those accusations. I fling at myself.

And I can take them to God. I can walk in the light. I can walk in the light. Remember chapter 1? We walk in the light. That's how we're cleansed. I don't hide my sins from God.

I walk in the light with all that I am. And he cleanses me. And remember he talks about when we do that together. When we walk in the light together. He cleanses us together.

[15:18] Not just when we confess. But when we're open and honest in the light. In the light. Not hiding from each other. There's a special kind of cleansing. So he's kind of saying the same thing.

But in a different way here. I can take my guilty thoughts. My condemning thoughts. To God. For reassurance. So here's the test in verse 9.

19. Excuse me. So he had mentioned truth at the end of verse 18. Little children let us not love in word or talk. But indeed and in truth. And John always segues between his sections.

So he mentions truth. Oh by the way. Truth. This is how we can know we're of the truth. So he's going to go into the next one. He's going to mention truth. We love in truth.

In other words we love genuinely. Not fake. We love. No we just talk about love. But we do love. And we don't just say slogans of love.

[16:17] We actually are in reality loving others. Right. So true. We love in truth. So speaking of truth. How do we know what's true? How do I know if I'm true?

How do I know if I'm being real in my love? Right. So verse 19. By this we shall know that we are of the truth. That I'm genuine. And I will know.

Now both of these verbs in verse 19 are future. We will know that we are of the truth. Not know now. I will know after something happens. I will know that I am of the truth.

And I will reassure my heart before him. So catch that before him. It's in his presence. Right.

For whenever our heart condemns us. God is greater. So first of all. We're proving the truth in verse 19.

[17:15] He just spoke of that. And because we're of the truth. We're going to seek to love genuinely. Even if I don't love perfectly. The fact that.

So John used the illustration of. I see my brother in need. I have the resources to help him. And then he said. He used the negative example. I close my.

I close my. Splank. I close my compassion. I have compassion. If I shut it down. Right. I'm not going to help him. Right.

But let's say. I start that way. And then I change. Then I say. No, I got to do it. I don't want to do it. But I'm going to do it. How can I not do that?

Because I. Maybe I hear that voice. That verse going. Hello. Right. Okay. I do it. So what if I do it with a bad attitude? Does it still count?

[18:14] No. You don't think so? But the other person got life. Does it still count? Do I ever do it. Without mixed motives?

No. I mean. I can purify my. But there's probably still something. Right. Way down. Right. Oh. I'll feel better about myself. When I do this.

Maybe just a little nugget of that. Just a tiny little. Right. Because I always feel so guilty. Otherwise. It was. You know. Is that a bad motive? It's mixed. In this flesh.

Can I ever do it. With a pure. Pure. Pure. Pure. Pure. Pure. Take the log out of our eye. Blah. Blah. Blah. I don't know that we can do it. Perfectly. Because what if I'm really. Really tired. And I'm really. Really weak. How do I.

[19:11] But I still do it. Does it count? Not like we get points. But does. Is God going to say. Well done. See.

And I think that's what John's talking about here. Do I love. Do I love. Indeed. And truth. Not just talk about it. So I'm actually doing it. But what if I do it with a bad attitude.

Does it still count? The person still got helped. Does that count for anything? See. See what we do to ourselves. So rather than me judge that.

Okay. Rather than me judge that. Because I can go. No. It doesn't count. Not. Bad attitude. Out. But the other person got helped. So you ruined it.

And see my heart's going to condemn me. See. It doesn't count. Because you know. You did it with a bad attitude. You could have done so much more.

[20:07] You could have done it with a smile on your face. Instead of a grimace. Anybody hear me? Anything sound familiar? Just me?

No. I know. I know. Bless you. For shaking your heads. Yeah. I can see that. Okay. So I know I'm of the truth.

Because I did love genuinely. Not perfectly. Not by a mile. But I did love genuinely. It wasn't talk. It was real. It wasn't perfect real.

It wasn't pure real. But it was still real. Real. But my thoughts. My heart's going to say. Man.

Man. That was pitiful. You did it out of guilt. Whatever. Whatever. Our thoughts are going to go all the place. Right? So when our heart condemns us.

[21:03] So how will we know we're of the truth? Remember that verse 19 is future. I don't yet know I'm of the truth. I will know I'm of the truth. And I will persuade my heart once something else happens first.

Verse 20. How will I persuade my heart? For I will. Verse 19. I will persuade my heart. I will reassure my heart before God in his presence.

I'm not doing this alone. I'm doing this just with him. For whenever my heart condemns us. I'm going to be able to reassure my heart. Because why?

God is greater than my heart. And he knows everything. I know some things. He knows everything. And he's greater than my thoughts.

Because his thoughts are not my thoughts. His ways are higher than my ways. So my thoughts condemn me.

[ 22 : 06 ] So is that conviction from the spirit? Or is that from the devil? So when my heart condemns me. Right? So if I experience guilt.

Is that the spirit? Because the scripture says the spirit convicts us. Right? When the spirit convicts us. How do we know it's the spirit and not the devil? When I'm convicted.

What do I do? He brings me to God. I know it's the spirit. Because he does convict me. He's usually soft. Right? He's just kind of. Unless I ignore a long time.

And then it gets. But I. No. Because the spirit wants to bring me to the father. So. But it possibly could also be.

The devil working through my. Corrupt heart. Because I just have this pattern of condemning myself. Right?

[ 23 : 06 ] So I'm good at that. Or it could be that voice that. That. If I listen to it long enough. It will drive me away from God. That's how I know it's the devil too. Is. If it. If it. If it makes me want to go away from God.

Go hide in the dark. Right? Like David did for a long time. So I don't know.

Sometimes I don't know. Because I can honestly say. Well yes I did love. But man it was pitiful. Blah blah blah blah blah. So what do I do with that?

I go to God. He says. Verse 20. Whenever our hearts condemn us. So. God is greater than our heart. He knows everything. So.

Because. He's greater than my heart. And he knows everything. Then I will be able to reassure my heart before him. Because I'm going to do this whole thing before him. I'm going to do this whole thing in his presence.

[ 24 : 06 ] Because he knows. He understands. Do you remember Psalm 139? It starts like this. Oh Lord. You have searched me.

And you know me. You know when I sit down. And when I rise up. You discern my thoughts. My heart. You discern my thoughts from afar. Even the way. You know it.

Right? You search out my path. And my lying down. And are acquainted with. Some of my ways. Right? No. All of my ways. You know everything about me.

Even before a word is on my tongue. Behold Lord. Thou dost know it all. He knows what I'm going to say before I speak. Jesus said that when we pray.

We don't have to inform God. It's not like he doesn't know. He already knows before you ask. Well why do we ask? Because he wants us to talk to him. Right? He wants that relationship.

[ 25 : 06 ] Of course. It's not because he doesn't know. Oh I didn't know you needed that. Okay. Right? It's like. Yeah. Come on. Talk to me about it. So even in my guilty thoughts.

He wants me to come to him. He wants me to take those guilty thoughts. To him. Because I don't know how to evaluate it. But he knows everything. So I go to God.

And I say. This is. Lord. I could have done so much better. I think I did it wrong. And maybe he's going to walk me through that.

Well did you help your brother? Yeah. But my attitude was bad. But did you help your brother? Okay. Yeah. But I don't like the way.

Well okay. Let's work on that. What's the father going to say? To me. The weak child.

[ 26 : 06 ] Okay. I don't want to have anything more to do with you. Right? You should have done better. Is that what he's going to say? No. Of course not. He's going to say. Come here my child. You still did it.

You still did it. But not like Jesus. Oh come on now. You need a little more practice at that. Yeah. Get to that level. You understand? Does that make sense? So remember Psalm 139 ends with this. He says. So it starts with. You know everything Lord.

And so it progresses with. Oh where can I go? Where can I hide from him? I can't hide from him. I go to the deepest ocean. He's there. I go to outer space. He's there. He's really there.

I can go out in outer space. It's all. And so he says. So I can't. I have to deal with God. So he says.

[ 27 : 02 ] So Lord. Now he prays. Search me. And know me. Try me. Test me. Right? And see if there be any.

Sin. Hurt. Wicked. You look at my heart. Because I'm going to protect my heart. Or I'm going to condemn my heart. Right? So you look. And then I know that you'll tell me. Because I'm not sure. Is there something wrong? So I go to him and I say. Test me. Try me. You know better. Show me. So he's going to show me. He's going to answer that prayer. Do you know that? If you're on it. And you'll wait. Sometimes it's like. Boom. Boom. Boom. Here's three things. I remember. One of the first times I did that was like. Boom. Boom. Boom. It was like. Okay. Repent of this. Go talk to this person. About this. And something. I can't remember now. [ 28 : 04 ] But it was like. Clear. Clear. Clear. Like. Okay. Got my marching orders. So I take my guilty thoughts to God.

For cleansing. And reassurance. And then what happens. Right. Verse 21. If our heart does not condemn us.

Why wouldn't it condemn us? Because we've reassured it. Because we've come to know. Because I've gone to God. I got my accusing heart. I take it to the Lord. I take it to the Lord.

He's greater than my heart. He evaluates and tests me. Then I can persuade my own heart. No. See what God said. See. I'm going to believe what God said. Not what I said. And then that leads to confidence.

If my heart does not condemn me. Then we have confidence before God. And what does that lead to? Verse 22. Prayer. So that whatever I ask. I have so much confidence. That whatever we ask.

[ 29 : 07 ] We receive from him. Well that's pretty good praying. Isn't it? I pray with confidence. I pray with confidence before him. I'm in his presence.

Whatever I ask. I receive. Okay. Stop there. Some people. Some Christians.

Take that. And say. See. I just name it. And claim it. See. Is that what that means?

Why not? Can I ask God to eradicate all my debt? Sure. You can ask that. Do I have a guarantee that he'll do it? I don't know.

What do you think? He said. Whatever you ask. You receive. What if I want a new car. And I want a Rolls Royce? Rolls Royce. Rolls Royce.

[ 30 : 04 ] Because. One preacher I heard. Frederick Casey Price said. You have Volkswagen faith. I got Rolls Royce faith. I'm like. Oh. La de da.

I bet you got some other stuff too. Don't you? Well he's got a plane. And you know. One of those guys. He shamed his congregation. If they didn't have what he had.

They had little faith. You got Volkswagen faith. Although Volkswagens are nicer these days than I think back then. I think he was thinking about the old. So what does it mean?

Whatever you ask. You receive. How do I know I receive it? Well he gives an answer at the end of verse 22.

Right? Whatever we ask. We receive from him. And why? Because we keep his commandments. And do what pleases him. Oh. So if I keep his commands. And do what pleases him.

[ 31 : 08 ] Then I can name it. And claim it. Right? Well if I'm keeping his commands. What kind of commands does that mean? Okay.

Covet. Okay. Every prayer about coveting is out. Adultery. Okay. That's out. Stealing. Other gods. Those are out. So remember I told you. When I was in depression for 12 years. And I was praying for God. To relieve me of depression. Right?

And that's a biblical prayer. I got it from Psalm 119. Etc. Etc. Revive me. Right? But at the end of 12 years. I'm like. Why? Why isn't he giving me this?

And he showed me that that had become my God. I wanted healing. More than I wanted him. And so couldn't God give me another God? Well he can.

[ 32 : 06 ] But would he? He said no. No boy. I had to learn to humble. Right? Accept. Embrace. Even embrace it. As from God. So.

What do we ask for? Well later in John. He's going to say. If you ask according to his will. Well what's his will? Is his will for me to have that new job?

I don't know. I. I. When I was a youth pastor. I was out in the field setting up. Volleyball nets or something for the. That night. And somebody drives by and stops.

And he wants me to pray with him. He says. We've got to have two or three. Right? Because two or three. Right? That's when God's really there. I'm like. Don't you think God's there even if you're alone? Never mind. And that passage isn't talking about.

You know. That. So they wanted. Well. You know. If we pray in his name. We just have to pray in his name. If we pray in his name. He'll give us anything. Also.

[ 33 : 07 ] Those are the magic words. You put the coin in. Say. Jesus name. Now he has to give it to me. Right? Because if I ask anything in his name. He will give it. That's what he said. I'm going to show you in a minute.

So he went to John 14. He said. See. It's in his name. I said. What's the context? What do you mean? I said. What was Jesus talking about? That he now talks about praying for.

I don't know. Okay. Try another verse then. Okay. John 15. You ask me anything in my name. I'll give it to you. Okay. What's the context? What was he talking about?

That now he says pray for. And he will give it to you. I don't know. Maybe you ought to do a little more reading. John 16. He said. Sorry buddy. All those contexts are applying to something about what his will is.

What he's just been teaching his disciples. In the upper room he talks about. He tells them and encourages them to pray. And I will give it to you. But each one has a context.

[ 34 : 09 ] This one has a context too. John says. If we're walking with him. If we're loving our brother. If we're believing in Christ.

Ask whatever you want. Because you're going to ask about walking with him. You're going to ask about loving your brother. You're going to ask about believing his name.

That's what you're going to ask. You're going to ask about things that he cares about. Right? What does Psalm 37 say? Delight yourselves in the Lord.

And he will give you. The desires of your heart. So if my delight is in the Lord. Then he's going to give me the desires of my heart. If my delight is in the Lord.

What will be my desires? More of the Lord. I want more of the Lord. It's not all of a sudden. If I'm delighting in the Lord. It's not all of a sudden going to be. All of a sudden be.

[ 35 : 03 ] Oh. Help the Raiders win. I didn't say Denver. See. I didn't say. Okay.

So let's look at those examples real quickly. In John. In the upper room. Jesus says it at least three times. John 14. He's teaching the same truth about confident prayer.

And now he adds the phrase in his name. In his name. Which doesn't. Which aren't magic words. It's not how you end a prayer. In Jesus name. Amen. That's how I used to think.

I usually try to start my prayer in Jesus name. Because it's how I go to the Father. I come to Jesus. I come to the Father not in my name. Because my name doesn't mean anything.

I go in his name. Because his name is the one that gets me access. His name is the whole reason I can go. Right. That's what in his name means. So. John 14. 12.

[ 36 : 00 ] Truly truly I say to you. Here's the context by the way. Truly truly I say to you. Whoever believes in me. Trusts in me. Will also do the works that I do. That's pretty amazing.

Right. I'm going to do the works that Jesus does. In fact he says. Greater works than these will he do. Because I am going to the Father.

Whatever you ask in my name. This I will do. That the Father may be glorified in the Son.

So whatever I'm asking for. Has something to do with the Father's glory. And the Son's works. Gee. Maybe it's doing the same works that Jesus did. Ask whatever you.

Whatever you ask in my name. That the Father will do for you. If you ask anything in my name. I will do it. Boy that's just wide open. Isn't it? The context he's talking about. Believing in him.

[ 36 : 59 ] Doing the same works that he did. Which was what? What was Jesus doing? What did he come to do? Share the gospel.

Everywhere he went. Preached the gospel of the kingdom. And when people were sick. He helped them. But that wasn't his mission. He helped people who were sick.

Because he cared about people. So second one. John 15. If you abide in me. My words abide in you. Ask whatever you wish.

And it will be done for you. There it is again. Ask whatever you wish. Whatever you desire. And it will be done for you. By this. Is my Father glorified.

That you. Pray for whatever you want. No. By this. My Father's glorified. That you. Bear much fruit.

[ 37 : 58 ] Because the whole chapter. He's been talking about. Abiding and bearing fruit. That you bear much fruit. And so prove. To be my disciples. So what do you think.

Asking there is. Talks about bearing fruit. Talks about. Okay. Now ask whatever you want. And then he picks up fruit again. So. He just threw that. Asking whatever you want.

In the middle of. Fruit bearing. But it can apply to anything. Not fruit bearing. Obviously. Even though he's talking about. Fruit bearing. He's talking about fruit bearing again. Right. This is what my friend.

Who came to me. In the. When I was setting up. Volleyball things. And I showed him. And he said. Okay. I got. I need another verse then. Yeah. You need. Yeah. You're not going to find it. Because God has reasons.

That he will give. What we ask. Because we're asking. What he wants. He's going to. Every time give. What he wants to give to us.

[ 38 : 56 ] Keep asking. Same. Same thing in John 16. Whatever you ask. Of the father. My name. He will give it to you. Until now. And now.

Look at this. Until now. You've asked for nothing in my name. You've never prayed to the father. In my name. Once I go. That's how you're going to pray. You're going to pray. In my name. I'm here. So you don't have to ask the father. You can ask me. But when I go to the father. Then you're going to ask. In my name. And when you come to the father.

I go. I know Jesus. Jesus is my friend. Father. Can I talk to you? Jesus. Jesus. He's going. Yeah. I know you. It's been a while.

Where have you been? No. What prayer does. Does he always answer? Somebody asked that. I asked that. Sunday school class.

[ 39 : 52 ] Where we're looking at the text. What prayers does God always answer? It's like. Well. He. In one way or another. He answers them all. Yes.

No. Maybe. Right. Yeah. Okay. Let me rephrase that. What prayer does he always grant? Ones that are in his will. Ones that desire what he desires.

Like doing what Jesus did. Like bearing fruit. Our sorrow and suffering turned to joy. So we overcome our guilty thoughts. First of all. By taking those guilty thoughts to God.

For cleansing and reassurance. There's a second reason. We can overcome our accusing thoughts. Because we are those who are keeping his commands.

And are abiding in his spirit. Essentially the reason we overcome. Is because he's given us his Holy Spirit. To dwell in us. But John connects.

[ 40 : 51 ] The Holy Spirit dwelling in us. To our keeping his commands. And our abiding in God. So those who are keeping his commands.

Are abiding in his spirit. I have five commentaries. That I used to dialogue with. After I've done my work. On Wednesday. So Tuesdays I do my work.

Pull out the flesh. Pull out the flesh. You know. Dig out the text. So then I got all my notes. And my thoughts. But I don't trust myself. So I want to read some other good thinkers.

Right. So I have five commentaries that I read. That are good thinkers. One of them. And I noticed the other day. None of them are Americans. I got a Scottish guy. I got a German guy.

I got an Aussie. Australian guy. And I got two Londoners. The German guy. Is Catholic. I wouldn't normally get a Catholic commentary.

[ 41 : 47 ] But the guy I really trust. For D.A. Carson. The guy I really trust. For good commentaries. Said it's worth it. He will make you think. You're not going to agree with everything.

But he will make you think. And he's a careful scholar. Oh he's Catholic. He's a careful scholar. Yeah that can happen. So. But he made this statement. About these verses. He said.

Listen carefully. He said. The fruit of obedience. Is fellowship with God. That sound right?

The fruit of obedience. Is fellowship with God. Are you sure it's right? He's revealing his Catholicism. That's Catholicism. So if I obey enough.

Then I have fellowship with God. Is that how it works? These verses sound like that though. Don't they? Isn't that kind of the natural way.

[ 42 : 44 ] To take these verses? We can understand why he had that conclusion. Right? He says. Right? We have whatever we ask. Because we keep his commandments. So it sounds like. If I keep his commandments.

He'll give me whatever I want. That's one way of looking at it. From human voice. And this is a commandment. That we believe in the name of Jesus. His son Jesus Christ. And love one another. Just as he commanded it. Verse 24. Whoever keeps his commandments. Abides in God. And God in him. And by this we know. That he abides in us. By the spirit he's given us. So in other words. I got to keep his commands.

Then I abide in him. And he abides in me. Is that true? Do I earn his pleasure? Does my obedience give me fellowship with God?

Or does it go the other way? Does my fellowship with him bring me into obedience? Oh, I like that channel better.

[ 43 : 44 ] And I think it's right. Right. I know it's not right. That me doing work. Earns me something with him.

I know that's not right. There's too many verses. That counter. Contradict that. So it must be. That. The one. Notice how he says it.

The one keeping his commands. Is the one abiding in his spirit. How do I keep his commands? By abiding in him. Jesus said.

You. You are the. I'm the vine. You're the branch. You bear much fruit. Apart from me. You can do nothing. Remember. Remember. I said I wasn't going to do it. But I'm doing it. Sorry. Abide. Right. I'm abiding in the brand.

In the vine. Because if I'm attached to the vine. Apart from him. I can do nothing. I can't bear any fruit. If I'm just a branch by myself. But if I'm attached to him. I'm drawing from him. I'm getting strength from him.

[ 44 : 41 ] He's producing through me. I'm just bearing. He's producing. Right. Same thing here. Whoever is keeping his commands.

Is the one who's abiding. Why is he keeping his commands? Because he's abiding. Because he's abiding. He doesn't say. If you keep his commands.

Then you will have fellowship. He doesn't say that. That's an errant. Conclusion. And it reflects his Catholicism.

Because his Catholicism believes. I'm saved. Not just by grace. Not faith alone. Not grace alone. I'm saved by grace plus works.

None of these solas say that. By the way. Do they? Do they? Because these solas were in a time. That corrected. And recovered the gospel. From works.

[ 45 : 38 ] I'm not saying all Catholics did that. At that time. Because Luther was a Catholic too. All those men of the Reformation were Catholics. They just started reading their Bibles.

Once Luther translated it into the language they could read. So we have confidence for three reasons.

I'm keeping his command. Notice it does not say that he answers my prayer because I have kept his command. As if I've perfectly done that.

But because I'm in the process. I am keeping. It's present tense. I am keeping. I'm working on it. I'm practicing. I'm doing the work. I'm working at it.

I'm far from perfect. I'm in process. I intend to do it. I desire to do it. I'm practicing it. I'm intentional about it. And so I have confident prayer that I will receive because I'm genuinely doing what pleases him.

[ 46 : 42 ] I'm working. So he says we're keeping his command. So then he's going to ask the question, which command? He says commands plural. There's lots of commands Jesus gives us.

But what does it all come down to? What is the command? Right? So in chapter two, he already mentioned that that old commandment, which is also the new commandment, is love one another. The old one is love your neighbor as yourself. The new one is love one another. And the new one also has a greater measure. Not the old one was love your neighbor as yourself. The new one is love one another as I loved you.

Higher bar. Higher bar. Much harder bar. But he surprises us.

So what's his command? Verse 23. This is his command. This is his commandment. Singular. This is it. This is it. Believe. Wait a minute.

[ 47 : 44 ] I thought it was love. Believe. This is his commandment that we believe in the name of his son, Jesus Christ. Oh, yeah. And love. Yeah. Love one another. Yeah, yeah, yeah. So in other words, the commandment has two parts.

It's believe in the name and love one another. That's it. Every other command Jesus gives, every other instruction flows from those. Remember, Paul said the whole law, the whole ten commandments were summed up in one word, right?

Love. If you love, you're not going to covet. You're not going to steal. You're not going to lie. You're not going to commit adultery. You're not going to kill your brother. Right? And if you're loving one

another, that shows that you already love God with all your heart, mind, and soul. Right? So you're not going to be having other gods before you, et cetera, et cetera. So under the new covenant, there's one command. Right? One new command. Love. Because if you love one another, you're going to fulfill everything else. But all the other commands kind of shoot off of that. So when I'm loving my brother, I'm also, right, sharing the gospel. [ 48 : 51 ] I'm, right, walking in the light. I'm doing all these other things that are a reflection of that. That's why the fruit of the Spirit starts with love. The fruit of the Spirit is love.

What comes out of love? Peace, gentleness, joy, patience, endurance. Oh, skip those. Gentleness kind. I like those. So even when we talk about the fruit of the Spirit, it starts with love. Everything else flows from that.

So believing in his name. So what does that mean? What's his name? What do we believe in the name? What do names mean?

Nowadays, we name people because we like, you know, oh, I like that name. So we name Zach. Is he still here somewhere? He's hiding. Oh, he's on the floor?

[ 49 : 53 ] Oh, he's downstairs. Oh, okay. I know he's got to keep moving. So we couldn't have kids. I had cancer, right? So we couldn't have kids. So we're praying for a child.

We want to have a child. We adopted. So we named our first child God has remembered. Zachariah. Right? We got a second child. We're like, I'm happy. So we named her Abigail, which means Daddy's Delight.

Delight of Abba. Abba. Abba. Gail. Delight of her. Names mean something. For me, my name, Bill, means, you know, my dad said, you know, you're named after, you know, when you were born, there was hospital bills, Dr. Bill.

You know, so we just call you Bill. Like, cool, Dad. Thanks. Later, I found out his best friend was Bill. So I thought, oh, okay. That's cool. So what does name mean?

So if I say, I have already mentioned two names. I mentioned Volkswagen or Rolls Royce. What do those names mean? What does Volkswagen represent? People's car. Huh? People's car. People's car. Just common regular.

[ 50 : 54 ] What's Rolls Royce represent? Rich people's car. Yeah. Yeah. All the bells and whistles and all the fruit. I got to, yeah, never mind. I want to tell you a story about Rolls Royce. Um, yeah, it means something.

So when God names things, so God named people. God named, right, Adam, mud, Eve, giver of life, right?

Everyone in the Bible got a name. So, so, uh, when, when, uh, Sarah finally had her first child, what did she call him?

Laughter. Ha! I'm going to have a child at 90? Yeah, right. So God says, okay, he's, he's going to be called laughter. Heel grabber?

Jacob? Abraham? Father of nations? Every name had significance. So Jesus is born. So Jesus is born. We read that this morning.

[ 51 : 56 ] Jesus is born. You shall call his name. What? No. They called him that. Yes. But first, he called Joseph.

You shall call his name. What, Joseph? Jesus. Why? Why Jesus? Why couldn't they call him Larry? That just doesn't sound right. He will save his people from their sins. Why? What is the word Jesus? What does the name Jesus mean? Yehoshua. Yesu.

Savior. Savior. Savior. God saves. Yehoshua. God saves.

Joshua. Right? Jesus. Names have meaning. So, so what, what do I believe about Jesus? Well, he, he's given three names here.

[ 52 : 51 ] Look at that. Verse 23. We believe in the name of his son. So he's the son of God. What does that mean? Son of God.

He's eternal. He's sovereign. He's, he, wow. He's Jesus. We just know that means Savior. And his name is Christ. What does Christ mean? Messiah.

King. He sits at the right. Psalm 110. He will sit at the right hand of the Father. And all power will be given to him. And he will be called the Son of God.

He's no mere man. So when I say, when we say we believe in the name, we believe the name is who he is. The name tells us who he is.

He has many names, doesn't he? One name doesn't tell at all. The Father has many names. Jesus. So we're believing in, so the one I trust in, the one I'm believing in is the Son of God, the sovereign God.

[ 53 : 58 ] He's eternal. That's why John said, he started this letter. What was from the beginning, what was revealed and manifested, made visible so we could see him and touch him and hear him and talk to him.

He's the eternal life. And this is what it's all about. We believe in Jesus. And this is really important for John because he's going to talk about, do we believe Jesus or do we deny Jesus?

Right? The ones who believe Jesus are of the Spirit of God. The ones who deny Jesus are of the Antichrist. Right? We saw that last time. I'm going to see it again.

So he's my Savior. He's the one who helps me. He's my King. That's why I love to say, my King is on his throne. The world's falling apart, but my King is on his throne.

I'm good. Yeah, that might not be good. Fair to middle him, but big picture, I'm fine. I trust him.

[ 54 : 56 ] He knows what he's doing. He's putting one enemy under his feet after another. He will do what he will do, what is best. He will save the ones I'm praying for when he has determined that's the time.

Because I'm going to keep praying because I think it's in his will. I think it's in his will. Because he's put it on my heart.

I don't think the devil put it on my heart. Pray for certain people. No. Whatever you ask for. I believe that.

So then he says, how is it possible? How is it possible to keep his commands that I'm believing in his name? It's because I'm living in his spirit. Verse 24. Whoever is keeping process, whoever is keeping his commandments, is abiding in God.

That's why he's abiding in God. And God is abiding in him. And by this we know that he abides in us by the spirit whom he has given us.

[ 56 : 07 ] So here's another test. How do I know? I know why I keep his commandments. Because he's in me. And how do I know that it's him in me?

Because he's given me his spirit. Now, next chapter he's going to say, how do I know it's the right spirit? Right? So chapter 4.1 he's going to say, okay, I said spirit.

Don't believe every spirit. Some of you are listening to certain spirits that aren't true. Spirit. Okay? And we're going to talk about how you tell the difference. But if it's his spirit, we know.

So he says, so I've always talked about abiding with that, you know, vine and the branches thing.

Here's another picture of what this word abide means. It means to dwell. To live. It's where I reside. Where I make my home. So I want you to think about abiding in him like living in a home. So where do we live? Okay, I live in Palmer Lake.

[ 57 : 08 ] I live over on 84 High Street. And when I get home. So think about this. When you get home. What does home mean to you? You know? Getting home where you dwell. You've had a long day.

You've had a long week. Maybe you've been away for a long time. You get home. What does home mean? Sanctuary. What? Comfort. Comfort.

Rest. Oh, I can be myself. Oh. I mean really myself. Get out the ice cream.

No, okay. Isn't that home? Home is. Oh. I can let it down. I made it.

In the door. Right? I find my strength. I'm safe. I'm safe. I can decompress.

[ 58 : 08 ] I can recharge. So when I dwell in the Spirit. And the Spirit dwells in me. I do the same thing.

I'm at home. I'm at home. With my relationship with God. Because that's where I can be safe. That's where I can find rest. That's where I can decompress.

That's where I can really be myself. I mean I can just say what I really think. Because in public.

It's probably not always wise to say everything you think. Right? But with God. I can do that. I mean I can tell him all my condemning thoughts. I can tell him.

Oh. All that. And it's not going to surprise him. I'm not going to see him go. Oh man. He's going to go. Yeah, I know. I know. Before a word was on your tongue. I knew. I know. I know you.

[ 59 : 05 ] I know you boy. Right? That's. So do you abide like that? There was a booklet written some time ago. By Robert Metzger.

Called My Heart, Christ's Home. Have you ever seen that? It's a wonderful little booklet. It's taken from Ephesians 3.17. Where it says that Christ settles down into our hearts.

And so he took that image of a home. My heart. Making my heart a home. And in my heart there's all these different rooms. Right? I got the living room. I got the den. You know, in the den every morning we meet.

We meet. Me and Jesus meet. You know, we're talking over the day and stuff. And right? And all these different rooms. Right? But then one day, you know, he tells a story about these different rooms.

And one day he says, you know, the Lord says, hey, what's behind that door over there? Oh, Jesus, you don't, you don't. That's just my stuff. What's in there? You really don't want to see that.

[ 60 : 05 ] I want to see that closet. That's. Right? That's where I keep my junk. Because I'm letting him dwell in my house, but I'm keeping a closet over here for me.

Or maybe I got a whole side of the house, you know. I got my man cave over here. Jesus isn't really into that. And I don't know. Ever think about that?

How does God dwell? Does he make his home? And do you make your home in him? That's this dwelling. When I'm making my home in him, when I'm safe with him, that's how I keep his commandments.

That's what moves me. That's what empowers me. So how can we live in the spirit? Let me just read one more passage. Romans 8 talks about the spirit dwelling.

In fact, he says it several times. How is it that when we dwell with the spirit, we please the father? So Paul says in Romans 8, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

[ 61 : 19 ] You, however, Christians, you, however, are not in the flesh, but in the spirit. If, in fact, the spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the spirit of Christ does not belong to him.

But if Christ is in you, in other words, the spirit is in you. Although the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness. If the spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Jesus Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through the spirit who dwells in you.

In other words, you will rise too. Same spirit that raised Jesus will raise you. Same spirit that raised Jesus is dwelling in you. So then, brothers, we are debtors.

We have an obligation. We have a debt to God. Not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh, you'll die.

But if by the spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the spirit of God are sons of God.

[ 62 : 32 ] For you did not receive a spirit of slavery. That's a different kind of spirit. You did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear. But you have received the spirit of adoption as sons.

By whom we cry, Abba, Father. Daddy, Father. The spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.

He confirms it to us. And if children, then heirs. Heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer.

Oh, that had to add that little, you know, provided we suffer. Remember, suffer now, glory later.

Well, the riches later, glory. Riches later, suffer now. Provided we suffer.

Because that's what sons of God do. They suffer. In this world. Just like their master. So how are we able to please God? Not in our own flesh.

[ 63 : 34 ] But we're able to please him because the spirit dwells in us. We walk by the spirit. We're led by the spirit. In fact, he says, we even kill the deeds of our flesh. You know, the spirit's all about killing.

Not all about killing. You know, the spirit has a killing side. Does that sound weird? That's what he said, right? If by the spirit you're put to death.

You're killing stuff. If you kill the deeds of the flesh. I kill my lust. I kill my anger. I kill my coveting. I kill my escapism. Whatever.

By the spirit. He helps me do that. He shows me how to do that. He shows me how to suffocate it. He shows me how to take, where does it get its life?

Where does it begin? Where's the trigger point of that thing? He helps me track that down. Cut it off. Right? Like Jesus said, cut off whatever is causing you to sin.

[ 64 : 32 ] The Holy Spirit is the one who teaches you how to do that. Of course, you've got to ask. Because he's showing you, but unless you're asking, you're probably not seeing it. Does his father expect perfection?

No. He desires us to keep asking. He desires us to keep walking with him. Keep desiring, trusting. He'll take care of our perfection. Right?

He will perfect us. We continue to practice with him. Those who are keeping his commands are those dwelling with his spirit.

When our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our thoughts. Let's pray. Father, I feel like it was a lot, a lot, a lot today.

A lot to digest. And so, cause what has been said, what has been read, what has connected, cause that to stick in our hearts and minds.

[ 65 : 43 ] Help us, help us at least, Father, get the big picture. That when our hearts do condemn us and accuse us, which if we listen to our heart, it will.

Help us to take that to you. Help us to not be afraid to take it to you. Help us not to hide. Help us not to listen.

But to take it to you so we can listen to you. And teach us how to pray. Teach us how to pray like Jesus prayed.

This we ask in Christ's name. Amen. Amen. Amen.