

Making God a Liar?

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[0 : 00] does not have the Son of God does not have this life. I'm adding the this because John has this.

And yeah, okay. I realize that the modern translations don't have all the words. Let us pray. Father, we ask you today that you would show us this testimony.

We keep hearing the word testimony through this text. The testimony of the Spirit, the testimony of water, the testimony of blood, the testimony of God Himself, the testimony of men.

Father, help us to hear the greater testimony, the testimony of God, the testimony of the Spirit. That verifies that Jesus is the very Son of God, not a Son of God, not became Son of God, but has, been, and ever will be the Son of God.

Help us to see what John is doing that we might bolster our faith, that we might be encouraged, and help us to hear what kind of thinking it is that makes God a liar.

[1 : 24] may that impress upon us today. We pray in Christ's name. Amen. Please be seated. So, so do you remember when Jesus went up on the mountain?

He's retreating with His disciples, and they go up on a high mountain, and so they're getting away from the crowds, and Jesus asks His disciples, who do people say that I am? What are the people saying?

Who do people believe that I am? And the disciples answer, well, some say that you're Elijah, that Elijah's come back. Some say that you're John the Baptist, resurrected. Some say you're one of the prophets.

So that's what people are saying. And then Jesus says, well, how about you? Who do you say that I am? And Peter says, oh, you are the Christ, comma, the Son of God.

Because the Jew believed the Messiah, the true Jew believed the Messiah was not a son of man, but was a son of God, who sat at the right hand of the Father in heaven.

[2 : 43] So, that's what Jesus says. I ask today, who, who, who is the world today?

Who does, who do, who does the people today say that Jesus is? He's a prophet. Yeah. Who, who is Jesus to the, to the world?

I mean, I realize a lot of the world don't even know him other than as a swear word. right? They don't know Jesus. They've not read the New Testament.

I'm surprised at how many have an opinion about Jesus and they've never read the Gospels. so, yeah, the, the, the, the, the, the common consideration of many people and many religions is that Jesus was a prophet.

Many religions accept Jesus as one of the prophets, a great teacher, an example of love and good deeds. So, it was the same in the first century.

[3 : 53] That's what a lot of people, that's what the disciples were responding to Jesus. Yeah, a lot of people say you're a prophet, you know, you're, you're quite a prophet, you know, you're, you're maybe like Elijah come back or, or John the Baptist.

So, the same thing happened in the first century as today. There was a man at the end of the first century by the name of Serinthus and he was most likely one of the people that John is combating in this letter when he talks about in chapter four, don't believe every spirit, don't believe the spirits and how do you test the spirits?

You test the spirit by saying, you know, what do they say? What is the spirit of the false prophet say? What is the false teacher saying? Or what is any teacher saying? Do they confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh?

And so, that was John's test in chapter four. Do they say that Jesus came in the flesh? Because Serinthus and other people like him in that day were saying that, that Jesus was a prophet, Jesus

was a great man, but he wasn't the son of God.

He, he was, in fact, Serinthus said that at Jesus' baptism, that's when the dove came, that's when the Holy Spirit came, that's when he became the Christ, but then that spirit left him before the cross.

[5 : 10] Because the son of God, yeah, he's, he's, you know, he can't be born, of course, so he had to come up later. And then the son of God certainly can't die, so he leaves before the cross. So, so that was a popular, and that's part of what John is, is combating.

That's why he talks about the test. Do they say Jesus came in the flesh? Or are they saying, no, you know, he's just a spirit, just, you know, Jesus is just special. And John is combating the fact that, that everything he believes, in fact, Christianity, stands or falls on who Jesus is.

If Jesus were merely a prophet and a good man and all that, what the world believes, then Christianity is merely another religion. And it's bigger than that.

So, so who is Jesus? So we, we believe that Jesus is the unique son of God.

John believed that. The apostles believed that. All the eyewitnesses believed that. The scriptures teach that. But there, as I showed you a few months ago, that, you know, the survey of what people, what evangelicals believe today, you know, not that many evangelicals who say they trust the Bible, not that many evangelicals believe Jesus is the son of God.

[6 : 36] The majority, I think, but not all, which we have fallen off greatly just in the last 20 years, I think, if I remember the data of the survey. So, who is Jesus?

And if we believe Jesus is the unique son of God, are we simply hanging our hopes on something that's unverifiable, that's just an opinion? Because the world will say, that's your opinion.

I don't believe that. I believe something else. But we Christians say, no, no, I know. How do you know? How do you say?

What testimony do you give? John is saying, he is declaring that God has given a great witness to the fact that Jesus is the son of God. and he's done that in different ways and today, we're going to talk about two of them.

These testimonies verify, authenticate Jesus as the son of God. Now, people can dismiss that but John is saying, if you dismiss it, you're making God a liar because God himself has said this.

[7 : 45] So, if you disbelieve, you're making God a liar. So, unbelief isn't just, oh, I don't believe that. John's saying, no, and it's much stronger than that. You're making God a liar.

Okay, I don't mind making Joe a liar. I don't want to make God a liar because that probably has consequences. That's where John's going.

What is at stake? This is no trivial, trivial, trivial issue. What is at stake in Jesus' identity? If Jesus is just a prophet, if he's not truly the unique son of God from eternity to eternity, if he is merely a man, a great man, but just a man, then he cannot save sinners.

He can, there is no forgiveness of sin. If he himself is not holy, if he is not without sin and died without sin as a perfect sacrifice, if he did not keep the law perfectly and then, therefore, be the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, if he was not the Son of God, he could not be holy.

If he was not the Son of God, he could not be without sin. If he was not the Son of God, he could not perfectly keep the law. So if he was merely a man, then his death was just a death.

[9 : 07] It did not accomplish anything. It did not bear our sins. it did not. As Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15, same thing goes for resurrection.

If Jesus didn't raise from the dead, then we're dead in our sins. Because if Jesus didn't raise from the dead, then he was just a man. And men die. They get held in the grave.

But the Son of God is not held by the grave. the Son of God cannot be held in the grave because he's ever living. So, this is why this is important.

This is no side issue. This is not about theological bullyism. This is the bare heart of the gospel, the bare heart of Christianity.

Christianity. If you don't believe Jesus is the Son of God, frankly, you're not a Christian. You are not a Christian. You are some other form. That he is the Son of God is the whole foundation of our salvation, our forgiveness.

[10 : 20] And to deny that is to make God a liar. Make no mistake, as we read through 1 John, John clearly says, the only way you have the Father is by having the Son and the only way you have the Son is by having the Father.

You can't have one or the other. Or you can't say, I just want to be, I just like the Father, I don't accept the Son. He says, that don't work because the Father sent the Son and the Father takes it personally if you don't accept His Son.

And Jesus, in fact, said the same thing. And you can't just have Jesus and not anything else because it comes as a whole package. Anyway, so how do we know?

So here's the question we want to face today. How do we know who Jesus really is? Is there significant historical witness to Jesus as the Son of God besides all the eyewitnesses, all the miracles that He did, besides the testimony of Scripture and the fulfillment of all the prophecies that He fulfilled?

Besides those? Besides those? Is there significant? They would say, eyewitnesses are pretty significant. There's hundreds of them.

[11 : 33] Miracles, you know, and the fulfillment of Old Testament, that's pretty weighty. John's saying there's something greater than that. There's the testimony of the Spirit and the Father Himself who bore witness to Jesus.

So, who testifies that Jesus is the Son of God? God has given pivotal authentication to Jesus as the Son of God. There are two greater testimonies. In verses 6 through 9 here, He will talk about the Spirit is the one testifying and He testifies through two historical events or experiences in Jesus' life, water and blood.

The Spirit is testifying to that by means of water and blood to the fact that He is the Son of God because those events declared Him Son of God.

Secondly, in verses 10 through 12, it's Father Himself. God is testifying. And that testimony is pivotal.

If you believe it, you're safe. If you do not believe it, you are making God a liar. that simple. According to John.

[12 : 54] This is how John said it. So, let's look at the first testimony we see in verses 6 through 9. The Spirit testifies, He says, in the end of verse 6, verse 6, this is He who came by water and blood.

Who? Jesus Christ. He is the one. And remember, verse 5, He had just said, we are believing that Jesus is the Son of God. So, He's talking about Jesus the Son of God.

This is He. The Son of God is He who came by water and blood. Jesus Christ. Not by water only, like Serenthus says, but by water and the blood. And these, and the Spirit is the one who testifies. The Spirit is the one testifying because the Spirit is the truth. And then He adds, for there are three that testify, the Spirit and the water and the blood and these three agree.

Right? So, if we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater. So, eyewitness testimony is wonderful. God's testimony is the last word.

[14 : 01] It's the final word. The only word. Right? So, for this is the testimony of God that He is born concerning His Son.

God's testimony is specifically about His Son and that His Son is God. He is unique, one and only, Son. Okay?

So, the one verifying, first of all, so we'll look at these three witnesses. He talks about the Spirit and the water and the blood. Okay? And obviously, it's the Spirit directing all of this.

He's the primary witness and He uses both water. He brings testimony through water somehow and through blood somehow. So, as we read that, we're kind of unfamiliar with those words.

What's, you know, way back when I was on vacation this summer and I was kind of reading through 1 John every day, I'd come to this pastor and go, what?

[15 : 03] That's the water and the blood. Okay, the blood, what's the water? And there's lots of ideas about what the water can refer to. It can refer to His birth. It can refer to His baptism.

It can refer to our baptism. It can refer to the Word of God. It can refer to a lot of things. Water is symbolic for many things in the Scriptures. The blood, okay, well that's got to be death, right? But is it His death or our death? Is it communion? No, sorry, that's the bread, the cup. The cup is the blood, right? Is it that?

Is that, when we do communion, are we, is that God's testimony right there? Does that prove that He's, Jesus is the Son of God? Well, we take this, it proves we believe that.

But does it prove that Jesus is the Son of God? So, that's what we're looking at, okay? So the Spirit, He's the witness that Jesus is the Son. 1 Timothy 3, Paul wrote to Timothy, said, Jesus was vindicated by the Spirit.

[16:06] He was justified as who He was. It was the Spirit who testified, vindicated Jesus. Jesus Himself in the upper room said in John 15, 26, that He will send the Spirit to them.

After He leaves, after He dies, He will give the Spirit to them. another helper, a paraclete, who is just like Him, someone just like Him, He will give to them.

In fact, He said, it's to your advantage that I go away, because if I don't go away, I can't send the Holy Spirit to you. But if I go away, then I can send the Holy Spirit to you. I leave, but I'm not going to leave you as orphans, because I'm going to send the Holy Spirit who will be with you and in you and support you forever.

And what will that Holy Spirit do? He will, in John 15, He said, the Spirit of truth will bear witness to you about me. When I send Him to you, He will confirm within your heart a subjective inner testimony, right, that only I have, but it is one that says, yes, when I read this, I know, yes, Jesus is the Christ.

He powerfully testifies to us. Jesus is Christ. Now, somebody could say that's just subjective. Got it. But God doesn't just testify one way.

[17:24] He gives outer testimonies as well. So how does He verify the truth? How does the Spirit do this? Not only inwardly to us, but how did He do it? Well, John says, through two other witnesses, through two other testimonies.

Not by water and blood. not by water only, but by water and the blood. So what's the water and the blood?

As I said, there are different perspectives. The water. One of the views, one of the popular views, it was the view of Luther and Calvin and still the view of many people today, a number of Catholics especially, have this view that the water refers to our baptism.

That when we're baptized, we are publicly testifying, right? And the testimony, we are believing that Jesus is Christ. Okay? We are, but our testimony is in the present.

We're talking about something Jesus went through in the past. Notice verse 6. Right? He says, this is He, talking about Jesus, the Son of God, this is He who came. He who came by water and blood.

[18:41] Not by water only, but by water and the blood. So He's not talking about how I came, He's talking about how Jesus came. How did Jesus come into the world? How did Jesus start His mission in the world?

So one viable interpretation is that the water may refer to His birth. And that's very viable because at His birth, right, and John already in chapter 40 made a big point of that.

He took on flesh. Right? And the virgin birth, the Scriptures go out of their way to teach the virgin birth because the virgin birth is essential if He is truly God taking on flesh and not becoming impure by sin.

So He does not take any, He does not get any of His physical form from His Father, from Joseph. He gets it all through Mary, right?

And Mary was told the Holy Spirit shall what? Overshadow you, protect you, so that this child will be what? Holy.

[19:46] Holy. Pure. Uncontaminated. God, the Son, will become flesh, right?

and He won't be contaminated by our sin nature. He will essentially be like Adam was before sin. So that's one view.

The other view is that it's His water baptism. That when He came to John the Baptist, because that is water baptism, right after that is when He began His mission. Right? Because right after He's baptized, right, the Spirit comes down and a dove and then Matthew says that, or is it Luke, one of the Gospels says that He's immediately after His baptism driven into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil for 40 days, right?

That's His testing ground. That's His proving ground before He begins His mission. Because after that, that's when He began to preach and teach and gather disciples. So which is it?

I'm okay with either. No, I'm not. No, I'm going to pick the baptism. No, I'm worse okay. No, I don't know. Does it really matter?

[20:59] It has, whatever it is, it has to be something Jesus went through, not we went through. It's how He came. So did He come through a miraculous virgin birth?

Yes. Did that miraculous virgin birth testify that He's the Son of God? Yes, because the angels started filling the sky, right? And the angel told Mary herself, this is a holy child.

He shall be called the one, the Messiah, right? He shall sit on the throne of His father, David, forever. So He's not a temporary guy, right?

So that was testified. I also think His baptism was a clear testimony that Jesus is the Son of God. Listen to this. Matthew 3, 13 and 17.

then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John to be baptized by Him. John would have prevented Him saying, I need to be baptized by you because John already had told people there's somebody coming after me of whom I'm not even worthy to untie their sandal.

[22 : 09] He's higher than me. So John already knew that. He didn't know it was Jesus yet, even though they're cousins. This is weird. He didn't know until the moment of the baptism because the Father told him, the Father told John the Baptist before Jesus was baptized that you're going to baptize somebody and I'm going to send the Spirit like it does so that when you see that, you'll know.

That's Him. So Jesus comes to John. John says, I need to be baptized by you. And do you come to me? I'm not worthy.

Jesus answered him, let it be for this is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness. Then John consented. And when Jesus was baptized, immediately He went up from the water and behold, the heavens were opened to Him and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on Him.

Wait a minute, who's Him? Okay, back up. So He, John, consented and when Jesus was baptized, immediately He went up from the water.

So when I first read this, I thought it's Jesus who's coming up from the water. Jesus who beholds the heavens open. Jesus who saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on Him.

[23 : 38] No, it didn't say on Himself. It says on Him. He's talking about a different Him. So who's the witness? John. Yeah, reading it carefully, it's John the Baptist who's the witness because it was what he was told before.

So when John came up from the water with Jesus, because when he baptized, he goes down, you know, everybody gets wet and we come back up, right? If he's poor, okay, I won't go there.

I won't talk about, I won't be Baptist today. Yeah, we won't go there. That doesn't matter. When he, John, came up from the water, in other words, with Jesus, and behold, the heavens were open to him, to John.

And he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on Him, Jesus. Jesus. Okay.

So that fulfills what he was told before that that's Him. This is Jesus, cousin Jesus. He's the guy. And behold, and then, okay, here's the testimony.

[24 : 50] Not just the Spirit coming, but now a voice from heaven that says, what? This is my beloved Son in whom I am and always have been pleased.

There's confirmation. There is the greater witness. Greater witness than John himself. John can say, yeah, I saw this, I heard this, you know, I'm the eyewitness.

But John heard a greater witness than his own, a voice from heaven that said, this is my Son. Remember when that voice spoke at another time?

Up on the mountain again? Right? Transfiguration, James, John, and so this John got to hear that one. This John probably heard this one too because he was a follower of John the Baptist.

He was a disciple of John the Baptist. So he was probably there. But anyway. So the Father bears witness to the identity of Jesus and sends his spirit to confirm that.

[25 : 56] So what's the blood then? The water, the blood. There's no doubt that the blood refers to Jesus' death. And again, to his death, not to our taking the cup. Because our taking the cup is a testimony.

Yes. It is our saying, this is the new covenant. Right? Jesus said, this is the new covenant in my blood. My blood. And so when we take it, we're doing it in remembrance of what he did.

What he did was much more important than what we do. We're identifying to him. So we are giving testimony, but testimony back to the original testimony.

That he is the son of God. So how does blood do it? Just the fact that Jesus died, does that prove him to be the son of God? No, because we all die. That doesn't prove us to be the son of God.

So how does this death do that? This historical, so, so, how does it point back? Well, John has a reference in the Gospel of John 19, 34 and 35, talks about when Jesus died, right, on the cross, and that the soldier came up to him and took a spear and did what?

[27 : 15] Piercing. Pierced his side, right, and what happened? Blood and water poured out. So a lot of people, including Augustine way back in the 4th century, said that, that's what John's talking about.

It's like, yeah, that makes sense, blood and water. Except the way John talks about it is he talks about three separate testimonies, the spirit and the water and the blood. So, but, yeah, but still, you got water and blood and it's death.

But I think it's even greater than that because here's what Matthew says about when Jesus died. And by the way, John's baptism, Jesus' baptism was the beginning of his ministry.

His death on the cross was what? What did he say on the cross? It is finished. It's done. It's accomplished. It's the fulfillment of his ministry.

Okay? Officially. So, here's what Matthew records about Jesus' death. Matthew 27, 50. Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit.

[28 : 21] That's his, that's his, that's it. And behold. Oh, I'm glad this translation has behold in it. Matthew uses behold a lot because it's his way of going, look, look, look, look, look, look, look.

Don't miss this. Behold. We read behold and go, that's really archaic language. But it's Matthew's way of saying, look, because something shocking just happened.

Behold. What? The curtain of the temple was torn in two. The curtain of the temple was torn in two. Curtain was super thick.

I don't know you read about it in the Old Testament. Weaved. And which way? From bottom to top or top to bottom? Where'd the rip start? Top.

It's high. 15 cubits high. Is it 15? I forget. But it's high. I mean, I'm not sure Shaq could reach the top.

[29 : 23] Right? From top to bottom. And, and, that's not all. And the earth shook. And the rocks split. And, oh, ooh, did you see this one?

The tombs. What? Okay, now I've seen earthquakes. We've lived through earthquakes. Okay, that doesn't make it a miracle. Rock splitting, that's pretty cool.

Curtain splitting, yeah, okay, that's really unusual. But the tombs, the tombs were opened. And many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. That had to make an impact.

Lazarus, what are you doing here, man? We just buried, yeah. Well, probably not, you know, be like a whole bunch of Lazarus walking around. They're, you know, all, I don't know.

They were raised and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection. So they don't take the spotlight when he dies. They wait till after he's raised and then they're raised.

[30 : 30] Because, remember, he's the first. He's always the first. He's the first resurrection. But that's, that's just weird. And coming out of the tombs, they went into the Holy City and appeared to many.

So it's verifiable. And then, well, just one more, one more. Then the centurion. He's the guy on, in charge of all the soldiers at the cross.

Centurion and those who were with him, keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place. I'm sure they didn't see the veil torn because they're not there, but they saw other things.

They were filled with awe and said, what? These are not people that had followed him. These are not people that heard everything that he said.

These are not people that saw his miracles. Centurion. Objective witness. Not biased in any way. Well, biased toward inflicting pain.

[31 : 36] He was good at that. Very good at that. said, truly. They didn't just say this is the son of God, it's truly.

Fact. This is the son of God. Because, did you see what happened? And then he didn't even know about the resurrection, the tombs opening and the resurrection until three days later, right?

Because Jesus died on Thursday, right? If we read our Bible, right? If we read Jonah, he died on Thursday. Three days and three nights. And he rose on the Lord's day, the first day.

So three days later, then all these other bodies are appearing. So God's testimony to his son begins at his baptism and possibly, well, not possibly, but definitely at his birth and his baptism and all

through his life by eyewitnesses and miracles.

And then his death was the fulfillment of his mission and he's testified as a son there. Do you accept that testimony? That's why I wasn't there.

[33 : 00] You say it's authentic witness. It is an authentic witness. God speaks from heaven. People around hear that and see that and authenticate it.

But I can't verify it. No, I can't go back 2,000 years and verify that. So how do I know? How do we know? That's true. Well, there's another testimony. See, the Father testifies.

The Father testifies of the Son and that governs our eternity. That's why John talks about it as either you believe him or you make him a liar.

It's not just that do you believe in this concept? Do you believe that religion? Do you follow that idea? He is saying God himself proclaimed this testimony and you have one choice.

You embrace it. You believe it because you know it's true or you deny it. which means I say God's lying.

[34 : 08] And I say Now smart people will get out of that and they'll say I don't say that. I don't even believe in a God. What does God say about that?

Yeah, you do. You're just pushing the truth. That's what Paul says in Romans 1. You're just suppressing the truth. God has made himself quite evident to you both outwardly and inwardly. You know. Do I push that down? Yeah. And smart guys push it down really creatively and talk about other things. Let's not talk about creation because you know we can't prove that.

No, it's just everywhere. Yeah, that just developed like that. Yeah, right. Sorry.

I'll let Zach take that. That one. You got to do one on that one. And throw in the astrophysicist stuff because I love that stuff.

[35 : 11] And the math one. That's good. Because evolution just can't explain math. Because it didn't evolve. If everything evolved how did we get math? Well, we turned it into new math.

So that one plus three is whatever you want it to be. like God said we lose all reason and we become foolish. So, okay.

So the Father's testimony of the Son governs our eternity. His testimony. So how do we have his testimony today? I was not there to hear when Jesus was baptizing. I did not hear that voice.

I read about that voice. I did not hear that voice myself. This is my Son. I was not there at the cross. John was. I wasn't there to hear the centurion say that and to see the things that went on.

I did not have the opportunity to go into the temple although I went to where the temple used to stand. I went into the Dome of the Rock and I did see where the ark says another story. So it's a real physical place.

[36 : 15] It's verifiable. And hair starts standing up on the back of your neck when you're in there. You can't go in there right now though, right? You can't go in the Dome of the Rock right now. So how do I know?

Right? How do I know? It's just people's opinion. How do I know? Well, so God said that in historical places but He still speaks today.

He still speaks today. How does He speak? How does He speak to us? How does faith come?

Where does our faith come from? Does it come from just my opinion or I get enough, accumulate enough evidence and say, okay, okay, okay, I believe.

Where does faith come from? Faith comes from hearing. Hearing what? Specifically, the Word of Christ.

Romans 10, 17, faith comes from hearing, hearing from the Word about Christ.

[37 : 27] When we hear the Gospel, when we hear God's Word, living Word, right, James just read, we're born again. How? by the living and abiding Word of God. When this Word is spoken and the Holy Spirit gives it power, that's how I'm born again.

I thought I chose to do that. Well, you do, but you've got to be living before you can make a choice. You have to be born of the Spirit before you can...

We talked about that back in 5.1, right? Right? So, believing. So, he talks about two responses, either believing or unbelieving.

Right? Verse 10, you're either believing the testimony of God or you're not believing the testimony of God and calling Him a liar. So, believing. I want you to know that...

Let me give you the translation. Whoever believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself.

Actually, the correct translation is whoever believes into the Son of God has this testimony himself.

[38 : 39] Why didn't they put into? Because it's really awkward. They don't, you know. John actually says you believe into Him. What does that mean? In fact, Jesus used that phrase a lot.

I am the bread of life. Whoever believes into me. Not just in me. There's another word John could use for that and he does in other places. But here he uses into. Going into.

It's a preposition that means direction. My faith goes a certain direction. It's not just my faith in a concept. It's my faith that goes in a direction. It goes into the Son.

I direct myself into Him. And what that shows is that I'm not just persuaded. So belief is not just being persuaded, not just being convinced, not even having the faith that the demons have that they're absolutely certain who He is.

But that doesn't help them. But that it's a faith that it's not just this mental thing. It's a direction. It's an action. It's leaning into Him.

[39 : 43] Remember how Proverbs says trust in the Lord with all your heart and what? Lean not on your own understanding. Which is interesting because Hebrew is interesting because it gives us a concrete picture of what trust is.

Trust is about leaning. I'm leaning. I don't lean on me. I lean on God. Right?

I'm leaning into Jesus. Which means to do that, what I thought is that means I distrust myself and I trust Him. See, because faith in that sense becomes even repentance.

Because I'm turning from leaning on me to leaning on Him. It's faith into Him. believing into Him. And it's continual. It's present tense.

It's I keep leaning into Him. Which makes sense because Jesus talks about abiding in Him, right? Dwelling in Him. We bear fruit, right? How? How? How? Abiding in the branch.

[40 : 43] Branch in the vine, right? Apart from the... Yeah, right? I'm leaning into Him. I got another... I got another... thing. Cool. It's a surrender.

So do you see faith that way? There's lots of people that believed in Jesus and the Scriptures but they didn't trust in Him.

They didn't commit to Him. They didn't lean into Him. They just like, oh, yeah. Clearly He did that miracle. Yeah. I believe it. I think He's the one.

And then He starts confronting you and going, no, He's not the one. I don't like the way He talked to me. He called me a liar. John 8. Read John 8.

John 8 is Jesus' discussion with the Jews who believed Him. By the end, He's calling them of the devil. I don't think they liked Him after that.

[41 : 50] And then unbelieving. So believing or unbelieving. What's unbelieving? And this is where John goes somewhere different, it seems like.

It's because he who has not... Oh, oh. Whoever does not believe God. So it's interesting. So the first one is whoever believes into the Son of God has the testimony.

Whoever does not believe God. It doesn't say whoever does not believe Jesus is the Son of God.

He says, whoever does not believe God. Because if you don't believe Jesus is the Son of God, you don't believe God.

Whoever does not believe God has made Him a liar. Because he has not believed in the testimony that God has born concerning His Son.

God the Father has said, this is my Son. I don't believe that. Well, it's not that simple. You're actually calling God a liar. It's not that you don't believe a concept.

[42 : 51] It's that you don't believe God. What God has said. Wow. In other words, you're not just denying the idea. You are willfully rejecting God.

You are refusing and denying His testimony and therefore making Him a liar. Deaths. Deaths. Wow. Now, I don't know if I'd put that into my evangelism, you know, where I go, okay, if you don't believe me, you're a liar. You're making God a liar. I don't think I'd start there. Right? John's talking about people who think they're Christians.

He's not talking about people that don't, that are kind of on the edge. He's talking about people that are saying they're Christians, but he's already called them liars before because these are the same people in chapter one where he said if you say you have not sinned, you're a liar.

Right? If you say that you've never sinned, you're making God a liar. So, so he's already done that.

He's talking about people that are saying, oh, we're believers and we're just fine. Oh, I never sinned. I've never sinned because they have this warped view of belief in humanity.

[44 : 02] There's people that talk like that today, talk that they don't sin. Okay. They just point them to John 1.

Liar, liar, pancifier. It's just absurd. You're making God a liar. And what's the consequence of that? Verse 11. And this is the testimony that God has given us eternal life and this life, this eternal life is in His Son. Whoever has the Son has this life.

Take a little pencil and point an arrow between has and life and say there's a the there, there's a this. Because John is being specific. He's not talking about just having life in general.

He's talking about a particular kind of life, an eternal life, a life that is in His Son. This particular life is in His Son. Whoever has the Son has this particular life.

[45 : 03] Whoever does not have the Son does not have this particular life, this eternal life. So to the believer, it's a gift. God has given this eternal life.

It's found only in His Son, right? This is, this is like, this life is in His Son. If you have the Son, you have the life. If you don't have the Son, you don't have the life. So there's no other way to eternal life but through Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Jesus Himself said, right? I'm the way, the truth, and the life. I'm the way. What does that mean?

Well, no one comes to the Father except through me. Oh, you don't know.

How do people today think about that? Oh, that's, that's, that's bigoted. That's, how can you claim that?

Well, I didn't. Jesus did. Talk to Him about it. By the way, one day you will. One day you will. And by the way, if you've heard about Him, then you know in your spirit deep down that He is who He is.

[46 : 05] You know, you know that. And if you say, I just don't believe that, you're calling God a liar. This is very pointed, isn't it?

I mean, John doesn't beat around the bush. Well, I guess He's old, you know, He doesn't want to, you know, He's good. Just get to the point, boy. Right? So this eternal life is only found in His Son. He talked about that at the beginning of this letter. John, in 1 John 1, verses 1 and 2, He talked about what was from the beginning. What was with the Father? What is the word of life?

The word that is eternal. This is the one who the Father sent. This is the one that we've touched and handled and spoken with and we've heard Him. This is what we preach to you.

Right? He's already talked about the Son as the eternal one. Right? He described eternal life back in chapter 3, 14. He says, this is life. You've passed out of death into life because you've clung to and received and accepted this idea not idea, sorry, fact that Jesus died, that He gave up His own life for you out of love.

[47 : 26] So the moment I'm converted, I actually experience a passing out of some form of death into a certain new form of life.

I begin to experience something different, new. And we can attest to that and that's what John's talking about in this whole book. We're changed. I start walking in the light.

I start owning up to who I am and all my warts and everything. I walk in the light so God can cleanse me. I don't hide in the dark where I'm just deceiving myself.

Right? I start to love others. Wow. In an unselfish way. Right? That's not about me. It's about them.

I start to love that because I don't love like that naturally.

I love because people love me. Right? I love because I might get something. I love if they do that. Right?

[48 : 22] This is a different kind. And then there's the confessing the truth because it's the truth. So, the question is, verse 12, what do you have?

Whoever has the Son has the life. Whoever does not have the Son does not have the life. So the question is, do you have the Son? What's that mean? How do I have the Son?

How do I possess it? That's a different phrase, isn't it? Other than, do you believe in the Son? Now he's talking to me, do you have the Son? Oh, what does that mean? No, you possess it.

He's dwelling within you. He's abiding. He's making a difference in your life. He's changing you.

He's the power that transforms you to do things you can't naturally do. So I thought, what does it mean to have eternal life?

If you have the Son, you have the life. What does that look like? We think of eternal life as just something, you know, when we die, we go to heaven. Right? That's eternal life, right? And that is part of it. Yeah, we look forward to that.

[49 : 26] That's heaven. We just talked about today. You either go to heaven or you go to another place. Right?

Everyone has eternal life. Every soul has eternal life. It's just where you spend it. Do you spend it in heaven or do you spend it in eternal death and eternal suffering?

I heard somebody the other day and I told, how did I say that? So believers now are living in hell in this life because this will be the worst you'll ever experience.

And later we will have heaven. Today, unbelievers are living in heaven. because this will be the best they've ever experienced. I thought, wow, did John say that?

That sounds like a Johnism, right? It's kind of, that's kind of what John's looking at. So what does it mean to have eternal life now? So, some of the I am sayings of Jesus and John, John 6, 35, I am the bread of life.

[50 : 31] Whoever comes to me shall not, what? Not hunger. Whoever believes in me, so coming to him and believing in him are the same thing. Comes, whoever believes in me shall never thirst.

What's that mean? I never thirst again. Remember the lady at the well. Oh, give me that water. I don't want to, what does that mean? I'll never thirst, I'll never hunger. What does it mean? It means you'll experience a contentment you've never felt before.

It means you will experience true fulfillment in this life. In this hellish world that you live in now, you will experience contentment and fulfillment. Remember, remember, Ecclesiastes is all about I can't find anything fulfillment.

I can't find any real meaning in life. This is all I got. This is it. And Jesus is saying, no, when you take from me, you'll experience something much more abiding and deeper and filling, a peace that passes an understanding, a joy that floods my soul.

Huh? A transforming view of others. Oh my. That's just tasting it and it keeps getting better. For this is the will of my father, he goes on in John 6, 40, this is the will of my father that everyone who looks on the son.

[51 : 45] Okay, so what's belief? Belief is, I come to him, I believe in him and I look on him. I look on the son and believes in him. By the way, it's believe into him. Should have eternal life.

And I will raise him up on the last thing. Oh, so there is the extra part. John 8, 12, Jesus said, I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me, following me is also believing in me.

I'm the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not what? Will not walk in darkness. But will have the light of life. That's pretty good. I won't be stumbling around.

I will actually have meaning and purpose in my life. I will have a direction in my life. If he's my light, I actually see things as they are. And that leads me to make better choices in my life.

Meaning and direction. That's good. Kind of the counterbalance of Ecclesiastes is what Jesus says. John 10, I am the door. Whoever enters by me. There's another word.

[52 : 48] Faith in him, come in him, enter. By me. Whoever enters by me, he will be saved. What does that mean? He will go in and out and find pasture. You know, you're like a sheep. You'll always find fulfillment.

And you have freedom because you're going to go in and out. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it to the full.

Abundantly. Does that mean it's my best life now like Joel says? No. Still hell on earth. But in another way, what I will have will transcend that.

What I will have the best is yet to come. Yeah. But I start getting some of it. I get the peace that passes understanding. I get the joy that doesn't make any sense.

I get a new perspective. I get light. I have life. I begin to experience life that's quite extraordinary.

[53 : 50] It's exceeding. It's abundantly. It's beyond the norm. Unbelievers don't understand what we begin to experience as we walk with Jesus. Even through the tears and the hardship.

because that's when they mean the most. That's how he builds me. That's how he strengthens me. I'd prefer he just give me strength.

You know, not coming through the trial. But that's how my son did it. That's how you're doing it. You follow Jesus. And then in John 17, Jesus is praying before he goes to the cross.

He lifted up his eyes to heaven. He said, Father, the hour has come. Glorify your son that the son may glorify you. He's talking about his crucifixion. Glorify your son that your son may glorify you.

Since you have given him authority over all flesh to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life. So here's where he defines it.

[54 : 50] What is eternal life? What is it in a nutshell? This is eternal life. That they may know you, Father. and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

That's eternal life. I mean, eternal life is knowing. You mean, oh, I know. Yeah, I know about that. Right? I know all about God. I read the theology books.

I know about, I know God. Right? Is that what he means? No, I see his head. No. No, he's not talking about that no. He's talking about know by experience.

I know through experiences God because I walk with him and I talk with him and what's the rest of the song? Walk with him. He leads me.

Sometimes he's quiet and I wait upon him. I know sometimes he doesn't give me the quick answers. but I trust he knows what he's doing.

[55 : 51] Don't try. I know he knows what he's doing. I know him by, I personally know him. What's the difference between knowing about somebody and knowing them?

So you can read about somebody and know about them. You know, I can read about some sports hero and know all their facts and figures and everything. I never met the person.

I don't know a thing about what they're like. They might be totally, oh, I don't like them in person. So it's like, you know, so when I really know a person, you know what they like, you know how they are, you know how they are in situations.

And I met knowing Jesus like that. You know, there used to be those bracelets, what would Jesus do? You know, it's a nice idea, but I don't always know what Jesus would do.

Right? Because he did extraordinary things. I know generally what he would do, right? But if I walk with him and I have come to know him, then I probably know what he would do.

[57 : 12] like, not talk at that moment. When I want to react. Slow to speak.

That's a hard one. Right? So let me ask you some questions.

Do you have the son? Do you have him? Is he dwelling in you by his spirit? Do you know that? And how do I know that?

I know that because he's begun to transform me. The things that I hated, now I love. I used to hate his commands, now I love his commandments. Doesn't make me perfectly obedient by any means. Now, he's transformed my values, what I care about. I still have some of those old ones that, you know, they hang on. But, have you experienced the fulfillment of the bread of life?

[58 : 20] Have you tasted his bread and found it soothing to my soul? And I was just like, oh, yes, that's, oh.

Do you walk in his light and still have purpose and direction in life? Have you found his pasture? Go in and out, find his pasture. Freedom, that means freedom from sin that has stolen true life.

Because when I choose sin, it steals my life, right? It brings me death, brings me stuff I hate. Have you begun to found that freedom from that?

Do you know him, walk with him, talk with him, depend on him, live by him? Is he your refuge? How do I have him? How do I get that?

How do I have him? Well, faith comes by hearing. So let me hear a bunch.

[59 : 25] Let me keep hearing until I believe. Because before I believe, I know. My testimony, I grew up, I thought I was always believing.

And I did. I believed everything that's said, but it didn't change me. It wasn't that kind of faith. But I was convicted. I knew it was true. And so, God keeping me on that road where I kept coming back to the church that I didn't want to go to.

Coming back to hear those sermons that convicted me so deeply. And then, one day, he woke me. it wasn't anything I did. And then I knew what real belief was. That's how you have him.

It's a faith directed to him, into him, surrendered. Do you trust God's testimony about his son?

Here's the bottom line that John's getting to. Do you believe that Jesus is the son of God because God himself has testified to that?

[60 : 33] Or do you dismiss it? Do you dismiss it? Do you just recognize what you're doing and I believe you know deep down that you're saying God is a liar by pushing it off?

So, so welcome it in. In fact, challenge God. Show me. Prove it to me. Yeah, that's a, that would be a good prayer. That would be a good prayer. Show it to you. Right?

Every time I ask God, you know, search me and know me. Show me if there's anything in me that's wrong. Oh, he's always faithful to tell me that one. They're way too loud.

You know, but what's great about that is he shows me and he gives me specifics. Okay, you gotta go talk to that person. Okay.

You need to get away from that. Okay. Yeah, he gets real specific. The one having the son has the life.

[61 : 37] The one not having the son does not have the life. Let's pray. Father, we thank you for your word. We thank you for John, how he just speaks the truth and he speaks the truth about you and he narrows it down to the things that are essential.

We thank you, Lord, that you have given testimony that you didn't just send your son into this world and leave him to himself. You were constantly with him, witnessing to him, witnessing through him. He, by his own words, said that he did nothing except from what you told him to do. So he was listening to you. Help us hear you.

And I pray for anyone today under my voice, Lord, that doesn't think they've heard that from you. Convince them. Show them, as only you can, that you speak today and your spirit is the truth.

We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.