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December memory verse: Isaiah 9:6-7 (NKJV)

⁶ For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Commentary on 1st John Chapters 4 and 5 by, Chuck Smith, 12.09.20

Chapter 4

Don't believe every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world ([1Jo 4:1](#)).

Jesus, in His Sermon on the Mount, chapter 7 of Matthew's gospel, said, "Beware of false prophets who will come to you as wolves in sheep's clothing." And so it's hard to tell a false prophet by his looks. He looks like a sheep.

Now, one of the deceptive things is that we think that a false prophet is going to be false in everything he says. When oftentimes a false prophet will tell 90% truth; that's what makes them deceptive. They say so much that is true

There's a lot of false doctrine, and there are a lot of false prophets. And unfortunately, there are a lot of people following these false prophets. Beware when someone says, "Now look, the scripture is sort of a difficult book to understand. It's best that you not read the Bible. Just read our book that explains the Bible for you, because if you don't have our book to explain the Bible, it's just such a difficult book that you will never understand it." So whenever they're peddling books and discouraging you from just going to the Word of God, beware. We encourage to get into the Bible and read the Bible. And I'm not afraid of anything you'll come to believe by just reading the Bible. But you read some of these books and you are going to be led out into left field.

So try the spirits, to see if they be of God. And basically, what is their testimony of Jesus Christ, and what is the fruit?

Hereby do we know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus is come in the flesh is of God ([1Jo 4:2](#)):

Now, that is more than just what meets the eye on the surface, "Jesus Christ is come in the flesh." But Jesus is His name, which is a contraction of the Hebrew *Jehovah-shua*, or *Joshua*. *Jo* is the Hebrew contraction for *Jehovah*. *Joshua*, *shua* in Hebrew is *salvation*. *Jehovah* is become our salvation. *Christ* is the Greek for the Hebrew *Mashiyach* or the *Messiah*, the *Anointed One*.

So the testimony is that Jesus is *Jehovah* our salvation, the anointed *Messiah* and that He has come in the flesh. And so it is a witness or a testimony of God coming in the flesh. And if that is not their witness then they are a false prophet. Now, they may say a lot of truth and they may have lot of fanciful stuff, but they are a false prophet when they deny the deity of Jesus Christ. That He is indeed God come in the flesh, *Jehovah-shua*, the *Mashiyach* is come in the flesh.

And every spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is the spirit of antichrist, whereof you have heard that it come; and even now already is in the world ([1Jo 4:3](#)).

There is a great spirit of antichrist in the world today. A lot of people opposed to Jesus Christ.

Now you are of God, little children, and you have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world ([1Jo 4:4](#)).

You see, going back to verse 24 of chapter 3, God has given to us the Holy Spirit who abides within us, and greater is He that is in you than the spirit of antichrist that is in the world.

Now they are of the world: therefore they speak of the world, and the world hears them ([1Jo 4:5](#)).

Their message is a popular message that the world enjoys hearing, but they deny the real power of God.

Now we are of God and he that knoweth God hears us; and he that is not of God does not hear us. And hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error ([1Jo 4:6](#)).

First of all, we know it by their witness of Jesus Christ. Secondly,

Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. And he that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love ([1Jo 4:7-8](#)).

The second way I know the Spirit of God is the fruit of the Spirit in my life will be love. Love for one another. Beloved, let us love one another. Love is of God, and it is the proof that the spirit that dwells in me is the Spirit of God, if the fruit is love coming forth from my life.

So Jesus said, "When the Holy Spirit is come, He will bear witness of Me." I know it is the Spirit of God because of the witness that He is giving of Jesus Christ. I know that it is the Spirit of God because the fruit and the effects of it within my life is love, a great love for my brothers and sisters in Christ. A great love for the family of God and the things of God. And if you can love me, you know that you've got the Spirit.

"Let us love one another, for love is of God; everyone that loveth is born of God and knoweth God." Now this is the agape love. It isn't the mushy, Hollywood junk that is passed off for love. It isn't even the phileo that we have within the strong family unit, but it is the agape.

There is the love which is the eros; there is the love which is the phileo, deeper and emotional, whereas the eros is pretty much fleshly. The phileo is more involved with the emotions. But then there is a love that is of the deepest level, and that is the agape. And that is love in the spirit level.

Many people who fancy themselves to be in love are actually in eros. And it's too bad that within the English language we don't have a broader word, as do the Greeks. We have love, and look what the word has to cover. Everything from peanuts to my grandkids and my wife. Hot fudge sundaes. I love them all. But what I feel for a hot fudge sundae is far different than what I feel for my wife. But I've got one word, "love them".

Now the Greeks, they had the different words for the different types of love. Well, my love for a hot fudge sundae, I suppose, would be eros, a fleshly love. And it's too bad that we can't really define our love when we are communicating with each other, because some of these young fellows that are going out with these girls, they whisper in their ears and say, "I eros you, baby. I have a strong sexual drawing to you." The eros, in reality, is pretty much self-centered. I like the relationship for what I get out of it, but I don't care what you get out of it. It's what I am getting, the satisfactions that I feel.

The phileo is a little deeper, and it is more of a give and take, reciprocal. I love you because we agree on so many things, and we can share and you can add to my understanding and you're interested in what I have to say. And it's a give and take. Like someone said, "Marriage is a fifty/fifty proposition." I've never found that to be so, but that is what they say. It's more of a seventy-five/twenty-five, but I won't tell you who has the seventy-five.

Now he that loveth not, knoweth not God; because God is love ([1Jo 4:8](#)).

And so this word is used to define the nature of God, "God is love".

In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him ([1Jo 4:9](#)).

How do you know that God loves you? "Oh, I go out and I commune with nature." Does nature tell you that God loves you? When you are out communing with nature, do you see the coyotes jumping on that poor little rabbit and tearing it to pieces? "Oh, God is love. Nature tells me so." I see the lions tearing at the gazelles, "God is love." I see the rattlesnake coiled, ready to strike, "God is love." Nature doesn't tell me that God is love, because you see, I am looking at fallen nature. I see nature as it is cursed by sin. I don't see nature as God created it. I don't see the lion lying down with the lamb, eating straw like the ox. I don't see nature as it was created by God. I see it as it has fallen as the result of man, cursed. So fallen nature cannot testify or tell me of the love of God.

Then how can I know God loves me? God does not seek to prove His love to you except in one place, and that's sufficient. It is sufficient so that you should never ever doubt the love of God again. If ever Satan questions, and he often does challenge, "Well, if God loves you, then why did God allow this? If God really loves you then why would God... " and you see, he often is challenging the fact of God's love and often he can put forth some pretty powerful evidence that God doesn't love me, because look at the mess I'm in. So whenever Satan begins to challenge the love of God and you start to go under, look at the cross. For therein God demonstrated His love for you once and for all. And He says, "Hey, you question My love, just look at the cross." "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son."

Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that God loved us, and sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins ([1Jo 4:10](#)).

God manifested His love towards us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for the ungodly. In this was manifested the love of God towards us because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world that we might live through Him. So, there is where God manifested His love, in sending His Son into this world. He loved you so much, He desired fellowship with you so much, that He sent His Son into this world to die in your place. To take away your sins in order that you might have fellowship with God. So herein God has manifested His love there at the cross. And the whole purpose of God is that you might live.

Now, "Herein is love, not that we loved God," and some people think that they are doing such a big favor and a big deal when they say, "Oh, I love God." So what. The only thing that it proves is that you are not a fool. Because you have every reason to love God, and that's no big deal. You should love God. He's so loveable. What is the big deal is that God loves you. When He knows you so thoroughly and so completely.

Now, if God so loved us, then we ought to love one another ([1Jo 4:11](#)).

Jesus said, "Love one another even as I have loved you." Now that's a pretty big order. And yet, that is what God requires of us, and that's what God's Spirit will do in us as we are filled and I can know that it is the Spirit of God, because of the love that He has given to me. So herein is love, not my love for God, but God's love for me in sending His Son to take my sins and to die for my guilt in order that God's righteousness might by

propitiated and He can receive me in fellowship. If God so loved me, then I ought to love one another.

Now no man has seen God at any time ([1Jo 4:12](#)).

What about Moses? Well, I have to believe that no man has seen God at any time, and what about Moses? Well, he saw the afterglow. God says, "Hey, you can't see Me and live. You get here in the rock and I'll pass by. And when I pass by, then you can look out and see the afterglow." And that radiated him to the extent he had to put a veil over his face. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. But before I can see God I've got to have a new body, this old body just couldn't take it. No man has seen God at any time, but

If we love one another, God dwells in us, and his love is perfected in us ([1Jo 4:12](#)).

And that is the work of the Holy Spirit within our lives, perfecting in us the love of God. And as I yield to the Spirit, and as I am filled with the Spirit, that work of the Spirit in me ultimately is to perfect God's love within my life. That I will indeed love as He loves.

Hereby we know that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he has given us his Spirit ([1Jo 4:13](#)).

How do we know what we know? And so here we are coming across several of these "Hereby we knows."

And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world ([1Jo 4:14](#)).

Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwells in him, and he in God ([1Jo 4:15](#)).

The confession that Jesus is indeed the Son of God, not a son of God as the Mormons would make Him, one of many. *The* Son of God. Or as the Jehovah Witnesses would make Him, a son of God. But if your testimony is that Jesus Christ *is* the Son of God, God dwells in him and he in God.

And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. For God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwells in God, and God in him ([1Jo 4:16](#)).

So, dealing with the proofs, how can we know the Spirit? There are a lot of false prophets in the world. Believe not every spirit. Satan is able to come as an angel of light to deceive. How can I know it's the Holy Spirit dwelling in me? The fruit, the love. God is love; His Spirit in me will be manifested in love.

And herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in the world ([1Jo 4:17](#)).

Again, Christ our example in love. As He is, so are we. How is He in the world? Loving. How many times do you read, "Jesus looked upon them and had compassion upon them"? And rather than looking and turning away with a cold calloused indifference, if Christ is really dwelling in us, we also will be moved with compassion over the needs of people.

"Herein is our love made perfect, we might have boldness in the day of judgment." When God's love is perfected in me, I don't have to fear the judgment seat of God at all. Boldness in the day of judgment. Why? Because I'm in Christ; I'm secure.

Now, there is no fear in love ([1Jo 4:18](#));

If fear has gripped your heart, it's because God's love is not perfected in you. You're not totally assured that God loves you. "I'm not really sure that this is gonna work for good, this may destroy me. This may be the end of my road. This may be all she wrote. This looks bad, I don't see any way out. What am I gonna do?" Well, you see, if God's love were perfected, if you really knew God loved you, so totally loved you, that whatever and anything that may happen to you can only happen because God allows it to happen and He loves you supremely, then I don't worry about what happens to me. "Man, what a mess, but I know that God loves me and so He's gonna work it out some way or other, you know. Well, they just foreclosed and took away my house, you know, but God loves and He's gonna work out something, you know." Oh, the confidence that comes when I know that God loves me and His love is perfected in me, I can accept what comes without fear.

perfect love casts out all fear: he that fears experiences this torment. [Fear is a very tormenting thing.] And he that fears is not yet made perfect in love. We love him, because he first loved us ([1Jo 4:18-19](#)).

Again, God is the initiator and man is the respondent. Beware of teaching that would make man the initiator and God the respondent. And that is a very popular teaching within many churches even. I heard that teaching for years. In fact, I taught it for a long time. "We should initiate, so that God can respond. We need to fast so that God can respond to our fasting. We need to praise the Lord so that the Lord can respond to our praises and bless us. We need to give to God so that God can respond and give back to us." And we make man the initiator and God the respondent. But in reality, God is the initiator and I am the respondent. And so my praises are not to bring a blessing of God upon my life, my praises are because of the blessings of God that are so abundant and bountiful that I can't handle it. "Oh, Lord, You're good. I love You, Lord. I praise You and thank You, oh Lord." And, you see, I am responding to the grace of God that I've experienced. God has initiated His love and His grace towards me, and I love Him because He first loved me. I'm only responding to this love, but I must know God if I'm going to be able to respond to Him. I must know the love of God, I must know the grace of God, I must know the goodness of God, I must know it all in Christ, and then when I know it, I respond to it. But it's hard to respond to something you're not aware of. So

God the initiator, God loved us first. I respond to that. I love Him because He first loved me.

Now if a man say ([1Jo 4:20](#)),

Now this is the seventh thing we've found that men are prone to say. And this is a great thing, if a man say, "I love God," isn't that beautiful? We ought to all be able to say that. We all should be saying that. "I love God." We should be able to say that. I'm not putting down saying that; we all ought to be saying that.

But,

If a man says it, and hates his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? ([1Jo 4:20](#))

This commandment we have from him, That he who loves God love his brother also ([1Jo 4:21](#)).

Jesus was questioned by a lawyer as to what the greatest commandment was. And Jesus said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. And the second is like unto the first: thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, and on these two are all the law and commandments" ([Matthew 22:37-40](#)). But you see, Jesus tied immediately in the love of my neighbor for my love for God. Remember when the rich young ruler came to Jesus and knelt at his feet and said, "Good Master, what good thing must I do to inherit age-abiding life?" And Jesus said, "Why do you call Me good? There is only one good, and that is, God. But keep the commandments." "Which ones?" "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not commit adultery, and so forth." "Lord, all these I've kept from my youth up, what do I lack in?" Well, he said, "If you're going to be perfect, then go sell all that you have and distribute it to the poor and follow me, you'll have great treasures in heaven." And he went away sorrowful because he had great riches. ([Luke 18:18-23](#)). Now, he had just said, "Lord, I have kept all these commandments from my youth up. You know, I haven't stolen. I haven't committed adultery, and I haven't lied against my neighbor and so forth. I kept all those from my youth." Now, what is the real commandment? Love your neighbor as yourself.

Now, here you are and you are very wealthy, you have more than what you can eat, more than what you need. And here is your neighbor and he's starving, but you're not willing to help him. Well, you then don't love your neighbor as yourself. So you may say, "Oh, I love God and I keep all the commandments," but when you come down to a practical example, no, you're not keeping the commandment. So it isn't what I say, but it is my deed that expresses the reality of my experience.

Chapter 5

Whosoever believes that Jesus is the Messiah is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him ([1Jo 5:1](#)).

So I say, "I love Jesus. He is the Messiah. Yes, I'm born again. Oh, and how I love Him." Well, if I love Him who has begotten me into this new life, then I will also love those who have been begotten--the family of God, my brothers and sisters in Jesus.

And by this we know [another proof of how we know what we know, by this we know] that we love the children of God, when we love God, and we keep his commandments ([1Jo 5:2](#)).

Jesus said, "A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another even as I have loved you" ([John 13:34](#)). Now, when John seeks to bring down the commandments of Jesus, Jesus gave us the Old Testament commandments in a concise form. "Love God supremely, love your neighbor as yourself, in this is all the law and the prophets." And it's all wrapped up right here, very concise. Now John also capsulizes, gives us the essence of the commandments of Jesus. He does that over there in chapter 3, and this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment ([John 3:23](#)). This is the commandment, and he gives us a condensed, concise form. Just believe on Jesus and love each other. That's what it's all about. That's what Christianity is all about. That's the heart of Christianity. That's the essence of Christianity. That we believe on Jesus Christ and that we love one another. There it is, you've got the whole thing right there.

Now, hereby I know that I love God. I can say that I love God, but I might just be mouthing empty phrases. By this I know, when I love the children of God, I keep His commandments.

For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous ([1Jo 5:3](#)).

They're not that hard. Now tell me, what's... well, I take it back. Well, the first one is not so bad, believing on His Son, Jesus Christ. Now, the second is more difficult, loving each other as we love ourselves. That is more difficult, and that does take a work of God's Spirit within my heart.

Yes, it's true; there are people with whom you are incompatible. They're too much like you. It's amazing how horrible our sins look when some one else is committing them. You know, if I'm committing them, they're not too bad. But if you start committing my sins, well, they are ugly and horrible. I can't stand you.

This kind of love takes a special work of God's Spirit within my heart. I can't do it. I can't manufacture agape love. I can't psyche myself into agape love. And that's why it's a

proof to me that it is God. As God has given to me love for people that I could not stand in the natural. And to experience God's love working in my heart, and changing my heart and my attitude towards these people, I know it's God's love being perfected in me. And there many times that I've had to pray, "Now, Lord, I know that You require that I love them, but that's impossible for me. I can't do it. But, Lord, I want You to work in me and give me Your love for them. I know that I don't love them, but I know that You do. So give me Your love for them."

"His commandments are not grievous."

For whatsoever is born of God overcomes the world: and this is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith ([1Jo 5:4](#)).

Now, we read in the book of Revelation that when Satan is cast out of heaven that, "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and the word of their testimony, loving not their lives unto death" ([Revelation 12:11](#)). Here our victory is our faith in Jesus Christ. We overcome the world and the things of the world through our faith in Him. And how is that faith developed? By knowing Him. And how can I know Him? By studying the revelation of Himself, the Bible.

Your problem in trusting God is that you just don't know Him. Your problem in trusting Jesus Christ is the lack of knowledge. That's why Jesus said, "Learn of Me. Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of Me" ([Matthew 11:28-29](#)). Why does He want you to learn of Him? Because there is where your faith is increased. The more you know Him, the easier it is to trust Him. And so we overcome by this faith.

And who is he that overcomes the world, but he that believes that Jesus is the Son of God? ([1Jo 5:5](#))

My faith in Jesus Christ brings me victory over the world. Now,

This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth ([1Jo 5:6](#)).

What does it mean, "He came by water and He came by blood, not by water only but water and blood"? This is referring to His baptism. He was baptized in water and then later baptized in blood. When John and James came to Him and said, "Lord, you know, we would like a favor. When You establish Your kingdom, let him sit on your right side and let me sit on Your left side." And Jesus said, "You don't know what you ask." He said, "Are you able to be baptized with the baptism wherein I'm going to be baptized?" "Oh yes, Lord, we are." Jesus said, "You don't know what you are saying." But He was referring to the cross as a baptism. So when he refers here, "He came not only by water, but by blood," it was a reference to His water baptism and then His crucifixion.

Spirit is truth." And so the Spirit bears witness of the truth to our hearts.

Now, verse 7 did not appear in any of the early manuscripts. It did not appear in the manuscripts until about the tenth century. And so this verse probably was not original in John's writing, because of the fact that it doesn't exist in any early manuscripts that exist before the tenth century. So verse 7 probably should not be here in the scriptures. This is the only verse of which I would declare that in the New Testament. But evidence of it existing in the early manuscripts is non-existent. There is an early church father who quoted from an ancient manuscript, no doubt, in which he quoted this particular passage. Now, what manuscripts he had, we don't know. But there is only one church father that made reference to it, early church father, and so it is generally conceded that this does not belong as a part of the original text. But you should go from verse 6 to verse 8.

The Spirit bears witness, because the Spirit is truth. Of what does the Spirit bear witness?

And there are three that bears witness in the earth, the spirit, the water, and the blood: and these three all agree ([1Jo 5:8](#)).

So the Spirit bearing witness of Jesus Christ, and of that salvation that we have through Jesus. John said, "We bear record of it. We saw it. It is true, and we bear record of it that you might believe." In testifying in the nineteenth chapter of the gospel, when the soldier pierced Him with the spear there came forth blood and water.

If we accept the witness of men, the witness of God is greater ([1Jo 5:9](#)):

And it is interesting that there are men who will believe men but won't believe God. They'll accept the word of men who are often untrustworthy, we ought to believe God.

and this is the witness which he has testified of his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God then has this witness in himself ([1Jo 5:9-10](#)):

The Spirit bears witness, the Spirit within me, and so there is that internal witness within me testifying to the truth of Jesus Christ to my heart. That's why there are no doubts. I know because of the witness of the Spirit within my heart. There is that *oetis* of the Greek. This intuitive, internal knowledge that I have by the witness that is within me, the witness of God's Spirit.

Now, he that believeth not God has made God a liar ([1Jo 5:10](#));

If you don't believe the witness of God, you are, in essence, saying that God is lying. And that's a pretty horrible charge to make against God. But that's the charge you make when you refuse to believe God's witness to your heart, and that's what basically the sin against the Holy Spirit is. It's not believing the witness of the Holy Spirit that Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world. Your only hope of eternal life is in Jesus Christ, and if

you don't believe that, that's unpardonable. God's made no other provision for your salvation apart from Jesus Christ. And so that's the sin against the Holy Spirit. You're calling Him a liar when He bears witness to you of your need for Jesus and surrendering your life to Him. So this is the record, you've called God a liar.

because you did not believe the record that God gave of his Son ([1Jo 5:10](#)).

What is the record that God gave of His Son? What is the witness that God has made of His Son? Just this,

This is the record, that God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. And he who has the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life ([1Jo 5:11-12](#)).

That's God's witness to you. God has given to us eternal life, but the life is in His Son. You cannot have eternal life apart from the Son. And as we pointed out this morning, eternal life is much more than quantity or duration of time. It is a quality of life.

These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God ([1Jo 5:13](#));

Why did John write this epistle? Chapter 1, he wrote it that we might have fellowship with God and the fullness of joy that comes from that fellowship. "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that you also may have fellowship with us. Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full" ([1 John 1:3-4](#)). Chapter 2, verse 1, "These things write we unto you, that ye sin not." Now, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God." Why did he write?

that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you might believe on the name of the Son of God ([1Jo 5:13](#)).

And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he hears us: And if we know that he hears us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him ([1Jo 5:14-15](#)).

Notice though, the conditions there is that if we ask anything according to His will. You just can't ask God for anything and get it. James said, "You have not because you ask not, and then you ask and receive not because you ask amiss, that you might consume it on your own lust" ([James 4:2-3](#)). Now we have this confidence in prayer, if we ask anything according to His will He hears us. You see, the purpose of prayer is not to get your will done, and that's a common mistake that people make about prayer. They think that it's some genie in a bottle that's going to pop out and grant you your three wishes. Not so. The purpose of prayer is to get God's will done. So I have this confidence in prayer, if I ask anything according to His will He hears me, and if He hears me, then I've

received the petitions that I've desired of Him. If I ask not according to His will, then He's going to be good enough and gracious enough to not listen and not answer.

If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death ([1Jo 5:16](#)).

There are sins that are not unto death. There are sins that we commit. The word *sins* means "missing the mark." And a lot of people miss the mark. In fact, we have all missed the mark. We are told that in the first chapter. And if we say that we haven't missed the mark, then you are only deceiving yourself and the truth isn't in you. We've all missed the mark, and if you see a brother missing the mark, he is sinning, but it's not unto death. What is the deadly sin? The rejection of Jesus Christ, that's the sin unto death. When a man turns his back deliberately and willfully upon Jesus Christ, that's the sin unto death. And John said,

I don't say for you to pray for that ([1Jo 5:16](#)).

You see, that's a line that God won't cross. God won't cross your free will. He has given you the power of choice and then He honors it. He won't cross your free will and He won't save you against your will. You don't have to worry. God's not going to force you to be saved; God's not going to force you to be with Him in heaven. If you don't want to be with God, then He doesn't want to make you miserable. "You don't have to be with Me." But you have chosen your own misery; God didn't make you miserable, you made yourself miserable.

There is a sin unto death: I do not say that you should pray for it. All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death ([1Jo 5:16-17](#)).

I believe in the grace of God, and I think that there is only one sin that can damn your soul, and that's the rejection of God's love in Jesus Christ. That's the sin unto death. And God is so gracious and merciful, and there is a sin that's not unto death.

We know that whosoever is born of God doesn't practice sin ([1Jo 5:18](#));

Because I have a new nature. We know that whosoever is born of God does not practice sin,

but he that is begotten of God ([1Jo 5:18](#))

Who is it that was begotten of God? Jesus Christ. And so, you should correct the capitalization here: "He that is begotten of God," *He* should be capitalized.

He that is begotten of God keepeth him, and the wicked one toucheth him not ([1Jo 5:18](#)).

I am kept by the power of Jesus Christ. He, Jesus, who is begotten of God, keeps me, and the wicked one touches me not.

And we know that we are of God, and the whole world is lying in wickedness. And we know that the Son of God is come, and has given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true; and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. And this is the true God, and eternal life ([1Jo 5:19-20](#)).

So he now closes out with, "We know, we know, we know, we know that whoever is born of God does not practice sin. We know that we are of God, and the whole world is in wickedness. We know that the Son of God has come and given us the understanding that we may know the truth."

The word *know* is the word *ginosko*, and that is, we know by experience the truth. We have experienced now that which is true. That we are in Him who is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

And then the final exhortation,

Little children, keep yourself from idols ([1Jo 5:21](#)).

But what an important exhortation, because it is so easy for us to get hung up with idols. Oh, I don't believe that any of you have a little statue in your room with a candle in front of it and you sit and chant in front of it in the evening hours. We are too sophisticated for that. Your idol probably has one eye and is in your living room or family room. And you stare at it for hours on end. Sometimes bursting out in laughter, sometimes yelling and screaming, but very devoted to your idol. You give it more time than anything else, more time than your wife or anyone else, especially this time of the year. Your idol could be that car that you drive by and look at every day. You've gone up and sat in it, and one of these days it's going to be yours. And all you can think about is that car, and how great it's going to be to sit behind the wheel and drive that thing. It's yours. I don't know what your idol may be, but there are many idols. Anything that takes the place of God in the devotion of my life, anything that comes between God and me, anything that begins to occupy my mind and my heart and displace God in my life is an idol that I must keep myself from. I cannot allow anything to come between my relationship with God. It can be a person, it can be an object, "But little children, keep yourself from idols." Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

Shall we pray.

Father, we thank You again for the opportunity of studying Your Word tonight, and just basking in the richness of Thy truth. Thank You, Lord, for the Holy Spirit and His anointing upon the Word and upon our hearts that we might hear and receive Thy truth. And now, Lord, help us to believe and trust in Thee more. Increase our faith, Lord. And Father, perfect in our lives Your love. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.