

Title: The Fellowship of the Gospel

Text: 1 John 5:16-21

Date: June 29, 2025

For you're a great blessing and joy, I would ask that you turn your Bibles if you have them to 1 John 5. 1 John 5 where we will read from verses 16-21. 1 John 5:16-21.

John the beloved apostle writes these words to us in 1 John 5, *"If anyone sees his brother committing a sin that does not lead to death, he will ask, and God will give to him life - to those who are sinning a sin that does not lead to death. There is sin that leads to death; and concerning that sin I do not say that you should pray. All unrighteousness is sin, and there is sin that does not lead to death."* Verse 18, *"We know that everyone who has been born of God does not continue sinning, but the one who has been born of God keeps him, and the evil one does not touch him. We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the hand of the evil one. We know that the Son of God has come and he has given to us understanding, in order that we might know the true one; and we are in the true one, in his Son Jesus Christ. This one is the true God and eternal life. Little children, keep yourselves from idols."*

This is God's word; would you pray with me today.

Father, we love the truths of the songs that we've been singing. That what is our hope in life and death but that we belong both body and soul, both in life and in death to God and to our savior Jesus Christ. That we are not our own but that we have been bought with a price. O glorious truth that is today that we get to hear about more today as we open your word. We ask Father that by your grace and by your spirit you might open our eyes and enlighten them more. To more clearly see your glory that you have revealed in the person and work of your son Jesus. And we ask once again today that you would help us by your grace to put aside all filthiness and all rampant wickedness and all distractions that we might have coming in. So that we might receive with meekness the implanted word which is able to save our souls.

We ask this in Jesus' name, Amen.

Perhaps one of the most consistent things about human beings, about us, is that we forget a lot of information. I know for a fact that many people here are forgetful in including me. And I know this is true not only because I am forgetful, because there is even a saying that we have in our culture that you know. I can't even remember what I had for breakfast this morning. Maybe this is true of some of you today. Maybe you learned about the woes of the human memory in school. Whenever you can just not figure out and remember what the Pythagorean theorem was on your math test. Or you couldn't remember who in the world the 13th president of the United States was. Maybe you learned about the fault of human memory when you forgot your keys inside your locked house. Or when you just got back from the grocery store and completely forgot that one very important ingredient you needed for your dish at the fellowship meal. Or perhaps you're reminded about your imperfect memory today when a person walked up to you

and said hi, it's so nice to see you and you just couldn't remember their name, but you knew their face. We could go on forever with examples, but it's not hard to see.

It's very evidence that we do struggle with forgetting important information and when we do that affects our life, right? Forgetting the Pythagorean theorem, which we all should remember all the time by the way would likely lead to a poor score on your math test, right? Or forgetting your keys inside your locked house would likely lead to you not being able to go wherever you were trying to and certainly not getting back into your house anytime soon. Forgetting a person's name usually kind of leads to an awkward situation where you say hey you, you know and try to figure out their name implicitly in the conversation. And if you're a husband who forgets his wedding anniversary or his wife's birthday, you might not ever be seen again. So, there's all sorts of ways that forgetting things affect your daily life. And the same is true for the life of the believer because of our sinful and fallen humanity we then often forget the truths of God's word which directly affects how we live our Christian lives.

We can be like the man in James 1, who looks at himself and his natural face in the mirror and then at once goes away and forgets what he was like. Whether it's because of our finitude or our sinfulness we forget the truths of God's word, the gospel, and who we are in Christ so very easily and has those very negative effects on our Christian walk. And if I asked you today, what are the key points of the book of 1 John? Many of you might not be able to give a single one. The riches that are in 1 John may easily slip our minds but fortunately John helps us. Reminds us of the core pieces of information from his letter that we were supposed to come away with and remember as we seek to walk faithfully to the words of his letter here at the end of the book. As we've gone through 1 John over the past nearly two years now, we've said that 1 John is a letter that John writes about all things concerning Christ. Who is the word, the life, the eternal life to believers because they are believers in order that he might encourage their status as believers and they might reflect it in holiness, obedience, love, assurance. Which all together leads to a right and rightly ordered fellowship with the Triune God into our complete and fulfilled joy. We get all that from 1 John 1:1-4.

And John divides his letter up into two main sections. God is light in verse 5 of chapter 1 and love one another in verse 11 of chapter 3. Which is why we were jumping all over the place in scripture reading today. And here John writes a fitting conclusion to his book that was focused on proclaiming all things concerning the word of life that we might have a rightly ordered fellowship with God in his closing statements starting in verse 16. Where he uses the two major sections of his letter. God is light and love one another to frame his closing statements. Such that he gives a proper summary of the book and brings to mind all the things that we need to remember from his letter in order to walk the Christian life well. And in his summary section, in his closing words, John helps us remember and draws on the teaching of his entire letter to tell us that life in fellowship with God looks like loving your brother and walking in the light. Life in fellowship with God. This is what John wants us to come away with from his letter. Looks like loving your brother and walking in the light. First John starts the last section of his letter with the second section of 3:11 with *"loving one another."* And if we spend any time reading the letter of 1 John, it is not at all surprising that John would close with this. Right? Because love of neighbor, love a brother, love of God is

all over the place in 1 John. We saw it from beginning to end that love is to be the characteristic of believers.

We even saw this last week. And rather than merely providing the general instruction, the general reminder, hey by the way love one another. He actually gives us a good example of this. Just as he does back in 3:12 with how Jesus is the example of the embodiment of love. He says in verse 16, *"If anyone sees his brother committing a sin that does not lead to death, you will ask, and God will give to him life - to those committing a sin that does not lead towards death. There is a sin that leads towards death; and I do not say concerning that one that you should ask. All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin that does not lead to death."* Last week we said that we had a Bible reading softball because he told us, I'm writing these things because of this reason. This week we have the exact opposite of that. We're like what in the world are you saying John? This is a hard text to read and so before we get much into this, we need to ask the question, what in the world does this passage even mean? What is John trying to say here?

There're two options that we could take. We could either say that the sin that John speaks about that leads to death or that doesn't lead toward death, that death in life here is talking about spiritual death. Sin that leads towards spiritual death. Sin that leads towards not spiritual death. Or we can talk about physical death and physical life. A sin that leads towards physical death and sin that leads towards or does not lead toward physical death, instead physical life. And for the sake of time, I'm just going to give two reasons why we should, I think along with the majority of commentators on this section, say that he is speaking about spiritual life and spiritual death and not physical.

First physical death and physical life would seem nearly illogical in this section. I mean just read what he says in verse 16, *"If anyone sees his brother committing a sin that does not lead toward physical death."* So, he's not going to die. *"He will ask, and God will give to him physical life."* What? That doesn't make any sense. Why does he need physical life if he already has it, if he's not going towards physical death? It makes no sense. Second perhaps the strongest evidence that John is talking about spiritual life and spiritual death is that the word for life he uses here in this text is used ten times total in 1 John. And all ten times is referring to the eternal life and the spiritual life that we have in Jesus. And actually, he has another word that he uses for life to refer to physical life. And he uses it twice.

In chapter 2:16, refers to the pride of life and in chapter 3:17 that we read today where it says *"the goods of the world"* or the life of the world. And he's speaking negatively about physical life. And he uses a completely different word than he uses here. Indeed, this word is used to refer to the eternal life found in Jesus no more than five verses ago. Where it says in verse 11 of our chapter, *"this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has a Son has life; he does not have the Son does not have life. These things are written that you might know that you have eternal life."* And then right after that it would be quite odd for him to just all of a sudden refer to physical life in death. So, we're going to say that John refers to spiritual life here. Now with that said like try to put this passage together, together. The difference between the sin that does not lead to death and the sin that does lead to death is not the sin itself but the person who is committing the sin.

Notice what he says right there in verse 16, *"If anyone sees his brother committing a sin that does not lead toward death."* He never says that a brother could even commit a sin that leads toward death. A genuine brother, a child of God, who has confessed his sins, been forgiven of his sins and cleansed of all his unrighteousness cannot, is not, even able to sin in such a way that would lead toward everlasting death. This is what John says right there in verse 18, *"Everyone who has been born of God does not continue sinning."* Right? And that is why we should pray for brothers that we see committing sin.

We discover they're committing sin, and we know it to be true that those who are truly born of God do not commit sin in such a way that would lead them toward eternal death. Which would be unrepentantly habitually all the way through to the end of their life. And we know instead that God keeps them and saves them and brings them back to genuine repentance and faith continually throughout all their life. And so, we pray for them that he would once again give them the experience of life, the joy of their salvation once again. And the reason that John says that he's not speaking toward praying for the sin that leads to death. That does not mean that he's saying don't pray for unbelievers in your life.

That's not what he's saying. He's just saying I'm not talking about that right now. I'm talking about loving your brother. And the good news is your brother will never sin in a way, if he's truly a child of God if he's truly a brother, he'll never sin in a way that leads to unrepentant habitual sin into eternal death because he has been given eternal life in Jesus' name. So now that we know what this passage is saying. You kind of got a grasp on it. What does that mean that we're supposed to do? What does John want us to do? How does he want us to love our brothers? Two ways he says.

Number one, look out for them. Number two, pray for them. First John tells us to love your brother by looking out for your brother. You see what he says in verse 16 once again, *"If anyone,"* what, *"sees his brother committing a sin that does not lead to death."* Before you can pray for your brother you need to first see him. You cannot know how to pray for him if you have not seen him if you're not looking out for him. I'm not convinced that John is only envisioning a situation where we kind of stumble upon a brother sinning. And oops, I walked in on you sinning now I can pray for you. I think John envisions here that we would constantly have our eyes placed on one another, looking out for another, seeing one another constantly. That means if we do sin, we can pray for another and as such give each other life.

My friends are we active in the overseeing of one another's souls or are we passively coasting in our fellowship with one another? How are we supposed to follow Jude's command to snatch one another out of the fire if we don't even see one another drifting towards it? Right. When we come together as a body, let's actually come together and be in each other's lives. Don't just passively sit in the pew and leave. Whenever you have conversations, just don't talk about sports or your hobbies or your work this week. But genuinely look after one another as a family. Let's know and be known by one another such that we can love one another well by seeing what is actually going on in each other's lives. Let's make phone calls, or send texts throughout the week, or send emails, go each other's houses. Do something throughout the week to just check in to see how they're doing. Let's ask hard questions of one another. The ones that really get down to the heart level. Let's get to know each other more than just on the surface level. Let's

truly look after each other. And then after doing so John says second how you love your brother well is by praying for them in light of that. Pray for them.

He says he will ask, and God will give to him life. God will give to him life. As Paul says in Galatians 6:1 & 2, *"Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."*

John tells us here that all sin is unrighteousness. All sin he says is unrighteous. All sin is serious. And therefore, we know that if a brother is sinning that he is doing something very seriously wrong in the eyes of God. That the fellowship that he has with God is strained that he's grieving the Holy Spirit. We also know that John told us in 1 John 1:9, *"If you confess your sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from unrighteousness."* He knows if he prays for them that God as he says in verses 14 & 15 from last week, *"that we have confidence that he will answer anything that we ask if it is according to his will."*

So that means when we see your brother sinning, we know what we must do is turn to the Lord for them. Ask the Lord to give that brother renewed life. Spiritual invigoration, an eye to see his sin, and repent. An eye to see the glory of God and return to him. A heart that desires to be in fellowship with the Lord and to have life and life abundantly. Here John reminds us of the power of prayer. That we can go before the Lord, ask whatever we want according to his will and utilize that privilege not for you know some kind of selfish motive but actually for the benefit of our brothers and sisters in the Lord. We through our bearing of one another up in love through prayer can be conduits of God's work in one another as he draws our brothers and sisters closer to himself.

Let's brothers and sisters love one another in this way. By looking after each other and by praying for each other. And those ways we can practically do this is that on Sunday morning in addition to not only asking good questions to get to know each other more throughout the week as we check in on one another not to just then walk away. But to pray together, to bear one another's burdens there, to lift one another up in prayer in our personal prayer times throughout the week, to attend prayer meeting on Wednesday nights where we can break up in smaller groups and talk about these things and pray together. Throughout the week, let us love one another in this way. Let's call another, meet-up, send texts, and emails. Don't neglect the meeting together of one another so it means we might stir one another up to love and good works and pray for one another in these ways.

Love your brother. That's what John says in his letter. He said you should walk away at least with this one thing to love your brother and you can do so in that way. Second John says remember this forgetful people, remember from my letter, that you also need to walk in the light. To walk in the light. We saw this all the way back and 1 John 1:5, *"God is light. This is the message that we have heard from him and proclaim to you, God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all."* And from that point forward John has expounded and applied and shown the implications of the fact that we have fellowship with the God who is light. He has told us over and over again who we are now in Jesus Christ who is the light that came into

the world and it's making the darkness pass away. He has told us over and over again that we are able to abide in him, have fellowship with God, have a new identity in him, have a life that reflects the light in our obedience to him. And we would live a certain way that we not only in other words know who we then are but also know what we're supposed to be doing. And so, it's fitting here that whenever John is trying to remind us of everything that we might forget from his letter that he does exactly that in this point.

He says first of all you need to know who you are to know the right things to know what we know to be true about ourselves in Jesus and then to act like it. He first tells us that we need to know who we are and then to be who we are. First, he says knowing who you are is important. Knowing the right things. It's something that John has been clear about in this letter repeatedly. We're not going to read these passages; I'm just going to list them for you. Where he says, *"by this we know"* and then he says something. *"By this we know or in order that you might know."* In chapter 2:3, 2:5, 2:21, 3:5, 3:10, 3:16, 3:19, 3:24, chapter 4:2, 4:6, 4:13, 5:2, and 5:13 and these verses today. He wants us to know something. To know lots of things. To not forget things about who we are in Jesus. Without a shadow of doubt, he wants us to be assured of core truths about our faith.

And the first one of three that he tells us at the end of his letter to summarize all of those verses about knowing, he says first of all that Christ keeps us from continuing in sin and protects us from the devil. He says in verse 18, *"We know that everyone who has been born of God does not continue sinning, but the one born of God keeps him, and the evil one does not touch him."* You might look at 1 John and come away thinking after reading verses like these, or in verses in chapter 3:4-10 and come away thinking, oh, man I might not even be a Christian. What was going on because John is very polar. He's like you're in or you're out. You're in the light or you're not. You're either obedient or you're not. You're either in the light or you're out of it. You're walking with the Lord or you're walking towards death. You're a child of God born of God or you're a child of the devil like Cain. He even goes so far as to say in chapter 3, *"that the one who is born of God is not able to continue sinning."* It's actually impossible for him to continue sinning. And so maybe you don't walk away thinking I'm not a Christian, but you say man, I might be a Christian, but man do I have a lot of work to do? Man, do I have so much stuff I need to do? Walk in the light, make sure I'm helping my brother, doing all this, doing all that. That's oh my goodness, that's a lot John.

We go back to last week talking about how the commands of God are not burdensome. But he says that we learn in this letter that everything is not actually dependent upon us here. That that life of continuing in not sin but in righteousness, that life of continuing in the light of walking in the light, who is it actually on. Most of the weight is on. Who is it on from this verse? Not ourselves. Notice what he says. The one who was born of God namely Jesus the only begotten of the father. the one who has been begotten of God from eternity keeps him and the evil one does not touch him.

What an amazing reversal of our expectation. We might expect to think that everything's dependent upon us. That everything, oh man, I have so much stuff I need to do. But the good news is today Christian is that John says no, no Jesus Christ keeps you. He keeps you. What John says that we should take away from all those texts and read in 1 John it is the Lord Jesus, the only begotten of the father, who is with the father who has manifest to us the word, the eternal life guards us, keeps us, protects us, doesn't let us go. He will

hold us fast. It is he who will keep you from falling into temptation. It is he who conquered and allows you to conquer with him. It is he who ultimately will keep you from stumbling. It's a sinless one who will let you and allow you and give you the power to walk away of righteousness and to flee from sin. Is indeed the righteous one who has made you righteous and who teaches you to walk in his ways. It is the one who obeyed even to the point of death. Death on a cross whose obedience has been given to you so that you might be able to obey as well. It is the one who has purchased your salvation who has guaranteed your state as a child of God that allows you to not do works for salvation, but because of it.

Let us never get it twisted that from new birth to death or actually from new birth to eternal life the word, the life, the eternal life, Jesus Christ is the one who keeps you and I. We might face temptation. We might face temptation John says even from the devil himself, but he can't touch you believer. He can't touch you. He will never be able to drag you down to hell with him. The Lord holds you in the palm of his hand. He will give you the strength, the way out, the ability to persevere and to conquer with him. And so, believers let us entrust ourselves to the Lord. What truth can calm the troubled soul? God is good guys. God is good. He keeps us. As Philippians 2:12-13 says, *"work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to learn to work for his good pleasure."* It's as Jude 24 says, *"Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy."* We know that for sure today. Just listen to John. We know that to be sure. We know it. Do you believe or know it? Do you know it? It is true. It is true of you.

Second John says that we are not of this devil run world. He says in verse 19, *"We know,"* second, *"that we are of God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one."* We are of God. We are of him. John has over and over said, use terminology like; born of God, child of God, little children. Throughout the entire letter John is remind us over and over again of exactly who we are. We who were once not sons of God, who were once separated from God are actually considered his children because of Jesus Christ. And because of that John emphasizes more in this point that we are not of the world anymore. That there's identifiable split between those who are of God and those who are of the world. And specifically, that those who are of the world just are in the lap of the devil underneath his power, underneath his control doing the wills and whims of Satan. As Ephesians 2 says the world is run by *"the prince of the power of the air."* Because we know this friends we shouldn't be surprised when we see it. We shouldn't be surprised when we see it at all.

John told us back in 1 John 3:13-14, *"Do not be amazed, brothers, if the world hates you. We know that we have passed from death to life."* We're different than them. We're completely different and we need to be careful brothers and sisters that we remember that distinction between us and that that distinction is a good God-designed thing. The world to try to convince us that we are on the wrong side of history that we're on the wrong side of the lines and we might be tempted in order to gain their favor to gain their trust to get them into our church doors. We can make really good and godly sounding reasons for it but we might make changes to the distinctions, blur the lines a little bit and how we do things around here. Blur the lines a little bit between you know you're really not so much different you and I. But that distinction is vital between the church and the world. Because God has assigned his name only to one of those and his glory is on the line. We are not of this world. We are not of this world. The whole world lies

in the power of the evil so don't be surprised also whenever you see the things on the news that are so depressing so troubling. The whole world is literally going to hell in a handbasket because it lies underneath the power of the evil one. Know that you were born of God, know that you are not of this world, and know that the sinful witness of this world is to be expected because of the ruler they follow.

Third, we know from 1 John this great truth that Christ has given us a new understanding for knowing him through our union with the true God and eternal life itself. John says in verse 20, he says, *"but we know that the Son of God has come and that he has given to us understanding."* Why? *"In order that,"* verse 20, *"we might know the true one; and we are in the true one and in his son Jesus Christ. This one is the true God and the eternal life."* By the spirit of God, we have come to a new understanding. Our eyes have been opened. The scales have been dropped. Our hearts have been made new to be able to know God. As John says in 1 John 2:20-21, *"But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and you have all knowledge. I write to you, not because you do not know the truth, but because you know it."* How about 1 John 2:27, *"But the anointing that you received from him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone should teach you. But as anointing teaches you about everything."* Paul says in 1 Corinthians 2 that because of the spirit of God we have what's called the mind of Christ. The understanding of the Son of God himself. Why? Why would we need the mind of Jesus? Why would we need understanding that's different from what we had before? Because as Galatians 4:8 said, *"Formerly, when you did not know God, you were enslaved those that by nature are not gods."* We didn't know God, friends. We didn't know him. We suppressed the truth.

We didn't want to know him. We were completely against him. We did not have fellowship with him. And our minds were constantly given to ourselves and to the things of this world and to creatures and to the glory of man rather than the glory of God. But then as we read in 1 John 1, what happened? The word, the life, the eternal life who is with the father, he was made manifest. He revealed the glory of the Triune God. We have beheld his glory. Glory as of the only begotten of the Father. Full of grace and truth Jesus Christ came and not only did he come but he gives his people new hearts and new eyes to see. New understandings to know. New understandings to understand. New minds as John says in order that we might know the true one. That we might even know Jesus Christ the true God and eternal life.

In this technological day and age, you know, we can know so much information. You have your phones at your fingertips. You can look up anything you want. You can even speak into it. So, you're like Siri or if you have an Alexa or something, you know, you say Alexa tell me about this. It is at our fingertips all the time. We can know stuff and know stuff and know stuff. You can go on to AI and chat GPT and say hey give me all the information you can possibly give me on this thing in this format in this way. I just want to know it all. We weren't created to know all the things about the universe friends. The purpose of our lives, the purpose for our creation, is to know one thing and one thing only. It's actually a person. It is the triune God himself. John 17:3 says, *"this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent."* Friends of Christian life is not about believing once and then coasting. It's not about following a set of rules or doctrines. It's not just about attending a church and showing up and serving in the youth group or serving in the tech team or serving or wherever. That's not what the Christian life is about. It's not even merely about just reading the Bible. Eternal life, the purpose therefore for our life, the essence of what life is, is to know God. Is to just know more of him, to know all we can about him, to grow

continually and forever in our knowledge and our appreciation and our and our in the awesomeness of who he is. That is the purpose for all of our lives. All of this is just garbage if we're not knowing God. Jesus Christ is the true God and eternal life itself. He's not merely a man. He's not merely a figment of our imaginations. He is the true God. The eternal life.

You want to know what it's like to live to truly feel alive? Then know him, just know him. You know, how might that change how we live our Christian lives, friends, if we know this to be true. How might that change how we read our Bibles? Instead of just asking the question what does it say, which is a good thing to do. We constantly are seeking Jesus. God, how can I know him? How can I know more? How can I just get something a glimpse of his glory today? How can I know him more today because that is what it means to live. The Lord will promise you everything under the sun for what it means to truly live. But we know as John says, *"that we have been given understanding from God himself in order that we might truly live by knowing God."* Those are the three things that John reminds us of about walking light, about who we are, about what the Christian life looks like, what it's all about. And he says well in light of knowing who you are you need to be who you are as well. To actually go out and act like it. To live it.

As John says in 1 John 1:6 right after saying, *"that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all."* He says, *"If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth."* Over and over again we've seen in 1 John that you cannot say one thing and do another. That the Christian life is not one merely confessed, but it is lived. John abruptly ends the letter with this command to his audience in verse 21, *"Little children, keep yourselves from idols."* That's it. While it may be abrupt, it is familiar with familiar language we have seen throughout the letter. Right? He refers to them as little children. He's even doing exactly what we are seeing here, knowing who you are and being you are. He's saying, hey you are little children that is who you are. Now how do you act like it? It's by keeping yourselves from idols.

In light of verse 20 we see the word true show up three different times. We might know the true one. We are in the true one. This one is the true God. Then right after that he mentions idols. Well, no wonder. Because if we aren't going to be following the true God, we're going to be following something else. If we aren't going to be knowing the true one, we're going to be knowing some false one somewhere. If we're not going to be abiding in and fellowshiping with the true God, true life, then we're going to be off abiding in some other God. In John's immediate context he might be thinking of the false teachers that he mentioned back in chapter 2 or in chapter 4 who say that Jesus is not the Christ. They worship a false Jesus.

You might be saying that those who say that Jesus didn't come in the flesh are worshiping idols. Certainly, he wants them not to do those two things. But think about what else this title of idols might extend to in light of what we just read. What things in our lives are satisfying us more than the one true God. What things in our lives do we think give us life. That if I have that well, that's what it means to be alive. What things in our lives do we seek to know more than God. The answer to any of these questions is your idol. Our idols. If I just have that right amount of money in my bank account oh, I will be truly alive. Oh, if I just had this job promotion man would that be the best thing. I'm going to know all I can about my own job

and just for sake all of the responsibilities, just know as much as I can about this that means I can just live this. This is my life. This is my identity. This is what I am. Well, the Lord tells us to love our families. Man, well, I can't go to church. It's hard to ever go to church because I just got to take care of my family. I hardly ever read my Bible because I'm doing all these great fun things with my family. Not saying that those things are bad, but how easy they can be to vault above the one true God. The eternal life.

John pleads with us today little children flee that, run from it, keep yourselves from it. Flee from those idols that are broken cisterns and that hold no water and come to the fountain of life itself in Jesus. Don't just know who you are but be who you're supposed to be. Be who you are. Walk in the light. John has taught us in this final passage that the life of fellowship with God is expressed and looks like and is characterized by loving your brother and then walking in the light knowing who you are and being like it.

First and foremost, John says three times that we know, we know something for sure. My question is believers do you know do you know? Do you have any idea the riches that you have in Jesus? Have you taken a second to realize what is true of you in Christ? Do you know it to be true?

Or have you kind of forgotten it by the wayside because of all the things of life that so easily get in the way. We talked last week about our struggle with assurance and how it's sometimes rooted in the fact that we do not think of ourselves in terms of the new reality we have in Christ as those who conquer. And otherwise not knowing who you are leads to a lack of assurance.

And similar things here, if we don't know that we are of God we don't remember that we've been given understanding to know God. That's the purpose of our lives. If we don't know that the Lord keeps us, we can be thrown into all kinds of uncertainty. So, I ask this week that we write these things down on a napkin, on a note card, in your Bible, somewhere in your house, on your hand, on your arm. Write it down somewhere. Remember it. Memorize these verses. Memorize all the things the Bible says about you for those who believe in Jesus and know them for sure. Know them today. You'll completely change the way that you live.

And second if you know it, if you're like I know that Colby this is old news snore fest, I would say you're probably right but are you living it? Are you being who you're supposed to be? Are you being who you are? Or are you just like the man in James 1 who looks at his natural face in the mirror and says I've known that for a long time. And then walks away and forgets at once what he was like. John reminds us of the genuine life and fellowship with God. The life that comes in Jesus alone looks like knowing and doing, being in the light and walking in it and loving your brother as you do so.

And this is the word of God from the book of 1 John which I now commit to your further study and faithful obedience until the true God and eternal life returns.

Let's pray together.

Father, we thank you for your word. We thank you for the book of 1 John. For all that we've learned from it and for how above all things that you have taught us in it to love each other as we love you. And that we are a new creation in Christ. And that we can now live in that new light in him. By the way we pray that you would be with us as we do this. That we would remind ourselves that you are the one who keeps us and we do not keep ourselves. We entrust ourselves to you as we seek to do these things this week.

In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

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