

# That You May Know (Part 2)

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[ 0 : 00 ] 1 John chapter 5, verses 18 through 21 will be the passage I'll preach from, but let's read 13 through 21 if you'd stand with me as we honor the reading of God's word together.

! I ask all these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life. And this is the confidence that we have toward him that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.

And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the request that we have asked of him. If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, he shall ask and God will give him life.

To those who commit sins that do not lead to death. There is sin that leads to death. I do not say that one should pray for that. All wrongdoing is sin, but there is sin that does not lead to death. We know that everyone who has been born of God does not keep on sinning, but he who has been born of God protects him, and the evil one does not touch him.

[ 1 : 21 ] We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding so that we may know him who is true, and we are in him who is true, in his Son, Jesus Christ.

He is the true God and eternal life. Little children, keep yourselves from idols. May God add a blessing to the reading of his word.

Would you please be seated? Amen. In John 11, Jesus informs his disciples that Lazarus, his friend, has died.

And he informs them of that in a strange way. Let's look at that. John 11, 14 through 15. Imagine being one of Jesus' disciples at this time and trying to process this perplexing statement.

Jesus, you're glad you weren't there to prevent Lazarus' death, and somehow you're doing that, or not doing that, is going to have a positive influence on what I believe.

[ 3 : 03 ] Added to the confusion was that Lazarus' body was housed in a tomb in Bethany, a village two miles from Jerusalem where Jesus' enemies were gathered and primed to arrest him and to kill him.

Those facts hadn't escaped the notice of one of Jesus' disciples, Thomas. John 11, 16, it says, So Thomas called the twin, said to his fellow disciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him.

Thomas' concerns and fears weren't unfounded, But his feelings caused him to doubt Jesus' words And doubt that Jesus was in control of the situation, Which would somehow, again, as Jesus said, would increase his and the other disciples' belief.

But we should give Thomas credit. Even though he had doubts, He trusted Jesus enough to go with him.

In this moment, His trust in Jesus Overcame his doubts. But there would be another moment Where that wouldn't be the case.

[ 4 : 35 ] All four Gospels record statements That Jesus made about his death And resurrection before Those events happened. John chapter 14 through 16 records The words Jesus spoke to his disciples In the hours that preceded His arrest and crucifixion.

He tells them repeatedly About the things That are going to happen imminently. And he tells them repeatedly To not be afraid.

He tells them not to doubt. He reminds them That God is in control. John 20 records Jesus' resurrection And his first appearance To the women that followed him On that first Easter morning And then later that evening When he appeared to his fearful disciples Hiding behind locked doors. Thomas was not with them. However, Thomas was not with them. And later, When the disciples told him That they had seen Jesus, Thomas said to them, Well, I knew it.

I remembered that time I doubted Jesus back in Bethany. You remember that, guys? I thought we were all going to die. But instead, Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead.

[ 6 : 04 ] He did strengthen our belief in him. Of course, it was just a matter of time Before he rose from the dead. Of course, if you know the Bible, That is not what Thomas said.

What did Thomas say? Well, in John 20, 25, We read that Thomas, When he heard the disciples' reports That Jesus had risen and was alive, Said this, Unless I see in his hands The mark of the nails And place my finger Into the mark of the nails And place my hand into his side, I will never believe.

We live in a culture That encourages doubt. A culture that celebrates uncertainty And discourages certainty.

A culture that promotes Seeing things in shades of gray Instead of seeing things in black and white. And people who live in those gray areas, They're skepticism.

And they're skeptical about everything. And in our culture, Such a person is deemed to be, More authentic.

[ 7 : 23 ] More human. More virtuous. Owen Strand said, You could sum up the spirit of the age like this. We're being encouraged to have faith in doubt.

After Thomas expressed his doubt, In John 20, 25, The next verses say, That eight days later, His disciples were inside again, And Thomas was with them.

Although the doors were locked, Jesus came in and stood among them, And he said, Peace be with you. Then he said to Thomas, Put your finger here. See my hands.

And put out your hand. And place it on my side. Do not disbelief. But believe.

What I want you to see here, Is that Jesus, Does not encourage, And he does not celebrate, Thomas' doubt.

[ 8 : 31 ] Jesus didn't say, Do not believe only, But also disbelieve, For that is what it means to be your true self. Jesus didn't say, Do not disbelieve, But trust in your feelings.

Nowhere in scripture will you ever find Jesus say anything like that. Nowhere in scripture will you ever find him telling people to doubt God and his word.

In fact, you'll find the exact opposite. For example, James 1, 5 through 8 says, If any of you lacks wisdom, Let him ask God who gives generously to all without reproach, And it shall be given him.

But let him ask in faith with no doubting. For the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord.

He is a double-minded man, Unstable in all his ways. James says that doubting God makes you unsure. And it makes you unstable.

[ 9 : 39 ] Doubt is not a fruit of the Spirit. And it does not honor God. Think of it this way. Where do we first see doubt in the Bible?

Think about it. Where do we first see doubt in the Bible? Genesis 3. Who is the source of that doubt? Satan is.

And what does he use doubt to attack? God's word. He says to Eve, Did God actually say? Jesus called Satan the father of lies.

And doubt is a tool that he uses to lead people away from God and away from his word. As he tempts them to exchange the truth for a lie.

And listen, Satan is not idle in doing this. And Satan fights dirty. The Apostle Peter encourages believers in 1 Peter 5-7 to cast all their anxieties on Jesus.

[ 10 : 54 ] To cast all of their discontent, their discouragement, their despair, their suffering on the Lord. All these feelings that cause them to doubt God's love, God's goodness, and God's grace, and God's sovereignty.

He says, Cast all those things upon the Lord. And in the next verses, in verses 8 and 9, he says, Be sober-minded. Be watchful. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour.

Resist him. Firm in your faith. See, the devil is not out for a little nibble. He wants to tear you to shreds and gobble you up.

Satan seeks to exploit our emotions. He wants us to define reality according to how we feel because he knows how overwhelming and all-consuming our feelings can be.

This is why we must be sober-minded. This is why we must trust in God's word more than we trust in our feelings. Our feelings are fleeting.

[ 12 : 12 ] But God's word is fixed. It's steady. It's firm. It's solid. You can trust it. You should trust it. You should trust it.

More than you trust yourself. More than you trust your feelings. Because you are capable, as am I, of being deceived, but God is not.

Because God loves and because God cares about you, he has given you his word to serve as a light to your feet, as a guide to keep you from falling into deception, to keep you from trusting untrustworthy sources, and to liberate your mind from doubt.

Jesus rebuked Thomas for his doubts, but he did so with compassion. God knows us. He knows that at times doubt is something that we struggle with.

And in his kindness, he's given us the book of 1 John to help us know that we belong to him.

[ 13 : 26 ] And in knowing that, to put our doubts to rest. He knows that we struggle at times to trust his grace.

He knows that at times the evil one whispers and that the world we live in is constantly trying to lure us away from him. So he says repeatedly through this letter, you can know that you are mine.

And you can know that I have a firm grip on you. You should know that you can trust me.

Don't doubt. As I mentioned last week, John uses a rendering of that phrase we know 22 times in this letter. Seven of those occur in the verses that we read this morning.

These statements, they form a basis of assurance for the believer. They are objective, not subjective.

[ 14 : 33 ] They are not based on feelings. They're based on facts. John lays out the facts in this letter. To this point, he said, you can know you're a true Christian and others can know that you're a true Christian if you believe the right things.

If you're growing in your obedience to God and in your love for his church. Bottom line, Christians are people who know Jesus. And in knowing Jesus, they know the truth.

And that truth is so awesome, so wonderful, so transformational, so freeing, that it overcomes whatever doubts they may have.

Christians are people who live unashamed and unafraid because they have experienced the perfect love of Christ that casts out fear and overcomes their doubt.

Christians are people who know Jesus. Christians are people who know Jesus. And they know what knowing Jesus means. And that knowledge always gives them reason to rejoice.

[ 15 : 42 ] Always. And so the main idea for this morning's sermon is the same as last week. That's really the second part of last week's sermon. Is that it's awesome to know Jesus. It is awesome to know Jesus.

Again, John concludes with five truths about what it means to know Jesus, to know him savingly.

And as I shared last week, as I prepared this sermon, as I was reading through these verses and these truths, I couldn't help but keep thinking, it is awesome to know Jesus.

It's wonderful to know Jesus. And I think that that is the thought that John wants to leave his readers with.

That it is awesome to know Jesus. Well, why does this matter? Corey Tenboom said, If you look at the world, you'll be distressed.

If you look within, you'll be depressed. If you look at God, you'll be at rest. So my hope is that God, through his word, will put us all, put you to rest this morning.

[ 16 : 55 ] If you're an unbeliever, we're so glad that you're here. My hope and my prayer is that God, through his word, through his spirit, will call you to salvation. That you will know Jesus.

That you will know the truth. That you'll be liberated and free from your sin and doubt. And have the certainty of knowing what it means to know and follow Jesus Christ. How awesome that is.

Believer, the world needs people who know the truth. They need people who love the truth. They need people who aren't afraid of the truth.

They aren't afraid to share the truth. It's okay to feel your feelings. But don't surrender to them. Surrender them to Christ instead.

And so my hope is that for all of us this morning, that the Holy Spirit will fill our hearts with joy. And reflecting on how awesome it is to know Jesus. In these five truths that John presents us with as he closes this book.

[ 17 : 58 ] I'll review the first two that we covered last week. The first truth. Why it's awesome to know Jesus is that to know Jesus is to have eternal life.

God doesn't play guessing games. He doesn't want us to act as children who doubt or question his love. And our relationship with him.

Like the kid who pulls the petals off of a flower wondering, does he love me, does he love me not? He wants us, his people, to be confident in knowing that we, through Christ, have eternal life.

And again, as I shared last week, I know for my family, for my wife, for my children, I don't ever want them to doubt or feel unsure of my love for them. And I'm a sinful human being. How much more then does God desire that his children and Jesus desire that his bride, his church, be confident of his love?

Well, infinitely more. He wants you to know that in Christ you have eternal life. And that eternal life starts the moment you're saved and it stretches out forever into eternity.

[ 19 : 10 ] That was the first truth. The second is that to know Jesus is to have answered prayer. To know Jesus is to have answered prayer. Verses 14 through 15 address the petitions that we make to God in prayer.

Through Christ, we have access. We have permission to speak openly, freely, and boldly to God the Father. We have the promise that when we pray according to his will, that he answers our prayers.

Verses 16 through 17 address prayers of intercession. We are to pray for other Christians when they stumble in sin. We are to pray for unbelievers that God would be gracious and merciful to save them.

However, we understand in all of these things that God does not answer to us. He is not obligated to obey us and know is an answer. And when know is the answer, we trust that God, as he says in his word, works all things together for the good of those who love him.

And he has an infinitely good reason for whatever answer he gives. And we trust that no matter what the answer is, his grace is sufficient always.

[ 20 : 23 ] Now, the third truth that makes knowing Jesus so awesome is that to know Jesus is to overcome sin. To know Jesus is to overcome sin.

Look again at verse 18. We know that everyone who has been born of God does not keep on sinning, but he who was born of God protects him. And the evil one does not touch him.

John here is reiterating a principle that he already stated in this letter in chapter 3, verse 9. His point there, as it is here, is that no one who has been transformed by the new birth and salvation goes on living in an unbroken pattern of sin.

Everyone who has been born of God, who knows Jesus savingly, they have a new relationship with God.

And as a result of that, they have a new relationship with sin. Sin is not something they minimize.

[ 21 : 29 ] It's not something they rationalize. It's not something they excuse any longer. It's not something that they blame other people for. It is not something that they hide.

It's something that now being in Christ, they resist. It is something that they fight. It is something that they seek to kill. Living in sin and living in Christ are incompatible things.

They may sometimes meet, but they can never live together. In harmony. This made me think about when I was first dating Danny, my wife.

And I had a really good friend. And she couldn't stand him. And he didn't like her. Because she was affecting my relationship with him.

And so it seemed like he did all that he could do to try to sabotage our relationship. And obviously, you know what choice I made.

[ 22 : 38 ] I realized these two relationships cannot coexist. There's not harmony there. One wants one thing, the other wants another. And thank God I chose the better.

And also, that friend became a Christian. Later on, a few years ago, he actually came to our church. And we went out to lunch with him afterwards. He's a changed man.

Praise God that he is. But at that time, I realized I could not have a healthy relationship with my future wife while being in a relationship with someone who wanted that relationship to end.

In a similar way, when God saves a person, he transforms that person. They're no longer a slave to sin, as the Bible says.

The Apostle Paul talks about it in length in Romans chapter 6, beginning in verse 17. But thanks be to God that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed.

[ 23 : 39 ] And having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. I am speaking in human terms because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, leading to sanctification.

For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death.

But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life. Those who have truly been saved, those who truly know Jesus, the Bible says, can never fall back into a pattern of unbroken sin.

Sin is no longer the pattern of a Christian in their life. John is affirming, understand here, the purity of our lives, not perfection.

Something he addressed in chapter 3, verses 2 through 3. Future glorification, perfection, impacts present sanctification, practice. Becoming more like Christ.

[ 25 : 05 ] John also says in this verse that the one who knows Jesus overcomes sin because God protects them. He keeps them from wandering away.

My favorite hymn is, come thou fount of every blessing. And my favorite verse in that hymn is, prone to wander, Lord I feel it, prone to leave the God I love.

Here's my heart. Sorry, take and seal it. Seal it for thy courts above. Makes me think of those handcuffs that parents used to put on their children when I was growing up.

You know what I'm talking about? Maybe you don't. I'll share with you. One cuff would go on the kid. And then it would be connected to maybe like a five-foot-long cord. And the other cuff would be on one of the parents. And they were often put on rambunctious children who were prone to wander.

[ 26 : 12 ] Out in a crowd, wherever they were, kid would see something and want to go for it. And they went for it until that cord ran out of slack.

And then, bam, not going to get what you wanted. And, you know, maybe some people would call that child abuse today. But it was effective.

It worked. Those kids didn't get lost or taken away. In a similar way, the Bible says that God keeps what he saves.

He protects. He guards what is his. He keeps his children tethered to him. John 17, 12, Jesus said, While I was with them, praying to the Father, I kept them in your name, which you have given me. I have guarded them. Not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. 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.

[ 27 : 27 ] 1 Peter 1, 3 through 5 says, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Now, Jesus, by his work on the cross, obtained our salvation, and now through his work in heaven, he maintains our salvation.

Hebrews 7, 25 says, Consequently, he, speaking of Jesus, is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

The evil one cannot touch what God has saved. The word touch in the Greek that John uses in verse 18 means to fasten to, like a leech or something like that.

Gross, right? To fasten to, to lay hold of, or to grab with an intent to harm. Satan can assault, but he cannot seize the person who knows Jesus.

[ 28 : 57 ] The devil cannot snatch from God what he has a firm grip of. So in the ultimate sense, the believer knows Jesus.

And in knowing Jesus, they overcome sin because they have been born again. They are clothed in his righteousness. And God keeps what God saves by the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit, who we receive when we're saved, we're sealed with, giving us a new nature with new desires to obey

our protector, who keeps us safe from the evil one.

The fourth truth that makes knowing Jesus awesome is that to know Jesus is to belong to God. And these kind of go, well, they go hand in hand.

To know Jesus is to belong to God. Look at verse 19. We know that we are from God and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. Despite the many different political, cultural, and social groups in the world, the Bible says there are only two realms.

Only two. And people belong to one of those two realms, one of those two kingdoms. Either the kingdom of God or the kingdom of Satan.

[ 30 : 26 ] 2 Corinthians 4.4 says, The phrase God of this world or God of this age indicates that Satan is the chief influencer of the ideals, opinions, goals, hopes, and views of the world.

His influence encompasses the world's philosophies, education, commerce, and religions.

They are all under his influence and control. The world takes its cues from Satan in opposition to Jesus.

And those who follow him. Jesus talked about this in John 15, 18 through 19. If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you.

If you are of the world, the world would love you as its own. But because you are of the world. But I chose you out of the world. Therefore, the world hates you.

[ 31 : 54 ] There's no middle ground that exists between these two realms, these two kingdoms.

And you cannot live with one foot in each of those realms, of those kingdoms.

Jesus said in Luke 11, 23, Whoever is not with me is against me. And whoever does not gather with me scatters.

Those who know Jesus should know they belong in his realm, in his kingdom. 1 Peter 2, 9 says of believers, But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

The Bible often depicts those who live in God's realm. And in his kingdom. And it often depicts God's relationship with those who belong to him as a herd of sheep and a shepherd.

God's people being the sheep and God being the shepherd in that illustration. And you know, if you know anything about sheep, it's pretty humbling to be portrayed as a sheep, isn't it?

[ 33 : 33 ] Let's just think about sheep for a second. I don't know how to say this nicely. I don't think there is. I know the kids are here this morning with us.

Sheep are stupid. Sheep are dumb. They're real dumb. They got itty-bitty tiny little brains. And they're also defenseless.

They aren't fast. They can't outrun predators. And they don't have sharp teeth. They don't have claws. They can't fight back.

If they're going to survive, they need a power greater than themselves to defeat their enemies. They need somebody else's power.

They need somebody else's power working on their behalf. Hence the need for the shepherd. John 10, 27 through 30. Jesus said, Jesus makes the point here that his sheep, true believers, they are kept by the power of the Lord.

[ 34 : 45 ] And they shall never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand. My father who has given them to me is greater than all.

No one can snatch them out of my father's hand. I and the father are one. Jesus makes the point here that his sheep, true believers, they are kept by the power of the one who has all power.

Does that make you feel pretty good? Makes me feel good. There is no force. There is no being.

There is no person who has the ability to subdue God in any way.

One of the greatest fears parents have is that their child will be abducted and snatched away from them. Hence the handcuffs. Maybe we're going to bring those things back.

I don't know. But you know, as a good parent, that's one of your greatest fears, isn't it? And rightfully so. You also understand that your power is limited.

[ 35 : 56 ] But God's power has no limits. And that truth, that you belong to God through faith in Jesus Christ, that he has you, that he'll never let you go, and that there's no power, no force who's able to take you out of his hand.

That truth should fill you with joy and relief and courage. If he has you now, he has you forever.

Praise the Lord. And now the fifth truth. To know Jesus is to have truth. To know Jesus is to have the truth. Verse 20.

And we know that the Son of God has come and given us understanding so that we may know him who is true and we are in him who is true and his Son, Jesus Christ.

He is the true God and eternal life. And so here, John is bringing his letter full circle as he comes to an end. Those who know Jesus, he says once more, know the truth.

[ 37 : 12 ] They know that they are safe from the clutches of the evil one. In Jesus, they can confidently say and declare and believe in him. Here is truth.

In Jesus, here is life. In Jesus, here is knowledge. Here is understanding. Jesus is who I need. Jesus is who I have.

And the knowledge that I have received from him satisfies my mind, my heart, and my soul. Is that true for you?

Do you trust Jesus? Or do you trust the world? Or do you trust yourself more? To know that in him, Jesus, you have life, that you have answered prayer, that you have power over sin, that you belong to him, that he is the source of truth.

These are great things. There is a true God. Jesus Christ is his true son. And to know him is to know the truth.

[ 38 : 25 ] But John doesn't end with that. He ends with verse 21. He says, little children, keep yourselves from idols.

John's saying here, there is a true God, but there's also counterfeit gods. In the context of this letter, the idols John is referring to, they aren't so much physical things, physical images, fashioned by people's hands, but spiritual images, fashioned by sinful hearts.

The false teachers, John addressed throughout this letter, upheld the world's philosophies as superior to God's revelation. They presented a different version of Jesus, a different version of salvation, which meant they were preaching a different gospel.

So here once more, John is urging these believers to continue to adhere to the truth they know about Jesus and to keep themselves from being deceived by anything that contradicts the truth that has been revealed to them.

You know, many people call themselves Christians today. especially in our country. But the Christ they claim to know and the God they claim to follow are counterfeits.

[ 40 : 01 ] Their feelings, their emotions, they serve as the hammer and the chisel in which they carve an image of Jesus, of God, that they like.

A God who approves of their sin. A God who serves them and gives them their best life now. A God who tells them, follow your heart, search your feelings, do what's best for you.

In reality, the God they've chiseled in their minds is a God that they've created in their own image. And they believe that they are or can be their own savior.

And that will only end with devastating consequences and disastrous ruin.

in the Lord of the Rings, the central plot device is the dark Lord Sauron's ring of power, which corrupts anyone who tries to use it, however good their intentions might be for putting it on and wielding it.

[ 41 : 24 ] See, the ring amplifies what the bearer's heart desires, magnifying them in idolatrous proportions.

Some good characters in the book want to liberate slaves or preserve their people's lands or visit wrongdoers with just punishment.

All good objectives. But the ring makes them willing to do anything to achieve it.

The good they think they are doing in reality inflicts worse harm on others and on themselves as the ring slowly takes possession of the person wearing it.

they become increasingly enslaved and addicted to it. It drives them to break the rules that they once honored. It causes them to mistrust and hate those who they once called friends.

[ 42 : 35 ] In the same way, idols are spiritual addictions that lead to terrible evil.

the heart of a sinful person will take good things like a successful career, like love, a relationship, material possessions, even family, and they will turn those good things into ultimate things.

They will take those good things and they will deify them in their hearts and make them the center of their lives, thinking they can give them significance, security, safety, fulfillment, salvation.

But they can never truly satisfy. Jesus said in John 4, 14, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst again.

In other words, they will be satisfied. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life. In Jesus, there is satisfaction forever and always.

[ 44 : 05 ] You know, one thing that helps me and I've shared before when it comes to the idols that you, you may not even know that you have them. You may not even know how you've deified these things in your heart.

One thing that's helped me is to think about what do you daydream about? What preoccupies your thoughts throughout the day? What is that thing? That could be the idol that you have put in place of God?

Or it could be your worst nightmare. What is that thing that you fear so much that causes you to doubt God's love, his grace, his ability to keep you secure and safe?

And oftentimes, when you think about one of those two things, it can help you locate what your idol is. But understand, please, that thing, whatever it is, it cannot replace God.

It never will be able to. There will be an endless pursuit that will always end in misery. You cannot be God because you're not created to be God. And because you're created, you could never be God.

[ 45 : 16 ] And you're horrible at it. And so are other people. And that person or that thing that you think is going to give you meaning in life, well, just look at the rich and famous in our culture.

Do they look like they're satisfied with the multiple houses and cars and money that they could spend in 200 lifetimes? No.

All these things are telling you it's not worth it. Don't waste your time. God is telling you today, if you know me, if you know me, if you follow me, you have all that you could ever need.

because what he's able to give, he continually gives in greater supply. To know Jesus is awesome. So how should we adjust our lives according to this message?

Well, I think it's this. Know and stand for the truth that you've received in Jesus Christ. Look, I know that it's hard when you go through certain things in life not to doubt God's grace, not to doubt God's goodness, not to doubt God's control.

[ 46 : 28 ] But I've also experienced so many things in my life that I've learned God has taught me that he's always in control. And a lot of things that I thought were going to be for the better and didn't happen, it ended up a great thing that they didn't happen the way that I thought that they should or were going to.

Know the Lord. Know that he is good, that he is gracious, that he is worth giving your very best to, that he will satisfy and only he can fill your heart in ways that no other thing, no other person can. Know him. Be in his words so that when you have those doubts, when you have those struggles, you're reminded of who he is and the truth that he has given to you and surrender your feelings, your emotions, your thoughts, your doubts to him.

Maybe some of you this morning need to be like the man who went to see Jesus to have him come heal his daughter and he said, I believe, help my unbelief. And maybe that's you.

Like Thomas in that first example, I believe, but there's some things that I'm really, I'm struggling with, those dots not being connected.

[ 47 : 50 ] And if that's you this morning, then you need to spend time, I encourage you with the Lord, that he would relieve your doubts and your fears. And listen too, we need to stand for the truth.

Christians need to be bold and courageous. What do we have to be afraid of? Why do we want to be liked so much by this world that opposes our Savior?

Stand for the truth. Do so like Jesus with compassion, but with courage and conviction. We need people in the church who know the truth and the world needs people from the church who know the truth.

And I encourage you, I challenge you to be that person. Let's pray. Lord, truly it is awesome to know you. Lord, it's awesome to know what it means to be in Christ.

All these promises, these truths that we've gone through as we've concluded 1 John that are true for us. Lord, you know each one of our names, you know each one of our hearts, you know what is causing us to doubt or to be uncertain and unsure.

[ 49 : 12 ] But Lord, you've showed us today in your word that you want us to take these things to you, to bring those things to you.

It's no worth hiding anything from you, Lord, you see it all. But God, you promise us that when we do so, you give us a peace that surpasses understanding. You, in your way, have the ability to direct our hearts, our minds to you and we are able to see things in proper perspective.

God, for those people today, I pray that they would be encouraged to seek you, spend time with you and know that, Lord, your word is true and they can trust it no matter what struggle they might be going through right now and in the future.

God, you have given us your word and your expectation is that we obey it and that we share it.

Lord, we live in a culture that is in desperate need of people who know the truth and who aren't afraid to stand for it and to do so in a way that honors you.

God, I pray for each one of us whom you've saved, whom you've called, that you would encourage us to not be silent, to not sit on our hands and be passive, but to speak the truth in love, knowing that we're saved and that you have us firmly fixed in your grasp and nothing can change that.

[ 50 : 36 ] Lord, I pray that that truth would give us such great courage that your church would be heard in this world in desperate need of the truth.

Lord, thank you for who you are. Thank you for the hope that we have in Jesus Christ, your son, whose name we pray. Amen. Amen.