

That You May Know (Part 1)

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[0 : 00] Turn in your Bible to 1 John chapter 5 verses 13 through 17 as the passage we'll cover this morning.

! But I'm going to read all the way to the end. And so we'll have today, next Sunday, Lord willing to complete our study of 1 John before moving to the book of Ezra.

If you would like to read ahead, I encourage you to do that. But for now, if you have a copy of God's Word, whether that's paper or electronic, would you stand with me? And let's honor the reading of God's Word together, 1 John chapter 5 verse 13 through the end of the book, verse 21.

I write 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.

[1 : 37] 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. We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.

And we know 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?

May God add a blessing to the reading of Jesus Christ.

[2 : 56] Of Scripture. He revealed their hypocrisy. He overruled and He overturned their man-made religious system at every step.

When Jesus began His ministry, when He stayed in the regions surrounding Jerusalem, they tolerated Him.

Somewhat. At least, they did in the beginning. In John 3, Jesus receives a visit from Nicodemus, a member of the Sanhedrin, the group that served as the Supreme Court of Israel, and who stood in opposition to Jesus.

Nicodemus came to Him at night, under the cover of darkness, likely on his own initiative. He and some others in that group were aware that there was something different, that there was something unique, that there was something special about Jesus.

And verse 2 records Nicodemus' opening remarks, and in that statement, He reveals that at least a portion of the Sanhedrin believed what they believed, I should say, about Jesus.

[4 : 26] Let's look at that. John 3, 2. This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, Rabbi, and this is what I want you to see, we know. Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these things that you do unless God is with him.

Nicodemus was certainly aware of John Baptist's ministry and how he had challenged the status quo of the religious leaders of the Jews.

His testimony, John the Baptist, was that Jesus was the Messiah, that He was the Lamb of God who came to take away the sins of the world, that He was the Son of God.

And from that point until this meeting in John 3 with Nicodemus, Jesus began teaching and He began performing miracles with undeniable power.

People knew He was different, and that as Nicodemus stated, that He had come from God. But Jesus had just done something prior to this meeting with Nicodemus in John 3 that was very controversial, that sent shockwaves through Jewish society.

[5 : 52] That event was His cleansing of the temple for the first time. When Jesus saw how the Jewish religious leaders had profaned His Father's house, how they had sought to use that sacred space to profit from people's worship, He was irate.

And He threw them out. An act which further drove a wedge between Him and the religious leaders of Israel, who according to Nicodemus knew, at least some of them knew, that He was from God. But they also knew that He was going against and not along with the culture. He wasn't going to play their game.

So their tolerance soon turned to irritation and envy, especially when they saw the number of Jesus' followers growing.

At this point, Jesus feels the heat, and He knows His time has not yet come, so He heads north and He continues His ministry.

[7 : 06] Now fast forward to Matthew 21. Jesus is back. This is maybe one, two, three years later in Jerusalem. And He's done it again.

He's cleansed the temple for the second time. He's upset the religious leaders' way of doing things once more, but this time, this time they thought He had gone too far.

The tolerance that turned to irritation had now morphed into passionate, vehement hatred. This was the Monday before the Friday when Jesus was crucified.

Over the next few days, Jesus had the temple. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, maybe Thursday, He had the temple basically to Himself as He continued to teach and to heal people.

But the religious leaders would not stand idly by. And this is what I want you to see next in Matthew 21, 23 through 27. Jesus has cleansed the temple for the second time.

[8 : 17] He's in there. He has it basically to Himself. He's been teaching. He's been preaching. He's been healing. And it says, And when He entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to Him as He was teaching and said, Now they want to try to trap Him.

They want to kind of make Him look silly. By what authority are you doing these things? And who gave you this authority? Jesus answered them, I will ask you one question, and if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things.

Here's His question. The baptism of John, from where did it come? From heaven or from man? And they discussed it among themselves, saying, If we say from heaven, He will say to us, Why then did you not believe Him?

But if we say from man, we are afraid of the crowd, for they all hold that John was a prophet. And so they answered Jesus, and this is what I want you to see, We do not know.

We do not know. And Jesus said to them, Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things. They did know.

[9 : 30] They did know. But because they feared people, because they feared admitting they were wrong, and what that admission might cost them, they took the easy way out, saying, We don't know.

We've gone verse by verse through 1 John. As we've gone through this book, John repeatedly uses a phrase in reference to Christians.

And that phrase is, We know. We know. In this short letter, five chapters in length, a rendering of that phrase appears 22 times.

And seven of those 22 appearances occur right here in the verses that we've read this morning. John's concluding remarks reminds us that Christians are people who know.

What is it that they know? Well, let's review 1 John. Christians are people who know God.

[10 : 39] 1 John 2, 3, 13-14, in chapter 4, verse 7. They know that they are in God. Chapter 2, verse 5. They know that they are living in the last hour, the time between Jesus' first and second coming.

Chapter 2, verse 18. They know that Jesus is righteous. Chapter 2, verse 29. They know that one day they will be like Jesus. Chapter 3, verse 2.

They know that Jesus came to take away their sins. Chapter 3, verse 5. They know they are God's children because in Christ they have passed from death to life and are not consumed by hate.

Chapter 3, verses 14-15. They know the love they've received from God through Jesus who in love gave His life to give them life. Chapter 3, verse 16 and chapter 4, verse 16.

They know that God abides in them. Chapter 3, verse 24. Chapter 4, verse 13. They know the Holy Spirit. Chapter 4, verse 2. They know they love God by obeying His commands and by loving God's children.

[11:47] Chapter 5, verse 2. Bottom line, Christians are people who know. They know Jesus.

And in knowing Jesus, they know the truth. And that truth is so awesome, so wonderful, so transformational, so freeing that unlike the religious leaders who feared people, who feared admitting that they were wrong, Christians should be people who live unashamed and unafraid because they have experienced the perfect love of Jesus Christ that casts out all fear.

They know Jesus. They know what knowing Jesus means. And that knowledge gives them reason to rejoice all the time.

And so the main idea for this morning's sermon is that it's awesome to know Jesus. Pretty simple. It is awesome to know Jesus. In this last section, this postscript of John's letter, John concludes with five truths about what it means to know Jesus, to know Him savingly.

[13:07] And as I prepared this sermon and as I read over this passage, I just kept thinking, it's awesome to know Jesus. It's wonderful to know Jesus.

And I think that's the thought that John wants to leave his readers with, that it is awesome to know Jesus. Remember, John is writing to Christians, he's writing to churches that have been rocked by false teachers.

These teachers were teaching things about Jesus that weren't true, but their deception was effective in that it led many to defect from the church.

It's heartbreaking when that happens, isn't it? The deceptions and the defections upset the church. So John writes to distraught people, some doubting, some depressed, some feeling defeated. He desired to remind them of the certainty of their salvation, to remind them of the joy that they have in Jesus, to remind them again that knowing Jesus is awesome.

[14:26] Why does this matter? if you're an unbeliever this morning, we are glad that you're here if you're listening online or whatever. God has brought you to hear this truth because he desires that you know, that you know him, that you know the truth, that you have the truth, that you'll be saved by his son, Jesus Christ.

Believer, this matters because this world needs people who know the truth, who love the truth, and who aren't afraid to share the truth.

And so my hope is that for all of us, the Holy Spirit will fill our hearts with joy in reflecting on how awesome it is to know Jesus.

So we'll get through two of those five truths today and the first is this. To know Jesus is to have eternal life. That's pretty awesome. To know Jesus is to have eternal life.

John begins verse 13 saying, I write these things. These things covers all the things that John has already written in this letter to this point.

[15:47] All the we know statements that I've already read that apply as he continues in verse 13 to you who believe in the name of the Son of God.

Again, the believers that John is writing to have endured a lot, but they haven't given in. While others were deceived, deconverted, and deserted the church, they remained.

But they were shook up. I imagine it must have felt like being in a car accident. Have you ever been in a car accident? You wrecked your car, you totaled your car, but you were able to walk away from it?

You know what I'm talking about. Mentally and emotionally it shakes you up. You're in a daze, you're in a fog, you're rattled. It's hard to process what just happened.

False teachers had wrecked the fellowship of these churches. And John here, once more, is instilling them with confidence, saying, you're going to be fine.

[16:58] I'm writing these things, as he continues in verse 13, that you may know, that you may know that you have eternal life. In the preceding verses, John explained that eternal life is something believers have now.

now. It's both a present possession and a future hope that believers have. In the present, believers are undergoing the process of sanctification.

They are being made, they are being conformed more and more into the image of Jesus. In the future, the process of sanctification reaches its completion, when they will be like Jesus, when they will enter into the final state of our salvation, which is glorification, when the sin nature is done away with.

John wrote about this in chapter 3, verse 2. He said, beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared, but we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, because we shall all see him as he is.

Now, there are two things that are important for us to understand before moving on. First, that eternal life does not so much refer to a duration of time, but to a person.

[18 : 29] John 17 records Jesus' prayer to God the Father, and in verse 3, he defined what eternal life is. John 17, 3, and this is eternal life, that they know you, God the Father, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

Eternal life is received by knowing Jesus personally, knowing that he is the Savior who died and who rose again to save you from the eternal consequences of your sin, knowing that he is also the Lord whom you desire to obey and imitate and follow because of the great love that you have received from him, and knowing that obeying him and following him is worthy and it's worth it. God doesn't play guessing games. He doesn't want his children to doubt or question his love and their relationship with him.

We're not to be like children picking off flower petals, wondering, does he love me? Does he love me not? He wants us to know.

He wants us to be confident. 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.

[20 : 04] How much more so does God desire his children and Jesus desire his bride, his church, to be confident of his love?

Well, infinitely more. To know Jesus is to have eternal life now and forever. He is the narrow gate, he is the narrow path, he is the only way to eternal life.

And to know Jesus is to have eternal life, and that's awesome. Now we go on to the second truth about what Christians know that make knowing Jesus awesome.

To know Jesus is to have answered prayer. To know Jesus is to have answered prayer. Look again with me at verses 14 through 15.

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.

[21 : 12] Confidence in Greek is *parousia* and it literally means freedom of speech. Freedom of speech. In other places it's translated as boldness and openness.

I imagine that many of you have or maybe are currently working for some kind of boss or some kind of supervisor. At some point in the past you've worked for someone who maybe was closed off.

They worked with maybe their door shut. And even when their door was open, because they hadn't attempted to develop any kind of personal relationship with you, you didn't feel like you could enter into their office and you certainly didn't feel like you could enter into their office and speak freely.

You were hesitant, maybe even fearful to approach them. But then maybe you have had a boss or a supervisor who did develop a personal relationship with you.

They liked you. They cared about you. They listened to you. And so you didn't hesitate to walk into their office because you knew that you would be received, that you would be welcomed by them, and that you could speak freely to them.

[22 : 41] And that's the idea that John is conveying here. In Jesus, believers have been granted this kind of access to God the Father.

Hebrews 4, 16 gives believers this encouragement. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in our time of need.

In Ephesians chapter 3, verse 12, the Apostle Paul adds that in Jesus Christ believers have boldness and access with confidence through faith in him.

Christian, you may boldly and freely come to God in prayer with your requests.

God gives you that permission and a promise that God will receive you, that he will hear you, and that he will answer.

[23 : 53] Now, there is a critical, critical component to our asking and God's answering that cannot be skipped over and it cannot be forgotten.

Yes, we have access to God. Yes, we have permission to speak freely, but the requests that we ask of him and that he answers must be according to his will.

According to his will. What does that mean? Well, it means at least a few things. It means or it assumes that the person that is asking desires to obey God's will because they have been saved. It means, again, or assumes that the person who is asking has been saved and wants to do what God wants. John has already mentioned this, 1 John 3, 21-22.

Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God and whatever we ask from him because we keep his commandments and do what he pleases.

[25 : 14] Jesus said something similar in John 15, 7. If you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish and it will be done for you.

When God saves a person, they are transformed spiritually. They have repented of their sins. They've turned from their sins. They continue to confess their sins. They know God. But at the same time, they have an increased desire to know him more.

God has revealed himself in Jesus' son and in his word that his spirit inspired. A true believer knows and loves then the word of God as evidence by their conformity to it, which informs their knowledge of God and instructs them in how they are to pray.

Praying according to God's will also means praying in Jesus' name. Now, I think that some of us have the impression that praying in Jesus' name is like adding the cherry on top.

[26 : 51] You know what I'm talking about? Some of you, when you were a kid, I know I did, whenever I really, really, really, really, really wanted something, I would say pretty please with a cherry on top.

Right? And so some of us treat Jesus' name like that in prayer. God, I really, really, really, really, really want this request answered. Lord, give me that Ferrari.

In Jesus' name, amen. doesn't work that way. I don't have a Ferrari. It hasn't worked for me.

Some of us also have the impression that our prayer won't count, or it won't be heard, it will fail to reach God's ears in heaven unless we finish that prayer prayer by saying, in Jesus' name, as if in Jesus' name are the magic words.

Those are the propellers that make sure our prayer gets up to heaven. We didn't say in Jesus' name, ah, God won't hear that. That's not what it means to pray in Jesus' name either.

[28 : 16] To pray in Jesus' name is more than words. It's an attitude. It's an attitude. John 14, 13-4, Jesus said, whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

To pray in Jesus' name is to desire that he will be glorified by the request. It is to pattern your prayer after the prayer that he modeled for us.

and part of that prayer in Matthew 6-10, your kingdom, God, come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

To pray in Jesus' name is to pray in humble submission to God's will as Jesus did in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Remember Luke 22-42, Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me, nevertheless, not my will, but yours be done.

[29 : 30] The goal of prayer is not to gratify our selfish desires, but to align our wills with God's purposes.

purposes. That is the attitude that prays truly in Jesus' name. Those are the requests that God answers.

Praying according to God's will not only brings glory to the Son, but it brings joy to the believer who prays and asks. Jesus said in John 16, 23-24, Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you.

Until now, you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive that your joy may be full.

When obedient believers delight themselves in Jesus, and they abide in his word, they know how to pray, they know what to pray for, because their wills align with God's purposes, and it fills their heart with joy.

For example, last Sunday, Monty shared a story about his first Sunday visiting our church, six years ago, and that on that Sunday, when he came to visit, we had 80 people in the sanctuary gathered to worship that morning.

[31 : 08] I don't think I've ever shared this story with anybody else before, but back then, on a weekly basis, when everyone else in the office had left for the day, I would walk in this sanctuary up and down these aisles with lights off, and I only stumbled and fell one time.

I got good seeing this place in the dark, and I would walk through our sanctuary, and I'd pray. I prayed what I knew about God from the Bible, and this is how that prayer would often go.

Heavenly Father, I know you love your people. Lord, I know you love your church.

I know you desire your church to be healthy and for your church to thrive. I know you desire for people to know your word and to worship you in spirit and in truth.

I know that you desire to save sinners, and I know that you desire that those whom you've saved will be sanctified. And I would say something along these lines, Lord, we have room.

[32 : 44] We have space to fill. Will you fill this space with people who desire what you desire? And I would say, God, I know that there are some who don't think you can or that you want to, but I know that you are a God who gives new life.

And will you demonstrate that? Will you demonstrate that you are a God who no one should ever count out, especially when it comes to your church?

God, I'll preach your word, and I'll trust that you do the rest, because I know that only you can do it, and that you'll receive the glory when you do it.

So understand, you all are an answer to my prayer. Every Sunday, when I, when Pastor Tyler begins leading us in worship, I look around, and my heart is filled with joy.

That joy has increased my faith. It's increased my trust in God who hears prayer. And who answers prayer.

[34 : 23] But understand this, no is an answer. As it was for Jesus, where we see how truly human he was, and understand how awful it must be to experience the forsakenness of God that he would ask that there be any other way.

Yet he submitted to the Father's will, knowing that it would accomplish a much greater good. Sometimes the answer is no.

And when that's the case, we trust in the God who works all things together for the good as supremely demonstrated on the cross of his son, Jesus Christ.

And we also know that a time will come when we will be in heaven, we will be glorified, this world as we know it will be gone, sin will be gone, and we have this promise from God that he will dry every eye, that he will wipe away every tear.

For in that moment we will have perfect knowledge and we will understand. So pray, make your requests known, speak freely, but do so in humble submission to God's will, knowing he knows all things and he knows what's best.

[35 : 56] Sometimes my kids will ask Danny and I for pop before soda, whatever you call it, before they play a game or before they go to bed. And the answer is no, because that's going to affect your ability to play in that game and you're going to be up all night.

And they may not understand it. Like what? Why? It's good, I'm thirsty, I want to drink pop. Well, because we're their parents and we know ultimately what is best for them.

And so even though they hear no, they obey because they also know that we love them and we know what's best for them and we want what's best for them. And God is certainly no different.

He knows infinitely better than we do. Verse 16 through 17. I'll read those again. 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 one should pray for that. All wrongdoing is sin, but there is sin that does not lead to death. At first glance, verse 16 appears to be an abrupt change of subject, but that's not the case.

[37 : 18] Verses 14 through 15 are about petitions in prayer. Verses 16 through 17 are about intercession in prayer.

Verse 16 is one of the most difficult verses to interpret in all of Scripture. So let's move on to verse 18. We can't do that, right?

Because we're Christians and we know the truth. We are people who know. The best way to interpret difficult verses is to begin with what we know for certain.

Using Scripture to interpret Scripture, as R.C. Sproul would say, using the explicit to interpret and understand the implicit, or what we might think a passage might imply.

We know that apart from saving faith in Jesus, all sin, all of it, all sin leads to death. One sin leads to death.

[38 : 19] We know that. God is holy, God is sinless, his standard is perfection. When Adam and Eve sinned, they brought the entire human race under the curse of sin, which brings death.

We are all born physically alive, but spiritually dead. That's what the Bible says. We are born with a sin nature and a desire to be our own authority and to be our own determiner of truth.

We know also that when God saves a person, he gives them a new nature, a new set of desires to obey him. But, while that's true, the sin nature still remains until we reach glorification.

However, as believers, we are no longer slaves to sin. We can choose not to sin. We know that when we are saved, we are clothed, we are wrapped, we are covered in the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

Our sins, past, present, and future are forgiven. Though we struggle with sin, as believers, we know from Scripture that Christ has atoned for our sins on the cross, and he continually serves as our advocate in heaven.

[39 : 44] We also know that believers are sealed with the Holy Spirit when they are saved, who keeps us and preserves our salvation. And as we just went over, gives us eternal life.

That begins the moment you're saved, and again that lasts through all eternity. That's what we know. What we aren't sure of is if John is speaking of physical death or spiritual death in verse 16. It's also not abundantly clear whether John has only Christians in mind, or whether he has Christians and unbelievers in mind.

So let's look at those two possibilities. If John is talking about spiritual death in verse 16, this could mean that anyone who sees his brother, and that's important to see because he addresses this person as a brother, a term he uses for believers.

if they see a brother committing a sin not leading to death, referring to a Christian who has fallen into sin, but again, because of what we know, they are in Christ spiritually, they have been born again, they are kept by God so that sin does not lead to spiritual death, that God will give such a person life, that God will keep them because he is the good shepherd who leaves the 99 and finds the one who went astray.

[41 : 28] In other words, John's argument could be that Christians fall into sin, but their salvation and spiritual death are not at stake because they have Christ as their atonement, they have Christ as their advocate, and they believe in him for eternal life, they have eternal life.

That if you see such a person, a believer in sin, what we should do is not go to another believer and say, oh, bless their heart, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah.

That's usually how we try to make gossip sound good, but it's gossip. So we shouldn't go to another believer and gossip about that person. Instead, we should pray to God first and pray for that person interceding on their behalf.

Pray that the Holy Spirit will convict them. Pray for God's help to confront that person and speak the truth and love to them so that they will repent, that they will forsake that sin, whatever it may be.

But John continues, there is a sin that leads to death, and it's interesting that here he does not address this person, this sin that leads to death as a brother.

[42 : 49] And then he adds, I do not say that one should pray for that. So this could be referring to someone who has committed apostasy, like those whom John has already mentioned in 1 John chapter 2 verse 19, those who left, those who departed with the false teachers.

They went out from us, he says, even though they confessed to be with us, they went out from us, but they were not of us, for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us, but they went out, that it might become plain that they are not all of us.

This also describes people who are vehemently opposed to Jesus and the gospel, and deliberately, willfully, verbally, continually reject him and the truth and the Holy Spirit's witness to it.

This can describe people who at one point claimed that they were saved, but like the seed that fell on shallow soil, or the seed that fell among the thorns when persecution and temptation come, they leave the church, they depart the faith, revealing that they were never truly saved in the first place. In such cases, their heart has been hardened to such a degree that prayer won't help. as Jesus said, there comes a point in time where you stop casting your pearls before swine.

[44 : 23] I think Hebrews 6, 4 through 6 describes such people in this way, for it is impossible in the case of those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift and have

shared in the Holy Spirit and have tasted of the goodness of the Word of God and the powers of the age to come, and then have fallen away to restore them again to repentance, since they have crucified once again the Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to content.

He says it's impossible. Now, understand also that John here in no way forbids prayer for such people.

He's merely stating that God may have already made the final decision about their future, and if that's the case, then that's the case.

The other possibility is that John is not talking about spiritual death, but physical death. According to this view, this verse refers only to believers, and the sin leading to death refers to a believer's sin that is so serious, so ongoing, that God takes their physical life.

life. Now, you might hear that and think, no. Well, let's look at the Bible, and for example, we have Ananias and Sapphira, and Acts, who serve as examples in support of this interpretation.

[45 : 55] When they lied to the Holy Spirit in front of the church, go and read it in Acts chapter 5, verses 1 through 11, they dropped dead. Now, you could argue were they truly saved or not?

Well, I don't know. But let's continue on, because there's other examples. The Apostle Paul warned believers in Corinth. Remember, he warned the believers in the Corinthian church about their abuse of the Lord's table.

They were taking communion in unworthy manners. And look at what he says to them in 1 Corinthians 11, 27 through 30. Whoever therefore eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord.

Let a person examine himself then and so eat of the bread and drink of!

both! Both views reflect biblical truth. And I think it's hard to be dogmatic about which one John specifically had in mind.

[47 : 20] I will not get in an argument. I will not get into a fight with you about which interpretation you think is best because I think they both could be true. And whatever the case may be, we'll find John in heaven and we'll ask him and then we'll know.

But this is what we all should agree upon, no matter what your interpretation is, is that sin is a very serious thing.

Both in the life of the unbeliever, especially, and also in the life of a believer. Every sin is an affront to God. and every sin must be confessed, forsaken, and eliminated from our lives.

So again, here's where I'm landing. God will save whom God will save. I don't know that. I don't know who he will save, I don't know who he won't save, but I know that he does save.

And I pray for unbelievers that God will be merciful towards them to save them. And I should do that.

[48 : 32] Because we also know that nothing is impossible with God. And that even the hardest stone-cold dead heart he can soften and make alive, as was the case for the apostle Paul, who hated Jesus, who hated his church, who arrested and persecuted Christians and was a part of their deaths.

it isn't wrong to pray for them, but what we must understand is God does not answer to me.

God does not answer to you. God does not answer to any of us. So we should pray for believers who are struggling with sin, and we should pray that such sin will be confronted and conquered through our faithful intercession on their behalf.

One day, when we get to heaven again, we can ask John, and he'll tell us. Better yet, we can ask Jesus, and he'll tell us. But what we do know is what he has made clear.

to know Jesus is to have answered prayer. When we pray in the right way, with the right motivation, we can pray, we should pray, and we should trust that God will hear, and he will answer our prayers.

[50 : 07] you know, it's unfortunate that despite this truth, so often prayer, I think, is the spiritual discipline that believers most often neglect.

Maybe because they think, well, God will do what God will do. He knows the end from the beginning, so what good is my prayer?

Or, maybe you're just too impatient. Maybe you're just too impatient. Or, maybe you're too stubborn, and you approach prayer with the wrong kind of spirit and attitude.

Look, Jesus prayed. The Son of God, the second person of the Trinity prayed, and he prayed a lot. And if Jesus prayed a lot, how much more so should we sinful people be in prayer?

God will do it. Well, let's listen to what Charles Spurgeon has had to say on the power of prayer, shall we? He always sums things up so well.

[51 : 19] He was talking to students who were training to become pastors, and this is what he said to them about the power of prayer. Might not we win more victories if we more constantly use this weapon of all prayer?

prayer. All hell is vanquished when the believer bows his knees in importunate supplication.

Beloved brethren, let us pray.

We cannot all argue, but we can all pray. We cannot all be leaders, but we can all be pleaders. We cannot all be mighty in rhetoric, but we can all be prevalent in prayer.

Prayer links us with the eternal, the omnipotent, the infinite. Be sure that you are with God, and then you may be sure that God is with you.

So, taking all of this together, how should we adjust? I think it's this. Live confidently in Christ and pray boldly. Live confidently in Christ because you know you're saved, you're his, you know where you're going.

[52 : 28] Doesn't matter what people might do or say to you, like Paul said, to live is Christ, to die is gain. So, what does it matter what people think or do or say about me? I'm going to be confident in who Jesus is, who I know him to be, and I will pray boldly.

Because as Christians, we live confidently. The truths that we have been made to know are not secrets that are meant to be kept. We share these things, and we also pray boldly.

I had a friend who, a guy I knew when I was first helping with my youth group back home, when I was maybe graduated from college, I can't remember, but he was another one of our helpers.

And he, one day he told us his testimony, how, you know, he did not grow up in the church, came from a pretty rough background, pretty rough home life, and hated the church, just did not believe at all.

But his grandmother prayed for him all the time. And his grandmother got her little group of ladies together, and they prayed for him all the time.

[53 : 49] They prayed for him for years. And finally, when God in his grace got a hold of his heart, and he walked into our church for the very first time, he was instantly mobbed by about ten, seventy, eighty-year-old ladies who were just hugging him and squeezing on him and crying.

And he thought, what in the, I don't know who these people are. I don't think they know who I am. Sure enough, he found out these ladies had been praying for him for years. Can you imagine their joy?

Lord, live confidently, pray boldly, be patient, don't be stubborn. Ultimately, if your prayer is that God will be glorified in your life, God will answer that prayer, and your heart will be filled with joy.

Let's pray. Lord, thank you for the God that you are. Thank you for the grace that you have, for being forgiving, for loving sinners so much that you would send your only son to live the perfect life that we cannot live, to die sacrificially on the cross for the sins that we've committed, and who rose victoriously on the third day as proof that we truly, in Jesus Christ your son, have eternal life.

We have access to you. We have the ability to come to you with our prayers. We have the promise from you that you hear. We have the promise from you, God, that you're not bothered by us.

[55 : 22] You love us. You want to hear from us. And so, Lord, I pray that your word that we've heard today, that your spirit will use it to make us people who are living ever more confidently in Jesus your son, living like him, being like him, talking like him, witnessing like him, serving like him, being courageous like him.

And that, God, we would also be bold in our prayers. Lord, we know that we can do nothing on our own power. It has to be you. And, Lord, when you do it, it's so awesome to see you at work.

So great to be reminded that God is great, as infinite, as holy, as mighty as you are. You hear us.

And you answer our prayers.

What a wonderful and awesome thing. Thank you. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. . I'm I'm I'm I'm