

Practice What You Preach

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[0 : 00] 1 John 3, verses 4-10 will be our text for this morning.

! That you'll continue to be reading the Word of God.

If you're there in 1 John 3, beginning in verse 4, would you please stand with me as we honor the reading of God's Word together. Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness.

Sin is lawlessness. You know that He appeared in order to take away sins, and in Him there is no sin. No one who abides in Him keeps on sinning. No one who keeps on sinning has either seen Him or known Him.

Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous as he is righteous. Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning.

[1 : 26] The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in Him, and He cannot keep on sinning because He has been born of God.

By this, it is evident who are the children of God and who are the children of the devil. Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother. May God add a blessing to the reading of His Word. Would you please be seated? Some TV shows begin with a brief sort of recap of the episodes that came before the present one that is about to be aired.

A montage of clips from previous episodes are put together to catch the audience up, telling them what happened before so they can understand better the episode that they are about to watch. Now, we've been in 1 John for a little while now. We've gone through this letter verse by verse, and we're now in the beginning of chapter 3 with the rest of that chapter and two more to go before we complete our study of this book.

[2 : 50] So I want to spend a little time here in the beginning to recap where we've been to remind you of one of the reasons why John wrote this letter.

And again, so that you can better understand the context of our text today. So John, remember, is one of the 12 disciples of Jesus, and he's writing a letter to churches in Asia Minor.

And these churches that he's writing to have had a problem with false teachers. False teachers had come in, and they were corrupting the gospel by mixing it with teachings that would later become known as Gnosticism.

The Greek word for knowledge is gnosis. So these teachers claim to have a secret, a hidden, special, spiritual knowledge that other people didn't.

Historians haven't been able to pin down when exactly Gnosticism became a thing or who it was who started it all. There's no teacher that they can specifically link Gnosticism to.

[4 : 12] But many of the ideas of Gnosticism share themes found in the works of Plato and other Greek philosophers, as well as themes found in Buddhism and Zoroastrianism and Judaism.

So trying to identify what Gnosticism is or what it looked like when John wrote this letter is a bit tricky. Kind of like trying to nail a piece of jello to the wall or trying to get a grip on a wet fish that is flapping around on dry land.

But this visual helps me better grasp what Gnosticism is, and it's to think about how you make Hunter's stew.

I don't know if any of you guys ever made Hunter's stew or understand what I mean by Hunter's stew. Well, let me tell you. As a kid, sometimes we would go to one of my friend's houses, and that friend introduced us to Hunter's stew, which basically involved getting a pot and filling it with water

and then opening all of the cupboards and dumping in whatever ingredients we found that either smelt good or tasted good.

We didn't measure anything. We just dumped in whatever ingredients we found that smelt good, and oftentimes the end result didn't taste very good.

[5 : 44] But that's the image that comes to my mind when I think of Gnosticism. Taking a bunch of different ideas from different religions or schools of thoughts without measure, putting it in a pot and mixing it all up.

And typically, two different flavors emerged from that stew of beliefs. If you think of Hunter's stew, the core ingredient would be water.

And the core ingredient of Gnosticism was the belief that the human body is made of matter. And matter is evil.

Now, that idea sounds like or similar to the Christian doctrine of original sin, of the sin nature.

The Bible tells us that we are all born sinful with a sin nature and that our flesh desires to sin. So you could see how that could be confusing for a Christian because at this point, at least, it seems like we agree.

[7 : 02] Gnostics also believed that God, the Creator, is good, but that this good God, this perfect being, was or is impersonable.

He's unknowable. And so they taught that a lesser God, a lesser deity, wanted to create a perfect material world, but somehow he botched the recipe.

That God, this lesser deity, got the ingredients wrong. But when this lesser deity created humanity, it accidentally imbued people with the spark of life, the spark of the true God's Spirit, making a person, then, a being with a good spirit on the inside, but evil flesh on the outside.

So when they tried to incorporate Christian beliefs into their stew, they would either teach that Jesus wasn't fully human or that Jesus wasn't fully divine.

And thus, they had corrupted the message of the gospel. Now, that was the core ingredient. Matter, what is physical, material, is evil, but the Spirit is good.

[8 : 31] And they would say, what we need is a secret knowledge to free the good from the evil. But, they said, Jesus isn't the one who sets you free.

It's you possessing this secret knowledge. Now, here's where Gnostics would diverge from one another.

In one camp, you had those who said, since the body is evil, it must be treated harshly. They had a list of rules and regulations about what you could and what you could not do.

So you see the appeal, especially to Christians who had come out of Judaism, and for people who liked religious activity, and a list of do's and do nots, to make them feel that they are doing something to earn or to keep their salvation.

And it was this form of Gnosticism in its early stages that had crept into the Colossian church, which the Apostle Paul wrote to warn against.

[9 : 48] In Colossians chapter 2, verses 20 through 23, he says, If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why? Why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations?

Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch, referring to things that all perish as they are used according to human precepts and teachings. These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and asceticism and severity to the body, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh.

Now, Christians do good. They obey God, but not to get saved, but because they are saved.

They have self-control because it's a fruit of the Holy Spirit living inside of them as a result of their salvation and the new birth and having undergone a transformation.

And they grow to despise sin. And that's why they seek to cut it out of their lives, not to be saved, but because they are saved.

[11 : 05] So that was one flavor of Gnosticism. The other flavor taught the opposite. They said, yes, the body is material and evil, but there's nothing really that you can do about it, but let it have and do whatever it wants.

Basically, you know, this thought that we're a bunch of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hydes. We have this duplicitous nature. A good you, which is your spirit, trapped inside of a bad you, which is your flesh, your body.

But the good you is not responsible, they said, for what the bad you does or desires. And so they taught that it's only when you die that the good you is set free from the bad you.

And it's this flavor of Gnostic thought that had crept into the churches that John is writing to in this letter. And it's these beliefs that he once again is refuting in our passage today.

And he does that by making another comparison between those who practice sinning and those who practice righteousness.

[12 : 28] He makes the point that those who practice sinning, they normalize sin, as evident by not only what they teach, but how they live.

They don't truly know Jesus because they're not truly saved. On the other hand, those who don't normalize sin, but who practice righteousness, John says, give evidence that they truly know God and are saved through faith in Jesus Christ, His Son, and thus they are saved.

And so the main idea for this morning's sermon of this text, I believe, is this. Christians practice what Jesus preached. How do you know if somebody is truly saved?

Well, one of the ways you can know is that they practice what Jesus preached. And so this passage, this sermon is important because many of the popular and most widely accepted teachings of our day aren't all that different from these teachings that John encountered in these churches 2,000 years ago, which is the normalizing, minimalizing, or rationalizing of sin and its presence in our lives.

The temptation to do this, again, is as prevalent today as it was 2,000 years ago. And truly, it's a temptation that's just about as old as time.

[14 : 15] Satan sought to minimize, normalize sin when he persuaded Eve and then Adam to commit the first sin.

Remember, he claimed to have this sort of secret knowledge that you don't know about, but I know it. And this secret knowledge that I have is that what God doesn't want you to do is actually really good for you to do.

Because if you do it, you'll be like God. And who wouldn't want to be like God? And so they were deceived and they ate.

And that same kind of deception has been around ever since. But John's focus here is not on the world, where we see this deception often carry out.

Here, his focus is on the church. It's on people who claim to know Jesus, but who don't practice what he preached.

[15 : 29] And so his focus is on this idea that you can know Jesus as your Savior, but not submit to him as your Lord.

that you can recite a prayer, get baptized, join a church, think you've somehow through those things received your get out of hell free card, and then go on living your life as you did before.

But while the Bible does say that salvation and grace are free gifts offered by God to sinners, they are gifts that have only truly been received by those who repent of their sins and desire to live a righteous and holy life.

When Jesus saves someone, when he truly saves someone, they are changed. They are transformed. They become a disciple of his.

Remember, after Jesus rose from the dead and before he ascended to heaven, he gathered his remaining disciples. And this is what he told them in Matthew 28, 18 through 20.

[16 : 53] All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

But he doesn't stop there. Sometimes we forget what comes next. Teaching them, discipling them, to observe all that I have commanded you.

And behold, I am with you always to the end of the age. You cannot be saved and not be a disciple of Jesus.

And a disciple of Jesus is someone who practices what Jesus preached.

Jesus did not come to earth and die on the cross so that you would be free to sin. He died on the cross to set you free from sin.

[17 : 52] And as John has just said in the verse before, chapter 3, verse 4, in chapter 3, verse 3, and everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

What is it that they are purifying themselves of? Sin. And they do that because they desire to put into practice what Jesus preached, who appeared to take away their sins and in whom no sin was found.

And so our text reminds us of all of that. Why is it important? important. Many profess to know Jesus.

But their life does not give evidence to that, that they've truly been saved. And those ones are in danger of hearing Jesus say when he returns, I never knew you.

Depart from me. There are pastors and there are teachers who profess to know Jesus and they have a lot of people listening to them.

[19 : 25] But they are normalizing, they are minimalizing, and they are rationalizing sin. If they even call it sin. And in reality, they are being used as Satan's pawns like these Gnostic teachers were to deceive many.

And you need to know who they are. You need to stop listening to them once you find out that that's who they are. So how can you know if you are truly saved?

That's also why this is important. Not just to be able to discern who is and who is not, but yourself.

Do you practice what Jesus preached? Is that your desire?

You know, in order to practice what Jesus preached, you need to know what Jesus preached. You need to know what the Bible says. And in our text today, the Bible gives us three evidences to analyze ourselves and others who we may be listening to who claim to know and follow Christ.

Because again, those who are truly saved, those who truly abide in Christ, practice what he preached. And so the first evidence John presents to us here is that a Christian's conduct is evidence that they abide in Christ.

[20 : 59] A Christian's conduct is evidence that they abide in Christ, that they are truly saved.

Looking at verse 4, everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness.

Sin is lawlessness. Now the word practice appears six times in these seven verses and each time it's written in the present active.

life. In the Greek the word is poion and it means to do or to make. It describes a way of life.

It's what you habitually do. It's how you conduct yourself as you go about your day-to-day life. And John's point here is that how you conduct yourself either confirms or betrays who you claim to be in Christ.

You can claim to be a disciple of Jesus but if in your conduct you don't practice what he preached then the Bible says you're not truly one of his disciples.

[22 : 11] You don't really know him. Look with me at Matthew 7 21 and here Jesus is concluding his sermon on the mount and he says something there that I want you to see in verse 21.

Not everyone who says to me Lord Lord repeating that phrase as if they know him will enter the kingdom of heaven and this is what I want you to see but the one who does that's the same word for practice that's the same word translated as practice in 1 John but the one who practices the one who does what the will of my father who is in heaven on that day many will say to me Lord Lord did we not prophesy in your name and cast out demons in your name and do mighty works in your name and then I will declare to them I never knew you depart from me you workers of lawlessness now jump down to verse 26 same sermon and there he says it again just in the negative and everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them same word does not practice them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand and the rain fell and the floods came and the winds blew and beat that house and it fell and great was the fall the false teachers wanted to believe that a separation can exist between what you claim to be and what you do but if you truly know

Christ if he has truly saved you the bible says there will be a noticeable recognizable undeniable difference in your life an identifiable difference in your life by how you live it by how you conduct yourself you see sin the way that God sees sin you agree with him on that you see it as lawlessness as John says it's everything that opposes God it's everything that opposes who God is it's everything that opposes what God desires and what God loves and it was because of our sin that God the Father sent Jesus the Son as John says in verse 5 you know that he Jesus appeared in order to take away sins and he could take away sins because in him there is no sin

Jesus died to set us free from sin he took it away how did he take it away well he absorbed it in himself on the cross where he was crushed and crucified for the sins of sinners he endured God's wrath there he took our punishment there for what we've done on the cross the sinless spotless

perfect lamb of God shed his blood to atone for our sins to become the acceptable sinless sacrifice that was required for us to have our sins taken away offering his own life taking our place bearing our sin taking our sins away so that by faith in him we bear his righteousness in verse six John continues on no one who abides in him abides in Jesus keeps on sinning no one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him a

Christian knows that sin is something that God takes seriously and so they don't minimize it they don't rationalize it they don't redefine it they don't excuse it and they don't identify with it when Jesus saves you he sets you free from your sin you are in Christ you bear his name you are a Christian you have been clothed in his righteousness you receive his name you have undergone a transformation and he expects rightly so that you conduct yourself in ways that reflect the reality of who he has made you to be the reality of who you are in him a truly saved person desires to live their life like Christ and for

[27 : 12] Christ remember my first one of my first days in college me and a friend of mine who I went to high school with we both were recruited to come play on the baseball team and so on that first day we went into our coach's office and he said hey I have a gift for you guys I haven't gotten to give them to some of the boys but here's some hats our team hat so he let us have our hats that we would be wearing during the game and if you know anything about baseball players we really like hats and so when we got outside of his office I like to wear my hat backwards and so I got out of his office and I spun it around backwards me and my friend were walking and we weren't!

walking for long before I heard somebody shout at me hey and I looked around and here comes this guy walking towards me and I knew that he was one of our upperclassmen and he got in my face and he grabbed my hat from the back and he spun it around to the front and he said coach thinks that that's disrespectful he said you wear it the way he wants you to wear it or don't wear it at all and that was quite the lesson I didn't ever wear it backwards at least in public ever again and you know we weren't the best team but we were a team that honored our university we were a team that honored our coach and we were a Christian university and no one honored the Lord more than we did when we were on the field and it mattered to us how we conducted ourselves does that matter to you does it matter to you that you conduct yourself in a way that people recognize

Jesus in you and give you opportunity to share Jesus with them if you continue in sin you're conducting yourself in ways that deny who you profess to be so again I ask you does your conduct reveal a person who practices sinning or practices righteousness have you truly been born again is there a difference in your life since that day you said or claimed to know Jesus does your conduct give evidence that you are in Christ it should it should Paul talks about that in Romans 6 6 through 11 we know that our old self that's who we were before we were saved was crucified with him Jesus in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing so that we might no longer be enslaved to sin for one who has died has been set free from sin now if we have died with

Christ we believe that we will also live with him this is who I am now in Jesus we know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again death no longer has dominion over him for the death he died he died to sin once for all by the life he lives he lives to God so you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body to make you obey its passions there should be a difference there should be a desire I don't want to be the old me anymore I want to kill sin I don't want to allow it to have any kind of influence on me anymore!

And in Christ you can do that but does your conduct confirm your claim to be a disciple of Jesus Christ do you minimize it it's not that big of a deal there are worse sins than this one do you rationalize it I didn't really have a choice I'm only human do you excuse its presence in your life well I do good for the most part so I'm allowed to have this or is it something you actively seek to put to death those who truly know Jesus and those who follow him know what it cost him to set them free from sin and they can't see it the same way sinfulness and lawlessness doesn't characterize how someone who is following

[32 : 08] Christ conducts themselves do you practice what Jesus preached if you do it will be evident by your conduct and secondly John continues on in verse seven a Christian's character is evidence that they abide in Christ so your conduct and now he looks at our character a Christian's character is evidence that they abide in Christ verse seven little children let no one deceive you whoever practices righteousness is righteous as he is righteous so now we ask well what does it mean to practice righteousness well John has already told us up to this point in his letter and he'll

continue to tell us more!

to to it it means being encouraged by them and encouraging others to follow Christ and it means having the guts when you see them not doing that well to say it in a loving way that's part of what it means to practice righteousness in chapter one verses six through seven John added to that he says practicing righteousness means walking in the light not in darkness that means delighting in what is true and what is good light repels darkness it means living in a way where you have nothing to hide it means you don't seek to keep your sins hidden it means as John says in chapter one verse eight that when you do sin you admit your sin and you confess your sin to God again you don't hide it you don't excuse it and you don't be fake about it either acting as if

I don't sin I don't have that problem anymore I can't understand the rest of you people acting like the Pharisees did acting as if you're better than others are that also can be living in the dark it means practicing righteousness it means being real it means being authentic and when it comes to your sin it means saying yes I sin I stumble I confess it and I move on and by God's help I seek to put it to death and not stumble into it again because as John says in chapter 2 verses 3 through 5 a person who practices righteousness knows and obeys God's commands they trust that God's word is God's word they trust in God's word more than they trust in themselves and their feelings and their opinions because as John said in chapter 2 verse 15 they love

God and not this world that seeks to draw them away from God a person who practices righteousness desires to live and conduct themselves in ways that honor Jesus Christ and so do those things that John has mentioned to this point do they characterize you?

There have and continue to be many false teachers who tell people it's possible some way somehow to be righteous without doing what is right why would they tell people that?

[36 : 11] I think at least for a couple of reasons one to pad their stats and feel like they are doing good we've got to be careful as Southern Baptists of doing that as well every year we give our annual church profile and man if you see those numbers go up you can feel good about yourself and the success that you're having and if you're not careful that can morph into we'll just baptize anybody who wants to be baptized you've been baptized before let's get baptized again to pad their stats to make them feel like they're being successful also people do this and they teach this to pad their wallets people are uncomfortable talking about sin you know yeah Jesus said that to follow him it means bearing the cross that's uncomfortable people don't want to hear that so let's turn our Sunday mornings into like a therapy session or a pep rally to make people feel good about themselves and let's not talk about sin but ultimately the reason why they do that is because they have been deceived by the devil which is what

John says in verses 7 and 8 whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil for the devil has been sinning from the beginning the reason the son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil understand there is a devil there is a devil and he's very deceptive and he's very persuasive the Bible says that he was originally created by God as a perfect angelic being but pride led to his fall he desired to elevate himself over God and that's what he continues to tempt people to do to be their own God to be their own authority of what is right and what is wrong to be their own determiner of what is sin and what isn't sin and John says such attitudes do not characterize a true disciple of

Jesus because such attitudes cannot exist in the person whom he's truly set free from sin and whom he's saved in verse nine he says no one born of God makes a practice of sin for God's seed abides in him and he cannot keep on sin because he has been born of God when God saves someone they're born again they are transformed again they are regenerated they receive the indwelling of the Holy Spirit they receive the Holy Spirit who is working inside of them transforming them making them more and more like Jesus just as human birth results from an implanted seed that grows into physical life so also spiritual life the divine seed of the Holy Spirit is implanted within us when we are saved and it continues to grow making us more like Jesus the gospel takes root in our heart and it grows and when it grows it produces!

It produces! Evidence that a transformation truly has taken place in Galatians chapter 5 verses 19 through 25 the apostle Paul compares the works or the fruit of the flesh if you can call it a fruit it's rotten fruit and the fruits of the spirit I want to read this to you and I'll have a question for you at the end 5 19 through 25 now the works of the flesh the person who practices sinning are evident sexual immorality impurity sensuality idolatry sorcery enmity strife jealousy fits of anger rivalries dissensions!

divisions envy drunkenness orgies and things like these I warn you as I warned you before that those who do practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God but the fruit of the spirit is love joy peace patience kindness goodness faithfulness gentleness self control against these things there is no law and those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions that he's listed and its desires if we live by the spirit let us keep in step with the spirit let us practice righteousness and so I ask you which one of those two lists most accurately characterizes you now before I continue on

[41 : 29] I need to explain what John means when he says he cannot keep on sinning he's already written about how we need to acknowledge our sin and confess our sin when we sin and never forget that when we do sin we have an advocate who is Jesus Christ to defend us and to forgive!

us what he's saying is that when a person is saved it's not as if they're never going to sin again before the Lord comes back or they go to be with the Lord but it's going to be their way of life there will be a difference and for the most part the fruits of the spirit will be what characterize them every third Friday a group from our church goes and visits Dick Connor Correctional Facility and we we worship we lead worship and we worship with the men who are there and unless you've been there to know these men and to see the difference that God has made in their lives many of them coming to faith while they were behind prison walls

I mean you meet them you get to know them and you get to the point where you just can't imagine that they would have done anything so bad to wind up in the position where they are in one of the inmates there that I've I've grown to develop a relationship with his name is Cleotus Cleo some of you guys know who I'm talking about if I pointed him out to you you would know who he is he's been in prison for over 30 years and he's in his late 40s 50s he was a young man when he was put in prison now you imagine he was telling me of his children and how he's watched his children grow up while he's been in prison and there was something with his case where not all the evidence was presented and he's hoping that that's going to be presented so that maybe he'll be able to get out of prison sooner you imagine being in that situation in that environment and being full of anger being full of hate not this man

I want to share with you he wrote me a letter a couple of weeks ago and I want to share just a part of his testimony with you he said in going to jail prison even though I lost furnishings and appliances my car and a lot of money to the world when I came to prison I gained Jesus Christ who is my Lord and Savior and ruler of my life he will bless me with what I need all the way around so my trust is in Jesus who is my Lord and Savior I don't run from God as I did in my past now I run to him because he is all I need and he says may God bless you in your church family when you are saved there is a difference and it's evident in your character do you practice what

Jesus preached does your conduct and your character give evidence that you abide in him finally the third evidence here that we need to look at from verse 10 a Christian's behavior confirms that they abide in Christ it confirms that they abide in Christ verse 10 by this it is evident who are the children of God and who are the children of the devil whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God nor is the one who does not love his brother this is John summary statement on this matter if you are truly saved you are born again you are a disciple of Jesus Christ and there is so much evidence!

[45 : 41] of that in your life if they were to charge you with that again there would be so much evidence and the jury would see that they wouldn't be gone deliberating for long they would come back and they would say there is no doubt that this person is a Christian they are a disciple they follow Jesus Christ does your conduct and does your character confirm your confession that you are in Christ no matter what people may profess or what past religious ritual or experience they may point to the bottom line is this it's what John said whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God now I know I titled this sermon practice what you preach but what's most important is that you practice what

Jesus preached no one has been more misunderstood and misquoted than Jesus of Nazareth when he began his earthly ministry he began preaching with these words repent turn away from your sin for the kingdom of God is at hand so I ask you this morning you've heard the evidence from God's word are you practicing sin or are you practicing righteousness and if you're practicing righteousness there might still be something that you need to repent of today maybe you're not lost but you have gone astray if you don't know Jesus Christ is your Lord and Savior let me tell you what the Bible says it's not that you recited a prayer it's not that you had perfect attendance on

Sunday morning it's not even that you got baptized it's that you know that you're a sinner you know that you're without hope without Jesus Christ to save you from your sins! turn to him and you've trusted in him and you've repented of those sins doesn't mean that you're perfect doesn't mean that you're not going to struggle with sin but it means that you see it as what it is for what it is and you seek to put it to death in your life and maybe for you this morning you've gone astray and you realize that there is sin in my life that I've normalized I've rationalized I've excused and it's time for you to repent I want to end with two quotes first for those who are an unbeliever or those who maybe are a believer and you've gone astray from C.S. Lewis he says we all want progress but if you're on the wrong road progress means doing an about turn and walking back to the right road that's repentance in that case he says the man who turns back soonest is the most progressive man maybe that's you this morning and the Lord is telling you turn back and maybe you've never known him before and he's telling you and he's calling you to salvation today and then for you as a Christian quote for you from J.C.

[49 : 28] Ryle a Christian is a walking sermon they preach far more than a minister does for they preach all week long and your conduct and your character people are watching you you say you're a follower of Christ they're watching you and it could be the case and it may be the!

I'm sure it's the case for some people that the only contact that they're going to have with a follower of Christ is you you are the one whom the Lord has put in their life to be their preacher so adjust this is how we should all adjust to what we've heard practice what Jesus preached!

preach what Jesus practiced in your life you practice what Jesus preached and in your life you preach and you tell people about who Jesus is what he practiced three application questions for you to look at we don't have community groups tonight we'll have our business meeting I encourage you to be a part of that certainly if you're a member of the church expect you to be here I encourage you just to take some time by yourself today this week with your Bible with this text that we've just gone through and hopefully with the help of the Holy Spirit to do some work question number one does your conduct and character confirm that you are truly a disciple of Jesus Christ not just when you're in public but maybe more importantly when you're in private as your conduct and your character reveal that you're truly a disciple of

Jesus Christ question number two do you minimize and normalize sin in your life what is that sin maybe that you're habitually committing you're a believer but you've given it safe harbor in your life what is it have you minimized it are you normalizing it what are you going to do to put it to death and then finally are you practicing what Jesus preached are you practicing what Jesus preached and are you in his word and are you spending time with him in fellowship and prayer to know what he preached so that you'll be able to practice it let's pray Lord we thank you for the truth in a world that's full of deception and many

Lord today as was the case 2000 years ago who come and they claim to know you and they tell us things that tickle our ears and things that aren't true but we want to believe are true but reality is as your word has told us this morning it's false it draws us away from you and in the case of some Lord it's a false gospel that they have falsely believed in and trusted in for salvation and they're going to hear you say on that day when you return depart from me for I never knew!

[52 : 54] God I pray that all of us would take what we've heard in your word today and that we would take it seriously that we would examine ourselves and our own conduct and our own character to determine whether or not we are living for you in the way that we ought to are we practicing what you preached Do we even know what it is you preached?

God I pray that you would do work with your spirit through your word and that we father they would decide to repent of whatever they need to repent of and pursue you like they hadn't been pursuing you before and God I pray for those who are here and they don't know you God I pray that in your grace you would reveal the true condition of their heart and that you would call to them and that they would be saved that they would undergo that transformation and be born again and have eternal life that they would truly be a disciple of yours who not only practices what you preach but preaches what you preached we ask these things in Jesus name Amen