

By This We Know

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[0 : 00] 1 John 2, verse 3-6, if you would stand with me as we honor the reading of God's word together.

! And by this we know that we have come to know him if we keep his commandments. Whoever says, I know him but does not keep his commandments is a liar and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps his word in him, truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him. Whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked. May God add a blessing to the reading of his word. Would you please be seated? Traditionally, when a man and a woman come together in marriage, they make vows.

A series of promises in the presence of God and those gathered to witness their union. That they will be faithful to one another for better or worse, richer or poorer, in sickness and in health, in joy and sorrow, to love and cherish one another for as long as they both shall live.

[1 : 30] And I've officiated a few weddings. I've stood between nervous bride and groom, hearing them recite those vows with beaming smiles on their faces and with every intention of keeping their word.

And that's what everyone who has gathered hopes for. Even the in-law who thinks that no one is good enough for their son or daughter hopes at the end of the night, as the couple is whisked away, that their union will last.

That the public professions to love and cherish one another always are kept. But only the marriage can prove that.

In the days and the years ahead, the husband and wife will have ample opportunity to prove their profession by their actions.

Those actions will either validate or contradict the vows that they made on their wedding day. It's in the four worst times that the actions of a husband or wife most visibly and vividly demonstrate that the profession that their spouse made to them on their wedding day wasn't just words.

[2 : 59] Their actions prove the genuineness of the words they professed on the wedding day. Those actions assure their spouse that what they said is true and that this is someone whom they can continue to trust.

And all this to say that actions speak louder than words. A person's actions will either prove or disprove who or what they profess to be.

That's an aspect of the point that John is making in this letter. False teachers have infiltrated the churches that he's writing to.

And they've spread ideas which deceived many who had professed faith in Jesus Christ. And now they were defecting from the truth.

They were leaving the church. So I ask you to imagine that you are a member of one of those churches. Some people come in.

[4 : 14] They're saying that Jesus isn't who you truly think that he is. That salvation is something that you accomplish yourself, not something that God accomplishes for you.

They're telling you that sin isn't a big deal. They're telling you that they have the truth, that they have the secret knowledge that you're ignorant of.

And that you need to listen to them. And as they say these things, you see other people within the church listening to them and nodding their head in agreement.

And then defecting from the church. These are people you've seen make public professions that they know Christ.

These are people who you have witnessed seeing them be baptized. These are people that you've worshipped with.

[5 : 12] These are people that you've taken communion with and fellowshiped with. And they're leaving. What would you be thinking?

How would you be feeling? And I'd venture to guess that you probably already know what that's like because you've probably already experienced that in some way yourself.

In our day, people call it deconverting or deconversion. Over the past several years, well-known Christian artists and authors and pastors with large social media followings have used those same platforms to announce that they no longer believe what they once professed or that they are re-evaluating whatever it is that they were professing to believe.

And this has sparked a trend primarily within young people who grew up in the church.

Emboldening them to proceed with their own deconstruction journey.

But you know, this trend is nothing new. Jesus warned of it back in Matthew 24, 12 through 13. He said, And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold.

[6 : 37] But it's the one who endures to the end who will be saved. If you remember his parable of the soils, there's four soils, but only one of them produces fruit.

We read Paul's letters to Timothy, and he talks about Demas and Hymenaeus and Philetus, all men who once claimed to be saved and ministers of the gospel who had left the church.

The early church saw many abandon their faith that they once professed. And these churches that John is writing to, located in Asia Minor, were no exception.

We get to chapter 2, verse 19. We'll read John say, And remember, John was in the room with Judas when Jesus announced that one of his disciples would betray them.

And none of them saw it coming. None of them pointed the finger at Judas. They were all pointing the finger at themselves, saying, Is it me, Lord? Is it me? And so John empathizes with the feelings of betrayal and confusion that these Christians were experiencing.

[8 : 00] And he desires for them to have joy, those who are truly saved, to have joy in the certainty of their faith, rather than be upset by the false teachings and the current defections of some.

And he uses doctrine to do that. Good biblical teaching will do one of two things. It will either give assurance to those who have truly been saved, or it will remove false assurance from those who truly have not been saved, revealing that they are still walking in darkness, that their profession is barren of any kind of fruit that is supposed to be produced by a person who truly knows and follows Jesus Christ.

1 John contains a series of tests. And John returns to these tests again and again throughout his letter to help us be sure that we have truly come to know Him.

The first test asks, Do I believe the right things about Jesus? And that's where we were at in the past couple of weeks. And we can call that the theological test. Do you believe the right things about Jesus?

The second test asks this question, Do I obey God's commands? And we can call that the moral test. And that's the test that we are presented with by John this morning.

[9 : 40] And his goal in giving this test and the other test that he will give is that you and I live assured of our salvation and that we be happy in Jesus, both right now and forever.

And that's the main idea for this morning's sermon. God wants you, brother, sister in Christ, God wants you to live assured of your salvation.

God isn't interested in playing some kind of spiritual guessing game with you. You aren't going to die and enter into some kind of cosmic version of let's make a deal where God says, Okay, you can choose what's in the envelope, the box or what's behind curtain number one.

One of those contains your past, your entrance to salvation. God is not like that. God is not looking to zonk anyone.

He wants you to be certain of where you stand with him. He wants you to be assured of your salvation. So again, John presents us with this test so that we know for certain that we have come to know him, Jesus.

[11 : 02] This test is a self-examination and it asks two questions. Before going into those questions, you might be asking or thinking, Why is this important?

Well, as a believer, this is important because the Bible says that you should routinely and regularly examine yourselves and take spiritual inventory of your lives, of the fruit that you should be producing.

2 Corinthians 13:5 tells us, Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves that Jesus Christ is in you unless indeed you fail to meet the test?

In 2 Peter 1:10-11, we read, Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election. For if you practice these qualities, you will never fail.

For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. And so examine yourself.

[12:08] We should be doing this all the time. Are the fruits of the Spirit evidence within me, in my attitudes, in my thoughts, in my actions? Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

Do those things describe me? And you ask, Is it my desire to be like Jesus? And I ask you, Are you who you profess to be?

And if so, then rejoice in your clean bill of spiritual health. One of the things I hate doing is going to the doctor or to the dentist, especially the dentist.

I hate being poked. I hate being prodded. I hate being picked at. But one thing I am thankful for is when, you know, they return with the results and they say, Hey, no cavities or no major physical illnesses or ailments that you need to worry about.

And so I hope the same thing happens for you today. Hopefully you rejoice in receiving a clean bill of health as we go through this message. That you are on track. That the life of Christ is present within you.

[13:34] And I know that for me, I want the people that I love to know that I love them. And it's no different for God. He wants you to hear these verses, examine yourself, know that you're in him, and know that he loves you.

If you're an unbeliever, this is very important. A lot of professing believers claim they know Christ and that they obey the teachings of the Bible until you show them what the Bible actually says. And maybe you've been led to believe that because at some point in time you repeated a prayer or because you grew up attending church or you've gone forward during an altar call or maybe even you were baptized.

And you think that those things, any one of those things or all of those things in some way are what has saved you, but those things don't save you.

You can't trust in those things for that. And so the question in this test today may reveal that the assurance you thought you had is no assurance at all.

[14:53] It's no good. And I hope that in seeing that, that you will truly be saved and live assured in the salvation that comes through faith in Jesus Christ.

So again, there are just two questions on this self-exam for this test. And the first question asks, do you keep his commandments? How do I know if I'm truly saved?

How can I be assured of my salvation? Well, question number one, do you keep his commandments? Look again at verse three. John says, and by this we know that we have come to know him if we keep his commandments.

So let me ask you some more questions. How do you respond to Jesus' commands when you read them in the Bible? All of the Bible. Do you think, yes, that is right?

Yes, that is true. Or do you think instead, that can't truly mean what I think that it means? Or he can't truly expect me to follow through with that?

[16:01] That can't be right. In other words, do you find yourself, when you read God's Word, agreeing with God's Word or arguing with God's Word and what it commands?

Jesus said in John 14, 15, If you love me, you will keep my commandments. To know God is to love God and to love God is to obey God.

Look at how the psalmist describes God's Word in Psalm 119, verses 97 through 105. Oh, how I love your law, your words, your commands.

It is my meditation all the day. Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies, for it is ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers, for your testimonies are my meditation.

I understand more than the aged, for I keep your precepts. I hold back my feet from every evil way in order to keep your word. I do not turn aside from your rules, for you have taught me.

[17:07] How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth. Through your precepts I get understanding, therefore I hate every false way.

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. Would you use the same words to describe God's commandments?

Would you agree with what we read in the Psalms? Do you study the Bible to win arguments and impress others with how much you know? Or do you study the Bible because you love God and you want to know God more?

We study the things that we love. When I began dating Dani, I was, you know, attracted to her beauty. And then I got to know her, attracted to her personality.

And it was clear to me that this is somebody that I wanted to know more. And this was somebody I didn't just want to be a part of my life, but I wanted to be a part of her life. And Dani played for our women's college soccer team.

[18:25] And I was a communications major. And one of the things that all communication majors had to do is you had to write for the yearbook. Yes, we had a yearbook in college. And newspaper. And I love sports.

So I would write sports articles. And when our editor needed someone to write an article for the women's soccer team, guess who volunteered for it?

Me. Said, I'll write that article because I'm thinking this will give me a good reason to talk to her. And hopefully, you know, things will escalate from there.

And so our editor also handed me a stack of pictures from their soccer games. And he said, you need to pick a couple of pictures to go along with your article. And so, of course, I go through all those pictures and I study them all.

And Dani is a good soccer player. She's in a lot of those pictures. And so, since I wanted to talk to her, I took all of those pictures of her and I put them on the top of this very large stack. When we had our first date, and I pick her up in my truck, and I reached for something in my console where I had put in the stack of pictures, forgetting that I had left them there.

[19:34] And I reach in for something in my console, and she looks in, and she sees pictures of her, and she pulls them out in this large stack. And she's sort of, these are all pictures of me.

And I think she was concerned. And who is this stalker who I have gone on a date with? And I embarrassingly explained the situation, and thankfully, she didn't jump out of the car.

But all that to say, again, we love, when we love something, we study it. It's not a chore. We don't even think of it as a duty, but as a privilege.

It's something that brings us joy. And so, again, I ask you, do you seek to know God's Word primarily, and most importantly, because you love God?

And because you desire fellowship with Him? And you know that you want to obey Him? So that fellowship is deepened and strengthened. In verse 3, know in the Greek is written in the present tense.

[20:44] And so the idea here is of knowledge that progresses through experience. So the sense here is a Christian who knows God and is continually able to know that they know God.

And so I ask you, is there presently within you a desire to obey God and honor Him by how you live, knowing what He's graciously done for you to save you?

Is the gospel something that you regularly think about and meditate upon and find joy in? Matt Carter was a pastor in Texas. I think he works for the North American Mission Board now, but he said this interesting quote about who he hires at his church when he was a pastor.

I want to share it with you. He said, If the person we're interviewing can't answer the question, I simply won't hire him or her.

Why? Because I've realized there is a direct connection between a person's love for Jesus and that person's obedience to Him. If you were asked that question, when was the last time the thought of the gospel made you weep?

[22:18] What would be your answer? What would be your answer? One of the questions that I frequently get from people is about their salvation. You want to know, How can I know that I'm truly saved?

If you want to know day by day that you know Him, that you are saved, it's simple. John tells us right here. Look to His perfect advocacy and His atonement in chapter 2, verses 1 through 2, and then keep His commandments, as we read in verse 3.

And keep there in the Greek is also in the present tense, and it conveys the idea of guarding. In this case, keeping guard of something that is precious to you.

I don't think that this is a big deal in Oklahoma or as big a deal in Oklahoma as it is in Kansas, but in Kansas, where I'm from, a lot of houses are split-level houses.

And they have a front room or a living room as soon as you walk into the door, either on the right or the left, is this living room.

[23 : 33] It's the first room in the house that people see when they walk through your front door. It's the room that has nice snow-white carpet and nice furniture and probably a piano that nobody ever plays in the corner and fancy decorations that the woman of the house does not want to be touched.

It's ironically called the living room, though it's the room least lived in. It's the room growing up that my mom kept all of us kids out of.

She wanted it to be clean and to preserve its pristine appearance if a visitor came by our house. Other people have a car or maybe a china cabinet or some precious treasure that they let few people see and even fewer people touch.

And that's the idea that John wants to communicate to us in regard to what it means to keep Jesus' commandments. It's in keeping his commandments like this that you can be assured of your salvation.

Obedience is an important avenue of assurance. If you truly know Jesus, you know that what he commands is best for you and you treasure that.

[24 : 59] You treat those words as precious. And in that way, obeying him is not some kind of a burden to you, but you see it as a blessing for you because you know him, you know the truth, and keeping his commandments protects you and others from the sinful choices and their consequences that would result if you disobey him.

But if you claim to know him and don't guard his commands as precious, John says in verse 4, whoever says I know him but does not keep his commandments is a liar and the truth is not in him. Now, you could read that and you might wonder, well, does this mean that I'm not a Christian or that I can lose my salvation if I don't keep God's commandments perfectly all the time and in every way? No, it doesn't. Remember what we've already read and what John has already said in chapter 2, verses 1 through 3, and then in chapter 1, verse 9, he is faithful to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

When we sin, what we need to do is apply those verses to our lives. And so what we are reading here in verse 4, this describes the person who doesn't do that.

[26 : 18] They don't apply those verses because they see no need to. Instead of confessing and repenting of their sin, they ignore it or they deny it or they excuse it.

If someone claims to know Jesus but doesn't guard his commands as precious, they are a liar in what they say and the truth is not in them in whatever it is that they do.

When a person is saved, the Bible says that they are born again. And as we saw last week, this is the person who understands that God is sinless, but that they are sinful and they need a Savior. When a person is born again, the Holy Spirit takes up residence within them. They are changed, transformed. They have a new set of desires, new passions in their hearts that desire to obey the Lord.

They aren't comfortable with sin's presence in their lives. As verse 5 says, But whoever keeps, and that's a habit, that's a pattern of life, whoever keeps his word, his commands in him, John says, Truly the love of God is perfected.

[27 : 48] I ask you again. Is it your desire, your deepest desire, to obey Jesus?

If that's the pattern of your life, if that is true for you, you ought to be able to look back to the moment of your salvation and see how his love has been at work to perfect you, making you more like Jesus.

It's in keeping and obeying his word that a Christian's love for Jesus grows and matures and is brought to its intended goal, glorification, when we are reunited eternally with our Lord.

Is that your goal? Do you see that progress? One of the things that I love doing is coaching Jack's baseball team, and a couple of those players are here.

Our goal, and they could tell you as pitchers, was to throw what percentage of strikes. Go ahead. Okay? Don't be bashful. Just yell it out.

[29 : 04] 60% strikes. As a team, our goal for our pitchers was that they throw 60% strikes. And so throughout the year, that's what we would continually say.

After every practice, after every game, most of the time, what is our goal? Pitchers, 60% strikes. In order to throw 60% strikes, that meant that we had to correct some bad habits, both mentally and physically.

And we started out the year around 50% or so, not great. But as the season went along, that number got closer and closer to 60%. And we ended the season throwing 58% strikes.

Not perfect, but better. And I think only in heaven is every pitch a strike. But I share that with you because at the end of the season, I'm able to look back and see progress.

And I ask you, since the moment you profess to believe Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, have you seen progress? Have you experienced the Holy Spirit chiseling away at you, molding you and shaping you into a person who is becoming more and more like Jesus?

[30 : 18] And what you say and what you do, how you think and how you live? If so, then John says in the beginning of verse 5, By this, by this we may know that we are in Him.

Do you keep His commandments? Do you treat them as precious? Do you even know what they are? Do you guard them against the lies that this world seeks for you to exchange the truth of God for?

What difference has knowing Christ made in your life? There should be a difference.

Now the second question. Are you abiding in Christ? Are you abiding in Christ? Verse 6. Whoever says he abides in Him ought to walk in the same way in which He walked.

John says we both have a profession to prove and a Savior to imitate. Your life, your walk, should match your talk.

[31 : 28] Your profession to know Christ should be evident by the way you live, like Christ. On the night before His crucifixion, when Jesus met with His disciples in the upper room, this is one of the things that He talked to them about.

John says, Chapter 15, verses 1 through 11 record those words about what it means to truly abide in Him. And Jesus said, I am the true vine and my Father is the vine dresser.

Every branch in me that does not bear fruit, He takes away. And every branch that does bear fruit, He prunes that it may bear more fruit. Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you.

Abide in me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me.

I am the vine. You are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in me, he is thrown away like a branch and withers, and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned.

[32 : 41] If you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.

As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in His love.

These things I have spoken to you that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be full. Jesus identifies Himself as the vine and God the Father as the caretaker of the vine.

The vine has two types of branches and only two. Branches that bear fruit and branches that don't bear fruit.

The branches that bear fruit are genuine believers. The branches that don't bear fruit are those who profess to believe, but a lack of fruit in their life indicates that their profession meant nothing.

[33 : 58] Salvation is received in Christ and Christ alone.

And when He saves you, He cleanses you from all unrighteousness. He gives you eternal life. But then He's continuing to work within you to sanctify you as He makes you more and more and more like Him.

And if you're becoming more like Jesus, then the life that you live ought to resemble a walk, the walk that Jesus walked. And where did Jesus' walk on this earth end?

The cross. Where He substituted His life as a sacrifice in obedience to God the Father.

In John 3.16, we all know this verse so well. Jesus said, proclaimed, professed the purpose for why He came.

[35 : 11] For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Me should not perish, but have eternal life. And then in John 19.30, He proved that what He said in John 3.16 are words that He meant.

When Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, it is finished. And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit. And throughout His earthly life, Jesus made it clear what it meant to follow Him, to walk after Him, to live like Him.

One of those cases within Matthew 16:24, Jesus told His disciples, if anyone would come after Me, if anyone will walk after Me, live for Me, let him deny himself and take up His cross, this instrument of death, and follow Me.

Jesus died to be your Savior. And He rose again and lives today to be your Lord. To abide in Him is to understand Him in that way, as Lord, as Master, as King of Kings, as the one who commands and you say yes.

Do you know Him in that way? Do you give Him and His words higher value than you do to your own opinions or feelings, whatever they may be?

[36 : 52] Do you desire comfort in life? Comfort that keeps you from obeying Christ?

Do you value comfort over Him? Do you welcome the pruning knife of the Father as He cuts away the remnants of the old self so that you may bear more fruit?

Are you living for Christ or are you living truly for you? Well, how did Christ live for you?

Love what Sinclair Ferguson said about Jesus' teaching here in John 15 about abiding in the vine. He said, Our Lord spoke of the Father's pruning from experience.

He was the vine, His Father the vine dresser. He Himself had been pruned during His life. He learned obedience through what He suffered. Hebrews 5:8 Even as He spoke in the upper room, He was on the verge of being pruned so severely that He would cry out under the sharp pain of God's cuts first that if possible He might be spared them and then in His dreadful experience of being God forsaken.

[38 : 12] In a sense, our Lord bore more fruit through His dying than through His teaching and through going to the cross than through His coming to the manger. His death was no accidental slip of the vine dresser's knife.

As it was true of the vine so it will be of the branches. Do you desire to live like Jesus and do you actually live like Jesus?

And I don't know about you but the longer I've known Him the less like myself I want to be. And the more I want to be like Him.

How about you? As our Danny and I's kids grow older we notice behaviors and mannerisms that remind remind us of ourselves.

Some of that's genetic and some of that's just they're patterning their behavior off of what they see. And when we see that we laugh and we tease one another she or he gets that from you you've probably done the same thing.

[39 : 31] But there's joy in it because I want my kids to imitate the best parts of Danny and I without any of the bad.

And it's no different with our Heavenly Father. This is the way it's supposed to work. Like Father like Son Jesus Christ like Savior like Saint.

Christ's life becomes our life our example our goal our pattern for living and it's in abiding in him that we walk like him and we become more like him but we don't do it in our own strength.

This is a great thing because he's at work within us perfecting his love within us through his spirit as we spend time in fellowship with him and his word. He does it in us.

I don't have to be like him to be assured I want to be like him and am assured. See the difference?

As we abide in Christ we will be like him because we really do know him and so the main application for this sermon is to live like Jesus to live like Jesus.

[40 : 55] I want to share with you a story from one of the heroes of the faith Amy Carmichael Amy Carmichael grew up in Great Britain and then she became a missionary in India.

This story is from March 1901 a seven year old Indian girl named Prina escaped a Hindu temple where she had been abandoned by her mother as a devotion to the gods.

It wasn't the first time she had fled the temple the first time Prina had hoped her mother would rescue her. Sadly her mother renounced her again and the temple woman punished Prina's desertion with hot irons on her hands.

Perhaps that would move her mother to see her desperation and keep her. The second time on the run Prina wandered across a large body of water and came in the dark upon a church in the village of Penai the lie.

Hopefully this church was different than the church she had been living in. Was her mother close? Would her mother keep her this time? Providentially yes.

[42 : 12] The next day she embraced and kissed her ama which means mother but it wasn't her birth mother. It was a 34 year old Irish woman whose name was Amy Carmichael.

Amy Carmichael served for 55 years in India without ever returning home. And for the last 20 years of her life she was bedridden with debilitating pain, the consequences of accidentally falling into an uncovered pit, but still she served and still she continued to live her life for Christ providing a safe haven for the most vulnerable members of society, pointing them to Christ and being a living example of Him to others.

She wrote this poem, again it's about John 15 and man it's powerful when you consider who she was and what she went through. She said, rid me good Lord of every diverting thing.

What prodigal waste it appears to be to be scattered on the floor, the bright green leaves and the bare stem bleeding in a hundred places with the sharp steel.

But with a tried and trusted husband's man there is not a random stroke in it all, nothing cut away which it would not have been lost to keep and gain to lose.

[43 : 40] Is that your attitude? God may not call you to go serve and a missionary in India but he calls you to be a missionary wherever he has you now. Is it your deepest desire to know him and to make him known by how you live?

If so, though we stumble, brother and sister, rejoice and be happy because the Lord has saved you and knows you and loves you and the work that he's begun in you will reach its completion and perfection one day.

and if that's not you, then you're here for a reason this morning. The Lord has you in this place to hear this truth, that you would turn from your sin and repentance and that you would trust in him for your salvation.

And I hope today is the day of your salvation. And I hope that you know the joy and the peace, the comfort, the purpose, the love that is to be had in knowing Christ truly, genuinely, savingly.

And, you know, we'll have an invitation if that's comfortable for you, come forward. I would want to know, we want to know, we want to continue to serve and pray for you, but if not, please come and find me later. Three questions of application for you guys to look at later today, later this week, hopefully as you're spending time and fellowship with God's Word.

[45 : 09] Number one, what is the relationship between obedience and assurance for the Christian? What assurances come with a life of obedience? What is the relationship between obedience and assurance for the Christian?

Question number two, why does truly knowing God lead to obedience to His commands? Why does truly knowing God lead to obedience to His commands?

And then finally, what does it mean to abide in Christ? What does it mean to abide in Christ? What other passages of Scripture would you use to shed light on that area?

And again, I ask you, not only what does it mean to abide in Christ, but are you abiding in Christ?

And I hope that you are. Let's pray. pray. Lord, I pray that those who are gathered here this morning, those who are hearing, who have heard this sermon as we've gone through Your Word and asked these questions and taken this self-exam, God, I hope that we've all passed the test. Lord, that we all would know that it is You who has saved us and that when You saved us, our profession wasn't just words because we're able to look back over our lives and see that there's been progress made, progress that You've made within us.

[46 : 35] Yes, we stumble and yes, we fall and yes, there's times where we're taking steps backwards, but You're the faithful shepherd who calls His sheep and who never lets them go astray.

And so, Lord, I pray that those of us who this is true, we have read, we've heard, we've analyzed Your Word, and we can say, yes, I know that I'm saved, and Lord, I pray that we would rejoice in You.

I pray that we would live even more determined to make You visible in every aspect of our lives. But like Amy Carmichael, we would, Lord, think it the greatest thing in the world to go wherever You call us to go, to do whatever You call us to do, because it's an opportunity to obey You and be like You. God, I pray for anyone who has heard this sermon, who has heard Your Word, and they cannot, they do not feel assured of their salvation.

Lord, I pray that as You do, in Your grace and in Your gentleness, You would reveal the state of their situation, and that You would call them to turn to You and be healed and be saved and have eternal life, and that they too, likewise would rejoice in knowing how great of a Savior and how great of a Lord Jesus Christ is.

[47 : 55] Father, thank You. And we ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.