

Word of Life

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Date: 06 August 2023

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[0 : 00] 1 John 1, verses 1-4 is our text for this morning.

! If you're there in your Bible, would you please stand with me as we honor the reading of God's word together? That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands concerning the word of life. The life was made manifest, and we have seen it and testified to it and proclaimed to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us. That which we have seen and heard, we proclaim also to you so that you may have fellowship with us, and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ. And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete. May God add a blessing to the reading of His word. Would you please be seated?

Sometimes a Christian pastor, author, singer, or entertainer will cross over into mainstream culture. At some point, the world takes notice of their large following or their talent, and then they begin to make the rounds where they are interviewed and ask questions at different talk shows by different people who are part of this world. And when that happens, specifically, usually the interviewer wants to know their views, their view on homosexuality, on gender, on politics, social issues, and especially if they're a pastor about salvation. And they'll be asked something like, are Christians the only ones who go to heaven? Is Christ the only way to eternal life? And they'll ask, well, what about people of other faiths? What do you believe about them? And what I've seen oftentimes is that those Christians, when asked those questions, they are suddenly put on the spot, but they act as if they're surprised by that when they should have been expecting that those questions would come. And a lot of what I've seen, unfortunately, is a bunch of hemming and hawing. They get asked the question and, you know, they'll respond with something like, well, that's a good question, or I'm not sure. Sometimes they'll say, I don't know. I don't have an answer for that question.

God has given them a platform to speak boldly for Christ and to share the gospel, but too often, instead of doing that, their faith, which should be rock solid, and those moments becomes really pliable and squishy. Instead of sharing what they know or what they should know about Jesus and how the Bible does address the issues that they are pressed to answer, they play dumb in an attempt, I think, to keep their mainstream appeal and the fame and fortune that comes along with that. But, you know, that does not model the example of Christ in the gospels, nor does it model the example of Christ's followers in the book of Acts and beyond. Self-preservation in a comfortable life was not what they sought. They knew the truth, and they weren't afraid of whoever it was in power that it might offend. After Jesus' resurrection, his disciples morphed. They transformed from timid, fearful men who hid in the shadows and concealed themselves behind locked doors. They had been with Jesus. They witnessed his resurrection, and after his ascension, they boldly sought to fulfill the mission Jesus had commissioned them for, to go, to proclaim with their mouths the gospel, to speak the truth, and in doing so, to combat error and make disciples.

[4 : 43] In Acts 4, Peter and John are arrested, and they're brought before the Sanhedrin, the ruling body of the Jewish people. They were the cultural watchdogs of their day, stamping out any teaching that contradicted theirs or threatened their positions of power and their influence over the people. The Sanhedrin tried, again, to use their power to intimidate Peter and John into silence, to get them to fall into line.

But Peter and John would not play their game. When asked to answer by whose power or in what name they were doing these things, they didn't hem and haw and say, I don't know, that's a good question.

No, instead, look with me at Acts chapter 4, verses 12 through 13. Verse 12 records their final statement that Peter makes an answer to the Sanhedrin's question, and verse 13 records their response to him.

Peter says, And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved. Now, when they saw the boldness of Peter and John and perceived they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished, and they recognized that they had been with Jesus.

And so they send them away. In the Sanhedrin, they have a conversation amongst themselves, and they thought, you know what, maybe we just, we didn't flex our muscles hard enough.

[6 : 19] Bring them back in here. That's what we'll do. We'll tell them how inconvenient we can make their lives for them if they continue to talk about Jesus. And so they call Peter and John back in, and verse 19 records Peter's response to their intimidation, trying to get him to be quiet.

But Peter and John answered them, Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge. Now get this, for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard.

Do you share the same boldness and conviction when it comes to your faith in Jesus Christ? Does your knowledge and love for Christ compel you to share the gospel? Do you have that desire to talk about Jesus, to share Jesus, especially with those who don't know him?

Or perhaps a closer analysis of your life reveals that you're not much different from those Christians who seek self-preservation when the opportunity comes to answer hard questions with the truth that people need to hear in a public setting. We live in a strange time, particularly when it comes to what people say or what they think they understand about the truth. We live in an era that looks with suspicion on any type of certainty or conviction about truth. We live in a society that has abandoned the idea of absolute truth, choosing instead to let people define truth for themselves even when those truths contradict one another. And sadly, many of our churches today have been influenced to do the same, to think the same. And I believe that that's due in part to their fear of people. Fear of holding firm to the truth we know because they might call us names. We'll say we're intolerant, inconsiderate, insensitive, anti-intellectual, just a bunch of dogmatic, Bible-thumping people.

[8 : 58] But if we deny the truth we know, our message will give false comfort to those who do not like the truth that it. The church was born in Acts chapter 2 through the preaching of God's Word, through bold proclamation of the gospel. And God's Word keeps us anchored in the source of truth, who is Jesus Christ.

And to deviate from that has devastating consequences, both for the church who does so, and the community that it is a part of and is supposed to be a light to. This is part of John's concern for the church and his purpose for writing this letter. First John was written by John the Apostle, one of Jesus' 12 disciples and one of the three who ministered closely with him. John wrote this letter between 80, 85 to 95, I think maybe more likely 90 to 95. Whatever the case may be, this is about 50 or 60 years after Jesus' resurrection. And John at this point in his life was the last remaining apostle.

The apostles were a small group of people who had witnessed Jesus' resurrection, were chosen by the Holy Spirit to preach the gospel, and were given the ability to perform signs and wonders that validated the testimony of what they said about Jesus. But again, by this time, all of the other apostles had died, being martyred for their faith. And John is the last one. And he's an old man, but he's still diligently serving the church. He's still a bold witness for the truth. A few years after writing this letter, he'll be arrested. And according to church history, he'll be thrown by his enemies into a huge basin of boiling oil. And miraculously, he'll survive that. And that didn't silence him, even though they sentenced him to slave labor in the island of Patmos, where he would write the book of Revelation, he continued to be active.

He continued to preach the Word of God all the days of his life. But here again, he's in Ephesus and he's active. He's overseeing many of the churches who are in that region. He's conducting an extensive writing ministry. Papias, an early church father, had direct contact with John during this point in his life, and he described him in this way, that John is a living and abiding voice. And John wrote this letter to combat, again, false teaching that had crept into the church. The false teaching was introduced to the church by many of its members and its leaders, those who should have known better but didn't.

So here's what's going on. Ephesus was located in Asia Minor and served at this time as like its intellectual hub. This is where the smart people live. This is where the intellectual elites of society gathered and lived and discussed whatever the latest philosophical idea or trend was, and then

they would cast that out to the rest of society. It's kind of like the way California operates in our world, at least, you know, in the way that the latest fashions and trends and ideas seem to originate from over there, whatever's cool, whatever the enlightened people do, and then it spreads across the rest of our nation. The ideas that these false teachers were advocating in the church eventually became known as Gnosticism from the Greek word *gnosis*, which means knowledge. The teachings contained within that system of belief threatened to destroy the fundamental truths that the church was founded on.

[13:26] And so John writes to expose those teachers and to re-establish and to re-fortify in the minds and the hearts of his readers the boundaries of the Christian faith. The boundaries he erects are the core doctrinal truths of what it means to be a Christian, what it means to be the church. And those boundaries serve to protect from falling into air. You think of it just like the boundaries that we have on our roads.

There's painted lines, there's guardrails, there's speed limits. All of those things serve as boundaries to keep us from wrecking our cars and potentially dying. In the same way, John erects these boundaries to say, hey, don't make wreck of your faith. Don't be fooled by these false teachings. This is what it means to be a genuine follower of Jesus Christ. These are the things that a true believer believes.

They know Jesus. They know Jesus savingly. And they desire to proclaim his gospel in the hopes that others will know him too, no matter the cost. And so the main idea for this morning's sermon is that Christians know Christ and desire to make him known. Christians know Christ and they desire to make him known. In these first four verses of chapter one, John testifies to his firsthand knowledge of Jesus Christ. And as he does that, he communicates three facts about him that he desires his readers to know as well, that they will proclaim those same truths also. Now, why is this important? Well, I think for believers it's important because God has revealed the truth to you. He's saved you by it. And he commands you to share it. And these three facts that John shares about Jesus should be included each time you combat error and each time you share the gospel. For unbelievers, why is this important? Well, maybe you have been confused by what you've heard different people say about Jesus. Maybe the way that people have shared Jesus with you has turned you off to Christianity completely. But I'm glad that you're here, and I hope that in hearing these three facts that John presents about Jesus Christ, that he will cause you, that he will open your eyes and your heart to know the truth and create a desire within you to make Jesus known. So now the first fact that John proclaims about Christ, that Christians know and should desire that others know as well, is that Jesus is knowable. Jesus is knowable.

To truly know Christ, you must understand who he truly is. And to know who Jesus truly is, you have to start at the very beginning. And that's what John does at the beginning of verse one. He says, that which was from the beginning. And so here John makes it clear that Jesus has always been.

He has eternally existed with God as God. This is the truth that he declared before in his gospel in John chapter one, verses one through four. Look at that with me. In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. Amen. There was never a time when the Son was not. He was in the beginning. He was before the beginning. This is what John believed. And he believed it because he heard Jesus boldly proclaim it on a number of occasions. In John 8, 58, Jesus said to them, truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am. I am. You go me. He's using the name of God. Yahweh. God and I are the same.

[18:08] In John 10, 30, Jesus said, I and the Father are one. In John 14, 9, Jesus tells Philip, have I been with you so long and you still do not know me, Philip, the truth about me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, show us the Father? Jesus believed.

And he taught that he was God. And John confessed the same. Jesus is divine. Jesus said that. But how did John know that what Jesus said was true? Well, we continue in verse 1. John was an acquaintance of Jesus for three years. He followed him closely. He heard him speak. He heard him preach. He saw him heal people of all kinds of illnesses. He saw him cast out demons. He saw him walk on water. He saw him bring the dead back to life. He saw Jesus die. And he saw Jesus rise again on the third day. Not only did he see Jesus, he touched Jesus. The Greek word that John uses for touch in verse 3 is the same word that Jesus used in John 20, 27. If you remember there,

Jesus is encouraging, doubting Thomas that he had truly risen from the dead. Let's look at that passage. Thomas saying here, unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails and place my finger into the mark of the nails and place my hand into his side, I will never believe unless I touch him. I won't believe it.

Eight days later, his disciples were inside again and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came in and stood among them and said, peace be with you. And he said to Thomas, put your finger here and see my hands and put your hand and place it in my side. You feel that? Do not disbelieve, but believe. Jesus is the incarnate word of God, the one through whom eternal life is received as witnessed by John in Jesus's life. And what he said in his resurrection that he saw validated the truth of who Jesus was. John was sure. And he continues to share what he knows about Jesus in verse 2.

[21 : 14] The life which made manifest and we have seen it and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life which was with the Father and made manifest to us. John makes it clear that to know Christ is to know him as the divine word of God who added a human nature to his divine nature. He was truly God and he was truly man. That's what Jesus said. That's what John heard. That's what John saw. That's what John touched as an eyewitness of Jesus's life, death, and resurrection. He was an audible, visible, intangible witness to Jesus Christ. He knew him. He proclaimed what he knew of him. Jesus was the visible manifestation of God in real human flesh. And it was that truth that came under attack by those who were promoting Gnosticism in the church. Now, there were basically two flavors of Gnosticism, but they shared two core ingredients or two core beliefs. The first, they believed that matter is evil, but that the Spirit was good and only the

Spirit was good. They basically believed that there is a great God who is perfect, but he's this unknowable spirit and that there are lesser gods and a lesser deity, they say, was the one who created the earth, this kind of cheap knockoff of whoever the supreme God was. But this lesser God wanted to create a material, physical world, and so he did. But somewhere along the line, things got messed up. And as a result, pain and misery and spiritual blindness were now a part of this material world. So all that is physical, they said, is evil. However, when this lesser deity created man, they say he accidentally imbued humanity with a spark of the true Spirit of God. So according to Gnostic belief, a human being was a perfect soul imprisoned within an evil body. Now, the second core belief of Gnosticism is that there is a mystical, hidden knowledge inside of oneself that must be set free. And whenever you hear that, the Holy Spirit alarm bells should be going off in your mind.

Because remember how Satan tempted

Eve in the garden, he claimed to have what? Secret knowledge that God was withholding, knowledge that would make Adam and Eve like God. And we know how that turned out. And as Christians, we don't hide our knowledge. We want people to know. We want them to know the truth that we have.

There are no secret handshakes. There's no secret rooms or anything like that. We want everybody to know the truth that has been revealed to us. But again, Christianity appealed to some of these Gnostics who divided into two camps or factions. On the one hand, you had the docetists who claimed that Jesus was a ghost or a phantom or like a hologram or something like that. He only appeared to be human, but he couldn't truly be human, have a flesh and have a body, because as they said, the body is evil, and he couldn't be sinless in that state. On the other hand, you had the faction started by a man named Sorenthus who said that a Christ spirit came into Jesus at his baptism, empowering him to do all that he did, but then that this spirit departed from him at the cross. And so it's these lies that John is refuting here in the opening verses of chapter 1. These people who claim to know Jesus didn't know Jesus.

And just like then, people today try to force Jesus into their own system of beliefs.

[25 : 59] They're okay with a Jesus who is a good moral teacher, but not divine. Or a metaphysical Jesus who grants wishes, who saves everyone, who tolerates sin. He doesn't call it sin. That's too offensive.

In fact, their Jesus is okay with whatever they do, so long as it makes them feel happy. But John says what Jesus says. He is not half God and half man, or all God and no man, or all man and no God. He's not merely a man who was spiritual or who was touched by the divine. He is the God-man.

And he's like no one else. He has always been with the Father, and at Bethlehem, he was incarnate to be God with us. Now, the fancy pants theological term that you can impress your friends with to

describe this is the hypostatic union. Jesus is fully man and fully God.

Or you could share that with your neighbors. Hey, right? This is a good way to proclaim Jesus. I heard this term. Let me explain to you what it means. But again, it's this truth. It's this truth that causes so many to stumble. That Jesus is fully God and fully man because it presents them with an uncomfortable reality that they'd rather not have to deal with. John Piper, I want to share this quote from you.

It's a little bit long, but I think he hits it really well here. He says, this is the stumbling block of the incarnation. When God becomes a man, he strips away every pretense of man to be God.

[27 : 56] We can no longer do our own thing. We must do what this one Jewish man wants us to do. We can no longer pose as self-sufficient because this one Jewish man says we are all sick with sin and must come to him for healing. We can no longer depend on our own wisdom to find life because this one Jewish man who lived for 30 obscure years in a little country in the Middle East says, I am the way, the truth, and the life. When God becomes a man, man ceases to be the measure of all things.

And this man becomes the measure of all things. This is simply intolerable to the rebellious heart of men and women. The incarnation is a violation of the bill of human rights written by Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. It is totalitarian. It's authoritarian. Imperialism, despotism, usurpation, absolutism. What does he think or who does he think he is is often their response.

But John says that Jesus is knowable. But to truly know him, you must understand who he truly is. To know his true identity is to know him as Lord and Savior. And that knowledge changes everything. Do you truly know Jesus? And when you share the gospel, and when you talk about Jesus, do you share who Jesus truly is? Not just a good moral teacher, not just a spiritual man, not just some kind of example, but the Son of God, who came to die for our sins and rose again, that by faith in him we are saved.

You know, I've heard different people, I've heard pastors use this expression about, you know, all the different religions in the world, and they use this illustration about a mountain. On top of the mountain is God, and we're all just taking different routes, different paths, and different sizes of the mountain. Doesn't really matter what you believe, eventually we're going to get to the top.

[30 : 20] That's not the way it is. The Bible says that God came down off the mountain. He came to us, and he revealed to us that he is the way, the truth, and the life. And there is salvation in no one except him. Jesus is knowable, and second, John reminds us here that Jesus is personable.

He's personable. Verse 3, he writes, that which we have seen and heard, we proclaim also to you, that you too may have fellowship with us.

And indeed, our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. The impact that Jesus had on his followers was dynamic. They were radically changed. In Acts chapter 7, verse 6, those who opposed them even admitted they are turning the world upside down. The impact of the life of Jesus, what they knew about Jesus, and how that knowledge transformed them, compelled them to share and to take this good news of him, this gospel to the nations. It wasn't optional. What they had personally experienced in Jesus, they wanted others to experience too. God has designed us with a desire to share good news. If you eat at a good restaurant, if you've enjoyed a good movie or a good book, there's this desire within you to share that with others. I think that's part of why Facebook exists.

It's a platform to share good news and invite others to take part in that joy. And John says that the best news is that God has come.

The eternal word became flesh. He lives sinlessly. He died sacrificially on the cross to atone for sinners. He rose victoriously from the tomb as proof that God the Father had accepted his sacrifice, that by faith in him we are forgiven, we are saved. Our lives have purpose. He sets us free from sin and its eternal consequences. He gives us eternal life. He gives us fellowship with God forever and with one another in the church. The Greek word John uses in verse 3 for fellowship is *koinonia*. And that term describes the joy that results when a group of people come together and they share common values and common beliefs and shared goals. And collectively, they are able to accomplish much more together than they ever could as individuals.

[33 : 20] You all know I'm a Chiefs fan. Somebody put a Chiefs coat on my, outside my door today. Thank you, whoever that was. I appreciate that. I've been to a lot of Chiefs games. And if you're from that area, you know that there is a rivalry between the state of Kansas and the state of Missouri.

And the Chiefs play in Kansas City, Missouri. And when you go to a Chiefs game, these people from Kansas, these people from Missouri who normally don't really like each other, come together wearing their red and their gold and they are impassioned as they cheer on a bunch of guys who they don't really know. And they go crazy whenever an inflated pig's bladder crosses a painted white line. You know, Chiefs fans collectively refer to themselves as Chiefs kingdom. And you know what's sad to me is that I've been to a lot of Chiefs games and I've observed a lot of that kind of koinonia there. I've also participated in a lot of church services. And I've observed a lot better koinonia at Chiefs games sometimes than I do in God's house.

John so loved the church, this believing community of faith in Jesus of which he was a part of. And he wanted all of them to enjoy the fellowship that they had in Christ and with one another. The Bible says that no one who comes by the way of Jesus is excluded. The moment you enter into a personal relationship with him, his life is yours. And so is his fellowship. In Christ, what we share in common is greater than any difference that could separate us. And I wonder, and I ask you to wonder with me, when people come to Highland Park, do they experience that kind of fellowship here? And I ask you to, do you share John's desire that people who don't know Jesus come to know him personally?

Sometimes when we don't want to share something, we'll say, well, that's personal, right? But if you know Jesus personally, that's news that must be shared.

[36 : 20] As those whom we share it with, we hope will come into our fellowship, that they'll become a part of our family.

We don't treat family like strangers. And church is not supposed to be a place where you show up and leave anonymously.

Unbelievers who enter this building should be viewed by us not as strangers, but guests. Who we get to share the good news of Jesus Christ with. And believers who join this body in membership are brothers.

They are sisters. They're our family. I said we might get on each other's nerves, but I want to say we will get on each other's nerves from time to time.

But at the core, there should be a love and a desire to be in fellowship with one another as we help each other be more like Jesus and work with each other to make much of the name of Jesus in the hopes that he will be known, that the truth will be shared, and that others will know him personally as their Lord and Savior.

[37 : 47] And now the third fact here that we should know about Jesus that is important for our church, is important for you as you testify about who Jesus is, is that Jesus is enjoyable.

He's enjoyable. He's knowable. He's personable. He's enjoyable. Look at verse 4. And we are writing these things to you so that our joy may be complete.

God is glorified in you when you find your joy in him. A common theology, a common Savior, a common Father, a common experience of joy unites all who have come to know Jesus personally in the life he gives, which is a life like no other.

John was troubled by the false teachings and the false teachers that had infiltrated the church that he loved. But the truth that he boldly proclaims in this letter, he does so with joy, knowing that in the end, the truth is going to win.

The truth will win. The truth of Christ will purify and sanctify his bride, his church. And he knows that as that happened, he'll say in chapter 2, verse 19, that there will be some that went out from us.

[39 : 11] And they went out from us because they did not truly know Jesus genuinely, savingly, as we have. When you share Christ, do you share it?

Do you share him with joy? Do you feel joy right now in knowing Jesus personally this morning?

That the creator of this universe knows you, loves you, has saved you, will keep you, will keep you, and not forsake you.

Joy is not a happy-go-lucky attitude that pretends that all is well. Joy, true joy, is something so much more.

Martin Lloyd-Jones' writing of joy described it in this way. He says, joy is something very deep and profound, something that affects the whole and entire personality.

[40 : 21] In other words, it comes to this. There is only one thing that can give true joy, and that is contemplation of the Lord Jesus Christ. He satisfies my mind.

He satisfies my emotions. He satisfies my every desire. He and his great salvation include the whole personality and nothing less. And in him, I am complete.

Joy, in other words, he concludes, is the response and reaction of the soul to a knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Do you have this knowledge?

Do you experience this joy right now? Philippians 4, 4 through 7 reminds us what to do if we're not feeling joyful.

It says, rejoice in the Lord always. And again, I will say rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand.

[41 : 21] Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything. By prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your request be made known to God.

And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Again, what is he saying there?

Joy, true joy, comes through fellowship with Jesus Christ, contemplating who he is and what he has done for you personally.

You know, this week I got to meet with Jody Bunch and the Clines, and they're going to come forward to join the church this morning. I got to hear their testimonies.

It's one of the best things about my job as a pastor is I get to hear people's testimonies about how the Lord saved them with the truth and how that truth has transformed their lives.

[42 : 30] You know, it's good that we do that. I think we need to do that more, share with each other and with unbelievers. The joy of what has happened to us through Jesus Christ, and it's easy to do that.

This is who I was before. Then Christ saved me. This is who I am now. Nobody can deny what Jesus has done to save you.

Or they can deny it, but it doesn't make it any more truthful. And so the main application for this morning's sermon is to understand that your life is a testimony to Christ.

And all that you say and all that you do, you are testifying to who you believe Jesus is. And I can say, you guys have heard my testimony before.

I'd be willing to share it with you who haven't heard. But especially for those of you who are here today, you don't know Jesus or you thought you did and you realize whatever I've been told is not matching what I have just read in God's Word.

[43 : 53] There is nobody like Him. There is no one who can do for you what He can do. He truly is the Son of God.

He transforms your life. He lives sinlessly. He died on the cross for your sins. He arose on the third day victoriously.

It's not about you being a better person or doing more good deeds to earn His favor. It's just you trusting in Him and what He's done for you. That's why our salvation, we often refer to it as just this amazing grace to me.

You've done that for me? Yes. So often we think there's got to be this transaction. Well, I've got to do something for you. No. All you do is trust.

You believe. And listen, this life is cursed by sin. You know Christ. It doesn't make things easier. And Jesus said that to follow me means bearing your cross. It's a life of self-denial.

[44 : 59] It will be hard. But you know what? In Christ, and I know many of you who have been there, even in sorrow, deep sorrow, there is a joy, isn't there?

There's a joy. There is a peace that surpasses understanding. And knowing that Jesus has saved you and Jesus has a place for you and a time will come when this world has passed away and Jesus has brought his church to be with him in eternity when he will dry every eye, every tear, no more sin, just the Lord and peace and his glory forever.

I hope that you know him. And if you don't, I hope that today you come to know him. for believers, don't be ashamed of Jesus.

Don't be ashamed of him. Don't be afraid to testify to the truth that you know that he's given to you. The world has questions and we have the answers.

We know what to expect. Jesus told us in John 16, 33, I have said these things to you that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation but take heart I have overcome the world.

[46 : 24] Don't fear men and what they might do. Answer. Testify. This is who Jesus is. I know him.

You can know him too. This is Jesus. I've experienced him personally. You can too. This is Jesus. I find so much joy in him and you can too. Three application questions for you to look at today or later this week as hopefully you dig deeper into this text.

Question number one. Why does John want others to share in the knowledge of Jesus? And do you share his motivation? With those who don't know Jesus in this world, is your motivation and your hope and your prayer first and foremost, I hope that they will come to know Jesus.

Question number two. Why does John emphasize both Jesus' humanity and his deity at the beginning of this letter? And how might we go astray if we do not affirm both truths?

And then finally, read Romans 10, 14 through 15. What does this text say about the need to share the gospel? And how does it describe those who share that truth?

[47 : 41] Will you bow your heads with me and let's pray. Lord God, we are so thankful for the truth that you have revealed to us, truth contained within your word, truth that sets us free from sin and gives us eternal life, that truth ultimately being your son, Jesus Christ.

God, forgive us that at times when our opportunity comes to share him or to answer questions about him in a public setting. So often, our first thought can be self-preservation or do what's comfortable for us instead of seeing that as an opportunity that you've given to us to open our mouths and proclaim the truth that you have commanded us to.

So God, I pray for me, I pray for all of us that moving forward when those opportunities come that we would even create those opportunities that we would share what we know about Jesus, what we've personally experienced in knowing Jesus and that as we do so, Lord, people would see the joy of Christ radiating out of us and through this body of believers.

God, we need you to make it happen. We know that it is your desire and so, Lord, we pray that you would use us as individuals and collectively to make much and to say much about Jesus that others would come to faith in him and we pray these things in Jesus' name.

Amen.