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Revelation

Chapter 12 - Revealing Why God is so Passionate

The Devil Bitterly Craving Vengeance (vs. 7-12)

Revelation 12:7-12: And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. The dragon and his angels waged war, and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night. And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death. For this reason, rejoice, O

heavens and you who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time.”

The Book of Revelation is an ominous book, oftentimes avoided by people, I think, because of some of the pictures that we see within the passage. The big problem is that God is clearly misunderstood. And the world has done a really good job in convoluting who He is. We believe that God is who He says He is, and we believe it's the word of God that defines who He is, not man. But man will even twist and distort Scripture based on his own perceptions. It's just like any text that might be sent to you. You could read it, and if you're in one state of mind, perceive that maybe the person's upset at you; if you're in another state of mind, perceive it as a compliment. A lot would depend on where you were, and how you read the text. And oftentimes when people get into Scripture, they perceive something very twisted

based on their own twisted mind. But it's not who God is at all. We believe that God is who He says He is. And if you listen to the Spirit of God, He'll clarify to you exactly who He is. Our faith is unique. There is no other faith that tells you that God loves you. No other faith. Think about it. And our faith says that God loves you so much that He would die for you. Can you think of any other faith like that? There is no other faith that promises you, not sort of, but promises you eternal life, resurrection from the dead. Now, if those two points were the only points, that would be enough to convince me that I'm going with those guys. Because I want to be with Someone who loves me, and I'd like to live forever. And what a marvelous promise that is. Life abundant with God.

So, when we come into a passage such as this and we begin to read some of the things that seem to be almost unbelievable, believe it. There is a force that is twisting and distorting, and convoluting. And it's interesting that he is portrayed as that picture of a dragon and oftentimes referred to as that serpent of old, which means convoluted serpent, because he has a way of twisting and

distorting things. When you think about our faith and understand that there is a battle going on against our faith; the forces of this world, i.e. Ephesians 6, remind us that we're not really wrestling against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers and forces against us in this world. And the forces of this world are working in a plan of grave deceit. And one of the ways that they work is they try to make the truth insignificant, almost marginalizing the things of the word of God.

1 Corinthians 1 would say, the things of the word of God are foolishness to the world. If, in fact, the evil one can somehow marginalize the truth, in other words, if he can say, "Oh, you don't really believe that Jesus stuff, do you?" If he can kind of pass it off and say, "That's really dumb. Really, you believe that if you ask Jesus in your heart, there's forgiveness of sins, and you're going to live forever? Nothing could be more foolish." And Scripture agrees with you. 1 Corinthians 1 says, yeah, it's foolishness of the world, but to us, it's the power of God. And God is looking for those that will humble themselves and say, "You know, I don't understand how He can do

this, but He does it.” “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name.” I don't fully comprehend that, but I know that there was a change in my life. And we're going to actually talk about those changes that take place that really are testimonials in which, I mean, you ask me how I know He lives? He lives within my heart. You can't debate with that.

Nevertheless, the world is trying to marginalize the things of the word. They try to take Scripture and they try to compartmentalize it. That is to say that they say, “Well, okay, Jesus works here, but He doesn't really work in every area of your life.” But that's not true, is it? He's either Lord of all or He's not Lord at all. I mean, He is God of all things. So, if in Romans 8:28, it says, “And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love Him and to those who walk according to His purpose,” then He has to control all things to make them work out together for good. If He doesn't control all things, then there's no way He can do that. But man says, “No, He can do spiritual stuff. He can't work in the realm of physical. He can't work in the realm of financial.” And

we compartmentalize God. "He can't heal relationships. He can do this, but not this." So, we'll go to a psychiatrist or a psychologist, and we'll go to other resources instead of to God. And man compartmentalizes. But he not only marginalizes and compartmentalizes, he delegitimizes. And there is a force, and we can see this in the world, that is delegitimizing Scripture and our faith.

Paul talks about this specifically in 2 Corinthians 4. And his statement is that we know that the god of this world is blinding the minds of the unbelieving. You say, "Well, how is he doing that?" Well, it's very simple. All you have to do is turn on your TV. Turn on your TV and what you're going to find are three-ringed circuses. I've never seen so many ridiculous evangelists and pastors or whatever they want to call themselves. False prophets, I guess is what I'll call them. But it's a sideshow! It's bizarre! They're talking about how they can help you make more money. And I'm going, "What text haven't you read that the things of this world is not what we pursue?" And they're lining their pockets and they're exploiting..., as Jesus will say to the religious leaders of His day, "You're lining your pockets

with the money from widows. You're taking money from widows." And oftentimes, they focus on the weak or the naive and the people that are not as learned. And they spout off things. My wife walked in on me. She goes, "What are you watching?" I said, "I'm watching this guy that's telling me I can be wealthy." But I'm just mesmerized by these individuals that are allowed to broadcast these lies, and yet they do it all under the name of Jesus, they do it all in the name of Christ, and I'm going, we're being delegitimized. And there's no reality to our faith here. People come into a sanctuary and immediately a church is trying to get into their pockets. What are you trying to do that for? If I understand following Christ, we're here to serve you! We should be looking for ways to minister to you! Christ did not come to be served, but to be a servant of all. And as Paul writes in Corinthians, he says His whole goal was to leave all His money in heaven, all His stuff, in heaven. So, as Paul will say, "He became poor for us that we might become rich." If we're following Christ, it's very different. I guess my point is, there is a spirit that is moving in the world that is trying to undermine, whether it's marginalizing,

compartmentalizing, delegitimizing, or even demonizing, “God's mean.” You ever heard that message?

Well, in many respects, you come to the Book of Revelation and God is perceived as mean. One of the main reasons for this text, that is to say Revelation 12, is to demonstrate and to give you a picture of the passion of God. If you remember, at the end of Chapter 11, we read of the lightning and the thunder moving out of the Ark of the Covenant, which is in heaven. It's an amazing picture. The initial thought of a lot of people is, “God's mad, He's mean, and He's angry, and He's out to get me.” You know, somebody does something wrong and they're out in the field and it's thundering, you know, “I'm sorry, I'm sorry.” Getting right with God. But there's this perception that God is out to get you. What Revelation 12 is doing is it's saying, you have no idea what those lightning things are about, do you? And the answer is no, we don't. It's a demonstration of God's passion. If you see somebody that really loves somebody else, they're very animated about it. And the heavens are getting animated at the end of Chapter 11 of Revelation because God feels very

passionate about something. Now, the question is, what does He feel passionate about? And as we've been going through Chapter 12, without me going through the whole chapter again, what we see is God being personified; we actually use the phrase "anthropomorphizing," but it's God taking on the characteristics of man so that man can understand Him. So, the characteristics of man, one is one of a husband. What do we feel passionate about? Well, relationships. We're passionate about relationships. Take a guy that loves a girl and someone threatens the one that he loves. You don't think you'll see him get passionate about that?

So, as you go through Revelation 12, you're going to see God as a husband. And that's not a new concept, because if you go back into the Old Testament specifically, you're going to see it in Jeremiah 3, as well as Isaiah 62. I mean, we sing that song, "Beulah Land," and it means married. That's what it means. God married Himself to His people. Why does God use that terminology? Well, you have to remember, God not only created everything, He invented everything. So, that relationship with husband and wife,

whose idea was that? God's. Adam didn't even know that a wife existed. See, he wasn't even looking for one. And God says, "We're going to make one for you because you look lonely." And I'm sure Adam goes, "So, that's what that was." But God brings in that relationship. Why did God bring in that relationship? Read the end of Ephesians 5, that He might display through that relationship God's love for the church. He directly paralleled that relationship of husband and wife to Christ and the church. So that God through these relationships is helping you come to terms with how He feels about things. Does God really love me? He feels passionate about you. How? Like a husband would his wife. Well, how does a husband oftentimes express these passions? Well, Scripture tells us he'll give her almost anything. And you see this interesting picture of God going, "I'll give her the sun, I'll give her the moon, whatever she wants." And you see the love of God being displayed in that.

Now, it's not only in this chapter going to reveal to us that God is passionate as a husband, but what's the very next passion? As a father. And how would you feel if a child,

you longed for a child and there hadn't been a child for a long time, finally the child was coming and that child's life was being threatened, how would you feel? Well, that's what the text is revealing. A father longing for his child and the child ready to be born and the dragon ready to slay the child. How would you feel? In every case, you're going to sense the passion of God, and that's exactly what He's wanting you to see. He's wanting you to identify. So, He's not wanting you to perceive Him as this demonizing picture that the world gives you, just some mean God looking to get you. This is God wanting to bring you home. And it's basically the prayer of Jesus in John 17, where Jesus begins to pray to the Father, and He says, "Dad, can we bring these guys with us so that they can understand how much We love each other and how much they're loved? Can we just bring them home?" And that's the prayer of Christ before He goes to the cross, because that's what He's going to bring about, bringing us home. Right before He goes to the cross, He turns to his disciples, and He goes, "Let not your heart be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many dwelling places. If it weren't so, I would have

told you. I go to prepare a place for you.” Where was He going? To the cross. It's not like, oh, He's got to go up and get a hammer and start building your house. The Father's house is already there. But Him going to the cross was preparing a place for you, was getting you there. That's what that was about. “And that where I am, there you may be also.” Well, here again, the world has misrepresented God, and it's almost as if, if you were to hear most people, it's like God's trying to keep us out of heaven. But He is rescuing us. So, you're going to see Him as a picture of a husband, you're going to see Him as a picture of a father, and you're going to see the passion of a Savior who is rescuing. Somebody that has a heart. There's a realization that something wrong is happening here. An injustice. You know that passion that you feel when an injustice has occurred, and you feel very strongly about it? That's what God feels. See? There's a reason for those feelings. And God's saying, “We're going to rescue you.”

When you go in the Old Testament in particular, I think of Isaiah 59 in this, and we've read it before, but if I could just have you look at it one more time.

It starts off,

(Isaiah 59:9) “Therefore justice is far from us,
And righteousness does not overtake us;
We hope for light, but behold, darkness...”

(Isaiah 59:10) “We grope along the wall like blind men,
We grope like those who have no eyes...”

(Isaiah 59:11) “All of us growl like bears,
And moan sadly like doves...”

Maybe you've had a week like that.

But it goes on and says,

(Isaiah 59:12) “For our transgressions are multiplied
before You...”

“And there's no way we can do anything.”

And because of this,

(Isaiah 59:14) “Justice is turned back,
And righteousness stands far away;
For truth has stumbled in the street...”

(Isaiah 59:15) “Yes, truth is lacking...”

The end of verse 15,

“Now the LORD saw,

And it was displeasing in His sight that there was no
justice.

(Isaiah 59:16) And He saw that there was no man,

And was astonished that there was no one to intercede;

Then His own arm brought salvation to Him,

And His righteousness upheld Him.

(Isaiah 59:17) He put on righteousness like a breastplate,

And a helmet of salvation on His head...”

Scripture is telling us that He's feeling passionate about right, and He comes as Savior. And these marvelous pictures that are given to us in Revelation 12 are really directly connected to the end of Chapter 11 in which you see all those lightning bolts and the moving of heaven, because it's just the precursor of God coming to rescue.

As we come a little bit further in Chapter 12, I want you to see in Revelation here that though there is an adversary that is trying his best to destroy, yet there is a cry in heaven, “Salvation has come.” You see the text? And of course, it really backs up to the fact that the child comes to the throne of God, and you see that in verse 5.

But if you come with me, it says in verse 10,

(Revelation 12:10) “Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, “Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night.”

Now, the word that is used, “*katēgoros*,” in the Greek, makes reference to not only an accusation, but a legal or forensic accusation. That is to say that it's like Satan is in a court of law. And once again, he has every right to accuse you because you and I are guilty. For instance, have you ever lied? Guilty. Okay. We can go down the list if you want to. But the fact of the matter is that we're all guilty. Scripture says, “For all have sinned and fall short of the

glory of God.” So, all guilty. Interestingly, when you see the Old Testament begins to reveal this, and you'll oftentimes see Satan in those positions of accuser before some of the most righteous people on the face of the earth, i.e. Job being one of them. And that's how the Book of Job starts off. It's basically Satan comes before God and he goes, “I know he seems like a good guy, but if bad things were to happen, I bet he'd curse You.” So, things began to unveil. Job perceived himself as righteous, but when all was said and done, Job realized, “I'm not righteous either.” So that in every case, in many respects, he's going to win the argument. Are you a sinner? Yes. Do you deserve to be condemned? Yes.

So, Zechariah 3 talks about Joshua. the high priest, and he stands before God with filthy clothes. Isaiah will say, “All of our righteousness is like filthy rags.” So, you're talking about a high priest in priestly clothes, and he's filthy. What do you think I am? So, the point throughout Scripture is, and in that particular text, Satan is standing up before the throne of God and accusing him. Does he have a case? Absolutely, he has a case.

Peter perceived himself to have the ability by sheer willpower to do the right thing. In fact, he told Jesus, “I don't care who leaves You, I'm not going to leave You. I'm going to be there.” “How do you know, Peter?” “Because I made up my mind. I'm going to do it.” Jesus goes, “Okay, you're going to hear... And when you hear, by that time, you'll have denied me three times before that chicken that thinks he's a powerful rooster, begins to crow.” It's just chicken. But he thinks he can rule the world. And he begins to crow. He says, “That's your pride. That's your pride crowing. But you're still just a chicken.” And He reveals in that setting, and Peter denies Him, not only denies Him three times, but when a little girl says, “You're one of them,” he goes, “No,” and he begins to curse. Now, if you remember the text, that Jesus talks with Peter, He says, “Satan has requested permission to sift you.” In other words, “Satan is going to cross-examine you on the court of reality. And you said that you would never deny Christ. Let's see.” And by virtue of sheer willpower, Peter could not. So, in every case, you see that he would win on the side of accusation. But something has taken him from his position of accuser and thrown

him down to a place of common, in which he has no authority in the heavens anymore.

And that's described, if you look with me, in Revelation 12, as he begins to say that salvation has now come and power has come. And now, watch verse 11, because this is a key text. And it's actually this verse I want to focus on.

(Revelation 12:11) “And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death.”

Now, what the text is revealing to us is there are three things in the text that bear witness that we are not only saved, but we are justified, we are sanctified, that is to say, we are guiltless before the throne of God. Three things. The first is the blood of Christ. It's interesting, at the very beginning of Revelation 1, in verse 5, if I could just quote you the verse, you can turn to it if you want to.

It says,

“And from Jesus Christ... who loves us and released us from our sins by His blood.”

One of the reasons why the whole thing of the blood is mentioned probably comes out of Leviticus 17:11 and verse 14 as well. I don't know if you tie the two together always. But the point of the blood is, in those particular texts, He says, "You can't eat the blood." You say, "Well, why can't I eat the blood?" He says, "Because the life is in the blood." The point of the blood is it signifies specifically, and in reality, life. Take away the blood and what? There's no life. So, you could literally put in there, not only did Christ shed His blood, but Christ gave His life for you. Now, what that's depicting is, of course, as John 15 would say, "Greater love has no man than this than one lay down his life." And it's conveying something more powerful than guilt, something more powerful than condemnation. It's called love. And what the heavens are going to declare is that the love of God is more powerful. But not only the love of God is more powerful, but He's going to pay the price. I mean, the wages of sin is death. Who's going to take death for us? Christ is. He's going to give His life that you might have life. He will take death, but He'll defeat death because of His own righteousness. But it's an interesting picture because it's displaying that.

So, it says in Romans 3, a great text,

(Romans 3:25) “Whom God displayed...”

That is to say, the Lamb of God. John would say, Who takes away the sins of the world.

“Whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation (atoning victim) ...”

You think about it. I mean, I've been to quite a few countries. I don't think I can go to a place where there's not a cross. I really can't think of any place where I've never seen a cross. “Whom God displayed publicly as an atoning victim for our sins.” The world has seen; the world knows the story. There's no mistake about this. He was publicly crucified before the Jews and the Gentiles, before Herod and the Romans. He was publicly crucified.

It goes on to say in Revelation 7:14,

(Revelation 7:14) “... they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”

And you've got to turn to Colossians with me because this is, to me, one of the most magnificent things about Him dying on the cross. Something actually takes place when

Christ dies on the cross. The fact is that the sins, the things that you and I have done wrong, which, look, the one who accuses and condemns has every right to condemn us; we've been taken out of his condemnation.

In fact, Colossians 1 says,

(Colossians 1:12) “giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light.

(Colossians 1:13) For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son,

(Colossians 1:14) in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.”

Now, if you go on, it says, how could He win? Because God gave Him authority above all authorities. And in him, it doesn't matter who or what authority is out there.

(Colossians 1:15) “He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

(Colossians 1:16) For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether

thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him.

(Colossians 1:17) He is before all things...”

And so, He's in charge.

It's because of that, if you look in Chapter 2, that by His death, He was able to cancel out the accusations that were given. So, here you are in a court of law, and it's like all your accusations are totally washed off the board by the fact that somebody already paid the price. You cannot be convicted of the same crime twice. Double jeopardy, right? It's been paid for.

And if you look within the passage, if you look in Colossians 2, and you'll drop on down, it says that you and I,

(Colossians 2:13) “... were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions.”

Now, watch what he goes on to say. This is very important that you understand it, because this will show how this works.

(Colossians 2:14) “Having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us...”

Well, that's an understatement.

“... and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.”

It's like He took your debt, put it on a cross, the nail went through Jesus, and He goes, “Paid. Paid.” See, the accuser is looking for some sort of payment. Jesus goes, “Paid. Paid in full.”

Now, watch,

(Colossians 2:15) “When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them...”

That's an interesting twist. I thought Christ was being made a public display by them. He goes, “No. What Christ was doing was He's saying, ‘Ha, you lose.’” And at that moment, He takes away all their power to accuse. They

have no more power to accuse because He has paid the price for them. And there's nothing more humiliating than a warrior losing all his power.

“When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him.”

Through His death on the cross.

How do we overcome the accusations, the hostility of the world? One, by the blood of the Lamb. You're guilty. You stand before God. Job finally finds out, hey, you're not as righteous as you thought you were. That's an epiphany for some of us. But you stand before God and you go, “Okay, so I'm not righteous. What do I do?” He goes, “Plead the blood. Somebody's paid that price.” Or maybe you're like Peter who thinks, “I can do it, I can be good by myself.” You can't. And the accuser's going to get you, and he's going to point out, and someday, some moment, everything's going to be revealed, and you're just going to see how totally weak you are, and you're going to go, “I need a Savior.” And God says, “Plead the blood. Plead the blood.”

Now, in the passage, it not only makes reference to the blood, but they overcome because of the blood of the Lamb and because, what's the next phrase? “The word of the testimony.” This is a very interesting phrase.

The best description I can give you is Matthew 16, if you take a moment and look there with me. The word of the testimony is not simply that which was accomplished in and through Christ, but that which comes to us by the Father, and what you're going to see within the passage is there are three that bear witness that we are redeemed and literally releases us of all guilt. The first is the sacrifice of Christ and His love for you. The second is the word of the testimony.

Now, the question is, where does the word of the testimony come from? That's an interesting question. Because what would cause me to put all of my hope in a guy that was nailed to a cross? You've got to be flipped! To think that a guy on a cross is going to bring you everlasting life? It just doesn't make any sense. There's nothing about it that makes any sense. But the day is going to come when you're going to go, “He's the Christ.

He's the Son of God. And I put all of my trust in Him. Don't ask me to explain to you why. But I can tell you this, I cannot say nothing. I must proclaim.” And Scripture will say, no man can say, “Jesus is Lord” except by the Spirit of God. It's a miracle that any of us, would say, Jesus is Lord. That's a miracle.

Now, watch the text, if you look with me in Matthew 16, as we've oftentimes read, Jesus comes and He goes, “Who do people say the Son of Man is? Well, you know, if you get a bunch of people together, they'll have a little conference, and everybody will have their own ideas. You know, “He's a good man. He's a prophet or whatever.”

(Matthew 16:14) “And they said, “Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.”

(Matthew 16:15) He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?””

Now, watch the passage.

(Matthew 16:16) “Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.””

That's a testimony of the word. He is giving testimony. Now, once again, I just want to remind you, the word "testimony," "*martys*," is actually where we're getting our word "martyr". But it is standing on the truth and being unyielding about it. I've seen some people, you ask them in a situation where there are a lot of other people in the room, "Who do you think Jesus is?" "I don't want to say." And I'm saying to myself, not saved. Because the evidence that you are is you can't not say it. You just can't not. And so, something comes out of your mouth, and you go, "He is the Christ, the Son of God. He is the One who saved me from my sin. I cannot not say that."

Now, watch the way this reads,

"... "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

(Matthew 16:17) And Jesus said to him, "Blessed are you..."

You've been blessed. You've been hit with a fairy wand. I mean, what God has done for you is given you something that you could have never done yourself.

Watch the text.

“... because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.”

So, you and I are washed by the loving, sacrificial blood of the Lamb who paid the price for my sins. The testimony that comes out of my mouth is an act of the Father that causes me to say, “My hope is in Your Son.” That's an act of the Father. And it's the evidence that we've defeated the evil one because when the Father puts those words in my mouth, Who's speaking to the accuser? God. God's speaking to the accuser because I've just said what He put in my mouth to say. And God's word will not return void. See? So, the testimony begins to be the power in which I'm defeating the accuser.

Now, watch the next passage if you go in Revelation 12:11, not only because of the word of the testimony, but how does it end?

“... they did not love their life even when faced with death.”

Now, you have the Spirit. There are three that bear witness. The Son, the Father, and the Spirit.

Turn with me to 1 John 5 and we'll see this. Which by the way, he's going to use a similar word; to remind you, "overcome" is where we get the word "Nike" for our tennis shoes. They stole it, but it's actually Greek. It's actually pronounced "nickay," so if you want to correct people, just tell them, "Those aren't Nikes, those are nickays." But anyway, it's the same word in Scripture which means to overcome or victory. So, the word is used in 1 John 5:3, as well as continually throughout the Book of Revelation. As he talks to the seven churches of Asia Minor, in every case, he says, "How do you overcome? How do you overcome? How do you overcome?" So, the same John who writes Revelation is the same John that writes 1st John; same John that writes the Gospel of John by the power of the Spirit.

So, if you look at 1 John 5:3, it reads this way,

(1 John 5: 3) "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments..."

Now, here's something bizarre. Once God comes within us, the same commandments that we go, "I don't want to

do that,” are the same commandments that we go, “Man, I can hardly wait to do that.”

And so, his statement is,

“For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.”

Now, why does he put it in that order? Because the love of God has so indwelt within me that I get it. Everything He tells me to do is because He loves me. So, that's why I want to do everything He tells me to do. It's no longer a commandment of harsh condemnation, but it is something that is inspiring for my good.

(1 John 5:4) “For whatever is born of God...”

In other words, if you have this Spirit within you,

“... overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.”

That is, we actually believe that He loves us. That's a strange thought, isn't it? Do you believe God loves you? I actually believe He loves me. I believe He loved me so much that He would die for me. Yes, okay.

(1 John 5:5) “Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?”

(1 John 5:6) This is the One who came by water...”

That is to say, He cleanses you. When you receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, you may sin again, but you don't want to. And when you ask forgiveness, if you confess your sins, He is faithful and just to forgive your sins, and He cleanses you from all unrighteousness.

How do you know that God is real in your life? Look, there have been times that I did something wrong. I went up to somebody and said, “Look, I'm really sorry. Would you forgive me?” And they go, “Yeah.” I walk away, and I go, “I don't feel forgiven. I just don't feel forgiven.” But I can tell you every time I confess my sins before God, I feel forgiven. Now, that's a testimony. I mean, literally, it's like He takes the load off my shoulders, and I go, “It's paid for. It's paid in full.” And there is a washing that comes in, and I feel clean. I mean, I may have lived a terrible life before this, but at this moment, I feel clean. I mean, you think of Mary Magdalene, who had multiple demons in her. Mary Magdalene had multiple demons. And she became one of

the closest people to Christ and was the first one to see the resurrected Christ. Now, how in the world could that happen? How could she feel that emboldened, unless she felt clean before God?

“This is the One who came by water and blood...”

Which is the love of God, His sacrifice for you, which paid the price.

How do you know that you're valuable? Well, Peter will say this, “You were not redeemed with things like silver and gold. You were redeemed with blood.” So, how valuable do you think you were?

“... and blood, Jesus Christ; not with the water only, but with the water and with the blood. It is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth.

(1 John 5:7) For there are three that testify:

(1 John 5:8) the Spirit and the water and the blood...”

“I'm loved; I've been cleaned.” Here's the next one, “And I'll die for this.” That's the Spirit of God. If you have the Spirit of Christ within you, you'll die for your faith. You're

not afraid. The Spirit of God bears witness, as Romans says, with our spirit, that we are sons of God.

Well, read it with me, Romans 3. We know that the Law convicts us. We know that according to verse 10 and 11,

(Romans 3:10) “as it is written, “THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE.”

(Romans 3:11) “... THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD;

(Romans 3:12) ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE...”

We know that God, in verse 25, has displayed Him as a propitiation or an atoning victim for our sin. And because of that, the deed of righteousness has been paid for.

But if you then turn to Romans 8, interesting statement the way he puts it,

(Romans 8:14) “For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

(Romans 8:15) For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, “Abba! Father!”

(Romans 8:16) The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God,

(Romans 8:17) and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ...”

Did you read the end of verse 17?

“... if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.”

How is it possible that you have the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ within you Who died on the cross that He might save you; how is it possible to have His Spirit within you and deny His name? It's not possible. And it's not possible to not have the fortitude, unlike Peter, before he had received the Spirit of God, he couldn't do it in his own flesh. But you take Peter, literally 50 days later, and he's standing before the same people that had crucified Christ, and saying, “Do what you want to with me. I'm not backing down.” Now, that wasn't Peter. That was the Spirit of God. And these three bear witness. And the Father is calling out, “Listen, you do what My Son says,” and we just do what His Son says. I mean, it's just the way it is. And we're attached to Him because of that blood.

But by George, we're not going to **not** attach ourselves openly to the Spirit of God, and we'll be willing to die. I don't know; the day may come when we actually see this transpire in the States. We know that it's happening all the time in China. We know that people are dying for their faith all over the world, even as we speak. They say that there are actually more martyrs today than there have been in past times ever. That's hard for us to believe because of the land in which we live. But the forces are becoming hostile towards us about our faith. I mean, we're not doing anything aggressively against them. We're just saying that we love Jesus. And I can't say anything else, can you? I have to say I love Jesus.

Closing Prayer:

Father, we give You thanks for Your lovingkindness and for the power of You working in and through our lives to such an extent that we're convinced that You love us. There's something about that blood that just convinces us that You love us. There's something within us that will not let us keep silent and will take us all the way to the

genuineness and sincerity of truth in our lives to where we'll be willing to die for what we say we believe. Now, that's got to be the Spirit of Truth. It's not just words. But it's these three things that reveal to us we've won. We're part of the family of God. We're going to be forever with Him. And it's that confidence that we take with us forever.

Your head's bowed and your eyes closed. I don't know where you are in your faith. But I can tell you this, if it's real, you'll know it. You'll know it. There'll be something inside that just says, "I'm convinced God loves me. I've got to say something about it. And I will be true, no matter what." These three will bear witness that you won; that faith, your faith, overcame the world. Your heads bowed and your eyes closed. I'm just asking you to examine yourself. That's why we come. That's why we go through the Word of God. Examine yourselves to see if what you have is real.