

God Has Called Us to Freedom

(Go To Meeting)

Albert Jones—August 1, 2025

In the hustle and bustle of life, it's very important to take a break and contemplate the past week. Sometimes we just fall into the Sabbath, and there's so much going on in the world and various things around us. Sometimes things can sneak up on us, but God has instructed us to be prepared, put our trust in Him, and He will take care of things for us.

So, tonight, I would like to bring a message that has been kind of marinating from various past Bible studies that we've been doing and the series that we're doing in our fellowship here in Michigan.

This freedom that we have been granted by God's grace and His work in our life is what we will be talking about tonight. How that freedom manifests itself in an understanding that we have with God and Jesus Christ in the work that They're doing in our lives.

One might call it an impossible work, to take a fleshly being and bring that individual to a state of acceptability on the level of Christ and God the Father Themselves, but here we are. *We stand justified before the Father in the Righteousness of Christ!*

That relationship is what enables us to complete this journey to the Kingdom of God. *God has called us to freedom*, and we're not in bondage any longer to Satan who was using and abusing us for his benefit. Keeping us in darkness and away from the Light of Truth that God had intended for us. So, when God called us, it began, *and our calling is one of life's great miracles!*

We'll start some discussion here in Gal. 5 in which Paul brings to our reality an understanding of what we are without God. God made us flesh. He created us in His image for the purpose of becoming members of His Family. But from where we are right now to where we are trying to get is *a great chasm* that only can be crossed, as God defines it, with the help of Jesus Christ.

Paul elaborates upon this Truth quite a bit in his teachings to the brethren, and which have been preserved for us to comprehend, as well.

Galatians 5:1: "Therefore, stand fast in the liberty..."—*this freedom that we have where Christ has made us free!*

We need to understand that that freedom is just not the forgiveness of sins, because we know that we still sin; but we have an Advocate with Jesus Christ. We have a propitiation for sin and the forgiveness of sin through His blood, which again is a part of the

entire methodology by which Christ brings us into the Family of God.

His work ahead of this relationship is what makes this relationship possible, *so, we are set free! We are provided liberty through the work of Christ!* That's why:

- Christ is so important to us
- Christ is so important to this relationship that we have with God

We understand that our standing before God the Father is a product and made possible through, first of all, God's loving grace toward us and calling us. But He called us to something He established so that we could stand in it.

Verse 2: "Behold, I, Paul, tell you..."

This is a whole conversation about circumcision, and

when we think about the freedom that we stand in, *it is all upon the work of Christ!* There isn't a physical thing that would enable this relationship to exist.

We look at the shadow of the Old Covenant as it was. It pales into comparison of the reality of the Truth that we stand in now with God. So, in a conversation with those who wanted to throw an incredible 'stumbling stone' before the Gentiles and saying to them that the application of Christ's blood would not be acceptable to the Father *unless one was circumcised!*

Verse 2: "Behold, I, Paul, tell you that if you become circumcised... [as he told them, and he wanted them to understand] ...Christ shall profit you nothing!"

Christ profits us everything! Our entire freedom, reconciliation, righteousness, the entire standing that we have *is a result of Christ!*

I've said in the past, 'No, I will never be ashamed of the name of Christ.' I can't say it enough. I can't emphasize it enough. Because I know my life is dependent upon what He did.

Verse 3: "Again, I am personally testifying to every man who is being circumcised..."—*or thinking that circumcision is necessary!*

That a physical exercise on the part of man can replace what Christ has done or complements it in any way. *It does not!*

"...that he is a debtor to do the whole Law" (v

3).

He has to be as perfect in the keeping of God's Commandments as Christ. Well, for all of us, brethren, it's already too late. It is already too late.

- we are saved by grace because of our sins
- we are saved by grace because of the imputed sin of Adam, our forefather, to us

So it's already too late! It's not even possible!

Verse 4: "You who are attempting..."

*A poor attempt, it will never succeed **IF** they think a physical thing can bring them into a right standing before God **for eternal life in God's Family!***

The type of righteousness, the level of righteousness required to stand before the Father and have eternal life imputed unto you. So, Paul goes on to say in:

Verse 4: "You who are attempting to be justified by *works of law*..."

There is not a single work of law that can justify a man or a woman! You are being deprived. One might say that they were depriving themselves of the gift of God. You are being deprived of any spiritual effect from Christ. That great work that He did.

- the Messiah
- the Light of the world
- the Savior of the world

You who are attempting to be justified by *works of law* "...You have fallen from grace. For **we through the Spirit** are waiting for the hope of righteousness by faith" (vs 4-5).

In other words, the Spirit allows us to comprehend the standing that we're in. ***This wonderful gift that God has given us!*** It allows us not only to comprehend the Truth, but it gives us power to exercise that ***walk of faith***:

- to live in faith
- to dwell in faith

Verse 5: "For we through the Spirit are waiting for the hope of righteousness by faith."

It will appear. It is imputed to us. But we haven't received it in the spiritual manifestation, yet, of physical true spirit.

Verse 6: "Because in Christ Jesus neither is circumcision of any force..."

No application, merit, or benefit to anyone pertaining to eternal life. It hasn't any force.

"...nor uncircumcision... [having any

advantages, as well; so it's neither/or] ...rather, *it is the inner working of faith through love*" (v 6). ***Paul emphasizes here that:***

- the Truth that they received regarding *the Christ*
- the Truth that they were baptized in regarding *the Christ*

is what matters!

Then as a result of having that Truth, you began to walk before God, which is defined here as running, running a race.

Verse 7: "You were running well. Who hindered you..."

Here are those throwing 'stumbling stones' before the brethren who are running this marathon, probably in the 15th lap.

"...Who hindered you, persuading you not to obey the Truth?" (v 7).

- to walk in Truth
- to live by the Word of God
- to obey the Truth

which was from the very mouth of Christ Himself!

Verse 8: "This persuasion is not coming from Him who calls you. A little leaven leavens the whole lump" (vs 8-9).

So, when our lives are connected with God for eternal life, We have to follow the prescription that God has devised. We follow His Truth, which has been revealed to us, as it says here, ***by the Spirit!***

The Spirit of God tells us that there is no other name on the heaven by which one can be saved! God's love is indeed an incredible thing. Thinking and listening to various sermons as we approach Trumpets, Atonement, and Tabernacles, about this time of year, the analogy seems to break down.

But understand, brethren, that in the Plan of God, we just came out of Pentecost, representing the resurrection of the firstfruits. Since Pentecost, we have been with the Father and Christ. We would have been on the Sea of Glass, receiving *spiritual instructions, all the various things that are necessary for us to rule and reign with Christ!*

Trumpets is approaching. The trumpets of God are being blown by the angels, the remaining ones. The various signs and wonders in heaven are being displayed. The resurrection would have occurred at the seventh trump, but the additional signs and wonders that are described in the book of Revelation are continuing.

We're there in the presence of God. The reality of our calling would have come to full fruition. So, here we are, in our understanding even now.

- this is our fate
- this is our future
- this is our destiny

Secured by Christ! That's where our joy comes from, and where our peace comes from.

John 3—Jesus Christ was conveying to the disciples as much as they could receive, not having the Holy Spirit in them as it was, even though God was in their presence.

I thought it was a unique thing to be able to have the audience of God Himself, the Creator of the universe, to be able to ask questions and receive instruction. I don't know that Christ would have kept any true knowledge from them that they needed to know. He would have been *a faithful Teacher*. He would have been able to expound upon this wonderful experience that He had brought into being.

That is to have disciples that are being instructed directly by God. Christ with them, walking with them and instructing them. We have that same relationship, because of what Christ did, God in us:

- walking with us
- instructing us
- guiding us

Day-by-day!

In a recent sermon that I listened to from Fred, regarding the greatest gift. He indicated the uniqueness of our relationship with God, as begotten sons and daughters, that that in itself is the greatest gift that God can give. The greatest gift of grace is for a man or a woman to be able to have an intimate personal relationship with God and Truth. That relationship is what you and I have been given.

John 3:12: "If I have told you earthly things, and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?"

We live in a physical world. We were created physical beings, but the truth and the reality of our creation, our status as human beings, is on the spiritual level. The true fulfillment of our purpose in life is a spiritual creation, which God is creating in each and every one of us. For us to graduate from the existence as human beings *into an existence of God, on the God plane, in the God realm.*

Anytime I think about that, it takes my breath away. I think about that often this time of year, because we're going into the fall festival season. All those activities having to do with spirit beings. The work of

Jesus Christ as King of kings, and Lord of lords, and His resurrected saints with Him.

- bringing judgment
- ruling
- bringing peace
- restoring
- renewing

The true condition that God desired the world to be! To have!

That from His very Throne shall flow rivers of living water healing the earth. His presence upon the planet will heal the planet; His saints with Him.

Verse 13: "And no one has ascended into heaven, except He Who came down from heaven, *even* the Son of man, Who is in heaven."

Now, He descended, ***but He also has ascended back to glory at the right hand of the Father:***

- setting the example
- being the forerunner
- being the trailblazer

So that we can see that Jesus is alive, and we are walking toward Him:

- to be raised like Him
- to be like Him

Verse 14: "And even as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, in the same way it is ordained that the Son of man be lifted up."

The crucifixion of Christ, this event, makes possible salvation for human beings from all time! Here is faith:

Verse 15: "So that everyone who believes in Him may not perish, but may have everlasting life."

John then defines it as an act of God. He didn't say another human being, He said:

Verse 16: "For God so loved the world... [both the Father and the Son] ...that He gave His only begotten Son..."—*Who was willing to come; no one forced Him!* This act of love was:

- not an act of futility
- not an act without purpose
- not an act without design

It was purposely designed, so that you and I could be saved, and have access to eternal life in:

- God's Plan
- God's Family
- God's purpose for us

Satan may have thought the Plan of God was defeated when he got Adam and Eve to sin, but it wasn't. Jesus Christ came and made the difference. And the Father sent Him

Verse 16: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, so that everyone who believes... [everyone means *everyone*] ...in Him... [all of mankind will have an opportunity to believe in the Son of God] ...may not perish, but may have everlasting life."

- will have a chance for eternal life
- will have the hope to be able to succeed in eternal life through faith

They "...may not perish, but may have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son... [an act on the part of God toward us] ...For God sent not His Son into the world that He might judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. The one who believes in Him... [Jesus Christ, the Son of God who came in flesh and made possible Life for us] ... is not judged..." (vs 16-18).

- We were judged for eternal death because of the sins of Adam
- We were judged for eternal death because of our own sins

Because there's no forgiveness of sin without the shedding of blood; 'the wages of sin is death.' That's not going to change! God's Law stands forever. The soul who sins shall die. Christian understanding 101: One can't live in sin and expect eternal life; it's not going to happen! One who is sinning, the only way to have that sin forgiven is to repent. Not feel bad only, but to truly repent toward God, and have faith in the blood of Christ. That blood is then applied:

- for the forgiveness
- the washing
- the cleansing
- putting one now in a state of acceptability to God

That's our standing right now, by grace through faith! These things are kind of foundational, but when we put the entire Plan of God together in terms of our true reality... It isn't that we just come to the Sabbath on Friday evening and kind of practice it through for 24 hours.

- this is our life
- this is our calling
- we were called to Truth
- we are cared for
- we are protected
- we are shepherd by Christ for the Father

And the Father is involved personally in our

development, as well. He dwells within us! Here is the Truth revealed. Who brought it? *Jesus Christ!*

Verse 19: "And this is the judgment: that the Light has come into the world... [Truth and understanding, Christ brought it] ...but men loved darkness rather than the Light because their works were evil."

Yes, sin and Light, or darkness and Light don't dwell together very well! Darkness is always running from Light, because it doesn't want to be exposed!

But the true opposite is true for us. We should be running to the Light if we discover any hint of darkness within us. We should run to the Light, *because the Light destroys darkness*:

- takes away darkness
- purifies it
- brings Light into the situation

We have this relationship with God, *which is truly a miracle!* I'm so thankful that God has allowed me to be a part of this with all of you.

Verse 20: "For everyone who practices evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light, so that his works may not be exposed; *but the one who practices the Truth comes to the Light...*" (vs 20-21). *That is because you know it, now you walk in it!*

- practices the Truth
- lives by Truth
- exhibits the Truth as a way of life
 - ✓ your conduct
 - ✓ your reality
 - ✓ your thinking
 - ✓ your existence

now is based upon Truth revealed!

Verse 21: "But the one who practices the Truth comes to the Light, so that his works may be manifested..."

To be able to see where there may be darkness, and get rid of it, expose the darkness to the Light:

- that it can be corrected
- the purification
- the cleansing
- the righteousness

That might be exhibited as a result of being exposed, to the Light! That they have been accomplished by the Power of God! This is the relationship and the walk that we have. God wants us to walk in this Light!

John 5—this brings us a proper context of what we're talking about here:

John 5:25: "Truly, truly I say to you, *the hour*

is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear shall live.”

In the scope of God’s Plan, as the Holy Days reveal the Plan of God, we would be—if the resurrection, had occurred—on the Sea of Glass, raised from the dead!

John 5:25: “Truly, truly I say to you, *the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear shall live. For even as the Father has life in Himself...*” (vs 25-26).

You understand that the Father has Life in Himself, and He has given you, He has imputed to you, that Life! He is the Source of Life, He has Life in Himself, He dwells in you!

Verse 26: “For even as the Father has Life in Himself, so also has He given to the Son to have Life in Himself; and has also given Him...” (vs 26-27).

God does nothing in a haphazard way, So, He’s defining for here for us: All the power that is invested in you and me; all the power that is being brought to bear in this relationship.

Verse 27: “And has also given Him authority to execute judgment because He is *the Son of man*. Do not wonder at this, for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves shall hear His voice” (vs 27-28).

This is the Truth, This is the truth in real time, where we are right now, that we’re hoping in. That even though we die in the faith, when He says, ‘Come forth,’ we will hear His voice:

Verse 29: “And shall come forth: those who have practiced good unto a resurrection of Life...”

That is the first resurrection; blessed and Holy is he who is in the first resurrection; over these the *second death has no power*; Let’s talk about those in the second death:

“...and those who have practiced evil unto a resurrection of judgment” (v 29).

So this judgment that they will experience would have taken place at a point by which *they would have had an opportunity*:

- to hear the Word of God
- to hear the Truth
- to have that Light shine in their life

IF they rejected and practiced sin, *that second resurrection is a resurrection of judgment!*

Verse 30: “I have no power to do anything of Myself; but as I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just because I do not seek My own will but the will of the

Father Who sent Me. If I bear witness of Myself, My testimony is not true. There is another who bears witness of Me...” (vs 30-32).

Christ and the Father affirming this powerful Truth, this powerful reality in real time, Christ in the flesh, The Lord God Who made man in the flesh, conveying to us through these words, these Scriptures, this Truth:

Verse 32: “There is another who bears witness of Me, and I know that the testimony that he witnesses concerning Me is true. You have sent to John, and he has borne witness to the Truth. Now, I do not receive witness from man, but I say these things so that you may be saved” (vs 32-34).

Verse 35: “He... [speaking of John the Baptist] ...was a burning and shining light, and you were willing for a time to rejoice in his Light.”

- Light and Truth
- Light and revelation

These things have something in common:

- we have received Light
- we have received revelation
 - ✓ your calling
 - ✓ opened your eyes, your ears, and your mind to comprehend Godly things

Verse 36: “But I have a greater witness than John’s; for the works that the Father gave Me to complete, the *very works* that I am doing...”

Once again, affirming the collaboration here; this entire thing that is happening to us that’s from Them! We are recipients of this wonderful gift,

- God toward you and me
- God in you and me
- And we in Them through our faith

Verse 36: “But I have a greater witness than John’s; for the works that the Father gave Me to complete, the *very works* that I am doing, themselves bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me”—*signs and wonders!*

Verse 37: “And the Father Himself... [I want you to think on that! The Sovereign God, the Father Himself] ...Who sent Me, has borne witness of Me. You have neither heard His voice nor seen His form at any time. And you do not have His Word dwelling in you... [not yet] ...for you do not believe Him Whom He has sent. You search the Scriptures... [looking, searching] ...for in them you think that you have eternal life; and they are the ones that testify of Me” (vs 37-39).

What that is saying to me is the most important thing for us is our relationship with God:

- *the Bible* is a tool
- *Go to Meeting* is a tool
- *Sabbath service* is a tool

These are things that God has given to us! They are Holy, they are good, *but they are not Christ!* So, it is to comprehend the importance of Christ in our life.

- the freedom that we have and that we are experiencing is from Him
- the hope that we have is from Him

***The Father wants you and me to understand that!
Christ is affirming this!***

Verse 40: “But you are unwilling to come to Me, that you may have Life.”

I say to that, for us: we have to be in Christ all the time! We should be truly yearning, panting, desiring and actively living toward Christ so that we can exercise righteousness every day and be benefited from that relationship; it’s designed for that purpose.

Verse 41: “I do not receive glory from men; but I have known you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves. I have come in My Father’s name, and you do not receive Me; *but if another comes in his own name, you will receive him.* How are you able to believe, you who receive glory from one another, **and do not seek the glory that comes from the only God?**” (vs 41-44).

These are just kind of statements that take your breath away when you pause and meditate upon them. ***The one true God is revealing Himself in these words!***

- that’s why these words are Holy and True
- that’s why these words are so precious to us

By reading these words, God talks to us, God is talking to you and me, because we receive Him, we desire Him! We give glory to God!

Verse 45: “Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father.... [Christ is a loving brother] ...There is *one* who accuses you....”

So if you read the Word of God and look in that perfect mirror, don’t turn your head away and forget! Turn your head away ***and pray and go to God for help,*** for continual cleansing, continual manifestation of righteousness in your life!

‘Help me to grow’ is what the prayer would be. ‘Help me, Father, while I fall short. Let me reflect You.’ These are the things that we are desiring for God to do in our life! We have the Book of the Law, we have the Bible!

“...**in whom you have hope**” (v 45).

Our hope is not based on just the words, But

the power behind the words:

- the Word of God Himself
- the Power of God Himself
- the forgiveness that is in His blood
- the Life that He is now living actively working on your behalf

Verse 46: “But if you believed Moses, you would have believed Me; for he wrote about Me. And if you do not believe his writings, how shall you believe My words?” (vs 46-47).

So these acts of faith that you and I live by are quite important for us. In doing them, don’t forget, where they originate. What you practice is not something made up in your own mind, it is prescribed for you! Your ability to be successful at it is not something you do or accomplish alone. The fight is too much for you alone! You have the Father Himself, and His Son who died for you, for helpmates.

- They are going to help you
- They are going to support you
- They are going to give you the strength to come through it
 - ✓ to be able to survive
 - ✓ to be able to achieve the purpose for which you were created

I want to read some Scriptures that kind of bring this home:

1-John 5:3: “For this is **the love of God**: that **we keep His Commandments**...”

Keeping God’s Commandments is expected for every human being, Who lives, God expects us to walk this way, to be on this path. ***This is God’s way,*** and His Laws define His Way, and that’s the Way we should walk in. We’re going to teach that in the Kingdom.

“...that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome. Now then, everyone who is begotten by God overcomes the world... [we have been begotten] ...overcomes the world...” (vs 3-4).

Not through our own personal powerful effort by ourselves. This is a part of the prescription that God has laid out. That He and Jesus Christ are going to help us to overcome the world, overcome sin!

“...and this is the victory that overcomes the world—**our faith**” (v 4).

- Trust God, He’s going to get you to the Kingdom
- Believe God when He says:
 - ✓ I am with you
 - ✓ I love you

He’s going to get us there; **don’t give up the fight,**

Fight the good fight of faith!

Verse 5: "Who is the one who overcomes the world? Even the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God. This is He Who came by water and blood—Jesus the Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that bears witness because the Spirit is the Truth" (vs 5-7).

We have God's Spirit within us to reveal Truth to us! You didn't have that, Before God called you, You were cut off!

Verse 8: "For there are three that bear witness on the earth: **the Spirit, and the water, and the blood;** and these three witness unto the one *Truth*. If we accept the witness of men, the witness of God is superior. For this is the witness of God, which He has witnessed concerning His Son" (vs 8-9). *The greatest witness that could be given, Is from the Father!*

Verse 10: "The one who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; the one who does not believe God has made Him a liar..."—**God is not a liar!**

That is an affirmation of the Truth, an affirmation of the sureness of the certainty:

"...because he has not believed in the witness that God has witnessed concerning His Son. And this is the witness: that God has given us eternal life..." (vs 10-11).

That we may have Life! Access to it is there, access to it has been made clear for you and me. *We have the connection to Life!* We have been given the invitation, and both the Father Himself and Jesus Christ are at work in us.

"...and **this Life is in His Son. The one who has the Son has eternal Life;** the one who does not have the Son of God **does not have** eternal Life" (vs 11-12).

In the scope of God's Plan that would have been revealed in actual manifestation. But we're going to be teaching it in the Millennium. So, listen up! Read these Scriptures! Study, and be prepared for the next phase.

Verse 13: "These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God in order that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may *continue to believe* in the name of the Son of God." *So, continue brethren:*

- ✓ don't waver
- ✓ don't grow tired
- ✓ cry out to Him

He is there ready to help no matter what the situation is in your life!

Verse 14: "And this is the confidence that we have toward Him... [I hope your confidence in everything is toward Him] ...that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us." *He promised!*

Verse 15: "And if we know that He hears us, whatever we may ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of Him."

And we have things that happen in our life on a continual basis. Many of us will hit these:

- pitfalls in the road
- bumps in the road
- mountains to climb
- fires to go through
- wind storms to confront

That's life, and God is saying, ***I'm with you, through it all!*** He tells us, as we look at our brothers/sisters in Christ: *Quit judging*, but:

- help
- encourage
- motivate

Verse 16: "If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin *that is* not unto death, he shall ask, and He will give him life for those who do not sin unto death. There is a sin unto death; concerning that *sin*, I do not say that he should make *any supplication to God*."

The unpardonable sin is a judgment that not many of us are qualified to judge that one has committed the unpardonable sin.

But there are sins, which one needs to be admonished for, one needs to be—in a private situation out of love—brought to their attention, light shined upon it. That's what the Scripture is saying. We pray for them, and we ask God to help them.

Verse 17: "All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not unto death. We know that anyone who is begotten by God does not *practice* sin..." (vs 17-18).

If you begotten of God you can't practice sin. It is just an impossibility! The Spirit of God convicts you; it'll wear you out, and you become anxious, fearful, and that type of thing, ***IF*** you are in a state where you're not conquering that sin,

- you are in the fight for life
- you are struggling against sin

God is with you, ***then fight***, brethren! ***Fight and pray!*** Fight and ask God to fulfill His promises. Tell God that you know that you're going through something right now, but you understand that He is with you If He's unwilling to take that away, tell Him to:

- strengthen you so that you can endure it
- give you the power of God so that you can

endure it

So that we can keep moving forward with the struggle or without it, that we keep moving forward!

- we're going to fight
- we're going to not give in to sin

"...for the one who has been begotten by God keeps himself by the power of God..." (v 18).

- that's how we survive
- that's how we walk
- that's how we fight

"...and the wicked one... [Satan] ...does not touch him. We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the wicked one" (vs 18-19)—*Satan the devil, as defined in Ephesians!*

Verse 20: "And we know that the Son of God has come..."

- that's our faith
- that's our joy
- that's our peace
- that's our hope

"...and has given us an understanding..." (v 20).

Christ shines His Light into our lives so that we can see and comprehend:

- the nuances of this battle
- the nuances of this fight

"...so that we may know Him... [that's how we walk, with Him] ...**Who is true**; and we are in Him *Who is true, and in His Son, Jesus Christ. He is the true God, and the eternal life*" (v 20). *So, throw all other things away!*

Verse 21: "Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen"—*of any kind!*

So our calling is indeed a wonderful calling! 2-John—let's put a capstone on it, right here! John is sending a message to the Church, He says to the elders:

2-John 1: "The elder to the chosen lady and her children..."

That's the entire begotten Family of God! This message isn't just for the congregation that John was writing to, but for the entire Family of God through history, through time, if we can look at it this way.

"...**whom I love in Truth**... [John loves us] ...and not I alone, but also all those who have known the Truth."

We are to love one another: an environment of love; *that's God's Family!*

Verse 2: "For the sake of the Truth that is

dwelling in us, and shall be with us forever: Grace, mercy, and peace shall be with us from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love" (vs 2-3).

So, That defines those who are assisting us, that count. Here's the relationship: **you, Jesus Christ, God the Father**, because you can't get to the Father unless you go through Christ! The Father and you, **because of Christ's righteousness!**

Now, we're not complete yet, because out from us—the three of us: the Father, the Son and us, all of us—are impacted in a positive way, **IF** we are practicing, God's Commandments. The love of God is complete in that circuit; the entire family benefits from you obeying Go! So, if you haven't thought of it that way, this is something that came to mind early in my Church life.

How is my obedience to the Commandments of God, helping somebody else? *Because we are one Body, brethren!* This is how we become a strong and powerful Church.

It's through obedience toward God, loving obedience! When we fall short, we hurt the Body. We cause a weaker state. When we are doing good, the Body is stronger, each and every one of us together. Our obedience to God benefits all of us Your obedience to me, my obedience to you, and all the brethren around the world!

Verse 4: "I rejoiced exceedingly that I have found among your children those who are walking in Truth, exactly as we received commandment from the Father. And now I beseech you, lady, not as though I am writing a new commandment to you, but that which we have observed from the beginning, that we love one another" (vs 4-5).

What is it to love God? *Keep his Commandments!*

Verse 6: "And this is the love of God: that we walk according to His commandments...."

Loving one another is obeying God; all of us collectively! The power of God is magnified in His Body when we do that.

Verse 6: "And this is the love of God: that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, exactly as you heard from the beginning, that you might walk in it, because many deceivers have entered into the world..." (vs 6-7).

The Bible, Is full of verses that say, 'Let no one deceive you into thinking that it's acceptable:

- to compromise with sin
- to be comfortable with sin

NO! Let no one deceive you, because many deceivers, are entering into the world!

“...those who do not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh...” (v 7).

Of true believers, they don't believe that God dwells in you and me. ***God is coming into us through the Spirit! God dwells in us!*** Jesus Christ is coming in the spirit of true believers!

“...This is the spirit of the deceiver and the antichrist” (v 7)—who says, *God would not do that!*

They don't understand the freedom that Christ has freed us from:

- the bondage of sin
- the crime of sin
- the sentence of sin

which is death! We were made free!

Verse 8: “Watch out for yourselves in order that we may not lose the things we have accomplished, but *that* we may receive a full reward.... [at the resurrection] ...Anyone who transgresses and does not continue in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. *But* the one who continues in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son” (vs 8-9)—*obedience!*

Fulfilling the love of God within His Body and within Family.

Verse 10: “If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into *your* house, and do not say to him, ‘Welcome!’ For anyone who says, ‘Welcome!’ to him is partaking in his evil works” (vs 10-11). *So, this is pretty serious!*

Verse 12. “I have many things to write, but I do not wish to *convey these things to you* with paper and ink; but I hope to come to you and speak face to face in order that our joy may be *completely* full.”

There is a difference! We can receive letters, booklets, and all of those kind of things, even books, but fellowship in God's Family is very important. For us:

- to be face-to-face, and spend time with one another
- to be lifting each other up spiritually
- to let the power of God be exercised

Verse 13: “The children of your chosen sister salute you. Amen.”

This is exhibited most powerfully at the Feast of Tabernacles. No matter where we are, we leave home and we go to that temporary dwelling. We tabernacle there for eight days, and there is a spirit there that's different from any other time of the year. That's what's happening, it's defined right here. We

have just read it! ***A Godly greeting in God's Church, a Church full of joy and peace!***

Brethren, God's love is Life; that Life has been exhibited; it has been given. The sacrifice that Christ has given, is so that you and I can have the opportunity to change and grow into that individual. Hopefully to be born into that being that God wants us to be. We are exercising this day-by-day.

2-Peter 1:1: “Simon Peter a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have obtained the same precious faith as ours by *the* righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied to you in *the* knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, according as **His Divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and Godliness**, through the knowledge of Him Who called us by *His own* glory and virtue; through which He has given to us the greatest and *most* precious promises, that through these you may become partakers of *the* Divine nature, having escaped the corruption *that is in the* world through lust” (vs 1-4).

Verse 5: “And for this very reason also, having applied all diligence besides, add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, endurance; and to endurance, Godliness; and to Godliness...” (vs 5-7).

And we're not done, yet; so let's keep reading, ***because God is defining for us where our***

- emphasis
- effort
- understanding

should be! These things should be:

- personal studies
- meditation
- prayer
- fasting

For us to receive more of this!

We're defining God here; ***that's what we're becoming!*** That is what God is perfecting in us, ***His very character!***

Verse 7: “And to Godliness, brotherly love; and to brotherly love, the love *of God*. For *if* these things exist and abound in you, they *will* cause you to be neither lacking effort nor lacking fruit in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ” (vs 7-8).

But it then defines the opposite:

Verse 9: “But the one in whom these things are not present is *spiritually* blind—so short-sighted *that* he has forgotten that he was purified from his old sins.”

So I wanted to make this applicable to all of us!

Verse 10: "For this reason, brethren, be even more diligent to make your calling and election sure; because *if* you are doing these things, you will never fall..."

- never fall from Truth
- never fall from this way of life

"...at any time. For in this way, you will be richly granted an entrance into the Eternal Kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ" (vs 10-11).

So, Peter admonished not to, take it lightly!

I want you to fully comprehend the relationship that we have with God. That relationship is never going to end until you are brought into the Kingdom of God.

So, you stay with Christ! Keep your focus on the wonderful gift of Life, which the Father and Christ are orchestrating in our life. The things They are doing for us, with us, in us and through us, And we will fulfill

Let me conclude with Peter's perspective. As I said, these things are more pronounced in my thoughts during this time of year, because we are so close to the Feast of Tabernacles and what it represents:

- the resurrection has occurred
- judgment upon the wicked is about to occur
- Satan is about to be put away

So, Peter is just affirming, as a minister, which is why this message should resonate with us because we are so close to the Feast of Tabernacles.

Verse 13: "For I consider it my duty, as long as I am in this tabernacle... [this temporary dwelling, this body] ...to stir you up by causing *you* to remember *these things*; knowing that shortly the putting off of my tabernacle *will come*, even as our Lord Jesus Christ has signified to me" (vs 13-14).

Verse 15: "But I will make every effort *that*, after my departure, you may always have a *written* remembrance of these things *in order* to practice *them* for yourselves, for we did not follow cleverly concocted myths *as our authority*, when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His magnificent glory, because He received glory and honor from God the Father when the voice came to Him from the Majestic Glory, 'This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I am well pleased'" (vs 15-17).

So, the perfection that we have in our standing with God is that same pleasing acceptability to the Father.

Verse 18: "And this *is the* voice from heaven

that we heard when we were with Him on the Holy Mountain. We also possess the confirmed prophetic Word to which you do well to pay attention, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture originated as anyone's own *private* interpretation; because prophecy was not brought at any time by human will, but the Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by *the* Holy Spirit" (vs 18-21).

That is power from on high that God sent; that Jesus Christ promised to send back to us!

So all that we know is a part of God's purpose for us to know it. We have a wonderful covenant relationship of freedom salvation and hope in front of us!

- let's hold on to our calling
- let's hold on to this Truth
- let's celebrate as we march closer and closer to the Feast of Tabernacles

Because the reality is soon to be given; is soon to be revealed to the world as a whole!

Scriptural References:

- 1) Galatians 1-9
- 2) John 3:12-21
- 3) John 5:25-47
- 4) 1-John 5:3-21
- 5) 2-John 1-13
- 6) 2-Peter 1:1-11, 13-21

AJ:bo/po
Transcribed: 11/25/25

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