

He Abides in Me and I Must Abide in Him

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Preacher: Pastor Kenoyer

[0 : 00] But everything and is true and is no lie, just as it has taught you, abide in him.! And now, little children, abide in him, so that when he appears, we may have confidence! and not shrink from him in shame at his coming. If you know that he is righteous, you may be sure that everyone who practices righteousness has been born of him.

Let's pray. Father God, this morning, as we who are your people take your word in hand, we recognize that it is your word expressly delivered by your grace and the work of the Spirit that we, your children, might be strengthened, encouraged, instructed, conformed into the image of Christ. And we recognize that we have every reason to trust you to use your word and to work through the Spirit who dwells in us to mold and shape us to be more like the Lord Jesus.

And that is our prayer this morning, that your word would have free course, that it would leave an indelible impression upon our hearts, that our behavior in the week to come would be reflective of the truth that you have for us.

We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. If I were to take just a moment at the outset and explain that preaching is the discipline, the work, of taking the word that God has given to us and making it clear and plain through the enabling of the Holy Spirit so that people would be transformed by the grace of God and convicted those who do not know Christ and drawn to the cross.

[2 : 05] And so I want you to keep that in mind this morning as we are working our way through this passage that the purpose of preaching is to help you understand in plain and clear fashion what God has said.

And that word, having understood it, should play out then in the way you live and act. Does that make sense? You're here to be encouraged and strengthened with the teaching of the word of God that you as believers may grow in grace, display his glory, and serve his purposes.

And that you who are here and don't know Christ would be drawn to the cross and discover the sweetness of blessing that comes in salvation. Now with that said, as kind of a what is he doing up there kind of explanation, let me preach.

Starting there in verse 25 or 26, we find that the apostle is writing to the church and he says, listen, let's start out by reminding you that I am writing these things to you about those who are trying to deceive you.

Evidently in the early church, there were individuals that were trying to mislead believers. They were trying to draw them away from their faith and trying to discourage them and break them down.

[3 : 23] And I want to tell you that it's not something that has stopped happening just after the early church kind of faded off the scene. We as well live in a day and age where there is incessant attack upon our faith and our hope in the Lord Jesus Christ.

And some of you actually are sitting here this morning struggling with some of those attacks. Let me give you an illustration. There are some of you that are sitting here this morning thinking to yourself, well, really, if I had a better paying job, if I had \$5 million in the bank.

By the way, if you had \$5 million in the bank, I don't want you to figure this out exactly, but can you imagine what kind of income you'd get a month? I know there's some computationalists out here, math people are thinking, yeah, \$5 million in the month, break that down into blah, blah, blah. You'd be in pretty good shape, wouldn't you? Would you be able to drive a different car? Would you be able to take different kinds of vacations? And some of you are actually doing the computation and thinking, yeah, if I had that.

There are some of you here that are being misled in thinking that if you had more, it'd be better. There are some of you thinking here that, I tell you what, if I were a little smarter, I had a little better education, I had a little better job, all these things would make a significant difference.

[4 : 41] I would be a happier and more productive, and my life would be better. John writes, and he says, hey, listen, I write these things to you about those who are trying to deceive you.

Now, with that as an introduction, John now gets into the details about what really is valuable in the believer's life.

But the anointing that you receive from him abides in you. So the starting point that I want you to hold on to this morning and have it etched into your mind is this.

If you are here this morning and you know the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, here is the incredibly sweet truth that John has for us.

We have the indwelling Holy Spirit. You remember John writing with his affection to the church that he cared so much for, was writing to encourage them under the struggles that they had in their day.

[5 : 53] They were being overwhelmed by people that were coming in and saying, listen, you're really not all that significant. You've not had someone teach you the secret things of God, and you're less than you really should be.

And so here is John stepping into the situation and saying, hold it, you better stop listening to that lie. Let me bring you back around to the incredible blessing that you actually have.

Now, we have to admit that John's literary style is a little more complex than the simple clarity with which Paul wrote, particularly the book of Romans or Ephesians, et cetera.

But nevertheless, when John writes to us, his intention is to bring blessing by helping us understand some fundamental and underlying blessings that we have as believers.

Now, there in the verse, he says, the anointing that you received. And when we hear the words anointing or his anointing in the passage and abide in him and the words that are used together here, he is not speaking about some kind of abstract issue that we're not really sure how it connects.

[7 : 04] He is helping us understand that we in Christ Jesus have an incredibly powerful blessing within us that we ought to rely on, and it ought to be supremely significant.

Going back to the issue of those who think that their life really would be better if they had \$5 million. I want you to imagine that you actually do.

And yet, you have a tendency, by virtue of kind of allowing life to crowd in, to forget just all that you have and how readily it is accessible and to your benefit.

And here is John saying, you need to understand that you have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Now, when he says this, abiding, there in verse 27, the anointing, he is actually talking about the anointing that refers to the blessing of the enabling Holy Spirit.

We, as God's children, those who are saved, have the Holy Spirit abiding in us. And in our specific text, what we're looking at here in verse 27, is that John wants us to understand that this enabling is connected to the spiritual understanding that comes with the Scriptures and things of God.

[8 : 19] And so here it is, verse 27, you, you have the anointing that you've received him in, and it's inside of you. And so in reality, because of what we have received in Christ Jesus, it is important for us to live in the shadow or in the effect of that which we've been blessed with.

Our spiritual lives should be evident, should evidence the things that we've received from Christ.

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit should be evident in the way we handle the challenges of life.

The ministry of the Holy Spirit strengthening and supporting us in the challenges that we have from moment by moment should come into play and be there fresh in our thinking.

I appreciate Pastor's prayer in relationship to the working of the Holy Spirit and the preaching of the Word. And I would pray that the Spirit is active in helping you as you listen this morning.

Because in our flesh, we can't pull it off. Would you agree with that? Let me say it slowly because I don't think some of you believe that. In our flesh, we can't pull it off.

[9 : 31] John writes, let's start out by understanding that you have the indwelling Holy Spirit and He is there to help you with the challenge of life.

There in verse 27, the anointing that you've received from Him abides in you. You have Him in you and you have Him at work in your life. The second part of verse 27, it says this, His anointing teaches you everything and is true and is no lie.

Now what John is saying here is that he expected the struggling believers to hold on to the reality of the ministry of the Holy Spirit. He wanted them to kind of grasp on and hold on and trust in that.

Now how do you know that you have the Holy Spirit in you and is actively working in your life? Stop and think with me just for a moment. Of some of the things that make the indwelling Spirit evident to

us.

How many of you on occasion have been reading the scriptures and they just don't make any sense? Ever had that happen? It's like, uh, I'm not getting this. You've stopped and you've prayed and you've sought the Holy Spirit and what has happened?

[10:45] You may have had to read it again. You may have had to read it again. You may have had to read it again. You may have had to read it again. But it has become clear. And you've ended up with that kind of aha moment.

It's like, wow, that is beautiful. That is wonderful. And that has been the work of the Holy Spirit. Here is John. And he points out, you have the Holy Spirit in you and it is the Holy Spirit who is at work in your life teaching you those things that are of the Lord.

Let me make this point by comparison. The unbeliever does not have the indwelling spirit and the unbeliever cannot grasp spiritual truth.

Have you ever tried to explain to an unbeliever what you understand and appreciate and enjoy and kind of had the person just not connect? It's like, you can talk your heart out.

You can plead with them. You can cry for them. But at the end of the day, they don't get it. Why?

Because the Spirit of God is not at work at that time helping them come to grips with the reality of what the Scriptures teach.

[11:55] And so here is John. He says, His anointing teaches you about everything and is true and is no lie. Over the years on those occasions where I've ended up in conversations with people who are uncertain about their salvation.

And I think it's appropriate for us to periodically, particularly when we're growing in grace or when we are really hitting a hard spot in our life. I've seen people drift away from the Lord and behave in a most ungodly fashion.

And it's appropriate. Are you saved? Well, here are some of the things that you can kind of put your finger on and say, well, those are indications of salvation. When the Spirit of God gives to us understanding of the Scripture, it is a mark of the indwelling Spirit and it shows us that we are His child.

John is saying, hey, listen, you can remind yourself that you have the indwelling Spirit and His anointing is teaching you all things. Now let me take you just for a moment back to a passage to help you put this together, taking 1 John with John chapter 16.

Turn back in your Bible for a moment to John chapter 16. We're going to look at verses 7 through 14 where the issue of the ministry of the Spirit of God and the believer is described for us.

[13:21] John chapter 16, verse 7 through 14. Nevertheless, John chapter 16, verse 7, nevertheless, I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away.

For if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you, but if I go, I will send Him to you. I want you to imagine just for a moment that you're one of those disciples and here's Jesus say, listen, it is going to be to your advantage that I go away because after I go, you're going to get the Helper and you are going to be incredibly blessed by having the Helper in you.

I'm just curious, how many of you in the last week have found yourself consciously choosing to ask the Helper to deal with an issue in your life that you have not been able to have victory over and are struggling with?

Let me ask the question again. Have you in this last week found yourself dealing with an issue that you've recognized you can't handle and you've asked the Holy Spirit to help you and He's given you victory?

You done that? I'll give you a little illustration of that sadly. I am 69 years old. I know better, but I am moody without practice.

[14:48] I don't have to warm up in the morning to be moody. There are some days I wake up and my wife says, did you get up on the wrong side of the bed? There's only one choice for me. But what happened to you?

And I remember the other day I was having one of those little moody moments and I was spinning out of moody control. I remember stopping and just saying, you know what?

Jesus does not, and this is conscious Tim Kenoyer talking to himself, Jesus does not want you to act this way, Tim. And you have the Holy Spirit in you and there's no reason for this and I ask the Holy Spirit to help you.

And guess what? He helped me. Do you have one of those moments? Have you had one? Where you see things beginning to spin out and hold it, hold it.

I have the indwelling Holy Spirit and I can rely upon him to help him. Understand as we look here at this passage in John chapter 16, we're blessed at salvation with the indwelling Holy Spirit.

[15:51] And that's one of the things that Jesus was teaching his disciples here. You can count on the Holy Spirit to help you in your daily walk if you are a believer.

So what are some signals that I am depending upon the Holy Spirit and that I am enjoying his help on a daily basis?

Let me give you a couple things to hold on to. For one, if you are depending upon the Holy Spirit, there is a ongoing sensitivity to your own inability and to the necessity of leaning on him.

I think about the passage in John chapter 15 where Jesus said this. He said, Without me you can do nothing. How many of you have ever been driving your car and the little light comes on to say what?

Empty. How many of you begin to get a little anxious when the light comes on? John's never had that happen. There are some of you that fill the tank up when it gets to be half.

[16:56] But others of us run right down to the very line and tempt God. I know when my light comes on, I have, at least according to the operators, the owner's manual, I have two gallons.

And I reach over through this steering wheel and I punch the button on my odometer and I say, I have two gallons times however my fuel consumption is.

Anybody else like that? Because I know when I'm out of fuel, I am dead on the highway. It's like, here's the thing.

When we recognize the blessing of the indwelling Holy Spirit, we show our dependence and we rely upon Him to be the one who fuels and supports and strengthens us.

And I'm curious, how often have you done that? You've said, listen, I am a person who has the indwelling Holy Spirit and I cannot pull it off myself.

[18:07] Second, when we are dependent upon the indwelling Spirit, it shows up in our prayer life. It shows up in our prayer life.

We ask for things that are according to His will and reflective of His Word and lean in towards the things that bring glory to His name.

So when you think about your prayer life, ask yourself the question, how often are the things that I'm praying for reflective of the things that bring glory to Christ and honor to the Father?

Or, am I just about grocery list praying? Do you know what I mean by grocery list praying? Those prayers that, you know, oh Lord, help the missionaries, help them.

And, you know, I've got some friends that are sick, you know, take care of them. And, you know, and it's, I mean, this morning, sitting on the porch, having devotions, and God sent along a hummingbird.

[19:08] How many of you ever watched a hummingbird? The most spectacular demonstration of the infinite wisdom of God, just in a flash. I mean, stuck that little beak in about three or four flowers and then decided didn't like my company and left.

I'm sitting here, ha, God did that. You know, it's like, wow. And sometimes we get caught up in, in not recognizing the goodness and the glory of our God.

And, and he's there. And, and so in our prayer life, instead of being just kind of self-focused on your grocery list, how often do you spend time thanking him for what he's done, what he's made, and, and all the evidence of his glory?

A further indication would be this. When we are being led by the spirit and dependent upon the spirit, we are very quick to rely upon the word of God for making judgments and determining what is right and wrong.

Give you an illustration. I was driving yesterday, and God populated the highway in front of me with very irresponsible drivers. Now, I have to admit, my wife would probably say that I am one of them when she's not driving.

[20:23] But, I was driving by myself, and there were, do you know what it is to come up to a stoplight and expect that the person in front of you, when the light turns green, is not on their phone?

I mean, do you follow that? It just happened to me about three times in a row, and I am, I'm a pastor, almost retired, but, you know, I was thinking, it wouldn't be appropriate for a Baptist pastor

to honk at somebody because they're on their phone, you know, it's like, and, here I am, I'm saying, hold it, Lord, I think you are the one who's sovereignly ordained for the person who's actually in front of me.

Okay, so this is about you and not about me? When we are, when we are living and walking in the power of the Spirit, when we're, when we're where we need to be, we end up trusting in His sovereign control of things rather than caught up in our own agenda.

Furthermore, when we are walking in the Spirit, abiding in the Spirit, we have a desire to not offend Him with unconfessed sin.

We have a desire to not offend Him with unconfessed sin. I think we're far too careless with sin, with unforgiveness, with ill-spirited thinking of other believers, with covetousness.

[21 : 59] And by the way, we live in a day where covetousness is probably the most endorsed sin you can imagine. All you have to do is go to Amazon, and it is there to entertain your covetousness.

Do you realize that? In fact, you can, you can go almost anywhere on the internet and find everything that you never knew you did, actually needed. There it is. And so, when we are abiding in Him, and we are sensitive to the Spirit that indwells us, we end up with a sensitivity to, whether am I, am I offending the Spirit of God or not?

So, the first thing that we see there in that passage in 1 John 2, is that the Holy Spirit abides in the believer. That's significant. That's supremely important.

The second thing that we find is that we have to make a choice to walk by His power. Now, put your finger on that word that appears several different times, abide in Him.

It's the very end of 27. It says, abide in Him. What does that mean? Now, the truth of the matter is, is that most of us probably don't use the word abide very often in our daily vocabulary.

[23 : 09] In fact, it's not one of those words that I have heard used apart from here in the church.

This morning, as I was driving to church, I was singing that song about abiding, constantly abiding Jesus' mind.

There are other songs that I remember learning as a young boy, and singing them this morning, just to remind myself of the blessing I have of being in Him. And here is Paul saying, there's something, or John, there's something for you to do in relationship to the Holy Spirit.

The word abide that is used here means to stay or remain. And it's really talking about being in a place or a relationship where that relationship is having an effect.

It's interesting that Jesus was in this abiding relationship with the Father. I want you to turn over just for a moment to John chapter 14, verse 10.

You're in 1 John, but go back to John 14. Because when we think about what it means for us to abide, it helps us to understand how Jesus abided in the Father.

[24 : 16] John 14, verse 10. Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me?

The words that I say to you, I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does His work. That little statement there, dwells in me, is the same Greek word that is being used by John over in 1 John.

So here we see that Jesus was abiding in the Father, and the Father was abiding in Him. And what it's telling us is that Jesus had unbroken communication or communion with the Father, and the Father's closeness led to a complete and constant influence in His life.

Let me say that again so you can follow it. Jesus was abiding in the Father, and the Father's closeness led to a complete and constant influence.

And so what we understand is this, is Jesus did what Jesus did because of His relationship. His relationship with the Father meant that He acted according to the Father's will.

[25 : 38] His relationship to the Father meant that He spoke according to the Father's will. And because He was abiding in the Father and choosing to abide in the Father, you end up with the life being affected by that relationship.

Now, neither Jesus nor John used the word abide to talk about spiritual passivity. We get the idea sometimes because the word means to stay or it means to kind of remain.

It's just kind of passively, well, I'm abiding. No. Abiding is about communion. It's about closeness.

And it's about choices that display relationship. Let me say that again because it's important.

Abiding is about communion. It's about closeness. And it's choices that display relationship.

Saying that you're abiding and then being incessantly anxious or unwilling to forgive or being easily offended, quick to remember past hurts, is not what the Scripture calls us to understand as abiding.

[26 : 53] And while it's true, and we do see this in 1 John 2, verse 27, that the Holy Spirit abides in every believer, it's also true that we as believers have to choose to stay close, to stay in communion, and not drift away.

We have a command that is given to us here in verse 28 that we're to abide in Him. It's a choice we make. Let me give you some other passages that Paul brings the same concept into light, and they may help us.

Turn over, if you will, to Ephesians chapter 4, verse 21 through 24. Ephesians chapter 4, verse 21 through 24.

Ephesians chapter 4, verse 21 through 24. Actually, it's in Ephesians chapter 1, verse 22.

Put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt according to deceitful desires, to be renewed in the spirit of your mind and to put on the new self created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

[28 : 16] Paul joins the apostle John in saying, listen, you've got some conscious decisions to make. There are things that you need to do.

In Paul's case here, he says, you need to put off the old pattern of living. You need to put off those old ways of thinking. You need to put off the old value structure that you had, and you need to put on the new man.

It's a conscious choice that you make. Another passage in relationship to that is over in Philippians chapter 2, verse 12 and 13. Therefore, my beloved, as you've always obeyed, so now not only as in my presence, but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God who works in you both to will and to work for his good pleasure. Now to bring that back into John's context, remember the starting point of John's argument here in chapter 2 is, you have the Holy Spirit in you.

Then he says, use the Holy Spirit that is in you. In the passage in Philippians, Paul says it this way, you're to work to bring about the fruitfulness of your salvation.

[29 : 34] Then in verse 13, for it is God who is working in you both to will and to work for his good pleasure. One other passage that I would hold on to and encourage you to remember is over in Colossians chapter 1, verse 29.

How do I know that the Holy Spirit is working in me? Colossians chapter 1, verse 29. For this I toil, struggling with all his energy, that he powerfully works in me.

Can I say that the Holy Spirit is actively working in me if I don't see the evidence of him at work? Do you follow that?

Can I say that the Holy Spirit is working in me if I cannot see the Holy Spirit at work? When I see myself overly anxious, easily irritated, committed to being an unforgiving person, embittered by things that keep on coming up from the past, can I say that the Holy Spirit is at work in my life? And the answer is what? No, no, no. And here is Paul saying, here's how I know that the Holy Spirit is at work in my life because I see evidence of the Spirit working through me.

[31 : 05] Now, why would it be important for us as believers today? I mean, after all, you're saved and you're going to heaven, right? Everything else is chump change. Well, let me tell you something.

He intends for us to be demonstrations of his power and his ability to transform lives. Would you agree with that? We who are his children should be less moody than we used to be, more forgiving than we used to be, more generous than we used to be, kinder, gentler, happier people than we once were.

And why should we be that way? For one, because we were saved. Number two, because we have the Holy Spirit at work in us and we are to be evidence of his glory and his power.

And so here we are. John is saying, don't let people fool you. It's not all about this super spirituality. Number one, you have the believer, the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Number two, you are to take advantage of that and to rely upon him to produce the peaceful fruit of righteousness in your life. So let's take a minute to identify some of what takes place when we are choosing and nurturing close communion with the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

[32 : 31] What does it mean when we're abiding in him? For one, we live with a sense of assurance of our relationship with him. We live with a sense of assurance of our relationship with him.

How often do you find yourself just kind of reveling at the fact that you're the child of God and you're incredibly blessed? Man, I'm his child.

Romans 8, verse 35. Another thing is this, is we're quick to remember that we can do nothing apart from him. If we're abiding in him, if we're in this communion with him, we're very, very quick to remember that we can't pull it off without him.

And incidentally, that shows up in your prayer life. I remember at one point in my life, I'd been convicted that my prayer life was not very robust, and so I thought the way to do it was have a longer prayer list.

Nothing wrong with prayer lists. But as I have continued to grow in the Lord slowly, I find that I pray about all kinds of things. And by the way, the things that I don't pray about, they're just an accident waiting to happen.

[33 : 36] I remember reading the passage, you know, praying always with all prayer and supplication. I thought, how can you do that? I mean, the rest of the day rolls by and you're not doing anything. No, no, no.

When you are praying always, you're praying about every part of your day, right? You're praying when you get in the car and saying, all right, Lord, I know that you've populated the highway with people that are going to test my humility and help me handle the test properly.

When you get a phone call, you say, Lord, this is you on the other end. You've got somebody that you want me to minister to. When you end up with a little bit of frustration in Sunday school or putting things together with VBS, Lord, hey, I need to lean on you.

You rely on him. Third, our prayer life is marked by a sweet communion rather than a spiritual wish list. Fourth, we see the evidence of fruitfulness that froze from our relationship rather than a forced effect.

When we are in communion with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit and we are abiding with him, fruitfulness is not something that is forced, but it's something that happens.

[34 : 51] Out of the good treasure, a good man brings forth what? Good things. Furthermore, obedience to his word is our delight and not our obligation or a means of avoiding chastisement or penalty.

Obedience to his word is our delight, not an obligation or a means of avoiding chastisement or penalty.

So let's close with the final little part of this chapter in 1 John 2. Go back there and we'll just touch on the last little portion of the text. I could use some fancy words here and I probably will just because I'm going to do it.

There's orthodoxy and there's orthopraxis. One is the teaching and the other is the practice.

And here at the end of his little Bible lesson saying, you've got the Holy Spirit, use the Holy Spirit, he now says, and here's how you know where you're at.

[36 : 03] It's when profession and practice come together. I like the closing logic that John uses here. He starts out with a theological truth. Look at it in verse, I turned the page wrong here, verse 29.

If you know that he is righteous, and so what's the answer to that? Is Jesus righteous? What's the answer? Oh yes, yeah, I got that. If you know that he is righteous, and he is, then you may be sure that everyone who leans in and practices righteousness is born of him.

The logic that John relies on here is inescapable. Jesus is righteous. It's reasonable to expect that those who are born of his grace are in the process of producing the peaceable fruit of righteousness as well.

Righteousness and fruitfulness go together and are indicators of genuine relationship. Isn't that right? Those who are the children of God should be displaying the fruit of godliness.

And here is John dealing with people who are being challenged by false teaching, who are being seduced and led away by lies.

[37 : 29] John says, Hey listen, start out by remembering that you as a child of God have the indwelling Holy Spirit. Tremendously important. Number two, remember that you are to rely upon the Holy Spirit for every moment of your spiritual and living existence.

The Holy Spirit is there to help you. He is your helper. Rely on him. Third, you can see the evidence of being a child of God by seeing the evidence of fruitfulness and righteousness in your life.

Last week, got around to weeding a portion of my flower bed. I had somebody helping me. And we had planted zinnias last year.

I like zinnias. They're a wonderful little flower that do well. And they had decided that they would seed the area of their own accord.

And we had zinnia sprouts coming up all over the place. Now, at the early stage of zinnia sprouts, I couldn't really discern whether or not they were just garden variety weeds.

[38 : 40] And I have always managed to grow a great crop of them. And so I want to save the zinnias, but I don't want to save the weeds. But how do I determine the difference between the two? Guess what?

Here's the plan. Give them another couple days and zinnias begin to do what? Zinnias pop out a little head that says, I am thinking about being a flower, and here's the signal that I'm going to have one.

It's the same way with a believer's life. By virtue of being his child, there should be evidence of his working in you.

I'm curious whether or not you see this fruit in your life. Do I show my joyful, happy confidence in my God?

Is my life marked by trust, by forgiveness, by humility, by spiritual fruitfulness, or am I a person who has been deceived by the enemy in thinking that because I've gathered a certain amount of spiritual head knowledge that I'm okay?

[40 : 06] No. The way in which you can have confidence in your salvation is by seeing the fruit of the work of God that has no explanation apart from grace and the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Now, I would encourage you this morning as we finish up looking at this passage this morning to ask the practical question, am I a believer? Am I a believer who is not appropriating the power of the Holy Spirit?

And this morning, am I committed to allow the Spirit of God to produce the fruit of righteousness in my life that brings glory to Christ and honor to our King? Let's close in prayer.

Our Father God, this morning, as we take the word in hand, we who know the Lord Jesus Christ confess that we are blessed beyond imagination, first of all, in the fact that our sins have been forgiven, and then also in the ministry of the indwelling Spirit who is actively at work helping us grow to be more like our Lord Jesus.

I pray that we who know Christ would this morning have hearts that desire to please Him and display His glory. I pray also for those that are here that do not know the Lord Jesus Christ.

[41 : 31] Perhaps some that are here this morning completely deceived by the enemy, thinking that having grown up in a church or having learned all the hymns and songs and verses, that that in and of itself is salvation.

And I would pray that those who are here that do not know Christ would be drawn to the cross, even this morning by Your power. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen. John is going to lead us in our closing song, Let's Stand Together.

And let me encourage you, if you're here today and the Spirit of God is addressing a heart that you need to care for in a public way, it might be that you're here and need some prayer and some counsel. It might be that you're here and you believe God is leading you to be part of this fellowship and you want to be on record with that.

It might be that you're here and you need the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior and this morning you're convicted of that. I want you to know that you don't have to come down to the front to be saved. But there's something to be said for humility that says, I need Jesus and I'm ready to go on record and let that be known.

You come forward, someone share the gospel with you and encourage you in what it means to trust in Jesus as your Savior. Let's sing together. Sing together.

[42 : 43] Lord, I come, I confess, bowing here I find my rest.

And without you I'd fall apart. Lord, I need you.

Lord, I need you. Next slide, please. Oh, I need you. Every hour I need you.

I want defense, my righteousness. Oh, God, how I need you.

Where sin runs deep. Your grace is born.

[44 : 00] Where grace is found is where you are. And where you are.

Lord, I am free. Holiness is Christ in me.

Lord, I need you. Lord, I need you. Oh, I need you.
Every hour I need you. My one defense, my righteousness.
Oh, God, how I need you. So teach my song to rise to you.
[44 : 59] When temptation comes my way. When I cannot stand up on you.

Jesus, you're my hope and stay. Lord, I need you. Lord, I need you.
Oh, I need you. Every hour I need you.
My one defense, my righteousness. Oh, God, how I need you.

You're my one defense, my righteousness. Oh, God, how I need you.

[46 : 10] It's our privilege this morning to have Samantha Bernard come forward, asking to be a member in our fellowship. It's our privilege to have Melody. Hang on. Come forward to ask for membership.

It's our privilege to have Jeff Keller and Donna Keller, that we had the wonderful privilege of doing the remarriage for on Wednesday night, come forward for membership.

And it's our privilege to have Mrs. Bout, who is Pastor Bout's wife, Brenda, come forward. I'll just bring this up.

In the future, we probably ought to figure out that when we vote on a pastor, we don't have his wife come forward a separate time. Pastor, would you work that out for us so that we don't have this?

In the future, we'll work that out. But anyway, these dear people are up here this morning saying this is the place that God is calling them to be part of a family of believers.

[47 : 15] I want to close with a passage of Scripture. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.

The membership deacon, you guys welcome these dear people. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.