

# I John 5:9-12 "The Bourne Testimony"

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Preacher: Peter

[ 0 : 00 ] You are listening to a message from Southwood Presbyterian Church in Huntsville, Alabama. Our passion is to experience and express grace. Join us.

So we're going to take a break from Luke for today, and we're going to dive into the world of junior high life a little bit, what we're doing on Wednesday nights across the street. We are doing 1 John, and we're systematically going through it.

So we're going to go through a few verses here, a few key verses at the end of 1 John, chapter 5, verses 9 through 12. And essentially what this is, is if you're familiar with surgical procedures, do you know what a surgical timeout is?

A surgical timeout is right before the procedure starts, the surgeon stops, and the essential people in the operating room all sit there and confirm, what are we doing?

Why are we doing this? Are we sure we're not amputating the wrong leg? Are you sure that this is the proper patient? I'm not joking about that. Are we sure that, of all of these things, right?

[ 1 : 05 ] And then they go in and they do the procedure. Yes? Okay. Ray says it was yes. And so what John is doing is, this book is rife with stuff.

He's loving people well. He's trying to give them advice how to live, but he wants to land them in a good spot. And he's doing a surgical timeout here, almost at the end of the book, to remind them of who they are and of who God is.

So read along with me on the screen or in your Bibles if you have them, as I read 1 John 5, verses 9 through 12. If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater, for this is the testimony of God that he is born concerning his son.

Whoever believes in the son of God has the testimony in himself. Whoever does not believe God has made him a liar because he's not believed in the testimony that God has born concerning his son.

And this is the testimony that God gave us. God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his son. Whoever has the son has life, and whoever does not have the son does not have life.

[ 2 : 18 ] Join me in prayer, please. Father, we come today with many things on our hearts and minds. We're busy people.

We can't breathe sometimes. We're overwhelmed. We're overwhelmed with suffering. We're overwhelmed with providing well-being and care for other people, older than us, younger than us, parents, children, friends.

We come into a place like this, and we hope to meet you here. We pray that your Holy Spirit is active and among us. Pray that you would fill our hearts with a desire to see you working in life.

And to steward the good gifts that you've given us and the life that you've given us, and that we would live and operate out of love and affection that's given to us by you, not out of fear or any other reasons.

So be with us today. Pray that the words of my mouth and the meditations of all of our hearts would be pleasing unto you. In the name of your great son, Jesus Christ, we pray.

[ 3 : 27 ] Amen. Last Sunday evening, after High Life, I was standing in a doorway in the great room, and I was speaking with a young lady, and she was telling me about these things going on in her life, some problems at school, which led to problems with some friends, and then that led to arguments with her parents, and just kind of a desperate place she was in as a 16-year-old, where she didn't feel welcome at home, she didn't feel welcome at school, there was no real place for her to be.

And as conversations go, she got to the point where she looked at me kind of with tears in her eyes, and she said, I don't even know if I'm saved.

I don't even know if Jesus is real in my heart or not. And just then, as though it had been foreordained before the foundation of the earth, I was smacked in the side of a face with a wet tortilla, by a junior in high school sprinting off behind me, and as I turned to look and find him, I was smacked on this side of my face with another wet tortilla, as that guy jumped and ran the other way. And if you ever wonder, is there a moment in time that can encapsulate youth ministry? It was the tearful, heartfelt conversation with this girl, mixed with being smacked in the face by processed flour.

Christine and Ty and I have this opportunity multiple times a week with these students to find places where the gospel can intersect with their lives. And I have a unique opportunity to walk not only alongside of those students, but walk alongside parents and other families as they go through short problems with their students, but also discussions about marriage, discussions about life and finances and things like that, where it's just a great, great job and a great thing that I get to do.

[ 5 : 46 ] But the thing that I've found now, I've always thought this, but I believe it now I think more than I ever have, is that whether you're dealing with a 12-year-old or a 16-year-old, a 36-year-old, a 56-year-old, there's something about all of us that we're all pretty much the same.

We're all pretty much the same. We all want to be loved. We all want community. We all want to be understood. We all struggle and we sin. And we all need reminders of gospel basics.

And so what John is doing as he comes to the end of this letter is he's slowing down with his readers and he's reminding them and he's encouraging them with gospel reality.

And this morning I want to slow down with you and I want to remind you and I want to encourage you with the gospel reality. If you're anything like me, you don't have time to take a breath in life, right?

There's always something new popping up at work that needs attention. My house finds new ways to break almost every single day. I can't find my friends, mostly because they don't exist, but the ones who do exist are just as busy as I am and we're all moving in different directions and so connecting is very, very difficult with them.

[ 7 : 12 ] If you're married, there seems to be no time to get together and have any real or vital conversation. We live parallel lives a lot of the time and we pass.

I don't have time and I wish that was it. I don't have the inclination to have substantial communication with my wife when I have the opportunity to. Our kids have more activities than we could have ever imagined when we were kids.

For some of us, self-medicating is the only way that we can get to sleep and then tomorrow, we get to look forward to more of the same. You wake up and boom. Whether you get up at 4.30, 5 o'clock, sometime between 4.30 and 7, right, Hosea?

Whenever we get up, life starts and you go the next day. Everything around us seems so out of control that we white-knuckle onto anything that seems manageable and controllable to us.

And for some of us, we seek control so much that we burden ourselves with actually being responsible for everything, for banking, for baseball, for football, for dance, for soccer, right, for vehicle maintenance, for basketball, for hockey, for robotics, for tennis.

[ 8 : 27 ] If something goes wrong, I messed up. It was my fault. I should have seen it coming. I had my day planned out. I should have known what was going to happen, right?

And others of you are sitting there going, yeah, man, I was there. I know I knuckled for a while, but let me tell you, I got it all handled now. You're welcome for me being here, preacher man. I'm glad to hear what you have to say to me today.

And that's fair. So we walk in here on Sundays for this one day a week where some of us drag in, some of us come in happily, joyfully, some of us pour out of our minivans, and we stumble in here with the hope of being renewed and equipped for the week ahead.

And those of us who want to be here, we're desperately seeking some assurance from our Heavenly Father that He still loves us and that He's still in control. Those of us who don't want to be here, I'm glad you're here.

I hope you stay and I hope you listen. God is still faithful today. I needed to hear that this morning as much as anybody else.

[ 9 : 46 ] I desperately needed to hear that. So I have great news for those who have limped into the service to worship their Heavenly Father, knowing that there's no other way for you. I have a great reminder to those who grab and clutch at control whenever you get the chance, knowing that you need a heart change.

And I have great news for you if you came here either out of antagonism or apathy or whatever else might drive you here. Our God is in control.

Through Jesus, He's shown more comprehension of your life than we could ever fathom. Through Jesus, He's met you in your sufferings and the sufferings of your loved ones yet again.

Through Jesus, He's made a way for you to turn from yourself and to run back to Him. And through Jesus, He has made a way to humble proud hearts and to melt hearts of stone.

Our God is in control. If you look on your bulletin, I did a really detailed outline for you so it'd be easy to follow along today. Story is one way that we can show that God is in control.

[11:04] Story is this kind of kitschy thing that a lot of people are into. Know your story. Tell me your story. Counselors and psychologists will tell you that the most important way to understand the things around you is to know and to understand your story.

Oprah and other pop psychologists and counselors will tell you that knowing these things is the way to really see your divine light and be open to see the divine light in others.

Let's just see how John describes the story. Start there in 1 John 5:9.

If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater. For this is the testimony of God that He is born concerning His Son.

A lot of the conversations I have with the youth center around who is really in control, they may or may not know that, but that's what the conversation is about.

[12:08] I love to have open forums and open discussions about what do you think of God and who He is in times of suffering, in times of wants, in times that are ugly and dark, because sometimes you need to hear yourself say things out loud to really know what you're thinking.

And those little sound bites are usually the way that I can dive in with them into life and into their stories and into understanding where they are. Because some of us see story as this thing that they don't really need to get into, but guess what?

We're all formed. We all came from somewhere. We are some kind of a product of our parents or our grandparents or our adopted parents and our environment and our siblings and all of those kind of things and sin patterns and the ways we lean into life all come from somewhere.

But most of us have spent so much of our lives trying to hide those things because we don't really want to be known by other people. We've been hurt in a lot of ways and if you put yourself on the line and you've not been accepted, you start to figure out, okay, what is kind of a way I can lay low and not have to be accepted?

Right? And we tell these stories about ourselves as though we're islands and we're kind of floating around and no one else really knows where we are and what we're getting at.

[13:27] And in those stories, we kind of lose track of who God is. Covenant children, people who deal with a lot of unchurched kids and kids who are nominal Christians, it's in the air and in the water here in Huntsville.

And there's not a lot of embracing of the reality of God being God. And John very plainly says right here that God's story is of supreme importance.

When he says, if we receive the testimony of men, he'd be talking about a few things there, but most likely he's talking about prophets and apostles and people who have gone out in the name of God talking about this God who is faithful and who loves and who pursues people.

And they're willing to receive that testimony. And John's saying, I got something a little bit more powerful than that. You're willing to receive that, but you're not willing to receive God's testimony from himself?

That's what's most important. And why is God's testimony the most important? Because he's offering you his son. He's offering you Jesus.

[14:40] I took some time with this junior crew that's juniors that help out with junior high life the other day to let them know we have all these conversations and sometimes I don't remind them of a simple presupposition of mine.

A presupposition being something that I go through life in the back of my mind that everything is filtered through. My simple presupposition is that regardless of being raised in a wonderful Christian home by good Christian parents and Christian grandparents who love me all of my siblings are believers despite being well educated at a good academic institution as well as theological and heart changing institution I don't need all of that stuff I need Jesus and that's an abstract and foreign concept to us because we love knowledge and we love to think about things but my presupposition

isn't that I need to know more about Jesus my presupposition is the only thing I can know and want is Jesus and that's a passion that has to drive me because that's what the Bible describes and that's what God offers that's why his testimony is so important and we see in John 5.37 a similar word there and the father who sent me this is Jesus talking who sent me has himself borne witness about me the word witness and testimony that's the same in the Greek his voice you have never heard and his form you have never seen he's talking to these people about rejecting Jesus himself for who he is and John that same writer is using the same word here to tell us that that's what's so supreme about God's testimony Jesus is what is of most importance I grew up at the beach and for any of you that have ever visited the beach there's probably not a much more impressive scene than a rough ocean on a big day say during a storm or a hurricane's approaching or something like that and inside of this impressive thing of nature there's probably nothing that's more frightening than getting caught in a riptide has anybody ever heard of a riptide or understand what they are this is a picture of a riptide and you see the currents jutting out in between the waves and essentially what happens is you get caught and it tries to drag you under and suck you out to sea and you have two options at that point in time I was raised as a pretty good swimmer I was taught how to swim in an ocean but when you feel the ocean grabbing you and doing something with you that you don't want to have happen and there's not an easy way to get out of it I tell you it's much easier to be afraid and if you start to fear and you start to fight that thing your fear will lead you to getting dragged under and you're gone it's a sad thing that happens to kids at the beach almost every year that's why you see signs when you go there that say riptides you know stay out of the water you see red flags on the beach depending on where you go things like that being a good swimmer and growing up at the beach I was also blessed with a certain amount of gifts that if I just stewarded my gifts well I could get out of it generally swimming parallel to the shore is an easy way to get out of a riptide not an easy way you have to work at it but if you do it for a while you'll find out oh if I just do this thing and don't try to think too much about it I'm going to actually get out of this situation don't get caught in riptides don't go in the ocean when there are riptides I'm not saying that's a good thing I'm saying it happened to me a couple of times my mom probably doesn't appreciate the stories but at any rate that's what happened so when we think of our stories more often than not our stories are things that we're trying to form or things that we're trying to change and things that we're trying to do based upon what's happening currently and what's happened in the past when what John is saying here is God's story is the one that's supreme and simultaneously our stories actually matter because our stories are supposed to operate inside of God's story we're supposed to be a demonstration of his faithfulness and of what human obedience is supposed to look like we don't obey out of fear or out of secular self-improvement we obey because we have an ever faithful father who loves us and wants to care for us we've all been given gifts and constantly life throws riptides at us it happens why?

[ 19 : 21 ] because we're sinful people around us are sinful the world itself is in a culture of sin and guess what? there's some very real factor that we don't always think about Satan does not like Christians acting like Christians Satan does not like Christians being able to communicate gospel truth to their children riptides are very real and they're thrown at us all the time and there's nothing more that Satan likes to see when a riptide is thrown at you than for a Christian to be stricken with fear and to start struggling against it rather than stewarding their gifts well and being obedient to the God who loves them who said hey when a riptide comes swim parallel to the shore I've got you you're safe our finances are a way that we do that a lot aren't they I'm not criticizing by the way anybody I'm asking for heart checks for all of us at this point because this is what

I was doing to myself as I was preparing this message savings 529's for the kids tithe how much you spend on houses on cars how many cars you have do you have a lake house how many lake houses do you have you know all of these things we make choices about where we spend our money and we make choices about jobs based upon how much money we get and there are ways to spend your money that are excellent stewardship of that and there are ways to spend your money that are absolutely fearful that if you don't handle your money correctly somehow you're not going to be taken care of because what life is on top of you and you're in control of your finances you're in control of how much you have you're in control of the stock market you're in control of global wars you're in control of natural disasters and if any of those things happen and you didn't invest in the right thing or have your portfolio diversify quite the right way money you can do all of

those same things and be in excellent stewardship don't hear me criticizing that I'm not criticizing an action I'm trying to go underneath of it and examine our hearts and invite you to examine your heart what do you do with the money that God's given to you and why do you do it have you ever even considered that question and our children discipline why do we discipline our children what's the heart behind disciplining your children is it out of fear or are you trying to steward your children well your primary relationship to your child if you consider yourself a believer your primary relationship to your child is not dictator of your home your primary relationship to your child is mature believer attempting to influence and raise immature believers to maturity that is your primary role according to God and you've been given a specialized role in that as a parent as the chief discipler and the people who are closest to this person to raise them up right in the nurture and admonition of the

Lord you're the one closest to that where does discipline come from sports and dancing those around here man I've had seven varsity letters in high school and when I say that out loud to people here and they know that I went on to play collegiate and professional athletics they go how did you do that without playing your sport 12 months a year 18 times a week for three hours and it's a different world a lot of your kids are not going to be major league baseball players or NHL players or something like that why are they doing all of these travel teams what's going on with that what is it costing you what is benefiting you is your child really the one I had a chance to teach champions in western Carolina champions tennis players I'm sorry in western Carolina these were 12 to 16 year old kids who were excellent excellent excellent and about 25 of them came to see me and I had a conversation with each of the parents individually about how their child was really going to be the one we're in western

Carolina in a Biltmore Forest Country Club in Asheville that is one little pocket of one place in one little spot of the country that's not even a tennis haven and they thought their child was going to be the one are you stewarding your child's time well are you stewarding their hearts well what are you showing them in that and then general idolatry of our children I'm sorry I'll go back to that I also have some vicarious people I'll tell you I'm about to draft our eight-year-olds coach pitch team in the next few weeks I'm not drafting kids I'm drafting parents I have no interest in having that guy you know Uncle Rico from Napoleon Dynamite I don't want that guy sitting you know because that guy won't sit outside of the fence he sits on the field right I want people who love their kids and want to see them have a good time and improve at a sport how to get along with other people right idolatry of our kids that's one that is

[ 24 : 53 ] Gimelie and I struggle with that one a lot at what point is your child an idol at what point are they are they really another human that you can let go and let be a human another of God's creations to grow and to learn and then pleasures in life relationships relationships man we don't know how to do relationships most of us and they can easily become things that we operate out of fear completely rather than stewarding them well we run away from people that we're in conflict with high school boys and girls especially boys they love to there's something about a girl you know she looked at me oh she must want to be with me and they just kind of are on top of them all the time and that hey how you doing you know there's a creepy dude that waits outside every class for me and I don't know what's going on with that but we do it too we find our need and our worth in people around us in our spouse and that's not where

God calls that to be alcohol and food you know these are things that are great gifts and things that can be misused well and then our bodies there's there's certainly this thing of our bodies where we we don't want to die we're afraid of dying and we take living well to a certain extent that is actually operating out of fear rather than stewarding the good gift that God has given us right and our heavenly father doesn't call us to live out of fear in our world that's not the call that he gives us he doesn't call us to be in control of our stories so that we can magically fix things and talk about how awesome our children are as though they're a total reflection of us we're called to steward our stories for our own sanity and for the glory of his kingdom stewarding your story looks different than controlling your story and God's given us all sorts of steps to steward our story that we'll talk about in a couple of minutes he calls us because his testimony shows us that he is in control of our stories and

John's desperate for his readers to know the love of God that's shown in Jesus Christ we're going to move on to love now to John as it should be to us the question is not whether the testimony of the father is true the question is this and we're going to head here pretty strong for the rest of the time

do you believe in the testimony of God is true do you believe it and if so how is that shown let's read verse 10 again whoever believes in the son of God has the testimony in himself whoever does not believe God has made him a liar because he's not believed in the testimony that God has borne concerning his son this truth of God's sovereign gift of his testimony mixed with what is quite clearly our human response to that can make the more

Presbyterian among us a little bit uncomfortable as we're reading it John isn't talking about random belief he's the one he's talking about the one who believes that the testimony is inside of himself there is a self attestation something is happening inside of you that cannot deny the presence of the testimony in you and that it is absolutely and forever your life will be changed because of that it wasn't walking to the front sometime at a conference it wasn't emotionally thinking man that music was really good and I like the fog machines and the lights too so I like this Jesus thing it's this incredible feeling and overwhelming feeling inside of you that this is true and that this is actually happening it can happen in those times I'm sorry don't hear me not saying that Jesus is literally indwelling people always exposing the heart of the believer and I say this makes some of us uncomfortable because we're seeing that man is somehow responsible for what's going on I'm not going to make you raise hands about you feeling uncomfortable with me saying man in this verse is somehow responsible for what's going on the objective truth revealed by the Holy Spirit is intertwined with our subjective response it's what's happening here and have a secret these things are not at odds these things are not at odds there's not a tension about this in the Bible Paul does not write Romans 9 without quickly following it up with Romans 10 these things follow each other and there's nothing wrong with that we don't have to be afraid of it we see here that you can't have the testimony of God revealed to a person without that person responding I think I just said that in a little more Presbyterian terms that we can fathom if God has given this gift to someone and the testimony is inside of them that person cannot reject that gift it cannot happen the rest of verse 10 exposes a little more of what

[ 30 : 37 ] I mean if you see there whoever does not believe God has made him a liar because he has not believed in the testimony that God is born concerning his son you can hear this testimony you can come here every single week and hear Will and Ron and Derek and every once in a while me preach good gospel sermons and not this testimony has not penetrated inside of you you do not have Jesus in you and you do not want Jesus in you that's where the responsibility factor matters because God wants you to be there and you turn it away you say no there's no room between believing in Jesus and this testimony of God wanting Jesus there's no middle ground that you can operate on and call yourself a Christian they are together scripture scripture demonstrates that all the way through and that's it seems harsh but it's actually not because the

Bible is full of stories about God's people desiring control that's all we want is control we don't want to give it up where did it start Adam and Eve right Adam and Eve wanted control they wanted knowledge of good and evil and so they sinned Abraham poor after he was called and then did it again a bunch of years later pretending that his wife wasn't his wife giving her to the local ruler calling her his sister Moses struck the rock didn't speak to the rock Aaron led the people to make a calf out of gold to worship because his brother up you know communing with God this wasn't really happening these are God's people these are our great leaders that we think about Jacob stealing his brother's birthright Joshua's army not doing what they were supposed to do when they went into the promised land the people in judges wanting a judge and then bad things happen and they don't want them and they did what was evil in their own eyes and oh

God give us something else David staying home taking a woman that wasn't his and killing her husband Jonah who had the chance to go and said he went down down down hidden headed in the opposite direction Peter Jesus had explained to him that his time had come and Peter still doesn't like it and then outside in the courtyard he denies Jesus like he's not even there you me the depth of God's love for his people that we find in this testimony of his son cannot be overstated he went through time and space all of the story of this book is about his faithfulness and love for us our stiff arming of him and that he was going to do it anyway and it looked like this it looked like blood and it looked like darkness and it looked like pain and it looked like suffering so that we could be back with him he sent his only son that's the picture that's given to us those of you that have kids imagine sending any of your children that's the image he's planting in us he sent his only son to show his love for us and that is where eternal life is found our father pursues us in love in ways that we could never imagine right greater love has no one than this that he laid down his life for his friends

God God gave God God gave God love leads us to our ultimate hope which is eternity in our father's family in John 1 12 we know that to all who received him to all who received Jesus to those who believed his name he gave the right to become children of God our father builds his family through his son let's look at verses 11 and 12 this is the testimony that God gave us eternal life and this life is in his son that's it that's the testimony those who have the son have life whoever does not have the son does not have life this is our time out this is John saying take inventory take stock of what's going on right now if you have the son you have life if not you don't and the father's desire we see it in first

Peter and in Timothy his desire is that all would come to a saving knowledge of him all would have eternal life this is the testimony God gave us eternal life and this life is in his son Jesus is eternal life Jesus is it he's our reward we have life from abiding in him we find this idea of our reward written in John's gospel in a few places whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me and I in him if anyone loves me he'll keep my word and my father will love him and we will come to him and make our home with him in our last verse here verses abide in me and I in you as the branch can't bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine neither can you unless you abide in me I'm the vine you're the branches whoever abides in me I'm your eternal gift and I in him you're mine he is that bears much fruit he it is that bears much fruit for apart from me you can do nothing and if anyone doesn't abide with me he's thrown away like a branch and withers if you abide in me and my words abide in you ask whatever you wish and it'll be done for you kids that's not what it sounds like [ 37 : 04 ] I don't have enough time to go through that but if you want to have a many children sermon come up and see me after we'll ask an interesting question last week toward the end of the last sermon and I want to ask a similar question today in a little bit different way do you want Jesus do you want Jesus the reality of wanting Jesus is different than wanting knowledge of Jesus wanting Jesus exposes you to the lordship reality of God that most of us would rather ignore certainly we want all the good stuff we want to be saved right we want friends we want community on this earth and we want all of those things but do we really want Jesus and in that to release all control of our lives we we've already discussed some ways that we know better than him we live that way every day if you give me a head full of knowledge about

Jesus then I do not have a person to whom I have to give any kind of account I just have head knowledge I can control that situation however I see fit and call myself a believer because I could probably give you some pretty good answers to the questions that you're going to ask me but if give me Jesus I I'm forced to come face to face with eternal love a story that breaks down every barrier I could possibly put up because Jesus doesn't come to judge he comes to give eternal life in him as your prized possession and you see it and it breaks you down I'm faced to respond with every fiber of my being I'm forced to know my own desperate state but not in some negative way I'm forced to know it because I know the love and beauty of what's been freely given to me if you've entered into your heavenly father's family do you remember that moment do you remember when it happened do you remember being on your knees maybe on the ground crying maybe in a fetal position and you were able to say my

Lord and my God I know who you are do you know your Christian birthday that's a fun thing I don't know my Christian birthday I was raised by parents who loved Jesus and exposed me to it all the time and my grandparents I have a wonderful story of a covenant child you have two baptisms today is that the heart of you guys as you raise up your kids that they would never know a day they didn't see their parents worshipping and that this truth was always embedded in them I don't see it as any less of a miracle for me I really don't my parents were converted in the front of a funeral parlor on a random Sunday in Seaford Delaware you know I come from am I allowed to call you Jesus free hippies I come from Jesus free hippies great people who always raised me in that way and that's when we take those vows like we did for the kids this morning that's the implication of that those kids will see it verse 12 serves to reinforce the reality of everything that we've been talking about whoever has the son has life and whoever doesn't doesn't a female student from the beginning of my sermon never finished that conversation with me like most of us the speed of life and the speed of life smacking me in the face with a tortilla that was enough to derail her it was enough to derail our conversation but

I trust that we'll finish it it was one that started a long time ago between us and has continued what about you do you have the son we're in we're amongst intellectual giants in our congregation a lot of really smart people here but I can't help but think that in a crowd this size some of us can't make

heads or tails of whether we want the son or not let alone whether we have him I plead with you to consider the simple gospel reality remember I'm slowing down to give a simple gospel reality that's what this is please consider this gospel reality the very God of heaven sent his only son to live and to die and to be raised again so that people like you and people like me can forever be called sons and daughters sons and daughters of the living

God not some abstract thought not a theory a reality that should guide the way that we live in Jesus he separates us from our sins as far as the east is from the west giving our stories a loving place in his story for those of you who walked in here suffering I hope you're reminded today that there is a God who loves you and who cares for you take heart he's still in control those of you who believe and yet we let life carry us away into unbelief and we go to places of fear take heart God's testimony to us is as true today as it's ever been run back to your father he's waiting with open arms our God gives us his word he gives us his spirit and he gives us his son his story of love invites us all all of us today into his family pray with me God thank you for the simple reality and the glory of your gospel the glory of our savior your son

[ 43 : 06 ] Jesus I pray that as we consider the reality of him that we will indeed want him that we will not want ideas of him and notions of him but that will want and desire Jesus thank you for loving us thank you for bringing us to hear your truth again this morning and we pray that it would serve to advance your kingdom in the great name of our King Jesus Amen For more information visit us online at [southwood.org](https://southwood.org)