

OpenTheo

Upper Room Discourse (Part 4)



The Life and Teachings of Christ - Steve Gregg

In the fourth part of his discourse, Steve Gregg explores the topic of healing and the different means through which God may heal people, including medical and natural means. He emphasizes that loving Jesus is shown through obedience to His commandments, and those who keep His commandments are promised the presence and help of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is described as the Spirit of Truth, given by Jesus to help His followers in His absence, and only received by those who belong to Jesus. Gregg concludes that inward revelation of Christ through obeying His commandments enables believers to know God and manifest Him in their lives.

Transcript

...you know, put pressure on them. But it's, as far as I know, as I understand the scripture, it's not God's will to force people to become Christians against their will, and therefore it's not our will that He would. I mean, there's a sense in which we wish He would, and probably there's a sense in which He wishes He would, but it's not in line with His overall workings and His own designated methods to do that.

So it's true, even though you pray in Jesus' name for someone to be saved, that Jesus might want to be saved, still there is the condition there, not that they'd be saved against their will, but that God might do everything in His power to influence their will, to pressure them in a certain direction, and so forth. And many people have been saved, of course by an act of their own free will, but in response to the prayers that people prayed for them, no doubt. Yes.

Well, yeah, a lot of people use the name of Jesus as sort of an incantation, as sort of a magic word, and that's, of course, that's a general approach that some people have toward the supernatural in Christianity in general. They see the supernatural as our version of the occult. Now, see, the occult basically says there's a spiritual dimension out there, and there's laws that you can manipulate if you learn the ropes.

You learn how to do the right spell, you learn how to do the right confession, you learn how to manipulate the forces, and you'll get the thing you want. That's what occultism's

all about. It's people getting their own way by manipulating powers and forces that are out there beyond their own human power.

It's manipulating those things on their own behalf. Prayer is not bad at all, and the supernatural in the Christian life is fundamentally different in this respect, that the Christian is not the least bit interested, hopefully, in using the supernatural to get his own selfish way. He wants to use the supernatural to advance God's causes, and he leaves it in God's hands, whether God chooses to respond in the way he's asked to or not.

I mean, God's sovereignty is honored by the Christian throughout the entire process. We pray what we think is God's will, but always with the provisional, you know, but not my will but thine be done. Jesus prayed that way himself in the Garden of Gethsemane, nevertheless not my will but yours be done.

And James indicated that's the way we should always talk. He said, go to now you who say today or tomorrow will go into such a city and continue there a year and buy and sell and get gain. He says, but you don't know what's on the morrow, for what is your life? It's even a vapor that appears for a little time and vanishes away.

For that you ought to say, if the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that. He says, but now you're rejoicing, you're boasting. Positive confessions that are not subjected to the will of God are boastings, he says, and he said all such rejoicing is evil.

That is, I believe it near the end of James chapter 4 that that's discussed. Yeah, in fact it is, almost the closing words of James chapter 4. I'll give you the verse numbers. James 4 verses 13 through 16.

The idea is you should say, if it's the Lord's will, we'll even survive. To say nothing of getting a healing or getting a provision or having a particular prayer answered. If it's God's will, we may survive and this may happen.

To simply confess it positively without subjecting it to the sovereignty of God is to act more like an occultist who thinks that he can have whatever he wants as long as he makes the right confession, does the right things to manipulate the powers. In which case prayer and God's power in the life of a believer ceases to be anything relational. It just becomes something, sort of a power out there to be tapped.

It has nothing to do with a servant submitting to his master, which is what Christianity is all about. Okay, well, we need to move along. Yeah, Doug? Should they use him? Kenneth Hagan has criticized his critics on this very point.

He says, these people, they say it's not always God's will to heal. I'm talking about people like me. There's people out there who say it's not always God's will to heal and that if you pray for healing and you didn't get it, that it may not be God's will.

And yet they'll go out and get a doctor to try to heal. He points it out as what he considers a bit of hypocrisy. The way I would put it is, it may in fact be God's will to heal, but not necessarily through a miracle.

He may wish to heal through some other means. God has a large variety of ways in which he works. He works through human means.

He works through natural means. He works through supernatural means. He does whatever he has to do.

And I think the reason we don't see as many miraculous healings, for example, in this country as they see in Africa or in Indonesia and places like that, is simply because there are more medical means through which the same object can be obtained. I'm not saying that God prefers for us to use medical means, but if we're willing to do that, he may have no objection to healing us through that means. In places where such things are not available, like in Jesus' time or in the third world, many places today, then of course if God wants to reach the same object that is healing him, he's going to have to do it miraculously because there's no other option available.

In a sense, our own culture and our own technology has insulated us against the need for as many miracles as people used to need to get well. We could call that pitiable, seen one way. There's a sense which I'd like to see more miraculous healings, and I could almost wish that we didn't have so many other things to lean on.

On the other hand, some could say, but these are the provisions that God has made for us. I mean, he's given man intelligence, the ability to conquer the environment and to conquer germs and things. That's what was part of giving man dominion over the things that God made.

And we can see some of these medical technologies, they'd say, as a godsend, and that God heals through these means doesn't mean that he's not still healing. So, I mean, there's lots of ways to look at it, but it's not necessarily a hypocrisy to say, I can believe God may make me well, but not necessarily miraculously. I'm certainly always willing for him to miraculously, and that's always the first thing I pray for.

I'd rather have God miraculously heal me than have to go to a doctor. I love miracles, and I don't go to doctors much because God has, I think, miraculously kept me quite well. But, yeah, the question is, oh, is it a sin to die without seeking medical help? That's a good question.

I would say if it is a sin, it may be a sin of ignorance, and therefore one that God would not lean too heavily on. I would say it may not be good wisdom. I mean, Hobart Freeman was a famous faith teacher.

He's no longer alive, but he died in recent times. He was a pastor of a church, and it's

been documented that over 90 people died in his congregation from sicknesses that could have been easily treated by available medical technology. It was right there nearby, but he thought it was a sin to go to a doctor.

So, one could say that he is personally responsible by his teaching, which is probably, unless his teaching is true. You see, I don't think his teaching is true. Therefore, as a false teacher, the blood of perhaps 90-something people is on his head who could have lived had they not been falsely taught by him.

I mean, God may have had no objection whatsoever to their going and getting insulin. Now, of course, that raises questions. Does God object to that, or does God not object to it? And that's a philosophical question.

It depends on whether we feel that technology is a God-sent or a Satan-sent. A lot of people just say medical science is just there to rob God of the glory of the healings and so forth, and I suppose that's the way that people could see it. But I could also say that when I pray for money, I could rejoice if God caused money to materialize in my wallet, or if I saw it raining gold Krugerrands on my lawn in the morning.

You know, I mean, that'd be miraculous. Make God a counterfeiter, too, by the way. But I would be quite pleased for God to provide through that miraculous means.

Yet I don't think it any lack of faith on my part to say that he might provide through humans. You know, in fact, that's the normal way. And even in Jesus' own day, there were people with limited medical knowledge trying to help people, and Jesus never indicated that that was a bad thing for them to do.

Luke himself was a physician, and there's no negative thing said about him in that profession. So I would just have to say that it boils down to what degree we think that God may wish to use legitimate means to accomplish his ends, as well as miracles where those means are not available. If there are natural means, if I'm thirsty, and I'm dying of thirst, and I'm sitting in my living room dying of thirst, and I'm saying, God, I need water, but there's, I could walk into the kitchen and get myself a glass of water, but I'm refusing to because I say, God, I want this miraculously.

I want you to provide the water. You know, I mean, that's kind of absurd. If I died doing that, would that be a sin? I'd say it'd be stupid, you know, and it may be a very stupid sin, and because of the level of stupidity, God might tend to go easy on me for it.

But then the question is, do I have the right to be that stupid? You know, what is my theology? How am I understanding the Bible and God if I allow my theology to be that warped, you know? So, all I can say about that, and it's an excellent question, I'm glad you asked it, but all I can say is that, no, I can't think of any philosophical reason why medical assistance would be a lack of faith any more than, say, or that it'd be a sin, any

more than to say, well, I need money, I think I'll go out and get a job. I could just pray that God will make the money fall from the sky, but if I'm able-bodied and if a job is available, maybe I should consider that's the way God wants to provide for me, to go out and get a job. And if I get a job, I'll praise God for it.

And if I'm able to keep the job and He provides it that way, I'll praise God for it. I mean, He gets the glory. Anyway, it just isn't- I just don't get to see a miracle as often as I'd like to, but an awful lot of times, the things we ask for which God could provide through a miracle, He prefers to just go through normal means if they're available.

And if they're not, then miracles come in greater numbers. Anyway, that's what I think. Now, as an addendum to that, I have to say that people have felt that my view about psychiatric drugs is inconsistent with this.

People have said, well, you don't believe in giving people drugs for schizophrenia and bipolar-affected disorder and so forth, and attention deficit disorder, these things. How can you criticize that when you don't oppose, for example, a diabetic going and getting insulin for his diabetes? And the answer to that is, well, there's a couple of things. One is, there's never been established beyond dispute a medical cause for these psychiatric things.

Some people are claiming they've got a gene, they're on the trace of a gene for schizophrenia, or they're on the trail of one, or that there's some biochemical imbalance in the brains of manic-depressives. But that has never been established, never been proven, and it's just not a clear-cut medical situation. The fact that drugs change the person's behavior doesn't prove that it was a chemical problem in the first place.

If I go out and get drunk, it'll change my behavior, but it doesn't mean I had something wrong with me chemically in the first place. And, I mean, drugs do change your behavior. In some cases, some drugs might change it in ways that people around you like it to be changed.

They might like you to not talk so much, so they like you to be tranquilized or whatever, but that doesn't prove that you had a medical condition in the first place. Drugs may be curing a disease that doesn't exist as a disease. They just may be introducing a natural element.

So I'm not opposed to the use of drugs for things that are clearly medically, you know, have to do with the physical thing. But when behavior is modified by drugs, there's a second reason I have a problem with it, and that is that, of course, diabetes is not a behavioral thing, and therefore has nothing to do with sin, righteousness, or anything. There's no moral implications to having low blood sugar, although your eating habits might border on... I mean, it depends on how you got that low blood sugar, but the thing is, if people have Tourette's syndrome and they're bursting out spurts of profanities

everywhere they look, and they say, oh, this is a terrible medical condition, that's a moral condition.

I mean, there's no indication that that's medical, and the Bible would indicate that that's sin. And whenever people start redefining sin in medical terms, I get concerned. And if we're willing to do that with something behavioral like Tourette's syndrome or attention deficit disorder or schizophrenia or depression or whatever, if we're willing to call those behavioral things medical problems, then we've gotten on that track that psychiatry's gone for a long time.

They've been redefining homosexuality in those terms, and what, drunken alcoholism in those terms. A lot of things that used to be called sin have already been added to the list of things that are said to be caused genetically or biologically, and that's never been proven. But as soon as we begin to buy into the idea that a person might have a physical condition beyond their control and beyond the Holy Spirit's control that causes them to do sinful things, I have trouble with that.

It basically wages war with biblical theology about sin is what it does. And I don't mind saying, and you've probably heard me say this before, I don't mind saying that some people might in fact be born either with a genetic or an environmental disadvantage that makes them inclined toward alcoholism or homosexuality or some of these other behaviors. But that's not the same thing as saying that those behaviors are a medical problem.

That just means that if Arnold Schwarzenegger was my dad and I was born with an ability to build a huge body and stuff, I might be more tempted to go out and beat up people in bars than I am now. I'm not the least bit tempted to do so, and that's entirely physical. No, it's not entirely physical.

I wouldn't beat up people if I was big. But if I was and I went around beating up people in bars, I could say, well, it's physical, you see. I've got this confidence in my ability to beat people up because I have these muscles.

Well, those muscles are maybe an occasion for pride and for aggression, but they don't make me do it. And there are physical conditions that put some people maybe at greater temptation than others are to do certain sinful things, but that just means that's where their struggle is going to be defined. But that doesn't justify what they do.

That's a side issue, but I don't believe, you know, when I say I do believe in medications, I do believe in medical science to a certain extent, I don't necessarily believe that their realm should be extended to include behavioral problems, just physical problems. Now, let's go on. Verse 15, If you love me, keep my commandments, and I will pray the Father, and he will give you another helper, that he may abide with you forever, even the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive because it neither sees him nor knows him.

But you know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans. I will come to you.

Now, the statement, If you love me, keep my commandments, obviously we could preach on this a great deal, in view of the fact there are many people who claim to be Christians, but don't seem philosophically to believe it's necessary to obey Jesus. And if you even confront them with the fact that they're not obeying Jesus, they act like it's an impertinent comment. Like, you know, I'm saved by grace, not by works, silly.

You know, I love the Lord, I just, I love women too, you know, so I just go out and sleep with them all the time, you know, whatever, you know. Well, let's face it, there's people who think and talk that way, and somehow they think that that's theologically sound or something. Jesus made it quite clear, if you love me, you will keep my commandments.

And there's another way to put that, if you don't keep my commandments, it shows you don't love me, that's all there is to it. If you don't do what Jesus said, it tells one thing very clearly, you don't love him. If you don't do the right thing, and I would have to say that I didn't obey the Lord in some particular, but it's not because I don't generally love the Lord, but I have to say that at that moment I wasn't loving him as much as I should have, because you can't love the Lord and love sin at the same time.

If you love Jesus, you will keep his commandments, and he said that again in verse 21 and verse 23 in a slightly different way, but the same teaching. He who has my commandments and keeps them, verse 21 says, it is he who loves me. You can tell who the person is who loves him by them keeping the commandments that they have.

Oh yeah, that's right, the textual variant actually indicates that this is not a command, but it's in the indicative, if you love me, you will keep my commandments. And that is, of course, that agrees with what verse 21 is saying, that the person who has Christ's commandments and keeps them is the person who loves him. And verse 23 says the same thing, if anyone loves me, he will keep my words.

So all those statements basically connect love for Jesus, which many people interpret in a sentimental, emotional feeling sort of a way, it just brings it down to the pragmatic, where the rubber meets the road, outward behavior choices. You don't know that someone loves the Lord by the fact that they say they do. You know that they love the Lord by the choices they make for their life.

They will keep his commandments. And he said, and I will pray the Father and he will give you another helper. Now this is interesting because he suggests, that verse 16 begins with the word and, which means it's taking into consideration what was said in verse 15, and this is in addition to it.

The idea is, if you love me, you'll keep my commandments and I will ask the Father to

send the Holy Spirit to you. To receive the Holy Spirit apparently would require first of all that you love Jesus and that you are committed at least to keeping his commandments. And that being so, this will also be so, Jesus will ask the Father to send the Holy Spirit to you.

A lot of people have been prayed for, for the baptism of the Holy Spirit and have shown no evidence that they've ever received it. I don't mean tongues. Some people think tongues is the evidence.

I'd say their life is the evidence, their fruit is the evidence. And there's a lot of people, including someone in my own immediate family, somebody who doesn't live with me, but someone very close to me, who's been prayed for twice for the baptism of the Holy Spirit and has shown no evidence of any change. And I've puzzled over that because it is so close to home.

And I thought, well why is it that someone can ask and be prayed for and take the initiative to apparently want that and yet not receive that? And the answer may well be something like this. First they've got to love Jesus and be committed to keeping his commandments. That's a commitment that not everybody has, but everybody who has it is a Christian.

And I have reason to feel that people who don't have that may not be Christians, in fact. I don't want to be the judge of that, but that seems to be maybe one of the ways of telling. Because the Holy Spirit is given to those who fit that criteria.

And he will give you another helper. The word another there refers to Jesus as the first helper. The word helper is parakletos.

In your studies in 1 John, Phil has already made the point that parakletos is a word that's used of Jesus. In 1 John 1 and I think it's verse 2, where it says, If any man sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous. Let me see this.

It's actually 1 John 2.1. If anyone sins, we have an advocate. The word advocate in the Greek is parakletos, the same word that's translated helper over here. And that advocate is like a friend in court, like a defense attorney.

The literal meaning of parakletos, it comes from the word para, which in the Greek means alongside. You've heard the expression parachurch. Parachurch organizations are those that work alongside the church.

Para is a Greek particle that means alongside. Kletos, in parakletos, comes from the Greek word kaleo, which means to call. And so literally, parakletos means one who's called alongside, but called in an official sense to represent and help somebody.

Like an attorney is called to come alongside his defendant and defend him. So parakletos

was a word that was used of an advocate, official legal advocate. And Jesus is that for us, but he said he's been with the disciples and he's been a very present paraklete to them.

Now he's going to be an absent paraklete up in heaven, but he'll send another one to be present. He'll send another parakletos. Now, in the Greek language, there are two words for other.

And one of them means another of a different kind. And another means another of the same kind. In this particular place, it is the latter word that is used.

So he's saying, I will send you a parakletos, an advocate, a helper of the same kind as myself. So what we have in the Holy Spirit is not someone much different than Christ. He's a helper of the same kind.

We can expect the same help from the Holy Spirit in us as we could expect if Jesus were here himself visibly helping us. What he's saying is, whatever help and advocacy you may have derived from my presence with you, you will not be deprived of it when I'm gone. You'll have another, like myself, doing the same kind of thing for you that I've been doing for you and that you would want me to do for you as a helper and an advocate.

So I'm going to send him to you. The Father's going to send him to you. And he'll abide with you forever.

Unlike Jesus, who was going to leave them, the Holy Spirit would never leave them. He'll stay around. Even the Spirit of Truth.

Now, throughout the Upward Discourse, Jesus repeatedly refers to the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Truth. I don't know precisely what all he intends by that. Obviously, there'd be a reason for him choosing that particular wording.

I don't know if he means to say that the presence of the Holy Spirit would be manifest largely in the presence of truth. That is, as you pursue truth, what you'll be finding is the Spirit of Truth, the Spirit who is the truth. The Spirit of Truth can mean the Spirit who is identified with truth or who is truth.

Or it can be a Hebraism that means the true spirit. Of truth can simply mean genuine or true. And therefore, he could be saying the true and genuine spirit, as opposed to all the other possible spirits.

John said in 1 John 4, verse 1, Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. 1 John 4, verse 1 There are spirits who are not to be trusted, but the Holy Spirit can be trusted. He's the Spirit of Truth.

He's genuine. He's truthful. Anyway, I can't really solve the question if you have it in your mind.

If you don't, more power to you of why Jesus chose this particular way of speaking of the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Truth. Of course, Jesus had said a few moments earlier that he himself was the truth. In John 14, verse 6, I am the truth.

Therefore, if the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth, he's the Spirit of Christ. And that the same truth teller, the same helper, the same advocate that they've known in Christ would be with them in the form of the Holy Spirit. And it says, whom the world cannot receive, which again may be a reason why some people are prayed for by the Holy Spirit and don't receive him, because they really don't belong to Jesus, they belong to the world.

They're not really Christians. The world means the unsaved world here. Because it neither sees him nor knows him, and generally speaking, unsaved people need to see before they will believe.

And he says, but you know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. Now, in what sense the Holy Spirit was presently dwelling with the disciples, we can't say for sure. Either he's saying that the Holy Spirit externally to themselves was nonetheless all around them, that they lived and moved and had their being in the presence of the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit had been at work upon them in various ways, perhaps in drawing them to Christ in the first place.

It's possible and maybe even probable that what he really means is, you know the Holy Spirit because he's in me, and I'm with you. Therefore, the Holy Spirit has been with you all this time in the person of me. And now you're going to have me in the person of the Holy Spirit.

The same Spirit that has been with you in me is going to be in you. He is with you now, but he will be in you. And of course, after Jesus rose from the dead, he breathed on his disciples in John 20, 22, I think it is, and said, receive the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit came to be in them.

And he does dwell in every believer. And that is essentially, if the second meaning of he is with you is in fact the correct one, that Jesus was with them and the Holy Spirit in Jesus was with them, he is saying, well, you've known the Holy Spirit in me, with you, but you will now know him in you. Rather than just with you, the Holy Spirit is going to be in you, even as he's in me, and you've known him in that way.

Now, that last verse that we read, verse 18, I will not leave you orphans, I will come to you, that is interesting. If the verse stood by itself, without a context, it would probably be taken to mean at the second coming. I will come to you.

Then he would come again. He'd come back a second time, and sure enough, he will. But in the context, it doesn't sound like that's the point he's making.

I'm not going to abandon you. He says, I'm going to send a helper, I'm going to send you another like myself, another advocate. He will be in you forever.

You won't be left orphans. I will come to you, and I will come to you, would seem to mean, through the Holy Spirit, I will be with you. When we say that Jesus lives in my heart, we're not making a technically accurate statement.

Jesus is in his resurrected, glorified body at the right hand of God the Father, in heaven. And the Bible says he's going to stay there, he's not going to come back, until he comes back. He doesn't come and go.

It says in Acts chapter 3, concerning Christ, that the heavens must receive him until the day of the restoration of all things. Jesus is there, and he won't come back until he's put all his enemies under his feet, it says in 1 Corinthians 15. He is seated at the right hand of God, and he must sit and reign there until all his enemies have been put under his feet.

So, Jesus isn't in my heart in the literal sense, but his spirit is in me, and that entitles me to say that Jesus is in me, because it's the same spirit of Christ. It's his spirit. In his spirit, he resides in me.

Paul said in 2 Corinthians 3, and I think verse 17, I'll find it to see if that's the right verse. 2 Corinthians 3, yeah, and verse 17 says, now the Lord is the spirit. And where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

Almost always in the epistles, and in the New Testament, the word Lord, unless it's quoting an Old Testament passage that uses the word Jehovah. But in places where it's not quoting the Old Testament, the New Testament almost always uses the word Lord to mean Jesus. When it says, now the Lord is that spirit, it could be understood to mean Jesus is the spirit.

And, of course, that's one of the verses for the Jesus-only. They basically understand it that way, and to tell you the truth, it's hard to refute that particular understanding of that verse, that when the spirit is in you, Jesus is in you in another sense. In one sense, he's at the right hand of God the Father.

In another sense, he is present by his spirit in you. And so when he says, I will not leave you orphans, I will come to you, it seems to be in the context of his sending the spirit, which shows us there's another case where the coming of the Lord is spoken of in some sense probably other than his second coming in this case. Verse 19, we only have a few minutes here, we'll go a little further.

A little while longer, and the world will see me no more, but you will see me because I live, you will live also. Now, he says the world's not going to see me, but you'll see me. That either means that when he comes back from the grave, he'll appear to them, but he won't appear to anyone else.

As far as we know, Jesus didn't appear to any unbelievers after his resurrection, except for James, his brother. And that James became a believer, and we don't know of any other cases of unbelievers that Jesus appeared to after his resurrection. Mostly it was disciples, though he did appear to James.

And of course, much later, he appeared to Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus. But some have thought maybe this means that the world won't see him anymore, but he will come back from the grave and visit them, and he did on several occasions. And they saw him, even though the world never got a chance to see him again.

On the other hand, it's possible that he means the world won't see me because they won't be spiritually alive. You will be spiritually alive and will see me in another sense that they cannot. Remember in Hebrews, it says in chapter 2, you studied I think today, it says that we do not yet see all things put under him, but we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor and seated at the right hand of God.

Hebrews 2. We see Jesus, do we? I haven't seen him yet, not with my eyes, but it is assumed that I see him in another sense. I perceive him by the eye of faith. The world can't see him.

Disciples can see him, but not exactly in the sense that we see each other here. And he may mean that. He may mean that the world will not be aware of my presence, but you'll be aware of my presence.

The world won't see me, but you'll see me in the peculiar sense in which Christians see Jesus by the eye of faith. And because I live, you'll live also. At that day, you will know that I am in my father and you in me and I in you.

So we're going to get all mixed up in this broth too, as it were. We are of his flesh and his bones. He's in us, we're in him, the father's in him, he's in the father.

Does this mean that we become part of a trinity? Some people have asked that, especially Jehovah's Witnesses who try to make things seem ridiculous if you do believe in the trinity. I personally, of course, don't believe that this means that we become absorbed into the Godhead. Certainly we don't become deity as Jesus is deity, but there is a union, an identity there that we are as identified to Christ as your head is identified with your body.

That's what the Bible says. It says in 1 Corinthians 12.12, look at 1 Corinthians 12.12. It

says, for as the body, and in that instance it means the physical human body, it doesn't mean the body of Christ. He's using the human body as an example of the body of Christ.

But as he speaks about our body, he says, as the body, the physical human body is one and has many members. But all the members of that one body being many are one body, so also is Christ. You expect him to say, so also is Christ and the church, or so also is the body of Christ, but he says, so also is Christ.

What is Christ? A body with many members. Jesus is the head, you and I are the flesh and the bones, the hands and the feet, the eye and the ear and the nose and so forth. We are the members of his body.

That's 1 Corinthians 12.12. As the physical human body is a body made up of many members, so also is Christ, since his departure. But when he was here, the body of Christ was all contained in one man, Jesus of Nazareth. Hands, feet, blood, vessels, everything was all in one individual.

But when he went into heaven, Jesus of Nazareth took on a new relationship to his followers. He became only the head of the body, and his spirit was given to his followers so that they are now the members of his current body. And he is still a many-membered body.

And we are identified with him as much as our heads and our bodies are identified with each other. As one. And it's a mystery, I don't deny that.

But it doesn't mean that we become part of the Trinity exactly, but it does mean that we become one with Christ. We become members of Christ. Paul put it that way.

Know you not that your members are the members of Christ? Interesting. Now, verse 21. We've talked about this already.

He who has my commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him. Judas, not Iscariot.

Now this other Judas, he has to say not Iscariot because Judas Iscariot is the one that is usually talked about. And this other Judas is not really mentioned elsewhere by that name. It is believed by most evangelical scholars that this Judas is sometimes called the three-named disciple.

If you compare the various lists of the twelve apostles, there is one name, one position on the lists that differs it from place to place. In some lists it's Thaddeus. It's spelled T-H-A-D-D, probably A-E-U-S or something like that.

And in other lists it's Lebbeus, spelled L-E-B. I don't remember if there's two Bs or not, but something different. Thaddeus, Lebbeus, and Judas, or Jude.

Judas and Jude are the same name. So it is thought that these different lists use these different names for the same guy. We know that Peter was sometimes called Simon and sometimes called Peter.

Matthew was sometimes called Levi, sometimes Matthew. Some of the disciples were known by more than one name. And this one apparently had three known names.

Judas. And he might not have gone by Judas very much after Judas Iscariot became so notorious. After the betrayal of Jesus, this man named Judas maybe didn't want to go by that name, lest when people talk about him, people confuse him with Judas Iscariot.

So he may have gone by his other names, Thaddeus or Lebbeus, more often afterwards. We don't know. But anyway, he's the guy.

He's the guy who speaks up. Does God love people who don't love him back? That's what you're asking. Yes.

Right. I think there's different senses in which the Bible speaks of God's love and God's hate. The Bible talks about God hating certain kinds of people.

It says in Proverbs that he hates those who are so discorded among brethren, and so forth. I think the Bible talks about these words love and hate in different ways, in different places. There's a sense which God loves the whole world because it's his creation, and because he wishes that all would be saved, he has high desires and positive desires for the whole world, for all people.

But he's not really in a love relationship with anybody except those who love him. He's had to posture himself as an enemy to those who are his enemies. In a number of places in the Old Testament it says, those who honor me I will honor, those who hate me I will be lightly esteemed.

God doesn't behave in the same way toward everybody. He does wish all would be saved, and in that sense he loves everybody. But in the sense of relationship and his dealings with people, he can act lovingly and be in a love relationship with those who love him.

He can't do that and doesn't do that toward those who are his enemies. He's had to posture himself as being opposed to them. So I don't know that it's so much referring to God's well-wishing or his emotional love here, as much as the relational dynamic of acting in a loving way toward those who love him.

Because remember, Jesus said in that very passage, the one who loves me demonstrates

it by obedience, and God will love him. And perhaps the love there is referred to as God's demonstration of love through his outward behavior also. I mean, love is more than just a feeling.

And I think what Jesus is saying is that God will act in a kindly and loving and generous way toward the person who loves him, there will be a relationship reciprocal going on there. But in another sense, he loves the whole world, but much less involved sense of the word love, I think, in that case. So Judas, not ascertained, said to him, Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us and not to the world? The question is based on the fact that Jesus said in verse 19, you will see me, but the world won't see me.

So he said, how is that going to happen? Now, Jesus' answer to that seems to justify what I said I thought Jesus meant in verse 19, because Jesus answered and said, he didn't say, well, I'm going to appear to you after my resurrection. That's how you'll see me and the world won't see me. But he says it otherwise.

It's more like an inner revelation he's talking about. Jesus answered and said to him, if anyone loves me, he will keep my word. My father will love him.

We will come to him and make our home with him. So he's obviously talking about the indwelling of God in us. And those who love him and keep his commandments, he dwells in us.

The Godhead dwells in us. He's no doubt talking about the phenomenon of the Spirit coming to be in us, which he was talking about a few verses earlier. But by the Spirit coming to dwell in us, it is Jesus and the Father also, because they're all one.

And don't ask me to unravel that one, but the point here is, when they say, well, Jesus, what did you mean when you said, we'll see you, but the world won't see you? And how are you going to show yourself to us and not them? He'll say, well, it's going to be kind of an inside deal. It's going to be, you love me, you keep my commandments, my father and I are going to come and make our home with you. And we'll be there, and that's how you'll see me.

And the world won't, they won't have this experience. It's a spiritual vision, as it were, a spiritual revelation. He who does not love me does not keep my words, and the word which you hear is not really mine, but the Father's who sent me.

So to go against Jesus' words is to go against the Father's words. To honor Jesus' word is to honor the Father's words, and therefore the Father and Jesus both will honor you, if you keep Jesus' commandments, and they will come and make themselves known to you. Now, this inward revelation of Christ is very possibly one of the major distinctives of a genuine conversion experience.

There are many people who are identified as Christians, and sincerely so. They no doubt

sincerely identify themselves as Christians. But they know Christ only, as it were, by hearsay.

They know because they've read about him, and they believe what they've read. They've heard people talk about Jesus, and they believe what they hear. And they know Jesus like they might know President Clinton.

They've heard everything there is to know about him, even his secret, you know, private life and color of his underwear has been, you know, broadcast on the news. I mean, you could feel like you really know that guy, in a sense, but you don't know him. You know him by hearsay, and that's not quite the same thing as knowing him.

And so there are people who know Christ merely by hearsay. But Jesus is saying, that won't be the case with those who love me and keep my commandments. We will manifest ourselves to him.

We will make our home with him. You will have an acquaintance with me. And I like to challenge groups of Christians about this, because many people have a subnormal idea of what it means to be a Christian, and think that if they've simply academically acknowledged the truths of Christianity about Jesus, that that makes them a Christian.

And no doubt that is what brings people into a relationship with God, but until that actual relationship with God is there, they're not a normative Christian. Let's put it that way, and whether we can call that Christian is God's call, not mine. Okay, well, we're about out of time here, so we can't go any further.

I was hoping to actually get through about another chapter and a half. But we will take this as however we must. Fortunately, we've reviewed all the themes in a quick way, so we'll be able to go through and take more detail, hopefully all the detail, next time.