

# OpenTheo

## How Can I Know That I Am Really Saved? (Part 2)



### How Can I Know That I Am Really Saved? - Steve Gregg

In this talk, Steve Gregg discusses the four tests that accompany salvation and how to understand the concept of being saved. He emphasizes the importance of confessing and believing in Jesus Christ as the Messiah and Son of God. Gregg also touches on the role of the Holy Spirit in testifying our adoption as children of God and explains how the Spirit helps us recognize our belonging and rest in the power of God. He notes that salvation is not just a one-time event, but rather an ongoing transformation of our lives.

### Transcript

Last week we had a sort of an introductory lecture to this topic of How Can I Know That I Am Really Saved? Obviously, the topic is that of the assurance of salvation. And we are using the book of 1 John to answer those questions because John in his gospel actually assures us that we can know if we are saved or not. Now, John doesn't use the word saved actually, but he uses terms that we would equate with that term.

When we talk about being saved, these are the terms that we would think of. He says in 1 John 2, 3, By this we know, that we know Him, knowing God. Not just knowing about God, but knowing Him as two people might know each other.

That's what salvation is, is knowing God. Jesus said that in John 17, 3. He said, This is eternal life, that they might know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. So, eternal life is knowing God.

And John says, We can know that we know Him. He also said that we know that we have passed from death unto life. And I'm abbreviating these statements because in each case he goes on to say, By this evidence, by certain evidence, we know.

All I'm trying to point out here is that the Bible affirms that we can know and normally will know if we are truly born again, if we have passed from death unto life. He said, By this we know that we abide in Him. Abiding in Christ is a concept that Jesus brought up back in John 15 when He talked about the vine and the branches.

He said, I'm the vine, you're the branches. The imagery is, of course, that the vine is a

living plant and branches that are attached to the vine draw upon that life of that vine. And, of course, if they become disattached from that vine, Jesus said, then they wither up and are gathered and burned because they are of no use anymore.

So being attached to the vine, that is being attached to Christ, abiding in Him, He says, every branch that abides in me bears fruit. This is one of the ways that John talks about salvation also. He says that you may know that you have eternal life.

So having eternal life, abiding in Christ, having passed from death unto life, knowing God. These are all different ways that John speaks about salvation. As I pointed out last time, none of these are really specifically talking about what happens after you die.

Obviously, if you have eternal life, that has ramifications after you die. That has ramifications after you die, of course. If you have eternal life, that's forever.

And that means that when your body dies, you still live on. But he doesn't talk about how we will have eternal life. He says we do have eternal life.

Salvation is something we have now. Knowing God is something that is our privilege now. In John's epistle, and for that matter in the New Testament in general, salvation is almost always spoken of in terms of what it means to us now.

Of course, the implication is, since we have eternal life, when we die, we continue to have these things. We continue to be saved. But we need to know not that we will be saved now.

Now, we might say saved from what? Well, obviously, from death to life. But spiritual death is simply the condition of not being available to God. He has to bring us to life so that we can live as he intended for us to live.

We have to understand that being saved isn't just about having a ticket to go to heaven when we die. Being saved means that we are rescued from a life that is spiritually dead, and given a spiritual dynamic of life, so that we can now, with the life that we are given, live up to the things that God has called us to do. That we need not fall short of the glory of God on a continuous basis, but we can actually live for the glory of God.

That's what we are made for. It says in 1 Corinthians 10, I think it's verse 30 or 31, Paul said, Whatever you do, whether you eat or drink, do all to the glory of God. That's what our life is supposed to be.

But you can't do anything for the glory of God if you are spiritually dead. You have to pass from death into life. You have to become converted, born again.

You have to know God. That's what salvation is, and its ramifications right now mean that since we have had this transition from death to life, now we can live in this life the

way that God deserves to have us live. Remember, salvation is not really about us.

It's about God. It's not about our needs or our rights as much as it's about God's privileges. God made us.

He owns us. It says in Revelation chapter 4, in verse 10 or 11, it says that the inhabitants of heaven sing, You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power, for all things were made by you and for your pleasure. Everything was made by God and made for his pleasure, and therefore he is worthy.

He deserves honor from our lives. And until we are saved, we are depriving him of his due. Yeah, we're being deprived also.

If we're not saved, we're missing out on something very significant that we cannot really afford to miss out on. But the focus of the Bible is not on me and what I'm missing out on if I'm not saved, but rather what God's missing out on. God's missing out on what he deserves from me.

He made me to live for his glory, and if I'm not doing that, God is being ripped off by me. And being saved means that God gets me back. He rescues me from my life of fruitlessness and death and gives me the life that will make it possible for me to live as I'm supposed to live, for him.

That's what salvation entails. And we can know if that has happened to us or not, if that is happening today to us or not, if we are saved at this moment. Now, these are the four tests that John's epistle provides.

First John, we're talking about here. Throughout his epistle, he repeatedly identifies some of these things again and again and says these are the ways that we know that we've passed from death and life or that we're born of God or that he abides in us or any of these other synonyms for being saved. We know because of these things.

Now, we're going to, in the course of these lectures, cover all of them. Tonight, we're going to talk about the first two. And then the third one we'll talk about next week and the fourth one the last week.

And the four tests, I pointed them out last time, but we did not go into any detail into any of them. The first is what we believe and confess about Christ and about ourselves. If we say we have no sin, for example, we're not there.

If we confess our sinfulness, then that's necessary in order for us to be saved. Also things that we confess and believe about Christ. There's quite a few things, at least quite a few verses in 1 John that mention that if we believe certain things, if we confess certain things about Christ, then we are born of God, then we have eternal life or whatever.

The second thing is that we possess the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit. Now, this might seem to be a somewhat more subjective issue. You know, I can know if I believe certain things, but how do I know if I have the Spirit of God or not? Well, that does need to be inquired into.

That is something we need to investigate, and we shall tonight. A third test is if we love one another. The Bible says whoever is born of God loves his brother.

We know we've passed from death and life because we love the brethren. It's a test of really being saved, is love. Jesus said, by this shall all men know you're my disciples, if you have love one for another.

And then the fourth test is if we obey his commandments. And that's probably the scariest one for most people, because we think about some of his commandments. Let's say the Sermon on the Mount, and we think, well, you know, how many of those do I have to obey? Or how frequently? How many misses do I get before I disqualify? How many disobediences will salvation endure? Well, we'll talk about that in our fourth week.

And the Bible, I think, will give you occasion to be, well, if you really are saved, it will give you occasion to be encouraged. Even if you're not perfect, because none of us are. But, of course, it's possible that in the course of these lectures you will have occasion to think less assuredly about your salvation.

If so, I hope that it is only because you really need to not be so sure. You know, it seems to many people that one of the best things you can do for people is assure them of their salvation. But that's not really the best thing you can do for someone if they're not saved.

And the fact that someone goes to church, or has always gone to church from their childhood till their old age, doesn't prove that they're saved. The fact that someone actually can confess certain things about Jesus and about themselves in itself does not prove that they are saved. And this is something I need to point out before we go into our next point.

We have four tests here. When you read 1 John, you'll find him talking about these as individual tests. We know we've passed from death to life because we love one another.

Whosoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. Okay, now here we have two statements. Whoever believes certain things is born of God.

But what if you believe that and you don't love someone? Because it says, he that does not love does not know God. 1 John 4, 8, right? So, this says if we believe something, we do know God. But what if I believe but I don't love? Or what if I love and I don't believe? Or what if I believe and love but I don't obey? I mean, in other words, the way that they are presented one by one in the book of 1 John, you'd get the impression, taking them in

isolation, that any one of these by itself guarantees that you're saved.

But then the way that some of the other ones are addressed, it makes it very clear that no, you've got to have that one too. Actually, the truth is you have to have all four. This is a four-fold test.

And you might say, well, that makes salvation seem rather hard to have to do all that. No, this is not what you have to do to get saved. This is how you know if you are.

These things are not the conditions for salvation. These are the evidences of salvation. And if the evidence of salvation is not present, then there's a good reason to suspect that maybe salvation itself is not present, since if it was, there'd be evidences of it.

In Hebrews chapter 6, the writer says, But we are persuaded of better things of you, brethren, and things which accompany salvation. Some things accompany salvation. If you have it, you have them too, because they accompany it.

When you get salvation, you get these things with it. There are things that accompany salvation, or these four things are them. And so, while some of them, like the belief part, might indeed be a condition for salvation as well, basically, these are tests or evidences that salvation is present.

So, we're going to look at the first two of these tonight. The first is what we believe and confess about Christ and ourselves. And John has more than one thing to say about this.

The first thing that we must confess and believe is that we have sinned, which is one way of saying that we really don't deserve to be saved at all. If a person thinks they deserve to be saved, they probably aren't, because you don't really get saved until you cry out desperately. You know, Jesus told a story about two men praying in the temple.

One was a publican, that was a tax collector, basically a person who'd sold out on his country and was working for the enemy, very much despised among the Jews, the tax collector. But the other was a Pharisee, and he was like one of the more religiously respectable people in the society. And they both prayed, and the Pharisee said, Oh God, I thank you that I'm not like other men.

I pay my tithes of all that I have. I fast twice a week. I don't do all these sinful things.

I'm not like this other guy here, this tax collector who's praying over down a few feet away from me. And the tax collector said, God be merciful to me, a sinner. And Jesus said, the tax collector went home justified.

The other guy didn't. That's what Jesus said. The tax collector actually went home justified.

That means forgiven. Because he never claimed to be worthy of salvation. In fact, the

only thing he claimed was that he wasn't.

He claimed that he needed mercy. And mercy is by definition something that is undeserved. He said, God be merciful to me, a sinner.

The only thing he confessed about himself was that he was a sinner. The Pharisee confessed that he was actually better than this other guy. In fact, better than most people.

And that he'd done quite a few good things. It's not professing your good works that is evidence that you're saved. It is professing that you're unworthy.

So John says, if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves. And the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

He says, if we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar and his word is not in us. So if we say that we have no sin, or if we say that we have not sinned. Well, that's not going to cut it.

We're liars. His word isn't in us. So we're clearly not saved.

But if we confess our sins, well that's actually an evidence that we agree with God. And he agrees with us. We have sinned.

But he's faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Now, this confession of sin is not just something you do when you get saved one time. This is something that is a continual attitude.

A continual confession. That is, you're aware even after you're saved that you're not really very good. And therefore, you don't pretend that you're not a sinner.

You don't hide your sin. There's two statements here. One in verse 7 and one in verse 9. We're looking at 1 John 1. And in verse 7, it ends with the blood of Jesus Christ, his son, cleanses us from all sin.

And verse 9 ends with that he's faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Both verses talk about being cleansed from sin. And both state how that is done.

But in different words. One of them says, if we walk in the light. The other says, if we confess our sins.

Confessing our sins and walking in the light are essentially two ways of talking about the same thing. If I walk in the light, as he's in the light, I have fellowship with him. And the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses me from all sin.

If I confess my sins, he's faithful just to forgive our sins and cleanse from all unrighteousness. So this cleansing is a result of walking in the light. What is walking in the light? Well, walking in the light is confessing that I'm a sinner.

Because in John chapter 3, Jesus said, this is the condemnation that light has come into the world. But men love darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. So for he that does evil hates the light.

And he will not come to the light lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that is of God, he says, comes to the light. He that does the truth comes to the light that it might be seen that his works are done in God, he says.

Now, coming to the light, therefore, is being transparent. Bringing the truth of the matter, of your own sinfulness into the light. Whereas, hiding in the dark and pretending that you don't have sin and hoping that no one finds out.

That's being in the dark. And John says, if we walk in darkness, we don't have fellowship with him. Only if we walk in the light.

So walking in the light is being forthright, being honest, being truthful about our own imperfection and sinfulness. It says in the book of Proverbs 28, 13, it says, he who covers his sins will not prosper. But whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy.

Mercy is what we need. Forgiveness of sins is a function of God's mercy. You'll have that if you confess and forsake your sins.

But if you cover your sins, that's not walking in the light. And you'll not succeed. James chapter 5 verse 16, he says, confess your trespasses to one another.

And pray for one another that you may be healed. Now here he's talking about being healed rather than necessarily being saved. But interestingly enough, he's writing to Christians about their need to confess.

So it's not just a matter of confessing the first time when you come to Christ. And you've confessed once, that's all there is to it. It's a life of being in the light.

It's a life of being honest. You know, the only thing that Jesus seemed to be really intolerant of was the Pharisees. I mean, certainly Jesus didn't approve of the lifestyle of the prostitutes and the tax collectors and the sinners.

But they seemed to be winnable. They seemed to be open to him. The Pharisees were the ones he seemed to really rail on a lot.

And what was it with them? They wanted everyone to believe they were righteous. They wanted to appear righteous to people. And Jesus had no tolerance for them.

And, you know, after you become a Christian, sure you confess your sins and say a prayer or whatever you do when you repent. But sometimes then, now that you're in a religious environment, and you realize that sins are not approved of in a religious environment, you try to conceal the fact as much as possible that you still have errors and sins and weaknesses in your life. Which, I mean, let's face it, just out of good taste, there are some sins you don't broadcast.

There are some sins you don't confess in public because it would be the wrong forum for certain kinds of things to be confessed. I guess we could ask, well, what is the right forum for confessing? I remember I was teaching in a YWAM school in Honolulu many years ago. And one of the students came to me privately, and he was having trouble with one of the leaders because it was a young and immature leader.

He said he had confessed privately to his leader that he was having an issue with, well, with masturbation. And the leader said, well, next time we have our public meeting, you need to get up and confess that before everyone. And he said, well, I don't think I should do that.

And the leader said, oh, no, you have to, and so forth. And that was causing, obviously, a rift between them. Well, my friend was right.

His leader was wrong. There is a general rule about confession that works and is biblical, and that is you confess to the offended party. Now, in every sin, God is offended.

So whether your sin is public or private, confession should be made to God. But beyond that, not all sins offend anyone beyond that. I mean, there are sins that are public, and the whole church, the whole community, or everyone you know could be offended.

Well, then you should make, when you repent, you should make a public confession. Your confession, your repentance should be as scandalous, or I shouldn't say scandalous. It should be as, what should we say, visible as your sin is.

As many as have known of your sin, and who have been offended by your sin, that's how many need to hear that you've changed your mind about it and confess it, and you believe it's wrong. If you've sinned against one party, and they know it, and they're offended, then a private confession between you and them is called for. And if it's just between you and God, and no one else knows about it, well, then confessing to God may be enough.

Now, you may wish, for practical purposes, to find a confidant that you can confess your private sins to just for accountability. And many people recommend that, and that can be a very advisable thing to do, but the Bible never talks about doing that. The Bible doesn't actually say anything about that.

It's just practical. It's a great idea. If you're having a struggle with a private sin, and you



don't know how to get over it, well, you might want to bring a trusted friend into your confidence about it, so that they can keep you accountable.

But, as far as God is concerned, your confession should be to those who are offended. How do I know that? Well, Jesus said in Matthew chapter 5, if you come with your gift to the altar, and you're ready to offer that to God, your gift, He says, if you there remember that your brother has something against you, well, then you make it your priority to go and make right with him. Leave the gift there, don't offer it to God yet, you go fix that deal with your brother, then come back and offer the gift.

The idea is, the person has something against you, it means they know what you did, and they're offended, and you need to go and apologize, or repent, or whatever has to be done. There's no place in the Bible that says you need to make a public confession to people who don't even know, and are not offended by what you did. Some people like to make a clean breast of it, and make a public confession, just because it makes them feel good about it, but sometimes that's not really the most loving thing to do.

It might put ideas in people's heads, unedifying pictures, and things like that, they don't need to know about at all. And also, by the way, even a private confession to an individual, if they don't know that you've injured them, you have to use your discretion as to whether to confess them or not, because you might cause problems in a relationship that weren't there already. If it's a private sin, I mean, there was a victim, let us say, but the victim doesn't know they were a victim, they don't know it.

They don't know that you had these evil thoughts about them. They don't know that you, you know, spoke gossip about them, or something like that. Well, repent of that, and go repent to the person you spoke the gossip to, you know, but I don't know that it always makes a lot of sense, and it certainly isn't always biblical, that you must go and tell someone you know, who you're in a perfectly good relationship with, you know, I've been telling people that you're, you know, a hypocrite, you know.

Well, suddenly, you know, I'm saying that because I repent of saying it, but now I'm causing a problem between me and you that wasn't there before. The idea, of course, of whenever you confess to people is to resolve a rift that's in the relationship. Confessing to God is always appropriate because God knows and is offended by all sin, though He's gracious and He's more than willing to forgive, but we are told to repent.

Now, here's another question about forgiveness of sin. How do we get forgiven? It's because of what Jesus did, right? Jesus' death on the cross. That's what we call the atonement.

Does a person have to understand how the atonement works in order to be forgiven of their sins? Now, you may not be aware, but there's a lot of different views that the church has held over the years about how the atonement works. How did Jesus dying

have any impact on my sinning or on my guilt? Of course, illustrations are very commonly given in sermons about, you know, I had a debt I couldn't pay. He paid my debt because I couldn't pay it.

Or, you know, He went in my place and paid my penalty before the judge or whatever. And these may be good illustrations in so far as they go, but the Bible actually says a lot of different things about how the death of Jesus impacted us, and it's not all simple. And there are some problems with some of the theories of the atonement, and some people feel like if you don't have the right theory of the atonement, you're not really going to get any benefit from it.

If you don't understand why Jesus' death covered your sin and took care of that problem for you, well, then it won't. So say some. Now, the reason I bring that up here is because in 1 John, the atonement is referred to immediately after this talk about confessing our sins.

Those verses we read about if we confess our sins and so forth are at the end of chapter 1. The beginning of chapter 2 says, If anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the whole world. Now, the propitiation for our sins is referring to Jesus' death impacting our relationship with God and dealing with the sin problem. But it's not a word most people understand very well.

So the question is, do I have to understand what this means? Jesus' death is a propitiation for my sins. What if I don't understand that? Will I not be saved until I understand that? In 1 John 4.10, he says, And this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. So twice John says that Jesus is the propitiation for our sins, which is a reference to the atoning work of Christ.

Paul uses that term also, at least in the English translation he does. In Romans 3.25, Paul says that Jesus, speaking of Jesus, he says, Now, these are statements from John and from Paul about how Christ's death acquired my forgiveness of sins. But what if that's a concept I can't really understand? A lot of people have thought, well, how can an innocent man be punished in the place of a guilty person? It sounds like a legal fiction to pretend like the innocent man is guilty and then treat him like a guilty person, and then pretend like the guilty person is innocent.

Some people have trouble with that. And some people actually say that sounds like an immoral way to resolve a conflict. The guy who's guilty, you don't want to let him off the hook so you kill an innocent party.

That doesn't sound very good. But that's essentially what Christians teach about the atonement. But there are other aspects of the atonement that are, you know, they're philosophically difficult sometimes.

The word propitiation in Paul is different than the word propitiation in 1 John, but they're related terms. In Romans 3.25, the Greek word is hilasterion, which is used in the Old Testament and in Hebrews 9.5 as a term for the mercy seat when describing the furniture of the tabernacle, the mercy seat. In the Greek Old Testament, the Septuagint, and also in the book of Hebrews in the New Testament, this Greek word hilasterion is used for the mercy seat itself, the place where the priest sprinkled the blood of certain sacrifices to atone for the sins of Israel once a year during the day of atonement.

In the secular Greek language, the word propitiation or hilasterion actually meant an offering that appeases an angry God. Now, the gods of the heathen were angry gods, and out of fear for their wrath, they tried to appease them with sacrifices. Now, some people actually picture God, our God, that way too, that God's angry at us.

So Jesus had to jump in there and say, No, don't hurt him. I'll die for him. Instead, take out all your anger on me, not on them.

And there is perhaps some language of scripture that justifies that, but the concept of God being angry, needed to be propitiated by Jesus, suggests to our minds that God was somewhat reluctant to forgive us, but now he's got to do it because of what Jesus did. But the Bible says it was God who so loved the world that he gave his only son. It was not Jesus' idea at all.

It was the Father's idea, and he did it because he loved us. God was not angry and wanting to destroy us, and therefore Jesus, who loved us, came to our rescue. God loved us, and because there was something he had to do about it, Jesus submitted to his Father and went to the cross to accomplish that, whatever exactly that was.

The word propitiation, at first, John, is a different word. It's hilasmus, and it's obviously a related word to hilastarian, but it's a word that refers to a means by which sin is covered, or remitted. So it's not this... The first one, hilastarian, in secular Greek meant something that removes wrath, or something that appeases an angry God, but the word hilasmus, which John uses, doesn't really have those connotations.

It's more just something that covers sin. Now, I'm thinking that even looking at these verses, and even knowing these definitions, it still doesn't clear up exactly how the atonement works, how it is that Jesus dying fixed my sin problem. C.S. Lewis, in his book, Mere Christianity, wrestled with this, and in the chapter called The Perfect Penitent, in his book, Mere Christianity, C.S. Lewis said, now, before I became a Christian, I was under the impression that the first thing Christians had to believe was one particular theory as to what the point was of dying, what Jesus' death was about.

According to that theory, God wanted to punish men for having deserted and joined the great rebel, but Christ volunteered to be punished instead, and so God let us off. He continues, now, I admit that even this theory does not seem to me quite so immoral and

so silly as it used to, but that is not the point I want to make. What I came to see later on was that neither this theory nor any other is Christianity.

The central Christian belief is that Christ's death has somehow put us right with God and given us a fresh start. Theories as to how it did this are another matter. A good many different theories have been held as to how it works.

What all Christians are agreed on is that it does work. He says, I'll tell you what I think it's like. All sensible people know that if you are tired and hungry, a meal will do you good, but the modern theory of nourishment, all about the vitamins and proteins, is a different thing.

People ate their dinners and felt better long before the theory of vitamins was ever heard of, and if the theory of vitamins is someday abandoned, they will go on eating their dinners just the same. Theories about what Christ's death are, excuse me, theories about Christ's death are not Christianity. They are explanations about how it works.

Christians would not all agree as to how important those theories are. Now what I wanted to say is that although 1 John does mention Jesus being the propitiation for our sins, understanding that is not one of the things that he mentions as necessary for us to understand or believe. He never says if we understand or if we believe that Jesus' death cured our sin problem in just such a way, then we will be saved.

What he does say is if we believe we're sinners and we confess it to God, we'll be forgiven, and we are forgiven, and that is because God has done something through Christ. He is the propitiation for our sins. It's not so important that we understand how that works as long as God does, and we can be quite sure that God does.

If God knows how that works, then it's enough that we confess our sins and trust that what he has said is true. He forgives us our sins. Now what else do we have to confess? We have to confess and believe that Jesus is the Christ or the Messiah.

Now this is important because we have come to use the word Christ as one of the names of Jesus. You know, Jesus Christ, it's like Jesus is his first name and Christ is his last name, and it's really not so at all. The word Christ, the Greek word Christos, is the Greek word for anointed one.

In the Old Testament, the Hebrew word for that is Hamashiach, which we anglicize as the word Messiah. So Messiah is the Hebrew word and Christ is the Greek word. They're the same concept, the anointed one.

Now an anointed one to the Israelites is a king. Yes, it's true that the priests were also anointed with oil when they were installed in office, but the anointing was primarily for a king. David was anointed by Samuel, and that made him the new king, even though Saul was still on the throne.

It was the anointing by the prophet of God, the pouring of oil over his head, that's what anointing means. That made him king. Now the Jews anticipated the coming of a great king who would deliver them and would be the ultimate and permanent ruler of Israel, a new king.

And they came to call him the anointed one, the Messiah. The word Messiah is used of Christ very seldom in the Old Testament, but it was used very frequently in common Jewish language. And in the New Testament, it was proclaimed that Jesus is the Messiah.

That's what the word Christ means. It's just the New Testament was written in Greek instead of in Hebrew. So instead of the word Messiah, we find the word Christ.

It's the same thing. So to believe that Jesus is the Messiah or the Christ is to believe that Jesus is the promised one, that he is the king that God sent to rule his people. And as such, he is therefore the Lord.

The word Lord means a ruler, an owner who has full authority over those who are under his lordship. Now in 1 John 2, 22, John says, who is a liar, but he who denies that Jesus is the Messiah, the Christ, that person is antichrist, who denies the father and the son. So a person who denies that Jesus is the Messiah is antichrist.

Now we've heard the word antichrist a lot in popular prophecy teaching. I don't want to go off on this because it would take us too long, but the point I want to make is this, that we popularly hear the term antichrist used of a hypothetical individual who has not yet appeared, but who is expected to become a world ruler, a tyrant, world dictator, and to oppose all godliness. Now most of the popular pictures of this antichrist make him not so much antichrist as anti-Jewish.

Most popular Bible prophecy teachers say the antichrist will be the ultimate anti-Semite. Well, I'm not sure where they're getting any of that because none of it's in the Bible. Actually, the term antichrist is found only in the book of 1 John, and it's repeated in the book of 2 John, as we'll see in a moment.

But 1 and 2 John are the only books of the Bible that have the word antichrist in them. Revelation doesn't have the word antichrist in it. None of Jesus' teachings have the word antichrist in it.

None of the Old Testament books have the word antichrist in it. Even 2 Thessalonians doesn't have the word antichrist. Only 1 and 2 John do.

And John defines what he means by antichrist. Whoever denies that Jesus is the Christ, that person is antichrist. Well, most Jews would fit that description.

That's why they crucified Christ, many of them. That's why they persecuted the apostles, because they denied that Jesus is the Messiah. I'm not saying this is a statement against

Jews, but I'm saying that it's a statement against anyone who denies that Jesus is the Messiah.

It's not saying that antichrist is someone who's against Jews. It's antichrist is someone who's against the proposition that Jesus is the Messiah. In 1 John 2.22, which we just saw, it says that the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ is a liar and is antichrist, and is clearly not a Christian then.

On the other hand, 1 John 5.1, says whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. So, what must we believe and confess? We must believe that Jesus is the Messiah. And if we do, then we're born of God.

If we don't, we're antichrist and liars. In Luke 2.10 and 11, the angel said to the shepherds the night Jesus was born, do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which will be to all people. I bring you this day in the city of David a Savior who is Christ the Lord.

Now, the reason I've highlighted Christ and Lord here is because Christ and Lord are simply two ways of talking about the same thing. A Lord is a ruler. The anointed one is a king.

Christ and Lord are the same thing. To say that Jesus is the Christ is the same as saying Jesus is the Lord. By the way, we may have heard or may run into New Age kind of teaching about Jesus being the Christ, who would say, well, in a sense, all people are the Christ.

Jesus just understood it first. And that he wasn't really the Christ until his baptism. New Age people say that Jesus became the Christ at his baptism.

He was an ordinary man before that. And at his baptism, he became the Christ. And so forth.

Now, that's what Gnosticism taught. And the New Age movement is basically modern Gnosticism. Gnosticism taught it in the second and third centuries A.D. But the point here is, if you think, well, Jesus was a man, but he became the Christ at his baptism, the angels disagree.

This is when he was born. The angels said, unto you is born this day in the city of David a savior who is Christ, who is the Lord. It simply means that he is the one, the Lord, the Messiah, the anointed one that God promised.

And he was that from the moment of his birth. There we have Lord and Christ together again in Acts chapter two. When Peter preached his first sermon, the people said, what must we do? And his answer was, well, this is just before they asked that.

This is what got them to ask that question. He says, therefore, let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ. Acts 2.36. And he says, so Jesus is Lord and Christ.

This is actually the only thing that Peter ever presented to the Jews on the day of Pentecost as anything like a challenge to them to be saved. He doesn't give an altar call. He doesn't talk about, you know, if you don't repent, you're going to go to hell.

He just says, listen, what I'm here to proclaim to you is that Jesus, the one you crucified, God has made him Lord and Christ. And it was that proclamation because they understood if he's the Lord and if he's the Messiah, then we are on the wrong side of God if we are not following this Messiah, this Lord. Remember, Jesus said, why do you call me Lord, Lord, and you don't do the things I say? Well, if he's the Lord, then doing what he said is pretty much mandatory.

And proclaiming him as Lord and Christ was all it took to, the Bible says they were cut to their hearts because they now knew who Jesus was. He's Lord and Christ. And that's what Christians believe.

That's what Christians acknowledge. Paul said in Romans 10, 9, if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, that means that Jesus is Lord. In fact, some translations actually put it that way.

If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you'll be saved. That's one of the indicators that you are saved if you really believe those things. Now, you also have to confess that Jesus is the Son of God.

Now, what's the difference between Messiah and Son of God? Well, in our minds, not at all because they are both true of Jesus and so the Messiah, Jesus, is the Son of God and we might just think of those as synonyms. However, the Jews had lots of ideas about the Messiah. They didn't necessarily have the view that he would be deity.

When Jesus came, he revealed that he was not only the Messiah, but he was deity, he was God. He was in the Father and the Father was in him. Or, to put it another way, he was the Son of God.

And therefore, to say he's the Son of God speaks of his divine origin, that he is the one that bears the nature of God in himself that he's not just a man like David who was anointed and a great king that God sent to be the Lord of Israel, but rather, God sent him, in a sense, himself in human form to be in that role. So, it's believing more about Jesus than just that he holds the status of king. He's also the divine king, not because he was sent by the divine God, but because he is the divine God.

Now, the full understanding that Jesus was God in the flesh was a long time in being

developed or understood in the church. It wasn't really until the Council of Nicaea that the whole idea was formulated in the way that we now understand it of the Trinity. I believe the Trinity is true, but it took the church a long time to put it into words quite right.

I think you can establish the Trinity is true from Scripture, but for a long time, not all Christians had exactly the same ideas of what it meant to say Jesus is the son of God. And some felt like he was a created being, but God's son, or one who was born of God, but secondary to God, not eternal like his father, and so forth. There were a lot of different views.

And even the disciples themselves, when they first began to follow Jesus, may not have fully understood this. John says in 1 John 4, 15, whoever confesses that Jesus is the son of God, God abides in him, and he is in God. So that's one of the ways you know because you confess that.

Now Peter at Caesarea Philippi, when Jesus said, who do men say I am? Well, certain answers were given, and then Jesus said, who do you say I am? And Peter said, you are the Christ, the son of the living God, the son of God. I have not revealed this unto you, but my father. Now, this confession that Jesus is the Messiah, and he's the son of God, are twin aspects of what Christians must believe and confess about Christ.

Now, did Peter know that Jesus was God in the flesh? Is that what Peter meant when he said you're the son of the living God? Did he understand it in the way that we modern Trinitarians understand it? Maybe not, maybe not yet. We don't know how much, we don't know the exact content or understanding of this mysterious concept, but he knew that Jesus was, was, you know, come from God. He wasn't just an ordinary man.

He was the son of God in some sense. Now, the reason I wonder why I'm not so sure that he understood the incarnation like we do, is that it was after this point that the disciples were with Jesus in the upper room in John 14, and Philip, one of the apostles who was here on this occasion when Peter said this, Philip said, Lord, show us the Father, and that will suffice us. And Jesus said, have I been so long time with you, Philip, and you don't know me? Do you not know that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me, and if you've seen me, you've seen the Father? Well, apparently he didn't know that.

Maybe Peter didn't know that either. They knew he was the son of God, whatever that means, but they may not have understood, but the confession that Jesus is the son of God is certainly a confession that Jesus has come down from God as, in one sense, an extension of God's own self. God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, and he sent his son, not just an angel, not just an emissary of sort.

He sent his only son. Remember the story of the vineyard where the master of the vineyard wanted the tenants to give the fruit up, and they killed the prophets, and they



beat up the servants, and they killed the servants, threw them out of the vineyard, and he finally said, I'll send my son this time. That'll change.

That'll get their respect, and they killed the son too, but notice the son was a different category than the servants. The servants were prophets. The son was someone else, someone dear to the Father's heart, someone bearing the Father's own nature, and so to associate Jesus closely with the Father as divine is certainly one of the things that John indicates we must do.

Now, John also gives this one, and I'm not going to spend as much time with this, I hope. He makes it very clear, we must confess that Jesus came in the flesh. Here's where he says it.

In 1 John 4, verses 3 and 4, he says, By this you know the Spirit of God. Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God, and this is the spirit of antichrist. He says the same thing in 2 John.

Oops, give me there. Right there. No, where is it? Well, where are we here? There it is.

2 John, verse 7, Jesus Christ is coming in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. Now, what does it mean to confess that Jesus has come in the flesh? Doesn't essentially everyone believe that Jesus came in the flesh? I mean, it seems like you'd find more people confessing that Jesus came in the flesh than you'd find confessing that he's God.

Everyone believes he was a historical character. What was he made of, if not flesh? Of course, there's very little doubt on the part of any informed person that he was made in a human body, in the flesh, which is what this means. But we need to understand that this one, more than these others, is very specific to John's audience because when John wrote this, there was the beginnings of a heresy that became full-blown in the 2nd and 3rd century called Gnosticism, and the Gnostics were saying that Jesus was not really physical at all, that he was just a phantom.

The Gnostics, they believed that Jesus was so non-physical that when he walked, he didn't leave footprints. That's what they actually said. And this was a heresy that denied that Jesus really had a human nature.

They did not deny that he was God, but they denied that he was really a human being. Now, you don't run into this very often anymore. You're not going to find too many people who are saying that Jesus was God and you don't run into this too much.

Not right away, anyway. But that's what John's referring to. So, he's basically, this one thing he brings up is directed toward the Gnostic idea that Jesus was not a real physical being, and that's a special, time-sensitive issue that was a big thing, a major heresy in the early days, which John was going for.

So, these are the things we must believe and confess. We have to believe that we've sinned and we have to believe and confess that Jesus is the Christ or the Messiah. And I should have put another quotation mark there, I see.

And we have to believe and confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and if the issue ever comes up, that he's come in the flesh. Not likely to come up in our conversations with people. I've heard people take that business, every spirit that confesses that Jesus has come in the flesh is of God, and try to use that to try to discern if someone's coming in the flesh.

Well, a demon often will say, sure, you know, why not? Okay, well, you must be of God. Well, no, they're missing the whole point. When John says every spirit that confesses, the word spirit there is being used of a prophetic utterance in the church.

If a prophetic utterance proclaims that Jesus has not come in the flesh, you've got a Gnostic in the church. You've got a false prophet in the church, an Antichrist. And so that's what John's saying is there is the question of whether we possess the Holy Spirit.

Now, I will say that all my life growing up, I grew up in a Baptist church as I mentioned last time, and I was a believer. I went forward at an altar call when I was four, did it again when I was ten, did it some more times later on. And, you know, somewhere along the line I became a true believer.

And if you'd say, I would have said, well, of course I believe I'm a Christian. Christians all possess the Holy Spirit. The Bible says that.

But if they'd say, well, how do you know you possess the Holy Spirit? I would have had to say, well, because the Bible tells me so. I mean, that's, I guess, the only way I know. And yet John talks about it as if the possession of the Holy Spirit is something we would know as a separate issue of being told in the Bible that we possess the Spirit because we know we're Christians.

See, that's what I would have said. How do you know you have the Holy Spirit? Well, because I'm a Christian. Christians all have the Holy Spirit, and I'm a Christian, so that's how I know I have the Holy Spirit.

John puts it the other way, no, you know you're a Christian if you have the Holy Spirit. That is, having the Holy Spirit is something that is an independent witness, an independent evidence that you're a Christian. I remember when I was in my teens, I had really no idea what that meant to have the Holy Spirit except that it was a matter of Christian doctrine that that's true.

I do have the Holy Spirit. But John clearly expected that his readers would have some independent verification of their salvation from the fact that they had the Holy Spirit, and that fact must be something that you have the Holy Spirit. John says in 1 John 3, 24, and

by this we know that He abides in us by the Spirit that He has given us.

We know that He's in us. We know that He abides in us. How do we know? Because He's given us His Spirit.

It's like, duh, I mean, I obviously have the Holy Spirit in me, therefore I can conclude that He abides in me. But how do I know? In 1 John 4, 13, He makes a similar statement. 1 John 4, 13, by this we know that we abide in Him and He in us because He has given us of His Spirit.

Now, that's making the same kind of statement but not telling me how I know if He's given me of His Spirit or not. Now some people say, well, that's easy, if you have the Holy Spirit you speak in tongues. Well, that's not anywhere near speaking in tongues as the evidence of the presence of the Holy Spirit.

The Bible does record that some people when they're filled with the Spirit did speak with tongues but that's not the same thing as making tongues the evidence. So what is the evidence? In Romans 8, 15 and 16, Paul said, for you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear but you received the spirit, and he means by this the Holy Spirit, when we cry out, Abba, Father, the Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God. Now that sounds like there's something like subjectively registers with us.

The Spirit bears witness with our spirits that we're the children of God. There's a witness going on from God to me. I'm being told something.

My spirit is being informed by the Holy Spirit. That means, of course, at the very least, whatever else it may mean, it means that I do not have to depend on external witnesses alone to know I'm a Christian. You don't have to tell me, okay, Steve, you're having trouble believing you're a son of God, well, here's all these Bible verses that'll prove it to you.

Well, but what if the Holy Spirit is not bearing witness with my spirit that I'm a child of God? Then I don't care how many external witnesses you get because, you know, Christianity, being a Christian is a supernatural thing. Sometimes we treat it too much like joining a club. You sign on the dotted line, I believe this, I believe this, I go through the baptism ritual, do that, now I'm in.

And lots of people jump through all of those hoops and never have a direct encounter with God where the Spirit of God can be seen, that they are born of God, that they're children of God. And yet Paul says that is the case. He said the spirit we've received is not the spirit of bondage to fear.

Now that bondage he's talking about is really in the context of legalism, bondage to the law which causes us to fear. We're afraid for our souls because we're afraid, we're not

saved because we're under this legalistic bondage, we never measure up to the law and therefore we're terrified. He says no, that's not the spirit.

God's given us a different spirit than that, it's the spirit of adoption or in Galatians he uses a similar phrase, the spirit of sonship by which we cry out Abba, Father. Now Abba, I'm sure you've heard before is an Aramaic word. It's a word for father.

But it's also a form of the word father such as a child might use in speaking to his father. It's an intimate word for father. It's not just like I say, well my dad is this man over here and I have no relationship with him.

But it's like a child calling his father daddy or papa. Abba is that kind of a word. And he's saying that because we have received the spirit of sonship or adoption our spirits quite as a response to that cry out papa.

When we talk to God it's like we're talking to our dad rather than just talking to the great mysterious God that is on the other side of the veil somewhere. The man behind the curtain who is turning the cranks and making the scary face on the screen. We're talking about somebody that's really our dad.

He's talking about how when we receive that spirit it causes us as it were spontaneously or naturally from within to sense and to recognize and to take for granted the fact that God is our daddy. And we know by this spirit bearing witness with our spirits that we have this realization that we are the children of God. So the spirit bearing witness with our spirit is something that obviously has to be subjectively discerned.

I can't tell you well the spirit bearing witness to your spirit that you're a child of God because you would know that I wouldn't. I don't know what's going on inside of your spirit. You know what's going on inside your spirit.

And so does God. Can you imagine the God who created the whole universe. He invades this little body here and it's not noticeable in any way.

You know what what is being said here is that when the when God comes in when the Holy Spirit comes into your life he is self-announcing he says I'm here and you belong to me now. You belong to God now. You're a child of God now.

And if a person has jumped through hoops even said a sinner's prayer by the way the Bible nowhere says if you say the sinner's prayer you'll be saved. It does say if you repent you know if you remember what Peter said on the day of Pentecost when they said what must we do. He said repent and be baptized.

He means in water in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Well some people maybe repent and believe and get baptized or think they have repented and believe. But they maybe have done something

less than that.

And they never received the Holy Spirit but they they're willing to get by without that and their church is willing to let them get by without that. I mean after all two out of three ain't bad. You know you've repented you you know you got baptized and you in place of the spirit we can just say and you tithe you know you repent and that doesn't tithe.

That's good enough for our church. I'm not talking about this church particularly. That's that is an attitude of many churches.

You know you repent you get baptized and pay your tithes you're in like a club. You go through the ritual you pay the membership dues and you're one of us. But the Bible says that it's receiving the spirit of God that really proves that our faith has connected with the truth of God and drawn God into our experience our convictions that is our beliefs and our confession.

The first thing we're talking about those convictions about Christ and about ourselves arise from the witness of the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. We believe and confess these things not because someone told us and bullied us into believing and gave us an apologetics lecture that said so that I couldn't reason my way out of that corner and say OK whatever you say Jesus is Christ Jesus son of God I can't I can't refute you. That's not how I know.

That's not why I confess it. I confess it because I know it inside the Holy Spirit bears witness to it. It says in 1st John 5 6. It is the spirit who bears witness because the spirit is truth.

Now here he's not talking about bearing witness that we're the sons of God in the context he's about he's bearing witness to Christ bearing witness to the truth about Christ and the spirit is truth. So we the spirit bears witness to us about this. And by the way Jesus told his disciples the spirit would do that in John 15 26.

Jesus said but when the helper comes which is the Holy Spirit whom I shall send you from the father the spirit of truth who proceeds from the father he will testify of me. So first John tells us the spirit bears witness of Christ. Jesus said that would happen.

He will testify bear witness testify. It's the same thing. The Holy Spirit bears witness that Christ is all these things that we confess.

It's not enough that we have just read the book and agreed with the words and repeated the words like a parrot. It's that we confess that he's the Christ we confess that Jesus is Lord we confess that we're serious because the Holy Spirit has convicted us of these things that he's convinced us that this is true. Jesus said in John 16 8 and when he has come meaning the Holy Spirit he will convict the world of sin and of righteousness and

judgment.

So he the spirit testifies of Christ and convicts of sin. That's why I can say I'm a sinner and say it with conviction because the Holy Spirit is convicted to me of my sin. That's why I can say Jesus is Lord because the Holy Spirit is testified of him to me.

There's an inner witness. John says in first John 5 10 he who believes in the son has the witness in himself. So if you're a true believer it is because there is a witness inside of you telling you this is true.

It's not all up here. The Holy Spirit bears witness not with my synapses but with my spirit. And he doesn't always have to reason with me or give me a lot of proofs and things like that.

If he bears witness and my spirit hears the Holy Spirit bear witness then I then I know I know from an internal conviction not just from external persuasion. The possession of the Holy Spirit gives discernment concerning false teaching and tutors the believer into greater knowledge of the truth. Jesus said that and John said that in two different places.

John said it in first John 2 27 but the anointing he means the Holy Spirit which you have received from him abides in you and you do not need that anyone teach you but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things and is true and is not a lie. And just as it has taught you you will abide in him. You will abide in Christ so long as the anointing which he's given you teaches you and leads you into all truth.

Now how do I know that anointing is a reference to the Holy Spirit because that's what Jesus said in John 14 26. He said when the helper the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name comes he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you. The Holy Spirit communicates with you.

Now you might say does that mean I'm supposed to hear these strange kind of spooky voices and stuff like that like that lady who drowned all her kids in the bathtub because God told her to do it. No that's not necessarily the case. It's not.

It's not voices in your head. I mean God could speak to you in something that sounds almost like a voice in your head at times. I would say in my whole 50 plus years of being a Christian that I would say there's been two three times in my life that I felt like God was speaking to me in like a sentence that it could have been couldn't have been clear if it had come through my you know my auditory nerves.

It wasn't it wasn't audible but it was like God just saying something to me like that. That's not usually how it is but there's a continual witness of the spirit. There's a. And as far as leading into all truth what I what I don't have any Bible education at all.

So you can just discount everything I say because I don't have any formal education in

theology or Bible. But when I was 16 years old I definitely got filled with the spirit and I didn't even it wasn't my plan to become a teacher. People began to ask me to teach and it turned out that I could do it.

And eventually through the years as I meditate on the word of God I would say the Holy Spirit. Now some might if they don't agree with the direction I went maybe they wouldn't say it was the Holy Spirit. But my experience has been that I feel like the Holy Spirit has illuminated the scriptures over the years as I've meditated on them and studied them and so forth.

And that doesn't mean I'm right about everything for sure but it does mean any progress I've made from where I used to be to where I tend to think it's more right now has been the teaching of the Holy Spirit not something else. And that's how it's supposed to be for all of us. You see the Roman Catholic Church teaches that Protestants are at a disadvantage because we don't have an authoritative teaching magisterium like the Catholic Church does.

See the Catholic Church has the popes and the magisterium which is the leading bishops and they collectively interpret the scriptures for the whole Roman Catholic organization and they're considered to be infallible in the Christian sense. So the Roman Catholic never has to wonder what the Bible means they can just go talk to the priest and he can tell what the magisterium said and that's got to be true. And when I talk to Catholics I say well what in the world do you do when you don't know what something means? You don't have a teaching authority in the Protestant Church.

Well we actually do. His name is the Holy Spirit. He's the teaching authority.

And John said you have no need that anyone teach you but that anointing will teach you of all things. And Jesus said the same thing about the Holy Spirit. I'm not saying there's no place for human teachers.

Obviously I am a human teacher. I believe in human teachers. But I just believe this that teaching ideally should be done by those who have a spiritual gift of teaching.

You see it is one of the gifts of the Spirit the Bible mentions. If someone has a spiritual gift of teaching and it's up to anyone to decide whether I do or not I'm not trying to convince you that I do. But if I have a spiritual gift of teaching then there's the validity in my trying to pass on what I think I know because that is the Spirit teaching through the gifts of the Spirit.

But that's not the only way he teaches. You can't depend on teachers completely. In fact Paul who certainly had the gift of teaching he wasn't accepted immediately by everybody.

Even the Bereans they searched the scriptures daily to see if what Paul said was true

and then they believed him. And it says they were more noble for that reason. They didn't just accept that he was teaching what the Holy Spirit was saying.

They had to check that out with scripture as anyone should. But the point is if you possess the Holy Spirit you will be able to from scripture and even from just an inward discernment sometimes know that something is wrong. I remember there was a young girl who became a Christian here in Santa Cruz in our coffee house we had back in the 70s.

And she some Christian friends gave her a book that was promoting it was Christian it wasn't cultic but it was promoting a view of God that I thought was damaging and not correct but it was very well argued. And I had read the book and I didn't like it and someone gave it to her and she read it and I asked her I said you know how do you feel about that book. And she said well you know as I read it it made a lot of sense.

The arguments seem sound and all that. But she says that's just not the God I know. You know she says that's just I know God and that's not him.

You know I mean the arguments were good but it just wasn't God and she was a young Christian and she was right. It wasn't God but she could discern the Holy Spirit teaches Jesus said in John 16 13 when he the spirit of truth has come he will guide you into all truth for he will not speak on his own authority but whatever he hears he will speak and he will tell you things to come. So the Holy Spirit will teach you whatever of course Jesus wants you to know.

In Matthew 10 Jesus is sending out his 12 and this is in Matthew 10 18 through 20 says you will be brought before governors and kings for my sake as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up do not worry about how or what you should speak for it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak for it's not you who speak but the spirit of your father who speaks in you. Now that's that's begins to sound like there's something to be supposed to be some kind of supernatural going on in my life if I'm a Christian I've been born into a supernatural relationship with God and I have the supernatural God living inside of me and he can even when I'm on trial and I don't know what to say that's okay I don't have to worry about what I'm going to say he says the spirit of your father will give you the words to speak in that moment he'll lead you into truth he'll tell you what to say now you might say but I know a lot of Christians who seem to me like they might have the Holy Spirit but they sometimes say really wrong things true not always are we being led by the Holy Spirit it's very important that we walk in the spirit that we submit to the spirit that we trust in the spirit and not trust in our own wisdom and our and so forth remember Paul in 1st Corinthians chapter 2 told the Corinthians when I came to you I didn't come with enticing words of men's wisdom but with the demonstration of the spirit and of power he says because I didn't want your faith to rest in man's wisdom I want your faith to rest in the manifestation and the power



of God through the spirit and there are times when we are not trusting in the spirit we're trusting in our wisdom we're trusting in our strength that's why Jesus didn't just say well when they bring you before the governors and so forth the spirit will give you words he says specifically when they do that don't worry about how or what you should speak in other words don't be depending on yourself depend on on God depend on his spirit to give you the words possession of the Holy Spirit means that we have direct contact with God and Jesus and no longer must depend on external testimony or proofs though they may be abundant there are plenty of external proofs and evidences for Christianity and for Christ and for all that but when you're born again you don't depend on those proofs for your conviction there's an internal witness of the spirit that makes you convinced in Romans 8 verses 9 and 10 Paul said that you are not in the flesh but in the spirit if indeed the spirit of God dwells in you now if anyone does not have the spirit of Christ he's not his so that is a true test of whether I'm born again if I don't have the spirit I don't belong to Jesus right and if Christ is in you he says he continues now what I want you to notice here is three things he said if the spirit of God dwells in you it means you have the spirit of Christ which means Christ is in you do you see the development of thought their spirit of God is the spirit of Christ the spirit of Christ is Christ in you and when we say Jesus lives in me of course Jesus is at the right hand of God the Father up in heaven he doesn't really literally live in me but his spirit is in me and he lives in me through his spirit his spirit and he are one so if I have the Holy Spirit I have contact with Jesus himself personally nearby inside Jesus isn't some remote monarch sitting on a throne on the other side of you know one of the black holes out there in space but he through his spirit is in direct contact with me and so Jesus said in John 14 16 through 18 I will pray the Father he'll give you another helper that he may abide with you forever 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 he will be in you I will not leave you orphans I will come to you he's not about the Holy Spirit coming to them he says I will come to you but in the person of his spirit he will come he has not left us without himself Jesus said in John 14 21 through 23 and we're going to wind this down here real quick 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 that is reveal my subject have you had a revelation of Christ has Christ revealed himself to you that's what he says will happen Judas not a scary it said Lord how how is it that you'll manifest yourself to us and not to the world and Jesus answered and said to him if anyone loves me he will keep my word my father will love him and we will come to him and make our home with him what's he talking about the Holy Spirit Jesus and the father come and make their home in us through the spirit of God the spirit of Christ that comes to dwell in us so we see this I will love him and manifest myself to him is the same as we will come and make our home with him in this passage just a couple more things real quick when Jesus went to Samaria and talked to the woman at the well she went and gathered her all the people in town she said come and see a man that told me everything I ever did and so they came to hear it says in John 4 verses 43 42 so when the Samaritans had

come to him they urged him to stay with him and he stayed there two days and many more believe because of his own word then they said to the woman now we believe not because of what you said for we ourselves have heard him and we know that this is indeed the Christ the Savior of the world now they said first we believe because you told us but now we've had direct contact and we don't depend on what you say to believe and we know because we've heard for ourselves we've had a personal experience with him ourselves that direct contact with Christ today is not had with seeing Jesus walking on in Galilee he's not there anymore he's at the right hand of God it is from his spirit when he comes to dwell in us we have direct contact with him he speaks to us he speaks to us he teaches us we have heard him for ourselves they said and we don't depend anymore on your testimony we first believe because you told us but that's not why we believe anymore we now believe because we've heard him for ourselves and we know John actually has similar words in first let me go through here in first John 4:14 he says we have seen and testified that the father has sent the son to be the Savior of the world the same expression those guys use we know he's the Savior of the world now we're going to finish up with this passage Matthew 16:15 this is sessory of Philippi that's where Jesus said to the disciples but who do you say that I am and Simon Peter answered and said you're the Christ the son of the living God and Jesus answered said him blessed are you Simon Bar-Jonah for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you but my father who is in heaven in other words let me ask you something did flesh and blood ever tell Peter that Jesus is the Christ actually yes if you read the story in the gospel of John chapter 1 Peter's brother Andrew met Jesus before Peter did he went and got Peter and he says come see the Christ we have found the Christ and he brought him to Jesus and Jesus said you're Simon I'm going to call you Peter from now on okay and that was early now much later when Peter says you're the Christ Jesus flesh and blood didn't reveal that to you Andrew could say well geez you don't seem to know I did tell him that I told that a long time ago he's here because I told him I revealed it to him no that's not the case you told him Andrew but you didn't reveal it to him the father revealed it to you you know many of Christian kids are raised in Christian homes or they go to as adults they they didn't do a campus felt ministry or they go to a church and people tell them that Jesus is the Christ people tell them and eventually they become convinced that that's true and so they say okay that's my testimony to Jesus is the Christ but some of them have never yet had that revealed by God to them the Holy Spirit has to come and bear witness in Lee he that believes on the Son of God has the witness in himself and that's that's where everyone has to be it's not just that flesh and blood told you my parents told me that Jesus is the Messiah before I ever knew God I was raised by Christian parents I heard it many times heard it at church but I'll tell you something right now that's not why I'm a believer today my parents told me a lot of stuff I don't believe anymore but I still believe this and that's because flesh and blood did not reveal it to me they told me but they didn't reveal it it was revealed supernaturally to me by God when Jesus Spirit came to dwell in me that spirit bears witness to me every day that Jesus is the Messiah that he's the Son of God and it's possessing the Holy Spirit as well as making the proper

confession these are the first two of the four tests that John says will determine whether we are really born again or not there's two more and we'll take those in successive weeks but at this point I've run a few minutes over time it's time for me to quit