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How Can I Know That I Am Really Saved? (Part 1)



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

In his lectures, Steve Gregg explores the question of how to know if one is truly saved. He takes inspiration from the book of 1 John, which is often used to explore this topic. Gregg highlights that simply saying a sinner's prayer is not enough and that there are four tests one can use to determine if they are really saved: having a personal connection and fellowship with God, possessing the Holy Spirit, loving others, and obeying commandments. These tests go beyond surface-level beliefs and require evidence of one's salvation through one's actions and relationship with God.

Transcript

The topic I'll be speaking on in this and the next three lectures is called How Can I Know If I'm Really Saved? Now this is really kind of, in one sense, a survey of the book of 1 John. I love teaching through 1 John, but there's five chapters and I only have four weeks. It takes me at least four weeks to get through one chapter.

I couldn't really do a study of 1 John. But the main theme of 1 John is assurance of salvation. And therefore, if we focus on that particular theme in the book of 1 John, we will certainly cover the majority of its main points.

And we will focus on that which the book itself encourages us to focus upon. Namely, whether we're saved or not. I guess the first question we should ask is, why should we ask the question? How do I know if I'm really saved? Well, why should I ask a question like that? I go to church.

I was baptized. I'm around Christians. I know some things about the Bible.

Why should there be any question of whether I'm a Christian or not? Well, one of Jesus' disciples once asked him, Lord, are there few who are saved? In Luke 13, 23. Now, that'd be an interesting question to get a direct answer to. But typically, Jesus decided to answer the question as he wanted to answer it, rather than the way the questioner wanted it.

He doesn't say, yes, there are few, or no, there are many. He doesn't actually answer the

question quite like that at all. Instead, Jesus said, strive to enter through the narrow gate.

Now, one can reasonably assume that entering through the narrow gate is relative to the subject of being saved. The question was, are there few saved? Are there few that enter through the narrow gate? Now, Jesus didn't say, yeah, there's only a few, or no, there's a lot. He said, strive to be one of the ones who does.

Don't worry about how much company you have. Don't worry about how many get there. Make sure you get there.

Jesus likes to change the focus of people who ask questions. They're curious. They want information.

No, is it going to be a big number, small number? He says, listen, all you need to worry about is getting in there yourself. You strive. Now, I guess I'd have to ask, in view of this particular question, how many are being saved? And Jesus answers, you strive to get in there yourself.

You know, years ago, reading this passage on my own, it just struck me. Could I describe my own approach to salvation as striving to enter? Or was I more or less cruising? Was I thinking, well, I'm in, you know? I mean, I accepted Jesus when I was a kid. I've been in church all my life.

I've even been in ministry since I was a teenager. What's to strive about? And yet, the people to whom Jesus was speaking had been religious all their lives, too, and in the right religion at that. Before Jesus came, there wasn't any religion more right than Judaism.

And these were Jews. They'd been raised in the Jewish religion. They were like me.

I was raised in the Christian religion. But they were raised in the right religion of their time. I was raised in the right religion of our time.

And yet, to them, Jesus says, you need to strive to get in there. And He then said, For many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able. Now, they said, are there few that are saved? He said, well, there's many who aren't.

He didn't say how many are going to be saved. He says, you want to know if there's few saved? Let me put it this way. There's many who will want to be, but won't be.

Many there will be, He says, who will seek to enter and will not be able. Then you will begin to say, We ate and drank in your presence and you taught in our streets. But Jesus will say, I tell you, I do not know you, where you are from.

Depart from me, all you workers of iniquity. Now, these are people who want to be

saved. He says, you better strive to enter the gate, because there's going to be a lot of people who want to get in that gate, and they're not going to be allowed in.

And they're going to say, but we knew you, Jesus. You were teaching in our synagogues, in our streets. So, we ate with you.

Now, this obviously is referring to people who lived when He was here. People like Simon the Pharisee, who had Him over for dinner and had feasts. A lot of people feasted with Jesus.

A lot of people heard Jesus preach in their streets, in their synagogues. They say, well, we heard you speak. Yeah, but you didn't strive to enter.

It went in your ears, but it must have gone out the other ear, because it didn't change you. And you're not in. I don't even know you, He says.

That's what He's going to say to some, who actually want to be in. Now, in another passage, this is in Matthew chapter 7, Jesus said, Now, I want to clarify one thing. If you were not in my earlier classes, I taught like a fall term here once on Wednesday nights, and I taught about the Kingdom of God.

And if you weren't there, I just need to clarify one thing that is not clear to everybody, and that is that the term Kingdom of Heaven does not refer to Heaven. The term Kingdom of Heaven is a term that's found only in the Gospel of Matthew, in statements of Jesus, which are paralleled in Mark and Luke, and in the parallels, it says Kingdom of God, not Kingdom of Heaven. That is, Kingdom of Heaven is a distinctly Matthew term for what the other Gospels record Jesus referring to as the Kingdom of God.

It's synonyms. Kingdom of Heaven, Kingdom of God. And Kingdom of God is not a reference to Heaven.

The Kingdom of God is a reference to the reign of Christ. And remember, when Jesus and even before Him, John the Baptist appeared, they were saying, the Kingdom of God is at hand. And at one point, Jesus said, the Kingdom of God has overtaken you.

And at another point, in Luke 17, 28, the Pharisees demanded of Him when the Kingdom of God would appear. Now notice, when the Kingdom of God would appear, clearly means, they're not talking about Heaven, they didn't expect Heaven to appear. They were expecting something to appear here, on Earth.

And they demanded of Him when the Kingdom of Heaven would appear, or the Kingdom of God would appear, and He said, the Kingdom of God does not come with observation. Men will not be able to say, lo, here it is, or lo, there it is, but He says, the Kingdom of God is in your midst. It's already here.

Jesus indicated that the Kingdom of God was present with Him, and that His disciples were the subjects of the King, and He was the King. And wherever there are those who are subject to King Jesus, there is His Kingdom. Now, that's what the Kingdom of God, or Kingdom of Heaven is.

And Jesus said, not everyone who says to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the Kingdom of Heaven. But, he who does, the will of My Father in Heaven. Now, notice that, because there's something said about doing.

Now, I was raised Baptist, and as a Baptist, it was considered entirely unorthodox to suggest that you had to do anything to be saved. Some of you are probably Baptist too, like I was. And therefore, maybe that's your thought too.

Oh, we're saved by faith. You don't do anything. If you try to do something, that's almost an insult to God's grace.

You know, because you're trying to earn something. Well, I want to clarify something. I would agree that if you're trying to earn your salvation by your works, that is an insult to God's grace.

Paul said, I do not frustrate the grace of God, because if salvation were by the works of, if righteousness were by the works of the law, then Christ died for nothing. If you could save yourself by your works, then Christ might as well not have come. And it is an insult to God's grace to say, I can earn my salvation.

But to say, I can earn it, is not the same thing as saying, I'm required to do something about it. Because it is possible for there to be something offered to someone on a condition. And meeting that condition is not the same thing as earning the thing.

For example, you were offered the opportunity to sit in this class. It didn't cost you anything. It was free.

It cost the church something. They were going to pay for the light bills, and they paid for the building and so forth. But you didn't earn it by driving here, but you had to meet the condition of driving here to experience it.

There are conditions for experiencing it, but meeting those conditions isn't the same thing as earning some kind of a privilege, or being owed something. And even if God requires you to do something, even if it's only to believe, that is a condition that you have to meet in order to be saved. And if you don't meet that condition, you won't be saved.

And whatever the conditions may be, they do not earn salvation. Even believing should not be seen as something you do to earn salvation. Salvation is a gift.

But receiving gifts sometimes come with strings attached. They're not less a gift for that. My grandmother, before she died, offered to pay my full tuition to go through Biola Bible College.

I didn't go. I had other things I wanted to do with my life, and I did something else, and she didn't give me the money. Now, what if I had said, Well, Grandma, thanks a lot, but I'd just like to go and kind of tour around Europe, so I'll just take the money you're offering for my tuition, thank you, and I'll just go out and have a good time for four years traveling around with your money.

She would have said, Well, no, the money's not available on those terms. What do you mean it's not available? I thought it was a gift. Yeah, but you have to go to this Bible College to receive this gift.

Well, then what? I'm earning this gift? Of course not. Going to school doesn't earn money. It's still a gift, but it's only available on conditions.

And that doesn't mean by meeting those conditions I've earned it. If I sign up at Biola Bible College, that doesn't entitle me to free tuition. It's still a gift, even if I have to meet conditions to have it.

So, Jesus says not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father in heaven. There's some conditions. He continues in the same passage.

This is Matthew 7, verses 21 through 23. He says, Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name, cast out demons in your name, and done many wonders in your name? Now, unlike the previous passage we saw in Luke, those people just claimed, Well, you preached in our streets, you ate in our midst. Well, yeah, so what? So you had, you know, proximity to Jesus.

That doesn't prove anything. His enemies had proximity to him, too. But these people have something more interesting to claim.

Lord, we actually cast demons out in your name. We prophesied in your name. We did mighty works in your name.

Many works. Wonders in your name. I mean, these people were more gifted than I am.

I haven't prophesied and done many wonders in Jesus' name. These people actually have something impressive on their resume. And they're making appeal to that in order to say, Well, Lord, certainly we belong here.

We belong in this kingdom. But he says, Then I will declare to them, I never knew you. Depart from me, you who practice lawlessness.

Now, I'll tell you what, this particular passage in Matthew 7 has always been one that startles me. Because it seems to me that someone can cast demons out in Jesus' name. And can prophesy and work miracles in Jesus' name.

That there ought to be, you know, there ought to be some indication in that. That they are Christians. But Jesus says, Not necessarily.

Now, don't ask me how a person can cast demons out in Jesus' name and not be a real Christian themselves. I don't know how that works. But one thing he made clear is, These are not the ways that you know that you're really in.

If you're in the kingdom. If you belong to the kingdom. If you've got salvation the way the Bible speaks about it.

You don't know it because of this kind of thing. But there are ways to know it. Hopefully.

Now, someone's going to say, Well, I thought it's just a matter of believing in Jesus. True. It really is.

Salvation is by faith and by faith alone. Believing in Jesus. That is correct.

However, there are some things we need to take into consideration. James, in James chapter 2 and verse 19 said, You believe. Speaking to his readers.

Then he says, Even the demons believe and tremble. Now, what's he saying about that? He's saying, Well, okay, you believe. Excellent.

That's a good thing to do. So do the demons. But, you know, they're not saved.

You know, the demons are not going to be in heaven with you. Right. So there must be something more than just believing.

Because if you believe and the devils believe and they're not saved. How do you know you're saved? You see, the thing is, there's more than one kind of believing the Bible acknowledges. And in the passage in James chapter 2, the point he goes on to mention and explain is that there's a kind of faith that does.

And a kind of faith that does not produce actions or what he calls works. There's a kind of faith that people can profess that I believe something, but they don't act like they believe it. And there's others who say, I believe something.

And you can tell by the way they act, they really do believe it. It really dictates behavior to them. That's what James is talking about when he says faith without works.

You can change the word works for actions. If you don't have actions that confirm that you have beliefs, then he said that faith is dead. Now, one thing we know about salvation

is that we need to have life.

Salvation involves having life. But if your faith is not a living faith, how can a non-living faith give life to a non-living person? If your faith is dead, it cannot convey life to you. And that's what James is saying.

There is a kind of faith that does save. And there's a kind that doesn't. The kind the demons have, that doesn't.

Do you have the same kind they have? Don't have much confidence in your salvation. Paul, in Galatians chapter 5 and verse 6 said, Now, the words avails anything means accomplishes anything with reference to salvation. In the context of Galatians, he's talking about what saves and what doesn't save.

And he says, it's not being circumcised that's going to save anyone. It's not even being uncircumcised that's going to save anyone. No one's going to be saved because they were or were not circumcised.

Those things don't avail anything. Those don't accomplish anything. But what does? What does save a person? He said, faith working through love.

Now, is Paul teaching faith plus works here? Like, I've got to believe, but that only gets me halfway saved, then I have to do a certain number of works to get all the way saved? No, he doesn't say faith plus works. He said, faith working in the King James Version says, faith that works through love, which is helpful, I think. A faith that works, like James said, a faith without works is dead.

James and Paul were not at odds with each other, as some people assume. James and Paul both believed that the kind of faith that saves a person is one that produces something. It's a faith that makes a difference in you.

If you went forward at an altar call, you said a prayer, you jumped through this and that hoop that people told you to jump through, and you never changed. Nothing changed in you. Well, then, whatever faith you had is not the faith the Bible says is saving you.

A faith that doesn't make a difference to you, how could it make a difference to God? If it doesn't make any difference to you, how could it make any difference to God? It's your faith, after all, and if you don't care about it, you're not impressed with it. If it doesn't have any impact on you, then I don't... The Bible seems to indicate it doesn't necessarily have any impact on God either. There is a kind of faith that has no impact on you.

It's just academic. It's just intellectual. You know, 90-something percent of Americans, when they're polled, say they believe in God.

And almost that many say they believe in Jesus Christ, that He's the Son of God, that He

died and rose from the dead. I mean, you poll the Americans, at least 75% will say they believe the basic things that we believe as Christians. But, like, where are these people? Where are these saved people? Where are these believers? Where in our society do we see evidence of 75% density of real Christian people? Then how come the elections go the way they do? How come the media is supported in its present quality? I mean, it's obvious that a lot of people do believe that they believe something.

But it doesn't make an impact on their life. And therefore, these verses are saying it really is not impressive to God. Those are the kind of people who are likely to be told, I never knew you.

There's a parable Jesus taught about the sower and the seed. You know the story. And the seed fell on different kinds of soils.

When Jesus was explaining that parable, He explained a couple of the images. And He said, now the parable is this. The seed is the word of God.

Okay, so the word of God, the gospel, it's preached broadly. And it reaches different kinds of people. Just like seeds fall on different kinds of soil.

Different states of heart are more or less receptive. And He says, those that fell by the wayside are the ones who hear. Then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.

Okay, so these are never believed. They don't believe in any way, shape, or form. The first group don't believe at all.

But the ones on the rock, that is rocky soil, are those who when they hear receive the word with joy. Now these people apparently do believe. But it says, these have no root who believe for a while.

And in a time of temptation, fall away. Now falling away is not okay if you're hoping to be with the Lord. Because you're saved by faith.

But if you believe for a while and fall away from faith, then you don't have any faith. How can you be saved by faith if you don't have faith? Right? I mean, if we're going to argue that we're saved by faith alone, we have to at least argue for the presence of faith in a saved individual. And if a person only believes for a while and then doesn't believe anymore, they don't have any faith.

So there are people who when they hear the word, it's like the water off a duck's back. They don't believe at all. There's others who seem to have a very enthusiastic first reaction.

They receive with joy. However, they don't really believe for very long. Now there's two

different opinions about this we won't get into tonight.

One is that if they fell away, they never really had a saving faith. That's possible. There are a lot of people who fall away who probably never had a true saving faith.

They had something, but it wasn't the right kind of faith apparently. Another view is that you really can have a saving faith at one point and then later not have it anymore. And we won't get into that controversy at the moment.

But the point here is the person who used to believe and has fallen away is someone who no longer has faith. And if salvation is by faith, then a person who doesn't have it isn't saved. So Paul says to the Corinthians in 2 Corinthians 13, 5, he says, examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith.

Not whether you were at one time, but whether you are. Examine yourself now. See if you're in the faith.

Test yourselves, he says. All right? Okay. He says, do you not know, he says, yourselves that Jesus Christ is in you unless indeed you are disqualified.

That is, if you test yourself, as he says to do, you may be disqualified. You may not pass the test. But you need to put the test to yourself, to examine yourself and see if you are in the faith.

Now, why in the world would someone have to do that? You know, these Corinthians, they were in the church. He's not writing to the pagan Corinthians. He's writing to the Corinthian church.

These are people who profess Christ. They've been baptized. They're in the church.

They're in the place where the letter is being read, or else they wouldn't hear it. Paul is speaking to people who certainly regard themselves to be Christians. And he says, you know, you better check that out more carefully.

You better examine that. You may not be in the faith. You need to test yourself.

If you are in the faith, Jesus Christ is in you. However, he might not be, if you find yourself disqualified when you put yourself to the test. Well, that really raises questions.

And what kind of test are we talking about? It certainly isn't that I cast demons out in Jesus' name, or prophesied in his name, or did many mighty wonders in his name, because some people did those things. They said, I never knew you. So how in the world do we come up with a credible test that tells us any such thing? And would it not be obvious that it's important to find out how we do on a test like that? You know, on the Internet, there's all these pop-ups about, you know, is your IQ better than Brad Pitt's or whatever, you know.

And you can take this IQ test. And apparently, a lot of people do it. I mean, everyone wants to know, how's my IQ? How do I compare with this celebrity or that celebrity in my IQ? Well, it's no doubt an interesting thing to find out.

But I think it's much more important to find out, how do I test out on the scale of being saved, of knowing that I belong to Jesus and he belongs to me, and that I'm not just imagining it? That's the test that Paul says we need to put to ourselves. Now, I guess the next question is, can this question, that is, how can I know if I'm really saved, can that question really be answered with certainty? Or is there no way to be 100% sure? Obviously, some of the people we read about in some of the scriptures that Jesus mentioned, they thought they knew, and they were wrong. Well, then how can we know, even if I think I'm saved, how can I know if I'm right or wrong? Well, that's important to find out, isn't it? In the first epistle of John, which is our subject matter for this series, John says a number of things like this.

In 1 John 2, 3, he says, By this we know that we know him. He says, we know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren, in John 3, 14. He says, by this we know we abide in him.

1 John 4, 13. 1 John 5, 13, he says, That you may know that you have eternal life. Actually, that whole verse is, These things I have written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life.

When I was a young Baptist guy, and trying to lead people to the Lord, I took some soul-winning classes. I used them sometimes. I mean, I did try to win souls.

I didn't win any, but I did actually, one of these courses I took was, was put on by the Billy Graham Association, because I was going to be a counselor, and was a counselor when I was 15, at the Anaheim Billy Graham crusade, for those who came forward. That way I didn't have to lead people to the Lord. Billy Graham could do the heavy lifting.

And I just had to be there to shepherd them on in, you know. So, that was easy. But in every soul-winning class I ever took, and I read books, and I took classes, I mean, I was interested from my youth on, in getting people saved.

They all made this point. They always used this last verse, 1 John 5, 13. They said, when you've said the sinner's prayer with somebody, you then take them to 1 John 5, 13, which says, by this, it says, these things I've written unto you, that believe on the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life.

And you need to have, after you've prayed with the person, you have to say, okay, now, do you know that you have eternal life? And we were not supposed to accept any answer except, yes, I know, because if they would say, well, I hope so, which would be a very common answer for people to give, or I think so, or if you say so, you know, none of

those things really had the ring of confidence in it that we were looking for. We wanted someone to say, yes, we know. And every time someone gave a less convincing answer than that, we were supposed to take them back to 1 John 5, 13.

What does it say? That you may know that you have eternal life. Do you know? And if they say, well, I hope so. No, do you? No, read that verse again.

And so, we had to use this verse to give people assurance of salvation. Now, I have to say, later on in my life, it seemed to me rather strange that something so life-changing, as the creator of the universe invading your life, and coming inside of you, and passing you from death unto life, and coming to live inside of you, that all of that could happen, and the person wouldn't notice? And that, you know, the only way you could give them assurance of that is by taking them to a text and keeping their nose at the same verse until they finally agreed with it? I mean, it seems to me that if God comes into your life, that should be like a... He should be self-announcing. It should be something that didn't happen when I wasn't paying attention.

If I'm changed into a new creation, and old things are passed away, and all things become new, there ought to be something I could notice about it. It seems. And it should not be necessary that my assurance of salvation comes by having to run to the concordance to find how many verses tell me I'm saved, because after all, these verses don't tell me that I'm saved.

John didn't put my name in his book. 1 John. He says, we know that we know him.

Well, who's we? John, and whoever he pictured himself as writing to. Would he, if he knew me, if he knew my experience, if he knew my total number of beliefs, would he include me in that number? I don't know. I guess that's what I have to find out, isn't it? Because there certainly, John indicated there is the possibility, and in fact the need, to know if you have eternal life, or if you need to keep looking, or if you abide in Christ, or if you need to start doing so.

I mean, you need to know where you stand. And if I don't know, if I'm one of these people that he's talking to, if I have the same experience they had, if I have the same beliefs they had, if what happened to them is the same thing that happened to me, that's what I need to find out. Because then I'll know whether I have this assurance.

But notice, these verses, and many others like them, I just took these four at random really, because there's about twice or three times as many in the book of 1 John. They insist that we can know if we're really saved. There is assurance possible.

But the test has got to be a valid test. If you say, well, someone laid hands on me, I fell down, I prayed in tongues, therefore I must be saved. Well, I don't care if you prayed in tongues, I don't care if you prophesied, I don't care if you cast out demons, in Jesus'

name even.

None of those things are said to prove that you're a Christian. But something must. If I can know, there must be some way to know for sure.

And there is. So we can know. What assurance are we given? Okay, John's epistle provides four tests.

Remember John, we read Paul in 2 Corinthians 13, he says, test yourselves, examine yourselves, test yourselves. Well, where's the test? Here's the test. John gives us four questions to answer correctly and to pass this test.

And I'm going to give you all four of them right now briefly, and then I'm going to go off into something else related and come back to these in the successive weeks of this series. Because I want us to look in depth at each of these tests, lest we misunderstand them and misapply them and misdiagnose our own situation as a result. That's going to be important.

But let's see, what are these four tests? First of all, several times in 1 John, he makes it very clear that the first test is what we believe and confess about Christ and ourselves. If you're familiar with 1 John, you might remember he talks about if we confess our sins, if we confess that Jesus is the Son of God, if we believe that Jesus is the Christ. All of these are about what we believe and confess.

It has to do with my convictions, what I'm willing to state publicly as my beliefs. And that's one test. Now, in another lecture next week, I'm going to come back to this and we're going to look at all the verses relevant to this and say exactly what is it that I have to believe about Jesus in order to be in this category of people that John thinks are saved.

Next test, if we possess the Holy Spirit. Now this can be ambiguous, can it not? I mean, how does one know if they possess the Holy Spirit? Again, there's a whole certain class of Christians who think, well, the way you know is if you speak in tongues. Well, frankly, I believe that speaking in tongues is a valid gift of the Holy Spirit.

But I also believe there's counterfeit gifts and a person might speak in tongues and not be filled with the Spirit. Furthermore, I think a person might be filled with the Spirit and not speak in tongues. It's not anywhere in Scripture said that speaking in tongues is the evidence that you have the Holy Spirit.

The closest thing you get is three cases in the book of Acts, three out of five, where people are said to have received the Holy Spirit and in of the five cases, three of them it mentions they spoke with tongues. But that's not the same thing as saying speaking in tongues is the invaluable evidence every time. And so we need to examine this question.

Do we possess the Holy Spirit? There'll be separate consideration of that, of course, in depth in a coming lecture. But let me just point out before we move to the third one at this point that this is experiential. I didn't say emotional.

Some people have more of an emotional experience than others. Some have a non-emotional experience. I'm not talking about emotions per se.

I'm talking about something experienced, something, a transformation that is brought about by God's Spirit, the same one through whom He created the universe, the Spirit that was hovering over the face of the water before He got started on that creation week, the one who gave such powers to the prophets and to the apostles and to Jesus. That Spirit has got to be in us. If He is, well, then that's one of the four tests.

How about if we love one another? Now, all of these things can be so misunderstood because I remember talking to New Agers on Pacific Avenue down in the 1970s, witnessing to them about Jesus, and they'd say, well, Jesus just said love one another and, you know, I love people. Well, I couldn't say they didn't. I didn't know if they loved people or not.

I can't say, well, no, you don't. You don't love anyone. I mean, they may well have loved people.

And here we begin to see something about these tests that we have to keep in mind through the whole study, and that is that all four of the tests have to apply to the same person in order to qualify for having passed the test. In other words, although you'll find a verse here or there that says we know that we have passed from death to life because we love. Well, that sounds all-inclusive, but it's not because that's in an epistle that also says we know that He abides in us and we know Him because He has given us His Spirit.

And in another place where it says, you know, whoever believes that Jesus the Messiah is born of God. I mean, there's these various tests. Each one of them, when they're brought up individually, sound like they're the whole story.

You know, each individual one when mentioned doesn't mention the other three, and you can get the impression, well, it's just this one thing. If I love people, well, I love my mom. I love my dog.

I guess that's kind of a prequel of sorts. It's got a lot of personality. And I love my kids, so I love my girlfriend.

So I guess I must be saved. Obviously, that doesn't qualify. Everybody loves somebody, sometimes.

And yet, that does make them all Christians, right? So, love... By the way, there's, of course, very clear descriptions of what it means to love as a distinctive of being a

Christian. Remember, Jesus said, By this shall all men know that you're my disciples. If you have love one for another.

It's like a test. Jesus said, Everyone will know you're really a disciple if you really do love. But he also said, And greater love has no one than this, than that he lays down his life for his friends.

So there's a particular species of love we're talking about here, which we will examine in a future lecture. And then finally, If we obey his commandments. This is stated probably more frequently than the other three in the book of 1 John.

Even though it's a New Testament book, not an Old Testament book. Obviously, obeying Jesus is a feature of being a Christian. And of course it would be.

Because Jesus said, Why do you call me Lord, Lord, and you do not do the things that I say? It's a rhetorical question. There isn't a good answer. It's obviously, If you don't do what I say, you shouldn't be calling me Lord.

Because Lord means owner. If I say I have a Lord, it means I'm a slave. I'm owned by somebody who I'm calling my Lord.

And if I'm a slave, that kind of, it kind of follows that I'm supposed to do what he says to do. And if I call him Lord, but I don't do what he says, there's just no, it's incongruous. And so obeying his commandments becomes one of the tests.

But on the other hand, you say, well, who obeys his commandments perfectly? I mean, I read the Sermon on the Mount. I've been a Christian for years. I still don't do everything perfectly.

In fact, in the Sermon, it says be perfect as your father in heaven is perfect. That's a steep one. Now, how could anyone be considered a Christian if obeying his commandments is one of the tests? We'll talk about that.

There's a good answer. OK, you don't have to be perfect to be saved. But the point is, the Bible talks about that.

We'll talk about it in more depth later on. But as you can see, these are four tests and they certainly go beyond, you know, just say the sinner's prayer and you're in. We know that we pass from death to life.

We know that he abides in us. We know that we belong to him. We know we're born of God.

If these things are true of us, four tests, and we'll examine those tests well enough to know how to assess ourselves in this series, which will be very short, only four lectures total. Let's move on to something else important. What does it mean to be saved? I have

not found one out of five Christians who would give the right answer to this biblically speaking.

I mean, saved from what? What does it mean to be saved? What is it that an unsaved person suffers that a saved person escapes? Saved means to be rescued. What is it you're escaping? Now, virtually all Christians I know growing up, and many of them I know now, would say, at least as a part of their answer, well, we're saved from hell. We're saved to go to heaven.

I mean, isn't that really all that matters? This life is short, and heaven's forever. Certainly the focus of salvation must be where I'm going when I die. The interesting thing about that is that none of the New Testament writers seem to agree with that.

Now, that seems strange, doesn't it? Now, I know that some things Jesus said definitely said, you better not neglect eternity. Like when he said, what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his soul? Obviously he's saying, gain your whole world in this life and you're still a loser if you've lost your soul as far as eternity is concerned. And, of course, Jesus said, it's better to pluck out an eye or cut off a hand if it keeps you from entering into life rather than to be thrown into Gehenna with both eyes and both hands intact.

That is to say, you'd be better off living the rest of your life maimed and blind than to get to the end of your life and have all your body parts fully functioning but you'd be thrown into Gehenna, you know, which is a word that's translated as hell in the Gospels, usually. Now, so there is certainly in the Bible no absence of reference to the need to be prepared for your eternal destiny. But, when the Gospel is preached to unbelievers, it just didn't come up.

I mean, if you read through the Book of Acts, we read the history of the early church for the first three decades or so, the lifetime of the apostles and their teaching, and we read the sermons that Peter preached to the lost, a couple or three different sermons that Peter preached are recorded for us. At least two or more of Paul's sermons are recorded to us when he's preaching to the unbelievers. And if you kind of read those sermons thinking, well, I wonder if the apostles preached the same way we do.

You find out the answer is no, they didn't. And one of the things that was different is the content of what they preached. I was listening to some preacher, I don't remember, I think it was on the radio just recently, or maybe it was in a church.

Oh, oh, I went to church on Sunday somewhere else in another town. And I remember the preacher was making an appeal for salvation. And all he mentioned was, you know, you want to go to heaven, don't you? You need to accept Jesus and you'll go to heaven.

That's the Gospel I heard growing up. That's the Gospel he apparently heard too. It's not

the Gospel anyone heard in the first century because the apostles didn't preach that way.

You read the preaching of the apostles in the book of Acts. They never mentioned heaven or hell one time in their sermons. Now, did they believe in heaven and hell? Of course they did.

But when they spoke to the unbelievers, they never held out heaven as the thing for you to repent for, or hell as the thing to avoid. Now, you and I would say, well, heaven is a good thing and hell is a bad thing and certainly it's desirable to go to heaven and not go to hell. And I'm sure the apostles would agree with that statement, of course.

But why is it that they never made any appeal like that to the unbelievers? To them, the salvation that they were offering was not focused on what happens after you die or where you go when you die. I mean, don't believe me. Just read those sermons.

They're there in the book of Acts. Read them. I've done it many times and I've marveled at how different they are from the mentality of the evangelicalism that I've been raised with.

But, if we're talking about something, when we say saved, if we're talking about something as non-verifiable as the question of going to heaven after we die, well then, it would be very easy to be self-deceived about our own status since we would not have any confirmation of our own salvation until we died and found ourselves in heaven. I mean, if salvation is all about going to heaven, then how will we know if anyone really was saved until we get to heaven and find out if they're there? We can believe it, of course, and it's all by faith. We can say, well, God told it.

God's Word says it. Well, okay, that's good. That's good, but how can I test myself to see if I'm saved? If saving means I go to heaven, well, I'm not there yet, so I guess I'm not saved, right? Or, no, I think I'm saved and I will go to heaven, but how can I prove that now? There's got to be something more now, earthly, experiential in this life that becomes the test of salvation.

The salvation that the Apostles preached did not focus on being saved from hell and going to heaven. Surprisingly, it's focused on something else. However, the Bible nowhere defines salvation in terms of going to heaven when you die.

That saved people will ultimately be with Jesus is guaranteed, but their being saved is a condition experienced in this life and merely continued in heaven after death. Salvation is something that applies to this because this is the life you're in. When you die, if you're saved in this life, you'll also be saved forever afterwards.

You don't live unsaved, unchanged in this life, and then when you die, you get to be saved. Being saved in the Bible is always something that happens now. It changes you

now.

It makes a difference in you now. And, of course, if you've got it now, you never lose it. So, when you die, you have it then too.

You go to heaven and that's great. But, it's interesting that that is not the focus of the New Testament. So, those who are saved, as the Bible uses the term after death, are the same ones who are saved during this life.

In other words, to know for sure that you will be saved after death requires knowing by certain evidences that you are saved even now. And I emphasize by certain evidences. We mentioned the four tests that John gave.

Those are the evidences. What you believe and confess about Christ and yourself. That you have the Holy Spirit.

That you love the brethren. That you keep His commandments. Those are the tests we are going to see again and again in 1 John.

And, by the way, John is not alone. The whole New Testament will be brought in to confirm all of these. Consider the variety of ways in which John describes salvation in this epistle.

For example, he says, By this we know that we are... and he says something then that is the synonym of being saved. It is not always the same thing. For example, he says, Salvation is fellowship with God.

And he doesn't mean when you die. He means now. You have a relationship with God.

You have a union with God. You have interaction, fellowship with God. And this is in 1 John, one of the ways that salvation is described.

He says in 1 John 3, That which we have seen and heard, we declare to you that you also may have fellowship with us. And truly, our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ. So if I have fellowship with them, and their fellowship is with God, I am in the same fellowship with God.

And it is made fairly clear here too also in 1 John 1, verses 6 and 7. He says, If we say that we have fellowship with Him, that is with God, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another. And the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanses us from all sin.

Now, when I was growing up and when I read this, we have fellowship one with another. I thought that meant you and I have fellowship with each other. It kind of sounds that way.

But in the context, it is not. It is talking about do we have fellowship with God or not. The contrast is between those who walk in darkness and those who walk in the light.

And he says, If we say we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we are lying. It is not so. But if we walk in the light, we have fellowship with one another.

Him and me. Him and you. Your fellowship is with Him.

Of course, you are also in fellowship with all others who are in fellowship with Him. But the point, the focus is, you have a connection, a personal connection, a fellowship with God Himself. Another part of being saved, besides fellowship with God, is being forgiven and cleansed.

Now, this is not just at the judgment day, at the end of your life. This is now. This is an impact that salvation has on sin in your life.

He says, But if we walk in the light, this is a verse we just looked at, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanses us from all sin. That is a part of being saved, is being cleansed from sin. He says, If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Notice, forgive and cleanse are two different things. Forgiveness is where He says, I am not going to condemn you for that. What does cleanse mean? It means you are dirty and you need to be clean.

Sin is a stain. Not just a stain on your conscience or on your record that needs to be forgiven. It is a stain on your character that tends to make you be a sinner.

It is not just that you did sins and God needs to forgive you for that. It is that you are full of sin and need to be dirty. You need to be cleaned up.

God needs to clean up your life. You do not need to clean up your life. Certainly not by yourself, but God needs to clean up your life.

But that is part of what it is. To be saved is that you have a totally, not only do you have fellowship with God, your relationship with God is different, but now your relationship with sin is going to be different. If you are really saved, you are going to be totally spoiled for sin because you will not be able to like it anymore.

You are going to be forgiven for the sins you have committed and God is going to be cleaning you up on the inside so that sin ceases to be your friend. Sin starts to be seen as a malady to be scrubbed out of you. And God has got a stiff brush and He will work on it.

If you are really saved, if you are really a Christian, He will be working on that. So there

are two things, being forgiven of sins and cleansed from unrighteousness. Now, I wanted to point something out here because some of you may hear another guy on the radio on the same station I am on who often says, well, no, we don't confess our sins after we are saved.

We don't have to confess our sins anymore. That is misunderstanding. He is talking about there is a once and for all thing that happens when we get saved.

We never have to confess our sins again. But that is not really quite true. And I don't have the slide here I wanted to show, but I will show it to you this way.

It says, If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Cleanse us from all unrighteousness is the same as this. The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanses us from all sins.

It is the same topic and they are only two verses apart. He is talking about being cleansed from sin. In one verse He says, If we confess our sins.

Now one preacher says, You just do that one time. That is not something you keep doing. You just confess your sin one time and you get saved and you never have to confess sin again.

You never have to repent again. But that is not what John says. Confess our sins is parallel here to walking in the light.

It is if we walk in the light, the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin. If we confess our sins, that is the same thing as walking in the light. He is faithful to cleanse us from all sin.

The cleansing of sin is something that happens as we walk in the light. That is not something you do just one time. Walking is step after step.

It is a process. It is not an event. And therefore, it is talking about the way we live our lives, the way we walk.

And one of the main features of walking is confessing our sins. Because you see, this is John talking about the same thing he records Jesus talking about in John chapter 3, the gospel of John. Jesus said, This is the condemnation that light has come into the world.

But men love darkness rather than light. For those who are evil do not come to the light, lest their deeds should be exposed or reproved. But those who do the truth come to the light that their deeds might be seen that they are a rod of God.

Now what Jesus is saying is coming to the light is coming to the place of being exposed for what you are. Wicked people don't want that because their deeds will be exposed in the light. So they want to stay in the darkness.

John says, Well, no, you've got to confess your sins. You've got to not hide in the darkness and conceal your sins. And this particular verse 9 is bracketed in 1 John chapter 1 by verses 8 and 10.

Verse 8 says, If we say that we have no sin, we lie and do not the truth. And verse 10 says, If we say we have not sinned, His Word is not in us. Now, it says, If we say we do not sin, if we say we have no sin, well then, we're not okay.

But if we confess our sins, that's coming into the light. That's walking in the light. That's staying honest.

That's staying transparent. That's letting ourselves be seen for what we are rather than pretending to be something more. It's in that honesty, in that transparency before God and men, I believe, that we are promised that cleansing takes place as a process continuously.

If I bring my guilt out to God publicly or even privately before God and say I've done the wrong thing, then He forgives. Otherwise, He apparently does not. Forgiveness and cleansing.

1 John 2.12 says, I write to you little children because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake. So, forgiveness of sins, cleansing from sin. This is one way that salvation is described in addition to being in fellowship with God.

1 John 4.10 says, This is love. Not that we love God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be a propitiation for our sins. Propitiation means the one who takes away the wrath.

In other words, the one who cleans our record and sets us free from the penalty of sin. But not just the penalty, but the defilement too. We've got to be cleansed from sin as well.

But our relationship with God and our relationship with sin are changed if we're really saved. Then there's this, knowing God. Now this is not, when I die, this is now.

In 1 John 2.3 it says, Now by this we know that we know Him. Now he means, by this we know that we're saved. He's using knowing God as a synonym for being saved.

Just like being in fellowship with God. Being forgiven of sins. These are things that are parts of being saved.

None of them so far have really spoken to what happens after we die. They have to do with what's now. I am forgiven now.

I am being cleansed now. I know God now. I have fellowship with God if I'm walking in the light now.

Salvation is about what's happening now. He says, I write to you fathers because you have known Him. I write to you little children because you have known the Father.

That's in 1 John 2.13. Knowing God. I didn't put the reference here, but it's 1 John 4, verse 7. It says, Everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. So, you see, knowing God is one aspect of being saved.

Everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God for God is love. 1 John 4, 7 and 8. Also this one, 1 John 5.20. The Son of God has come that we may know Him who is true.

This is the true God. Jesus has come so we can know God. Actually, Jesus said in John 17.3 when He's praying to His Father, He said, This is eternal life that they may know you and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

That's eternal life, is knowing God. And you know, it's important to ask, Do I really know God? And I often tell my testimony that there was a time when I'd been a believer for 12 years when I was in my teens and somebody asked me, Do you know the Lord? I said, Yes, I know the Lord. But I didn't know what he meant by know the Lord.

What I meant was, I'm a Christian, I'm a believer. I know the Gospel. I know the Bible.

I'm in church. I'm not an unbeliever. But then he began talking to me about knowing the Lord and the way he knew the Lord.

I could tell that he knew the Lord the way different I did. He said, What's the Lord been doing in your life? I didn't have an answer for that. I forgot to even do something in my life that was a concept I had no familiarity with.

I knew that I didn't really know God in the way that he meant. I wonder how John meant it. OK.

Fellowship with God, forgiven and cleansed, knowing God. Another way that salvation is described is overcoming Satan in the world. Now this is important because salvation means rescue.

Right? To be saved means you're rescued. From what? Well, among other things, from the power of the devil and the power of the world. And you know what? If there was no other part of salvation than that, if there was no heaven and no hell to be concerned about, if this life only was the only one we had to be concerned with, it seems to me that this aspect of salvation would be very important because people who don't know Christ are enslaved to the world and they're victims of oppression from the devil.

That's what Peter said when he was describing Jesus' ministry in the house of Cornelius. In Acts 10, I think it's verse 38, he said that Jesus was a man anointed by God who went

out doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil. Well, being oppressed by the devil is not a pretty thing.

Being in bondage to the world is not a pretty thing. And being saved means at least this, that you are given the ability to overcome or victory over Satan and the world. Where does it say that? 1 John 2, 13 and 14.

I write to you, young men, because you have overcome the wicked one. In other words, you're saved and as a saved person, this is true of you. You have overcome the wicked one.

I've written it to you, young men, because you're strong and the word of God abides in you and you have overcome the wicked one. That's a feature of salvation. In 1 John 5, 4 and 5, it says, For whatever is born of God overcomes the world.

Now, the world is the devil's domain so there's not much difference in these two concepts. Overcoming Satan, overcoming the world. He's the god of this world, the prince of this world.

Well, whoever is born of God overcomes the world and this is the victory that overcomes the world, our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? Well, those are the saved people. Salvation includes overcoming the world and overcoming the devil.

Okay? It also means God abiding in us. God living inside of you. Yes? The last verse was 1 John 5, verses 4 and 5. You're welcome.

So, God abiding in us. What does it mean that God abides in us? Well, it means we're not alone in there. It means that the creator of the universe has moved in and there are evidences of that.

I can't go into this in detail partly because it could make a great long study in itself and I've got a lot more points to make but these are the things that John says. If we love one another, God abides in us. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him and he in God.

1 John 4, verses 12 and 15. So, God abiding in us is part of being saved. Also having life or eternal life.

Sometimes it's just referred to as life. Other times it's called eternal life. Sometimes it's called both in the same verse.

For example, we have and this is the promise that he has promised us, eternal life. Now, you might say, promise, that's the future, right? Well, not exactly. 1 John 3, verses 14 and 15 says, we know that we have passed from death into life.

That's already happened. Because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death.

That is, he hasn't made the transition from death to life. He's still in death where he was when he started. You love your brother, you've made that transition.

You're not in death anymore, you're in life. But if you don't love your brother, well, you're still in death. Whoever hates his brother is a murderer and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

See how he uses life and eternal life synonymously here? He's not talking about eternal life after I die, of course, but since it is eternal, it continues after I die. He's talking about something I have now. Something that's a part of my present experience.

In 1 John 5, 11 and 12, and also in the same chapter, verse 20, he says, and this is the testimony that God has given us eternal life. That's already happened. And this life is in his Son.

He who has the Son has life. And he means, of course, eternal life. He who does not have the Son of God does not have life.

This is the true God and eternal life. God is eternal life. Jesus is eternal life.

He's the true God and eternal life. And if you have him, you've got eternal life. But most people think, oh, I've got eternal life.

That means I get to live in heaven forever. Well, it does mean that when you die, among other things, it means when you die that you get to be with Jesus forever and alive. But that's not all it means because John doesn't focus on if you are a Christian, you will have eternal life in another world.

He's talking about in this world right now, you have something called eternal life. And I guess that's something that needs to be understood to be appreciated. But we've seen these phrases here.

There's one other thing. And that is if you're saved, you're born of God. You've been born again.

You're a child of God. You didn't come into this world that way, but you become that. You become a child of God by being born of God.

He says, if you know that he is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of him. 1 John 2.29 Also, 1 John 3, verses 1 and 2. Behold, what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us that we should be called children of God. Beloved, now we are children of God.

It's already now. And it has not yet been revealed what we shall be. But we know that when he is revealed, we shall be like him.

For we shall seem as he is. It goes on to say, in 1 John 4.7, it says, Everyone who loves God is or who loves is born of God and knows God. We saw that verse in connection with knowing God.

But see what we got here. This is what salvation is in 1 John. He never mentions heaven or hell.

In the entire epistle. He doesn't even talk not at one time about what happens to people after they die. He says, You can know that you have fellowship with God.

You can know that you are forgiven and cleansed. You can know that you know God. You can know that you overcome Satan and the world.

You can know that God abides in you. You can know that you have eternal life. You can know that you are born of God.

And that is knowing that you are saved. Because that's what saved is. Saved is having a relationship with God.

Which confers these benefits and features. And of course it has continuing benefits after death. But the focus here is what about now? And that's why it's possible to test things about me now.

To know if I have this. Because it's something that's now. And then the four tests that John gives are tests about I can look at me now.

I can test me as I am. What are my beliefs? What is my experience? What is my behavior like now? That's why it's so important. We need to stop thinking that salvation primarily is what happens after we die and go to heaven.

Salvation is primarily that God wants us to have this now. And by the way, while I fully believe in heaven and hell, I want to make it very clear that if there was no heaven and no hell, some people say, well, would you still serve God if there was no heaven and no hell? Is this worth it? It is to me. You know? This would be true whether there's a heaven or not.

If there was no heaven or no hell, I still want to know God. I still want to be forgiven. I mean, why? That's just to escape hell.

No, it isn't. It's because I'm guilty until I'm forgiven. I don't want to live my life guilty before my Creator.

Even if there's no consequences, I don't want to be carrying guilt around all my life. I like

to be forgiven. Overcoming Satan is a good thing.

These things are good things. Worth it. They're worth it.

And it's like all this and heaven too. You know? But this is it. This is what salvation is according to 1 John.

These things which are now. Well, what must one do to be saved? And we're getting to the end here. Well, here's a verse from Acts chapter 2, verse 37 and 38.

It says, When they heard Peter's preaching, they were cut to the heart and said, Men and brethren, what shall we do? And of course, the implied remainder of that sentence is what shall we do to get right with God? What shall we do to be saved? And Peter said to them, Repent. Now, when I was young, when I asked these kind of questions, people said, Ask Jesus to come into your heart. Come down forward and let the pastor welcome you and say a sinner's prayer.

These are the things that in my culture growing up were how you got saved. I don't remember if anyone ever told me when I was young, you need to repent. Repent means you change your mind.

And what you're repenting of, particularly, is sin. Before you are a follower of Jesus, you make excuses for sin in your life. You minimize sin.

You sin all the time, of course, when you're not a Christian. And therefore, in order to live with yourself, you practically have to minimize and say, well, my sins aren't quite as bad as some people might think they are. There's a mitigating circumstance.

That's why I do these bad things. Or you excuse it. Well, when you repent, that means you turn around and change your mind and say, you know what? There's no excuse for my sinful behavior.

This is bad. This is really bad. It's just as bad as the Bible says it is.

Sin is not okay. I'm not going to think it's okay. I'm not going to live as if it's okay.

I'm going to turn around and stop living a life of sin. Does that mean I'll never sin again? Of course not. I'm a weak human being.

But it means that I've changed my direction now. Instead of living in a direction of I'm pursuing my life of sin, I'm now pursuing a life of holiness. Sin catches up with me sometimes, so I'm careless or trip over it.

And I fall. But the thing is, it isn't the way I'm living. Because I don't agree with it anymore.

My mind has changed. I've repented. And Peter says, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.

We won't go too much in detail about baptism, but it was an understanding in the early church, and it should be today, that if you come to Christ, the initiation into his family is through water baptism. Now, can you go to heaven if you haven't been baptized? I think so. The thief on the cross did.

But the thing is, he didn't experience much of salvation in this life. He got into heaven by the skin of his teeth at the last minute. He didn't get baptized.

He didn't come into the life of the kingdom of God in this lifetime. He got in just, you know, at the tail end of his life. But entering into these experiences, always in the early church, they baptized people the same day they believed.

They didn't just say, okay, we're going to have a baptism in three months, so we'll just put you on the list. If it was in the middle of the desert, you find a puddle of water, you baptize the guy if he wants to get saved. Because that was considered to be an important step of commitment to Christ.

And Peter said, you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Well, one of the tests John said is, if we have the Holy Spirit, then we know that he abides and so forth. So, repent and be baptized, and you'll receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Now, the only problem I have with this passage, it doesn't say anything about faith at all. It doesn't even mention faith. And yet, most of Paul's and even Peter's epistles say a lot about being saved by faith.

So, we can see that, I think what Peter's doing here is presupposing that faith already exists. When they said, what must we do? They're essentially saying, we heard you preach, we believe what you said, what's our next move supposed to be? He said, well, you need to repent, be baptized, and receive the Spirit. Faith, obviously, is implied.

It is stated outright in this verse, Romans 10, 9, that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart that God has raised him from the dead, you will be saved. Okay? Well, confess with your mouth that Jesus is your Lord. And as we said, Jesus said, why do you call me Lord? Lord, and you don't do the things I say.

Obviously, to confess that Jesus is your Lord means you mean it. You're not just talking about it. It's real.

He really is your Lord. You've decided that you are not going to resist His Lordship and His rule in your life anymore. You're surrendering to Him.

As Lord, He has claims upon you. Total claims. He owns the deed to you.

He bought you. You're not your own. You've been bought with a price, it says in 1 Corinthians 6. You don't belong to you.

You belong to Him. Okay, act like it. Confess it.

You start by confessing. You follow up by continuing to confess and live according to what you talk. You just don't talk the talk.

You walk the walk, too. And you believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead. So you have to believe in the crucifixion and the resurrection of Christ, of course, essential.

So, what does one have to be saved? According to those two passages, you need to repent. You need to confess Jesus as your Lord. Believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead.

Be baptized. And receive the Holy Spirit. Now, as I said, these are not all conditions for going to heaven.

There have been people who went to heaven who never were baptized. A whole bunch of them in the Old Testament. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob.

I'm sure they're in heaven, but they didn't get baptized. And the thief on the cross in the New Testament and so forth. But we're not talking about going to heaven here.

We're talking about those things that are normative of the Christian experience of salvation. Knowing God, having fellowship with God, being cleansed from sin, all this stuff. These are the things that the Bible calls salvation.

And these are the things that the Bible says one must do to be saved. And so once one has done those things, then there are the tests of whether you are saved. And they will be found to be.

If these things are true in your life, then so will these things. You'll believe and confess about Christ and ourselves, the right things. We'll possess the Holy Spirit, of course, since part of that is receive the Holy Spirit.

We'll love one another. And we'll obey His commandments, because He's the Lord. And so these are the things I wanted to say initially.

I just barely got it in. And it's the time we're supposed to quit.