

1 JOHN CHAPTER 3

In the midst of the Coronavirus pandemic if we're not careful we could find ourselves wondering – why Does a Good God, a loving God allow such a terrible plague to wreak havoc in the world? God has the power to stop it at any time He chooses. If you were to have a close relative or friend die from the pandemic and you were not allowed to go visit them in the hospital while they were struggling for their life and they die and you do not have the opportunity to have a homegoing service whereby all family and friends who desire to come can attend in the church house and around the grave site. If you are not careful, that could cause you to get angry with God. 1 John chapter 3 will focus on the love of God and the fact we need to have a relationship with God by accepting Jesus as our Lord and Savior. Most people understand that the most important things in life are not things at all – *they are the relationships we have*. Man accepting Jesus as Lord and Savior is the most important relationship. God has put a desire for relationship in every one of us, a desire He intended to be met with relationships with other people, but most of all, to be met by a relationship with Him. In this chapter, John

tells us the truth about relationships – and shows us how to have relationships that are real, for both now and eternity.

Vs. 1 - John is clearly pointing out the love of God has nothing to do with the worthiness of the one being loved – the love of God is based on the *character of the One* who loves us. Praise God, He loves us in spite of how we sometimes act. God loved us before we loved Him – **Romans 5:8** says, “*But God, demonstrated His own love towards us, that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*” **Vs. 1** begins with the word “behold” - the word *behold* carries the idea of wonder or amazement and it’s a command for the believer to reflect or ponder...to look at closely and study intently. The word manner is very interesting – in the Greek the word is *Potapus* – which carries the idea of “*out of the country*”- John is saying *God’s love is out of this world* - there is no country on earth characterized by such love as God displays in heaven and throughout His vast universe. We are to “*behold the manner of love*” the Father has bestowed on us. The word bestowed means *lavishly given* - it points to the fact that *God’s love is not earned or deserved*. It is purely a gift that comes because of His unmerited favor that He lavishes it upon us. God has loved us from the beginning; God loves us even when we were not lovable. God’s love is unconditional – God will not desert us when we

*mess up – God will love us for eternity. That is why we are to “behold” – we are to stop everything else and pay attention to this. Now this takes effort because we have so many other things crowding into our daily lives. If we do not deliberately and intentionally take the time and strive to block out all of the distractions around us, we will not see Jesus for who He is and for what He has already done for us. If you meet someone and you really enjoy their personality – their company, conversation - the two of you seem to be two peas in a pod but one of you move to another state and you never call each other again or see each other again - then that friendship can quickly fade and disappear. Vs. 1 goes on to say, “we should be called “children of God!” Now I need to clarify something - we hear people all the time say we are “all God’s children.” Is everybody a child of God? Technically speaking, this is true, *but not in the sense John is conveying in these verses.* A more accurate statement would be “all humans beings are apart of God’s creation and God loves all of His creation.” But, not all humans are “God’s saved and redeemed children” – those who have placed saving faith in Jesus alone – one who has confessed with their mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in their heart God raised Him from the dead. *Remember, there is a place called Hell, reserved for the Devil, and everyone else who rejects Jesus as their**

*Lord and Savior. And there is a place called Heaven, reserved for all people who accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior. One group will live in eternity with Christ and one group will eternally be separated from Jesus and all others who have accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior. John further confirms this in the [Gospel of John 1:12-13](#) when it says, “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” John also said in [1 John 4:19](#), “We love Him because He first loved us.” There has never been a time God did not love us...even when we struggle with our signature sins - God still loves us because we are His children...and as children of God – God can’t stop looking at us – He can’t fall out of love with us like humans often times do with each other. You may be feeling like nobody loves you – but you better learn the song *Jesus loves me this I know for the Bible tells me so*. Satan wants you to believe nobody loves you and God does not love you especially, after you commit a sin or make a mistake - but Satan is a liar because [Romans 8:38-39](#) says, “For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of*

God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Even if you’re earthly parents have gone on to be with the Lord – even if your earthly parents abandon you – *Psalm 27:10* says, “*Then the Lord will take care of you.*” Now, the last phrase of vs. 1 says (reread it) - If you have experienced the love of a godly mother, a child, and/or a spouse, you have a foretaste of how wonderful God’s love is for you. Although we are *children of God* that does not mean everyone else in the world recognizes or even cares about our spiritual heritage – our *”Sonship”* – meaning we are *joint heirs* with Jesus – this will make us *enemies* of the world - and since the world (*unsaved humanity*) did not recognize God in the flesh being Jesus the Christ – then it should not be surprising, they do not recognize us (Christians) as God’s offspring. *You see, a servant, is not greater than his master.* A big challenge for a lot of people today is generally, people want to be well liked and respected – and on the surface there is nothing wrong with that...*but we must understand being loved by God means there are going to be some who will dislike you and strive to persecute you just because you stand for truth and the Bible is the Christians standard of truth.* Our opinion as Christians on all issues of life should not evolve over time but rather *they are shaped and settled by what does the Word of God have to say about it.* And *friendship with the world means enmity with*

God according to **James 4:4**...we may have to become content in this evil and mean generation...at least for a season, of being satisfied with the fact Jesus loves me – when you stand up for what the Word of God says - you will lose some friends/acquaintances – you may not get invited to all the parties and the “social get togethers” because when people discover you are living **“Biblically correct”** and not **“politically correct”** you may not be invited to a lot of places and events – you see **2 Timothy 4:3** says, ***“For the time will come when they (the unsaved people of this world) will not endure sound doctrine”*** – and if the unsaved world will not put up with sound doctrine then that means they will not want to put up with ***“children of God”*** either...but as long as you know Jesus loves you – you can press on.

Vs. 2 - Now **vs. 1** tells us ***“what we are”*** (children of God) now in **vs. 2** it tells us ***“what we shall be.”*** We will become like Jesus in that we will have a ***glorious new body*** – we may not know all the specifics of our Christian journey, but we know ***“we win.”*** God has a finished portrait of “Louis Rosenthal” and He has one for all “children of God” of what we’re going to look like. Now none of us **“today”** look like the **finish product** – we don’t now because God still has to file off some of our bad habits – He has to touch up our language and thought pattern – He still

has to shape and mold our character issues – there is some stuff He has to remove from our hearts. We don't look like His portrait right Now - but Yet, we will be what He has designed us to be. God saw *Abraham* when he was still *Abram* – God saw *Israel* – when he was still *Jacob* – a name that means trickster – heel grabber – God saw *Paul* when he was still *Saul* persecuting Christians – arranging to have Christians murdered...God saw *Peter* even when he was just *Simone* – a contemptuous – speak first, think last person – God saw the gospel writer *Matthew* when he was still *Levi* – a crooked tax collector. I am sooooo glad that God today sees the best in me when others around me may only see the worst in me...And the people in your family - the people in your church or at work may right now see you for what you are right now...But like the text says...But Oh when Jesus comes...we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

Vs. 3 - This word ***“hope”*** is not referencing some type of ***“lucky chance”*** like you hope you win the Publishers Clearing House Give Away – for a Christian, ***hope*** is defined as ***confident expectation based on the Word of God***. So the Rapture - Jesus the Christ returning for His church as stated in ***1 Thessalonians 4:13-17*** – is a fact therefore, we should purify ourselves – meaning ***keep our lives morally clean***. Although all of us fail

everyday by sinning - that does not mean it should not be our aim to live holy. We can't live a pure life if we're not guarding our eye-gate and our ear gate. We can't live pure and holy if we're not meditating on those things that bring about pure thoughts, actions, and deeds. There will be No "Revival without the Bible."

Vs. 4 -6 in verses 4-6 sin or lawlessness is mentioned **6 times**. When John mentions sins he is talking about a **lifestyle of sin** since all saints sin every day. Really verses 4-9 is one long paragraph in the Greek and the **primary verb is practices**...which again references "lifestyle."

Lawlessness means a person who has full knowledge of the law or rules – one who has knowledge of right and wrong but consciously or purposely does what is wrong or unlawful – a synonym of lawlessness in the verse is iniquity...and what is the result of practicing lawlessness or iniquity as it relates to praying (Psalm 66:18). Lawlessness can also be categorized as outright REBELLION. We have the word of truth to teach us how to live but we exhibit lawlessness when we operate as though we don't have the word. Lawlessness exists when we operate in the flesh (***Galatians 5:19-21***) to not operate in the flesh requires us submitting to the Holy Spirit and being obedient to the Word of God. (we must read the word, study it, meditate on it, and pray it back to

God). Regarding in vs. 5 the phrase - “*You know that He was manifested to take away our sins.*” John defines the mission of Jesus Christ at its most basic root... *What do you think is the basic 101 mission of Jesus coming to the earth?* To take away our sins...to die an sacrificial and atoning death on the cross to take away our sins or pay the price in full for sin. The angel Gabriel promised Joseph regarding the ministry of Jesus: you shall call His name JESUS, for He shall save His people from their sin in *Matthew 1:21*. Now how does Jesus “take away our sins?”

(1). Jesus takes away our sin in the sense of taking the penalty of our sin. This is immediately accomplished when one comes by faith to Jesus.

(Justification)

(2). Jesus takes away our sin in the sense of taking the power of sin away. This is an ongoing work in the lives of those who walk after Jesus.

(Sanctification)

(3). Jesus takes away our sin in the sense of taking the presence of sin away. This is a work that will be completed when we pass into eternity and are glorified with Jesus. *(Glorification)*

The emphasis in these verses is not on sins....but on sin – the practice or lifestyle of sin because 1 John 1:8-10 confirms we all commit sin but in verses 4-6 John’s emphasis is a lifestyle or practice of sin. We have the

Holy Spirit dwelling in us that convicts us when we commit an act of sin.

In **vs. 6** when it says, “***abides in Him***” it means to be in fellowship with Christ – to allow nothing to come between ourselves and Christ. Living a deliberate and habitual lifestyle of sin reflects we’re not abiding with Christ. *Let me emphasize something about the habitual lifestyle of sin...some people in church fall in this category of living a habitual lifestyle of sin...because some people allow Satan to veil sin in their lives...we allow ourselves to believe that since some in the church ***are not*** committing adultery, committing murder, committing burglary/thefts, abusing drugs/alcohol that we’re not habitual sinners...but in most churches the sins that are the most abundant are things like – *we are commanded to go ye therefore and make disciples...how many people have you witnessed to intentionally this week? The Bible says study to show yourself approved...how many of you fall in the category of watching more TV in one night than reading the Bible in 3 months...the Bible commands us to forgive...how many of you are walking around right now with unforgiveness in your heart...the Bible forbids us to gossip...what would be your first response to someone calling you and saying “girl” or man” guess what I heard about so and so.” My brothers**

and sisters *we can't be hearers only...we have to also be doers of the word!*

Vs. 7 – Little children again refers to *new Christians – immature Christians...those just beginning their journey – those most susceptible to false teaching are the “little children” – each week we should pray that God will enlarge our territory with new believers (little children) and then we must pray for their journey each week when new members/believers join us. At TMFBC we teach/preach from the Bible...this is the predominant reason I encourage you to place on your timeline your church's worship service and sermon snippets...what is said can be backed up in the Word...Regarding the phrase “*little children let no one deceive you*” it is a reference to false teachers and counterfeit Christianity – Millions claim to be Christian but millions do not believe Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life...the only way unto salvation. Contextually, during this time frame Gnostics were trying to convince true believers that a person could be saved and still practice sin (*again body is evil only spirit good – that spirit of Gnotisim still exist especially in the LGBT movement today*). This is an evil spirit and false teaching that is prevalent in the church. There are church denominations like the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America that is appointing gay*

Bishops, priests etc...there are groups of pastors coming together at conferences saying homosexuality is not sin. This group is living lawless – living in open rebellion against God’s word. If a person can enjoy deliberate sin and they do not experience the convicting power of the Holy Spirit or God’s chastening...they had better examine himself/herself to see whether or not he/she is really born again. John says let no one deceive you or led you astray. In the end times - the times we’re currently living in let no one deceive you is often times mentioned...because Satan knows his time is short and he is stirring up his followers with the great deception...many scholars believe the great deception is going to be Aliens/UFO’s will take out the Christians when God raptures His church because Christians are too narrow minded; they say we don’t accept all people living their own lifestyle...Now regarding the phrase in **vs. 7 “*he who practices righteousness*” Since Christians sin daily, how can we be declared righteous? We are righteous because of a right standing with Jesus Christ – we practice righteousness when we live a lifestyle of Christ. Righteous conduct or fruit reveals who we are.**

Vs. 8 - Again this word sin is referring to a lifestyle of sin. Where/when did man obtain is sin nature? Our sin nature derives from Genesis 3:6-

7). *Consistent and long term sinful living is not characteristic of a Christian.* “For this purpose” Jesus came to free us from the penalty of Satan – to give us the power to overcome Him. In the end Satan loses and is cast into the lake of fire forever. **John gives us another contrast in this verse – Christ who had no sin and the devil who can do nothing but sin.** The word **destroy** here does not mean annihilate because Satan is still very busy and at work right now (can’t I get a witness). **But the word destroy here carries the idea of being rendered inoperative – robbed of power.** Satan is mightier than man but *he is no match for God...he has to get permission to send storms our way or temptations...God only allows only what He knows we are prepared to deal with (proof is 1 Corinthians 10:13).* So be encouraged to know that God has allowed whatever trial/storm you may be going through even in this Coronavirus pandemic...and He will take you through it or remove it from you. So trust God and watch Him work it out for your good and His glory. He does everything in His perfect timing.

Vs. 9 – Regarding the phrase, “*Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him*” - the change from being **of the devil** to being **children of God** comes as **we are born of God**; when this happens, our old nature, patterned after the instinctive rebellion of Adam, dies –

and we are given a new nature, patterned after the instinctive obedience of Jesus Christ (Read [1 Corinthians 5:17](#) - *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new*). When we have been born of God or as we most commonly call it – *born again* we receive the *indwelling of the Holy Spirit* - “His Seed” and we now have the power to resist the devil when we submit to God. Another contrast – God’s seed – the Holy Spirit and 1 Peter talks about a corruptible seed that is from Satan in [1 Peter 1:23](#). This “*seed remains*” in those born again – God loves man so much He is willing to reside in us permanently. If you had to guess...what type of person do you think is the most miserable person on earth? *Perhaps the most miserable person on the planet is a Christian trying to straddle the fence – he can’t enjoy sinning because the Holy Spirit is convicting him of sin and since he has experienced the fullness of God before, nothing else will do so his half hearted worship or service and half hearted enjoyment of sin is never satisfactory.*

The love of God and the Life of Love

[Vs. 10](#) – the phrase “*in this*” what does the “this” refer to? “This” refers to a *lifestyle*...your lifestyle will allow one to tell if one is of God or of the devil. In [Matthew 7:16](#) Jesus said *you will know them by the fruit they*

*bear...We can talk the Christian language but it is in *how you live that best reflect who you are.* Unsaved people bear the fruit of *Galatians 5:19-21* and saved people bear the fruit of *Galatians 5:22-23*. Christians pray, read the bible, study the bible, witness to the lost, serve with gladness, give sacrificially and with cheerfulness obey God, etc. They do these things not to get saved but because they are saved. A converted Indian said I have two dogs in me...one good and one bad – they are always fighting...the good dog wants me to do good things...the bad dog want him to do bad things...he asked, do you know which dog wins? The Indians said, “the one I feed the most.” A Christian who feeds the new nature with the word of God, worship, and with prayer will have power to live a godly life. What kind of spiritual food are you eating and drinking?*

Vs. 11/12 – Loving one another is a hallmark and basic trait of a Christian...love is a choice and not just a feeling. Jesus said by this you will know that you are my disciples – that you love one another...this was a statement to Christians...the world is supposed to see Christians loving one another...*do you think our church and other churches you visit display this quality?* A person is most interested in what you know about Jesus when they know you care about them. When you show love,

you open up the door to witnessing. John then contrast Cain and Able - Cain was wicked and of the devil – but Abel was of God. Love is proof of a changed life – love is not optional for Christians – and love is more action than it is verbiage.

Vs. 13-15 – How many of your bibles has the superscript John 15:18 after the verse...these are what is called parallel Scriptures, not an all exhaustive list but a verse that corresponds to ***vs. 13***. Jesus said in ***John 15:18*** - ***“If the world hates you, you know that it hated me before it hated you.”*** Regarding the phrase – ***“Do not marvel”*** John in essence is saying ***we shouldn’t be surprised when the world hates us; but we should be surprised when there is hatred among the body of Christ.*** And this is because Jesus said in **John 13:35** – ***“By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”*** Christians are not going to be the ***most popular people***. The ***Gospel will offend...now the Gospel will offend*** but ***we (Christians) who share the Gospel truth should not be offensive when we share it.*** Christians will be despised, persecuted, talked about because of our faith in God and living a Christian lifestyle. **Matthew 5:11-12** says, ***“Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they***

persecuted the prophets who were before you. Let me see if you are paying attention to frequently stated truths from the pastor because I say this frequently...*If you and the devil are not having regular head-on collisions; what does that mean? You and the devil are traveling in the same direction.* The unsaved world will hates us because we make them aware of their sinful state as we live righteously. When we say (prayerfully with grace and compassion) – homosexuality and transgenderism is sin...drunkenness is sin...many are not going to be happy with you...you will not be popular. *When I took evangelism classes in seminary usually every other week our class was a practicum: we'd go out in the community of the seminary and share the Gospel and every time we'd go to the NE Mall in Ft. Worth within 15-20 minutes of witnessing in the mall we'd get kicked out of the mall.* Now in the malls you find people all the time stopping you asking you to participate in surveys – signing you up for giveaways that really was nothing but a timeshare selling technique and nobody bothered them...*but you can't share Jesus.* The unsaved world cleverly came up with a way to get prayer out of schools...well, the *Coronavirus pandemic* has allowed prayer to return to both the church, and since school is at home...what is our excuse now for not having prayer in the school now? Now look at

vs. 14 – The phrase “*passed from death to life*” refers to passing from *spiritual death* to *spiritual life* because we are born again...we received the Holy Spirit and we exhibit love for one another. (*Reader to look at a parallel passage – Ephesians 2:1-7*). John is stressing how much loving one another truly means to God in this chapter and these verses. A *love for the people of God* is a basic sign of being born again. If this love is not evident in our lives, our salvation can be questioned. *This is why re-opening the church under today’s present conditions with the Coronavirus pandemic in Texas reflects things getting worse and not better means the church if it loves its people must be cautious and error on the side of caution that rushing to open the doors right now. It is not only out of an abundance of caution we do this but out of an abundance of love for the people we will be cautious.* Additionally this phrase “*we know that we have passed from death to life*” **when we hate a person, we’re actually a murderer at heart** – Cain hated God’s acceptance of Abel’s sacrifice then he murdered Abel. Regarding **vs. 15** - *John is not saying that anyone who has committed murder is automatically going to hell...Who can provide a Biblical example? Exodus 2:11-12 – “Moses saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his brethren. So he looked this way and that way, and when he saw no one, he killed the Egyptian and hid*

him in the sand.” Paul arranged for Christians including Stephen to be stoned to death...The tense of this verb refers to a continued unrepentant action. A murderer by lifestyle, who is unrepentant will not inherit the kingdom of God. The reference point is not of a murderer who had eternal life and then lost it because he sinned...No, it is murder from one who is not saved. *The only unforgivable sin is blasphemy of the Holy Spirt* – you reject God from saving you. Finally, John mentions the word “know” frequently...we can know Jesus – we can know we know love – we can know we have eternal life. If you were to tell a “seeker of Christ – someone you are discipling” some simple basic proofs of what being a Christian is: what would you say: I believe there are three (3) basic tests to measure the proof of a genuine Christian.

1. the Truth test (if we believe in what the Bible teaches is true especially what it teaches about Jesus and salvation)
2. the Love test (if we show the love of Jesus to others)
3. the Moral test (if our conduct has been changed and is becoming more like Jesus)

Then our claim to be a Christian can be proven true.

Vs. 16 – What is the “*this*” – Jesus died a sacrificial, atoning yet horrific death on the cross that resulted in Him dying in our place for sin. But He got up. His death was the propitiation for our sin...His death was accepted by God as the just penalty of sin that was paid in full. Romans

5:8 is a parallel text for this phrase of **vs. 6**. Love has multiple meanings...there is **eros** love – sexual love – erotic love reserved only for Biblical marriage...it's sin any any other contest. **Storge** love – love for family; it's the kind of love between a parent and child, or between family members in general. **Philia** love – brotherly love – we get our English word Philadelphia from this word. And finally there is **Agape** love – the highest form of love and it requires God's help to love at this level; it's the type of love that looks out for the betterment of another. It is a self-giving love that gives without demanding or expecting repayment. Now, we must also know love is not just a feeling but love is about a choice – its action. The phrase *“ought to lay down our lives for the brethren”* – so does that mean you should be willing to die for another person? Lord forbid, if we encounter an active shooter at the church, who is going to take the bullet for me? Is this what this phrase *“ought to lay down our lives for the brethren”* means? No, this phrase refers to when we serve others, sacrifice for others without looking for anything in return. We can do this on food distribution Saturday's – going to the Samaritan Inn to serve, and everyday divine appointments by God He sends our way we move on them. Are you willing to sacrifice

sleeping in late – or playing ball, going fishing etc. when needed for kingdom advancement?

Vs. 17-18 – In these verses John highlights what it means to love in real life. Again love is a “action” word – it’s something we “choose” to do...it’s not just warm and fuzzy feelings. In these verses John mirrors what James said about faith. Faith by itself, if it does not have works is dead. Whoever has this world’s goods or livelihood and sees someone in need cannot show the world the love of God. “*Need*” refers to the *basic needs of food, water, clothing, and shelter*. This verse highlights for me why I encourage our membership to participate (active and/or passage) in our food distribution and Dorcas closet ministries so much. We are called to love (especially) those in our sphere of influence. And yes, it’s not easy to love those who live an open illegal/immoral life or those who do not subscribe to your geopolitical views. When you hear some people say I just love everybody; sometimes that is a copout...*because for some; loving everybody in general may be an excuse for loving nobody in particular.*” And then the phrase – “*And shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?*” Whatever love we may say we have for mankind, if we are not charitable and benevolent, we make our profession of faith in Christ Jesus being our Lord and Savior a lie.

Vs. 19 - the phrase “*and by this*” - this refers to showing love –

demonstrating love. What are some of the best examples of

demonstrative love verses in the Bible: ***Romans 5:8 – John 3:16.***

Vs. 20 – (In contrast to how we are to show how we are to love and give

we can easily go too far to the right) - God knows our heart and our

motives...matter of fact God says this about the heart of a man in

Jeremiah 17:9 – “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately

wicked; who can know it?” But that is man when He is unsaved...that

is man operating in his strength and not God’s because **Romans 8:1**

refers to man when He is saved: it says, “*There is now no condemnation*

to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh

but according to the Spirit.” God is greater than our heart. You can hear

of a worthy charitable activity and want to give but don’t have it and

you might beat yourself up because you can’t help – but God knows; we

can sometimes be too hard on ourselves. Refer to **Mark 16:7** after Peter

wept bitterly for denying Jesus three times; he repented and Jesus knew

it...after His resurrection He sent a special message to Peter to remind

Him he was forgiven. When God forgives us...we have to forgive others

and ourselves.

Vs. 21/22 – When we are in fellowship with God, our heart will not condemn us, because we know that we can have confidence toward God and our standing with Him. God gives us peace and not confusion. Love for the brethren helps produce confidence towards God, and confidence toward God gives you boldness in asking for what you need...John will redirect this verse with a more *profound and awe inspiring verses* in ***chapter 5 verses 14-15*** and these verses are akin to what the psalmist said in the ***84th Psalm verse 11***. This does not mean that you earn answers to prayer by loving the brethren. Rather, it means that your love for the brethren proves that you are living in the will of God whereby God can answer your prayer. Love is the fulfilling of God's law (***Romans 13:8-10***); therefore, when you love the brethren, you are obeying His commandments and He is able to answer your requests. Regarding **vs. 22** it is one of the greatest promises in the Bible – ask God for anything that is of kingdom advancement in faith – bank on receiving it. I don't believe the church in general believes this and certainly not living like it does. This verses meaning is akin to ***John 15:7*** also. John is also making a distinction here: Keeping God's commandments is very important to answered prayer. But we should make a distinction between the *prayer of the man who is saved*, and the

cry of the heart seeking mercy from God for salvations. For the sinner who comes to Jesus in prayer, seeking mercy, the only requirement is faith in God - sincerity of heart. God does not demand our obedience before He saves us.

Vs. 23 – Regarding the phrase “we should believe on the name of His Son” - John is making a reference to what Jesus said in *John 6:29*: ***“This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.”*** The first commandment and the greatest work we can do, is to believe in Jesus. The phrase *“believe on the name of Jesus”* also refers to His authority – the power is in the name of Jesus – to believe on the name of Jesus is to pattern our lives after Christ – to imitate him....to stand on His promises. Since the power is in the name of Jesus...why do you think there are an overwhelming majority of “Christian – gospel songs that substitute “He” for the name of Jesus? When the world sees us and hear us they ought to see us and hear us and make a reference to us like they did in *Acts 11:26*. Not only are we to believe on the name of Jesus but we are to “love one another.” John in this second commandment is making reference to Jesus’ teaching from John 15:12 when Jesus said, **“This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.”** The love of the brethren is not an option for some Christians; it is

a commandment for all. This is why I am so supportive of the food distribution and Dorcas closet ministries; when you love the brethren and you see need, you want to help. Sometimes the help is providing physical/material need and sometimes the help is prayer.

Vs. 24 – The phrase “abides in Him” is critical to understanding the meaning of this verse. Those who abide in Jesus know they are abiding in Jesus because of the presence and assurance of the Holy Spirit. John again is giving the same idea as Paul provided in Romans 8:16 (The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God). The Holy Spirit is our *seal and guarantee* that we are children of the king – we receive the Holy Spirit at the very moment we accept Jesus as our savior (Justification). We live in Christ and He lives in us – it’s mutual...it’s called being in fellowship. So if you can sin continuously and never feel remorseful - never have the conviction of your conscience by the Holy Spirit you might want to get a spiritual checkup.