

Dan Ricciardelli "We Know"
Tucson Zoom 12/19/21
(Transcribed by Wendy Sellick)

Amen and good morning everybody. I see lots of pictures on my screen this time. Sometimes I don't but this time I do so it's really great to see all of you. It kind of makes me homesick in a thousand different directions if that's possible. I wish we could be with you in person but we're trusting that God will work it out so that we will be able to do that once again.

Turn to Isaiah 32. We have so much to say and so little time and that's a scary thing when a preacher says something like that but we want to use Isaiah 32 as an umbrella. Everything that we're going to talk about today comes under this covering, under this heading. The first verse was such a wonderful promise and it's a promise that is being fulfilled. Isaiah 32:1, Behold a king shall reign in righteousness and princes shall rule in judgment. The last time we were together, you probably don't recall, we were talking about some aspects of the manifestation of the sons of God. The next big thing that God is going to do in this world is the manifestation of the sons of God, part of that is that they will rule and reign with Christ, having delivered the creation from the bondage of corruption. And what we notice today is the bondage of corruption. We talked about that then but let me just reiterate that what is lacking in government, what is lacking in the economic system, what is lacking in every system of our world is righteousness. There is nothing but falsehood. There is nothing but iniquity. There is nothing but hypocrisy. There is nothing but evil that is spewing forth all across our world and as you and I look at this we are on one hand disheartened and yet on the other hand knowing that these are the very kinds of things that Jesus prophesied of in Matthew 24 and following, these are the things the word of God has talked about and Isaiah 32:1 is all the more poignant, all the more powerful when we realize that long long ago through the prophet Isaiah-now remember the prophet Isaiah said some things that came to pass-Isaiah said, behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son. Family, that came to pass. Isaiah was a real prophet. He was a true prophet. The things that he said came to pass not because it was written on his business card and not because he had a little thing on YouTube. Isaiah was a real prophet. He spoke the words of the Lord and they came to pass. And he said some big stuff like Isaiah

chapter 53, so many of you know so many of the verses. And the same Isaiah comes out with this word, Behold a king shall, emphasis on the word shall. It's not maybe, it's not hope so. It's for real. It's for sure. It's as sure as the virgin conceived and bore a son. It's as sure as Isaiah 53. It's as sure as the highway of holiness in the 35th chapter. It's as sure as the great things said in chapters 61 and 62, Arise shine, for thy light is come and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. This is just as sure, a king SHALL reign in righteousness and princes SHALL rule in judgment. And the righteousness and the justice and the true equity that comes from God and nowhere else is going to be seen in this world. Christ shall reign for a thousand years and the way I see it right now is that he will have an administration of sons of God who are like him spiritually. Who are like him in terms of authority. Who are like him in their relationship with God. They aren't Him but they are like Him and this King Jesus is going to reign in righteousness. Notice a couple of things later in this chapter, vs 5 seems to be a bit of a description of what things become like when darkness rules, like it seems to be ruling now across our world, it says in vs 5, The vile person shall no more be called liberal nor the churl said to be bountiful. For the vile person will speak villainy and his heart will work iniquity to practice hypocrisy and to utter error against the Lord. Because, family, it's all against the Lord. Psalm 2 says they gather together against the Lord. The rulers have taken council together, that's a conspiracy and that conspiracy is against the Lord. That's Psalm 2. To utter error against the Lord. To make empty the soul of the hungry and he will cause the drink of the thirsty to fail. And on and on it goes. But notice in vs 15 it says, Until the Spirit be poured upon us-upon us-from on high. And the wilderness be a fruitful field and the fruitful field be counted for a forest. Then judgement shall dwell in the wilderness and righteousness remain in the fruitful field. Listen-and the work of righteousness shall be peace and the effect of righteousness be quietness and the assurance forever. And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation and in sure dwellings and in quiet resting places. And so God is going to do something in the end of this age. Highlighted here is one aspect of it. One facet of it prophesied here by the prophet Isaiah and as he ends with assurance and sureness that's sort of what I want to hone in on this morning. Some assurance. Some confidence in the word of God and in the promise of God. And so I'd like you to turn to Acts 3:16

Now in Acts 3:16 I want to start a little mini sermon for you. This passage is so beautiful and highlights the power of God, but the power of God in the face of adversity. This is very important, family. I'll read from vs 11, 'and as the lame man which was healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch that was called Solomon's greatly wondering. And when Peter saw it he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel why marvel ye at this? For why look ye so earnestly on us as by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk. The God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob, the God of our fathers has glorified his son Jesus whom ye delivered up and denied him in the presence of Pilot when he was determined to let him go. But you denied the holy one and the just and desired a murderer to be granted unto you and killed the prince of life who God has raised from the dead whereof we are witnesses and his name through faith in his name has made this man strong, whom ye see and know. Yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.' The phrase 'in the presence of you all' doesn't quite capture what is meant. It's almost like it's 'given him perfect soundness in your face. Despite the fact that you're against him and you killed him and you wouldn't stand up for him before Pilot and in spite of all that Jesus, through faith in his name, has caused all this in spite of you', in that sense in the presence of you all. Now the word 'given' here, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness. These people knew this guy. They knew that he was lame. They knew this was not a ruse. They knew that this was not a fake. They knew that somebody, and Peter was telling that the somebody was God, brought strength, brought healing and it was seen. It was known. And everyone in that place could be absolutely assured of what had taken place. Now you notice that this was a 3:16. Now let's turn to another 3:16, John 3:16.

We're talking about assurance. When that man was healed by the power of God in the name of Jesus there was nothing else to say. It was obvious. And so with John 3:16, I don't think there's anyone that would doubt this. I don't think there's anyone that would not be assured of this verse, if you're a believer. If you're a fundamentalist believer. If you're an evangelical believer. "For God SO loved the world that he GAVE" now gave here is the same word as 'given' in Acts 3:16. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever" and I want to put the emphasis here "that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have

everlasting life.” This is one of the bold statements that John makes. He makes so many BOLD statements. This is one of them and a beautiful one at that. And you and I can have assurance that in the love of God, in the salvation of God, if you have believed in Jesus then you would not perish but you would have everlasting life. Now I’d like you to turn to Ephesians 3:16

We saw in John 3:16 in a very big way, in a very spiritual way, in a way that blankets time and space God GAVE his only begotten son. And then we saw in Acts 3:16 a specific example, a practical happening that stems from the fact that God GAVE his only begotten son. And what happened there was that through the name of his son that was given, some word, was given to that man strength. Was given to that man healing and deliverance that everyone could see. So based on those two things when we look at Ephesians 3:16, this is talking about you and me. This isn’t out there some place. This is right here. Right now. And so it says that he, the Lord, would grant you-now the word ‘grant’ is the same word as ‘gave’ in John 3:16. It’s the same word as ‘given’ in Acts 3:16. Here in Ephesians 3:16 ‘that he would grant you according to the riches of his glory to be strengthened with might by his spirit in the inner man.’ And what I want to assure you today is that God is doing this. This is what God is doing. What a privilege it is. What a necessity it is, if you and I will ever be or become what God wants us to become we must be strengthened with might by His spirit in the inner man. And God has granted that to you. He’s granted that to me. So today we probably want to talk a little bit about the inner man. But before we get into that I want to remind you of something that I’ve said from time to time, you don’t have to turn to Luke 2 you know it so well, and here we are in the Christmas season and surly different people are still watching on TV ‘Charlie Brown’s Christmas’ where Linus gets up there and he quotes some of those verses from the early part, ‘bringing tidings of great joy, behold this day is born unto you in the city of David a savior which is Christ the Lord’ and what a powerful revelation it is for anyone that ever got mixed up in a bunch of super spiritual thinking that somehow they thought that Jesus had to do something else in order to become the Christ or that it didn’t really happen until his resurrection or things like that. We have the reminder, and we all could have read it long ago in Luke 2, that that little baby in the manger was already the savior. He’s already the Christ. He’s already the Lord. And that is because there’s

only one. Daniel's prophecies and the prophecies in Isaiah and elsewhere only point to one human being. And they narrowed it all down, it was narrowed down to the days of the Roman Empire. It was narrowed down to the city of Bethlehem. It was narrowed down in terms of time and space but then the prophecy that I mentioned earlier REALLY narrows it down because there's only one. Isaiah said 'behold a virgin shall conceive'. And so there's no other that it could possibly have been. And so there was not a contest to see if this guy over here might become the Christ or some guy over there might become the Christ. He's the Christ, the Savior, the Lord from the beginning. But you also know, and we've mentioned this many times, that in the very same chapter somewhere around vs 40, or it might be the 39th, it says 'and the child grew and waxed strong in spirit'. And so though he was who he was yet he had to grow INTO who he was. Now I say that not so much thinking of him but more thinking of us. 'For beloved now are we the sons of God. And it doth not yet appear what we shall be.' And so you are who you are right now by virtue of a new birth. You are a new creation man. You are a new kind of creature that other than Jesus the world had never seen anything like it before. And while all that is true it's just as true for you and me that we must grow INTO who we are just as the child Jesus grew and waxed strong in spirit. In fact the phrasing 'waxed strong in spirit' in Luke 2 is the exact same phrasing in the Greek as Ephesians 3:16 where we're reading now, 'to be strengthened with might by his spirit' is the same phrasing as 'waxed strong in spirit.' Now that would be a good place to shout Amen, jump up and touch the ceiling, because what I just told you is this. We grow like Jesus grew. It is granted to you and to me through the riches of his glory to be able to grow like Jesus was able to grow. May you and I, young and old wax strong in spirit. It's hard to put into words everything that phrase means. It means a lot. In fact prior to it being said of Jesus it had been said of John the Baptist. He grew also and waxed strong in spirit, speaking of a relationship with God Almighty. Speaking of the authority that is being brought forth in that person's life by the Spirit of God. The authority of holding, always holding, 24/7 holding to the values of God. Holding to the mind of God. Holding to the will of God above everything else. And holding to the love of God. So it's important that we realize that the way we're going to get from point A, where we are right now, to point B, where there will be a manifestation of the sons of God that will deliver the creation from the bondage of corruption and rule and reign with Christ a thousand years, the way we get

from here to there is we grow like Jesus grew. May we take advantage of the situation that God has given to us even of somewhat of isolation, no one is isolated from the Holy Spirit. No one is isolated from the word of God. No one is isolated from a relationship with God, in fact perhaps other relationships and other things could prove distractions that God has removed in this time in order to hone in to you and me to have a deeper personal relationship with God SOMEWHAT like Jesus had. Jesus was the only begotten son, true but yet he is bringing forth many sons unto glory that will share in a similar way a relationship with the father like he had. That's what it's all about. And I find it interesting that so many of God's people do not understand what God's plan is. What the reason is that they got saved in the first place. John 1:12 is very clear, 'as many as received him to them gave he power to become the sons of God even to them that believe on His name' And so the reason that Christ died at Calvary, the reason that he rose from the dead, the reason that he shed forth the Holy Spirit is not so you and I could play church. It's not so that preachers like me could play preacher. But rather he did this so that you and I could grow like he grew and that given that power we would let God work it in our lives that we would be strengthened with might by his spirit in the inner man and utilize, in a sense, to become not mere Christians, not Pentecostals, not Charismatics, not Move of Gods but to become the Sons of God. So when you don't know that then you will fall for a lot of different rationales, different fads and fancies that run through the church and so every wind of doctrine that blows, if you don't understand what God really wants you can be blown about by winds of doctrine. So there's a wind of doctrine that blows around that says things like we Christians need to take over government, we Christians need to take over the media, we Christians need to take over this and we need to take over that and so on and so forth. That's just one wind. There are other winds. For example the wind of Jewishness. All across America perfectly fine Gentile Christians who are accepted by God in Christ just the way they are are allowing themselves to get talked into becoming Jewish and they want to learn about Jewish stuff, they want to cook Jewish food and they want to keep Jewish feasts. Some of them want to worship on Saturday instead of Sunday and all these different things. So if you don't know what God is doing and what God wants to do with you your desire to do SOMETHING will draw to you or you will be drawn to something other than what God wants to emphasize. So important to read the word of God to understand

what the will of the Lord is. So God spare us from the emphasis on Moses or the emphasis on prophets or the emphasis on angels. In Hebrews 1, read it. You'll find that one of the first things he's saying is Jesus is better than Moses, Jesus is better than the prophets and Jesus is better than angels. These themes continually reoccur. They are reoccurring once again at the end of the age. Do not allow yourself to be distracted from God's program. And let me mention another one. And that is that God's help for you and me is somehow outside of us, whether that help would be in the political dimension or some other dimension but what we've got to understand is that God's help for you and me is now, always was, always will be inside us. God wants to strengthen you with His might, by His spirit in your inner man. Thus changing you so that you would be transformed by the renewing of your mind. That you will be transformed in the spirit of your mind, from what you used to be, the weak powerless non-relational Christian that you used to be into one that is walking with God and that is conferred upon with power and with authority and with wisdom and with the life of God able to dispense that, able to change situations, able literally to deliver creation from the bondage of corruption because by the power of His spirit you and I have been delivered from the bondage of corruption. And in this it's important to note that God is therefore teaching you and me to love righteousness and to hate iniquity. And that doesn't mean out there but God wants me to hate iniquity in me. Anything self-aggrandizing in me. Anything that would be on the take in me. Anything that would use a position of power or authority or whatever for my own ends and my own purposes. God is teaching me to hate that in me. He's teaching you and me to love righteousness. That whatever sacrifice needs to be made for righteousness, for doing the right thing, for pleasing God. These are some of the lessons that God wants to teach SOMEBODY as He strengthens them by His might, by His spirit in the inner man. Now let's go to 1 John 3.

1 John 3 is a very powerful chapter. Remembering what Jesus had said to the two disciples that were walking with him on the road to Emmaus after they brought up some different things and questions he says to them, 'Oh fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken.' And I want to, hopefully, take those words to heart myself and I want to learn to believe all that the prophets have spoken. There's a lot that the prophets have spoken about Christ and there's a lot that the prophets have spoken

about you and me and our interconnected relationship with Christ. And so it's important to believe it all and I think most of the evangelical church likes to focus on those prophecies and those scripture verses and those teachings that simply concerns Jesus himself. It's a lot simpler. It's a lot easier. And the ramifications of anything else don't belong to us when do that but yet if we're going to truly believe all of the words that the prophets have spoken then we have got to come face to face with a lot of things particularly things like John 3, and I want to remind you that we're talking about assurance, and you see in the same way that we are assured that God gave his only begotten son and the same way that we are assured that that lame man was healed in the name of Jesus. We can be that assured that God has granted to us to be strengthened with might by His spirit in the inner man.

Now just a little word about the author, John. His writings are revered for some reasons. John the humble fisherman, the brother of James, the son of Zebedee called by Jesus at one point one of the Sons of Thunder. He was probably the youngest apostle and referred to, among other things, as the disciple that Jesus loved. Now Jesus loved all the disciples but there was some special love between Jesus and John. John was in that inner circle of three along with James and Peter. They together were present on the mount of transfiguration. They were present at Gethsemane. At the cross it seemed like everyone else had run away but John was still standing there at the foot of the cross and Jesus actually entrusted to his friend that he loved the care of his own mother there. Then John with Peter discovered that the tomb was empty. He was there at the day of Pentecost, the healing of the lame man which we just talked about, later he was exiled on Patmos, received for us that vision we call the book of Revelation. I believe it's accurate to say that unlike all the other apostles John actually lived to a ripe old age and in that old age wrote the gospel of John, wrote these three epistles. I tend to believe the story that he was lowered into boiling oil and survived, whether that is true or not we know this is true that he spent his last days in Ephesus and when they would have their meeting and he was very old and weak and frail they would bring him out into the meetings for or less to bless the people and he would always say the same thing every time they brought him out. He would just say 'Little children, love one another.'" So to him all those experiences and all that personal experience with Jesus and the long life

in the church and what a privilege it must have been for the people at the end of the first century, young people at the end of the first century could actually lay eyes on someone who 60 years before that had actually walked with Jesus, had laid his head on Jesus chest. These are the things that would have been such a terrific privilege and when he wanted to boil it all down to one sentence the one sentence was this, 'Little children, love one another.' And so that encapsulates the whole command of God and the whole power of God toward us.

So in 1 John, if you've read it you know that he uses the phrasing 'we know' many times. That's why we're here because when John says 'we know' brother you better know. We better know it when John says 'we know' 21 times. In 1 John he uses the phrase 'we know' and then he tells us something wonderful. These are some of those bold proclamations. Look in chapter 5 vs 11. Talking about assurance, here's some assurance. This is 1 John 5:11, 'And this is the record that God hath given to us eternal life and this life is in His son. He that hath the son hath life. And he that hath not the son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the the name of the son of God' Now here's the reason why. 'That ye may know' That ye may know 'that ye have eternal life and that ye may believe on the name' or continue to believe on the name 'of the son of God.' So this is part of the knowing, this is part of the assurance that John by the spirit is ministering to us. We know these things. And I want to ask you this question. Do you know you have eternal life? Have you let anybody talk you out of it? Out of the knowing? No one's going to talk you out of eternal life but I suppose the fancy dancy teachings could talk you out or talk me out of KNOWING that we have eternal life. The way you have eternal life is you believe on Him. That's what John 3:16 says. 'Whosoever.' That could be you. That could be me. I might not be much but at least I qualify to be a whosoever. OK? I don't have to be a Hollywood star. I don't have to be anybody special. I just have to be a whosoever. 'And whosoever believeth in him will not perish but will have everlasting life.' That's the record. And this is the record too. That we know that we have eternal life. Now I think I the reason that John writes this is because even then in the first century there was a tendency among human beings like us to not always know it. To not wake up in the morning and the first thing entering you mind is knowing you have eternal life. When you get older the first thing to enter your mind might be a little

notice of a little ache or a pain or a little stiffness of the joints. But knowing where the human condition will take people John reminds us of very practical things in 1 John. John's writing this not because he enjoys writing but he's writing this so that we would know that we have eternal life. Now turn to the 3rd chapter

3rd chapter vs 5. I just find 3 little things that we know. 1 John 3:5. The first thing I think is important that we know he talked about is this, 'And ye know that he (Jesus) was manifested to take away our sins. And in him is no sin.' So I want to ask you, do you know this. Do you know that he was manifested not just to take away signs in some in some undefinable category but he was manifested to take away our sins. You have very specific sins for you. I have very specific sins for me. And he was manifested to take away those very real personal sins and thank God that we are the whosoever and he was manifested to take away our sins. Now that MEANS something. Let me read vs 19 before I forget. In 1 John 3:19, along the same lines it says 'And hereby we know that we are the truth and shall assure our hearts before him.' It's important that our hearts are assured. Isaiah said it. John says it. Vs 20, 'For if our heart condemn us God is greater than our heart and knoweth all things. Beloved if our heart condemn us not then we have confidence toward God.' Once again, John knows the human condition. He's at once very revelatory but at the same time very practical in his epistle. So John knows that we can have moments of doubt. John knows that sometimes if we look back with regret at whatever that sin was that we did a long time ago, or whatever that series of sins were we know in our good moments by faith and by the spirit, we know that he has forgiven us but every once in a while we think back with regret or what have you or we can even have the experience that our heart condemns us. And instead of denying that, John acknowledges that. John acknowledges the human condition but more than simply acknowledging the human condition John points us to the solution for the foibles and the eccentricities and the weaknesses of the human condition. And he says, you know, I understand what it's like to be you. I understand what it's like to be a believer in Jesus. You're not an angel, you're a believer in Jesus. Nobody's saying you're perfect already but you're being strengthened with might by his spirit in the inner man. And you're going in the right direction but as you're going in the right direction and we want to assure our hearts before him. I realize there are

times even now where our hearts condemn us. We look back and we see what a rascal we were. We see what hurt we may have cause to ourselves and others. But then he says, 'for if our heart condemn us God is greater than our hearts.' And right here is where I think of John Cheever's message, I've told you about this before and how much I like it. But I'm going to tell you again. In part of a message he just mentioned that the tomb is empty. I can't remember if he said everything I'm thinking right now or if he didn't but what I took away from it was, Praise God the tomb is empty! Because it's proof positive that my sins are forgiven. Not just the sins that I don't think about but the sins that could even make my heart condemn me. Even those sins are forgiven and the reason is because if you see Jesus when he came into this world, he came into this world to destroy sin. He destroyed the works of the Devil. And if there had been one sin that Jesus was not able to destroy that one sin would have kept him in the grave. It was only one sin that lost the Garden of Eden for Adam. It was only one sin that kept Moses out of the promised land. And if there had been one sin that Christ took a upon him that was too much for him, that he he could not handle, that would have gotten the better of him, then he would not have been able to rise from the dead. One sin would have sunk him and kept him sunk so that when the Bible says and when my brother says 'the tomb is empty' that means that every single sin has been destroyed. Including yours. Including that one that still bothers you. Including that one that can continue to cause your heart to condemn you. And so even if we go through those sort of psychological experiences the spiritual truth is greater than that. If our heart condemn us God is greater than our heart who knows all things. He knows all things. He knows what you did. Now get this, he knew what you were going to do before you did it. And he made you anyway. He didn't say, 'now Dan, he is such a rascal that I'm not even going to create him. If he's going to do this, this and this I'm not even going to bother to make him. But instead of that he knew precisely what you were going to do. I'm looking at all of you here, I see ya. He knew what you were going to do before you did it and he created you anyway. And not only did he create you but he redeemed you in Christ Jesus and the lamb for you was slain not as a result of what you did but was slain before the foundation of the world in anticipation that he would be able to forgive you. So even if your heart condemn you God is greater than your heart. And, if our heart condemn us not then we have confidence with God. Do you KNOW that? DO YOU KNOW the tomb is

empty? DO YOU KNOW that he was manifested? Not just to take away everybody else's sins but he was manifested for this purpose, to take away your sins as well as mine.

Now that assurance of eternal life causes us to be happy people. You cannot even half way know that and not be a happy person. What is now going to separate you from the love of God? Would it be tribulation? Not when you know your sins are forgiven. Would it be distress? Would it be peril? Would it be the sword? We say, oh well, I'm not going to face peril. I'm not going to face the sword. Think again. It could be coming to a town near you very soon for a lot of Christians. You could face peril but you'll find that if you truly understand that the tomb is empty, your sins are forgiven, you've got an eternity with Christ ahead of you then you are, and to quote Demos Shakarian's book title, 'The Happiest People On Earth'. We should be at all times because of the fact our sins are forgiven. What life it is to be forgiven! What a life it is to be clean! What a life it is to have eternal life! And so a Christian then isn't despondent or depressed or defeated. Not if they know the purpose for which He was manifested. It was to take away our sins.

The next thing I want you to note is 1John 3:24. We know he was manifested to take away our sins. Secondly we know this, 1John 3:24, 'And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in Him and He in him. And hereby we know that He abideth in us by the spirit which he hath given us.' This verse goes along with Ephesians 3:16 where we're strengthened with might by his spirit. He abides in us and as he abides in us he abides by the spirit which he has given us. So this begins to speak to us of how this actually works. Let me explain, in vs 5 we know what he did but in vs 24 we know what he is doing. We have perfect assurance and perfect confidence in what he did. And now we can have the same confidence, the same perfect assurance in what he is doing. And what he is doing is he is abiding in us. What he is doing is he is strengthening us right now by his spirit in the inner man. Now this all leads somewhere. It isn't just a loop that just keeps going and going and going but it has a point. It is leading somewhere but I want to concentrate for a minute on this knowing that Christ is in you.

2 Corinthians 13. I don't often minister on this verse but let's take a look at it. The context of what we're about to read, I think we can get a little sample of in vs 3. 'Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me' there were some doubters in the midst way back in the first century 'which to you ward is not weak but is mighty in you, for though he was crucified through weakness yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you. Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith. Prove your own selves. Know ye not your own self how that Jesus Christ is in you except ye be reprobates' And so I bring up this particular verse because there many times when we are quoting 'Christ in you the hope of glory' but we have to be careful that we don't relegate this 'Christ in you' to some personless, impersonal power or spiritual substance or some kind of blob of some spiritual something called Christ. I've actually heard people almost put it that way. The Christ that is in you is not just some christ, some anointing. The Christ that is in you is Jesus Christ and I want to ask you, Do you know that? Do you know that it's Jesus Christ that is in you? 'Know ye not your own selves? How that Jesus Christ is in you, except you be reprobates' And so that life that is in you is the life of Christ, the life of Christ Jesus.

So now, looking at how this actually works, I'm going to go back to 1John 3. The way this actually works, this Him abiding in me and strengthening me with might by his spirit in the inner man, I want to tell you it's real. We're not talking types and shadows. We're not talking dark sayings. We're not talking similes and metaphors, though we're going to use similes and metaphors. But what I'm talking about is very real. You don't have to turn to it but I want to start with 1Corinthians 6. You know that vs 17 says, 'he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit' And when you were born again, that beautiful day when you gave your heart to Christ by faith, by faith you were joined to Him. Something very wonderful happened in your life. Your spirit which is the 'candle of the Lord searching all the inward parts of the belly,' your candle which up to that point in time was not lit, your candle got lit! The Lord touched you. The fire of God ignited your spirit. You were dead in trespasses and sins and there was no way you that you could make yourself alive any more than any dead man has the ability to make himself alive. But God touched you and when you received Christ into your heart by faith your spirit came alive and you are now alive unto God and you have passed from darkness to light. You have

have passed from death unto life. That's by the power of the cross. That's by the blood of the Lamb. That's by the grace of God. That's by the power of the Spirit. And when that happened, notably, the Bible says he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Now that means that your born again spirit, your recreated spirit is so united with the spirit of God that the life of the spirit of God is now your life. That what formerly all you had was your human spirit, your human values, your human strength, now because you are joined to the Lord you are not limited by those things. But you are now unlimited in the values of God, in the sweet life and the sweet influences of the life of God, shall I call it the fruit of the spirit. There are available in Him but they're not just available out there someplace, they're available in Him in you in your born again recreated spirit. This is real. This is not theory. This is what the Bible is teaching us. So by union with Christ in this way all the life and the life qualities of his are now yours. This can make a change! This can transform you and me from what we used to be, stinkers that we were, it can transform us into those who are just like Him. Because His life is able to flow into our lives.

Now don't turn to John 15 but you know what it says. Jesus there says 'I am the vine. Ye are the branches.' I like that because on the one hand we're told that we're to be like him, we're never told that we're to be him. You're never going to be him. There's only one Him. There's only one vine. And if there were two million branches you could take the two million branches, put them all together and they will still never equal the vine. Jesus said 'I am the vine. You are the branches.' The branches are completely dependent upon the vine. The vine is not at all dependent on the branches. But what I want you to know from this is that the same sap that flows through the vine also flows through the branches. And there is a like kind there of the kind of material that the vine is made of. And the kind of material that the branches are made of and as the branch comes into the vine there is what we call a node. And that node is the little hole where the life and the sap of the vine is able to turn the corner and flow into the branch. And you see the node for you and for me is our born again recreated spirit. You are the human being that has been justified, that has been born again, now you have a connection to the vine that is real. It's not symbolic. It's not a metaphor. It's for real, there is a connection there. And that means that the love and the joy and the peace and the patience and the gentleness and the kindness and the meekness and the faith that

are the fruits of the very Spirit of God can be yours and mine for real. And it's that change, that strengthening with His might by His spirit in the inner man that He is wanting to bring forth in your life and in my life.

Let me see if I can go a little bit further. When the human condition is susceptible to weaknesses, let's say a weakness of jealousy of someone else, you can allow the happiness, you can allow the joy, you can allow the thankfulness to well up from within your spirit to displace the unthankfulness or the jealousy or the envy or the whatever it might be that is plaguing your soul. Let me back up a paragraph. Man is spirit and soul and body. And they are all connected. They've learned that the soul and the body are very much connected. What is the soul? The soul is the mind and the emotions and the will. It's part of the inner man, the hidden man of the heart that you can't see. That you can't put under a microscope. That the the scientist is not going to be able to come up with quantifiable data on it but there is an inner man just as sure as shootin that is more real actually than the outer man because the outer man is perishing but the inner man is renewed day by day, my Bible says. And that inner man, you've got a mind, you've got emotions, you've got a will. And so do I. What I'm saying is that mind and that will and those emotions CAN be, SHOULD be overwhelmed, flooded with the influence of the spirit of those qualities that come from the spirit of God can actually flow into and touch the human soul. And so if it's feeling sorry for yourself, if it's impatience, if its lust, if its hatred, if its variance, if its emulations, if its strife, whatever it is can be replaced, can be supplanted with fresh, real, Godly influences that come to you from God through your born again spirit because he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. And that means that in this life, in this world you will be different. You will have a testimony that is different in real life situations where everyone around you is panicking and everyone else around you is angry or whatever it is, you will not go with the crowd. People will notice something different about you. And that something different about you is not YOU, but rather it is the life of God in you. So they'll say to you, you know, you're so patient or you're such a kind person, I really appreciate this or that about you. And don't ever take that to yourself but realize that maybe a little bit of growth has taken place, that you have been a little bit more strengthened with might by His spirit in the inner man to become what God wants you to be. And that is a person that is loving righteousness at all times, hating iniquity at all times and growing

into the image of Christ. Romans 8 tells us that we are to be conformed to his image so that he would be the first born among many brethren.

Now 1 John 3. We would normally start with vs 1 but I've done a little preacher trick on you and I've flipped it around today so that we're going to end with vs 1. We saw in vs 5 something that God did. We can be assured of what he did. He was manifested, he took away our sins. In the last vs we're assured of what he's doing, he's abiding in us by his spirit. That's what he's doing and that is just as real and just as sure as the fact that he took away our sins. And now we come to the 3rd assurance and I'll put it this way, it's not totally this way but I'll put it this way. We are also assured of what he's going to do. We know what he did. We know what he is doing. But there's a purpose for it and we know what he's going to do. We know where it leads, do you KNOW where it leads? Do you KNOW what it's all about? Do you KNOW why you're hearing this word? Do you KNOW why God picked you out from the different ones he could have chosen? It's for this, John 1:3, 'Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God. Therefore the world knoweth us not because it knew Him not.' A hint, again, so many times in the New Testament of the interconnectedness between our life and His life. 'The world knows us not because it knew Him not. Beloved now are we the sons of God and it doth not yet appear what we shall be but we know when He shall appear' here's where it's leading, 'we know that when he shall appear' that's what's going to happen at the end of this age, that's what the world is looking for, 'when he shall appear we shall be like Him. For we shall see him as he is.' And then practical John he gives the revelation and then he gives the practical out working and he says in vs 3 'and every man that hath his Hope in Him purifies himself even as He is pure.' John takes us up into the heavenlies and then he brings us back down to earth and he takes us up into the heavenlies and he brings us back down to earth. So what needs to be happening right now is are you as sure of the fact that when He shall appear we shall be like Him as you are of the fact that He was manifested to take away our sins. Or are you assured that he is working in you, is abiding in you by his spirit and that is leading to this. What it is leading to is we shall be like Him. Now the reason that we shall be like Him is because he needs a company, he needs an administration, he needs the

sons of God, he needs the overcomers that will be like Him to work with him, to take part with him in the things that he is going to do in this world.

Let me throw a couple of things at you to see if you kind of agree with the theme because in one sense we're already like him. In the sense that we're made of the same substance but in another sense we're not like him because we have not grown into who he has called us to be. So to return for a moment to our soul, our soul is like the Holy Place. If man is a spirit and a soul and a body and if the (Mosaic) Tabernacle is the Holy of Holies and the Holy Place and the Outer Court, there truly is a correlation between the two because just as in the Holy of Holies the presence of God, the Shekinah glory of God and the light that was associated with it was in that little room hidden away, separated by a veil that was only peeked open once a year in Old Testament times. In the same way we have a born again recreated spirit, the presence of God is there, He is abiding in us by his spirit and there is light and there is life God in your spirit. In the Holy Place there is the ability to receive light from two different sources. In the Holy Place when the door was opened the light from the Outer Court was able to come into that room but that was not the only light that was able to enter. In that once a year time when the veil was parted the Shekinah light, the light of the glory of God, was able to also come into that Holy Place. And this reveals that our soul is very much like this, able to receive influences either from the Spirit, which is deep on the inside, or also able to receive influences from the outside, from the five senses, from the world, from other people, from things that we read, from things that we see, and on and on it goes. And you know all of that and so of course the Outer Court which did not have any covering over it represents the body, that which is the most in touch with the outside world and all the influences good and bad that it can bring. And so what I want you to understand is that in the same way that the Holy Place was able to receive light and influence either from the outside influence or from the inside, your soul and mine is in exactly the same place. My recommendation, I think God's recommendation, to us is that we receive the influence from the spirit, from the spirit, so that our decisions that we make, that the things that we think, the options that we form are all based on the knowledge that is coming to us from God by His spirit rather than from the influences that are out there in the world and that come to us only through the five senses. It's interesting of course that when Jesus died at

Calvary one of the things that happened was that the veil was 'rent in twain from top to bottom' signifying that in in the life of redemption the person is now able 24/7 365 to be able to receive the life and the strength and the light from God. So it was no longer just a peek behind the veil one day in the year but now through Christ there would be an availability of the light and the life of God and that love and joy and peace that we've been talking about already. It's important to see that and to confirm what God is doing at this end of the age and to wrap this up let's go to Revelation 20.

So to say it as bluntly as we can, in the end of this age God is bringing forth sons of God. They will manifest at the end of the age like the revelation of Jesus Christ, in the same way there will be the manifestation of the sons of God. It's important to see this theme. I've said it many times, I'm seeing now that not only is the New Testament's theme sonship but truly the theme of the whole book is sonship. When we see the first story of Adam in the garden of Eden we realize God is instructing us about sonship because Luke says that Adam was the son of God. And so he goes through all this lineage backwards that so and so was the son of so and so and Adam which was the son of God. So all that stuff going on in the garden and subsequent to it is all instruction for us. I mentioned before the book of Proverbs is a sonship book. The book of Kings and Chronicles are also sonship books in the sense that in those books we learn about various kings and what they did that was good and what they did that was evil. And this is instruction to those who would rule and reign with Christ. In fact the very word 'proverbs' has two meanings. It does mean a pithy saying of wisdom but it also means to rule and to have dominion and in that unique Hebrew way of saying things, it was if that book was an instruction from one king to the future kings, from Father God to the Sons of God, to those that would rule and reign. So as blunt as I can, Jesus is bringing forth sons of God who will be like him in every way that is necessary. I want you to remember Enoch's prophecy recorded in the book of Jude. You don't read Enoch's prophecy in the book of Genesis. You read it in Jude, of all places. Which reveals that you've got to have the whole Bible to understand what's going on. A lot of things in Old Testament times you would never know except you would read the New Testament. And Enoch's prophecy was so wonderful because it came 700 years after the initial promise of redemption in which God said 'there's going to be a seed of the woman and this seed of the woman is going to

defeat that serpent, that devil, that just took dominion. The devil just won the victory but one day the seed of the woman is going to come.' And that's the only word that people had for about 700 years. But roughly as that time goes by Enoch, the seventh form Adam, comes along and he has this prophecy and it's recorded in Jude where it says 'behold the Lord cometh.' So if you're wondering what the seed of the woman is you've got your answer there if you're listening. 'Behold the Lord cometh' so is the seed of the woman just going to be a mere man? No, it's going to be the Lord. 'Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints' Now I'm not even sure there were ten thousands of people on earth at the time that he said that. But he revealed something that was way off into the future, beyond a virgin shall conceive and bear a son. And so these twin words have carried down from age to age till we come to this time and we begin to see a theme that it's not just the Lord, now hear me, it's not just the Lord but it's the Lord with ten thousands of his saints. You see the theme again, it's not just Captain Jesus it's Captain Jesus and the many sons that he is bringing to glory. It's not just Jesus the first born. It's Jesus the first born with many brethren. It doesn't end there. It's not just Christ the head but it is Christ the head with a many membered body. It's not just Christ the forerunner, it's Christ the forerunner and those that run after and the Bible says that they all run the race. They all run the race but there's only one that is the forerunner. And that is Jesus. Continuing that theme it's not just the Lamb on Mt Zion but in, I think, a completion of Enoch's prophecy it's the Lamb on Mt Zion with a hundred and forty-four thousand. And when you read the description of that 144,000 you have to come to the conclusion that they are like him. As it was said of him that there was no guile found in his mouth it is also said of them that there is no guile found in their mouth. As it could be said of Christ that he is without fault before the throne of God it is also said of them in Revelation 14 that they also are without fault before the throne of God. Are you sensing a theme here? And so this is what God has wanted to do from the very beginning. His plan has never changed, it's not snaked through the ages, it's not been reactionary but God has been actionary from the very beginning and so when you come to Revelation 20 it says they will live and reign with him for a thousand years. But in Revelation 22:5, 'And there shall be no night there. And they shall need no candle, neither light of the sun for the Lord God giveth them light and they shall reign' not for a thousand years, 'and they shall reign for ever and ever.' So there is an

unfolding. There is more and more revelation that comes to us and the key is that we allow him to do right now what he wants to do.

So to recap, we need to have assurance in what he has already done. And we need the same assurance in what he is now doing. And if we know what he's doing we can yield to what he's doing. We can co-labor with him if we know what he's laboring at. If we don't know what he's laboring at then we can actually fight him. We could be resistant to his will. But if we understand what he's doing, if we're understanding what the will of the Lord is then we can co-labor with him. Things go a lot smoother if we co-labor than if we fight against him. Lastly we have assurance and we know what he will do, and he will have a company of people that are just like him. That he will entrust as the princes because 'behold a king shall reign in righteousness and princes shall rule in judgment'