

Believing, loving, victory, testimony, assurance

Part 1

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[00:00:01] You may be assured, beloved brethren, that it's a matter of great exercise to everyone who stands on this platform on a Saturday as to what the Lord would have brought before us.

And I do feel that he directed me very definitely into these passages of scripture.

I was lying awake in the night that the words of some of these statements in John's first letter came very strongly before me, and I felt that this was just what the Lord would have us to consider together.

I've always found it very difficult to speak consecutively or even to study consecutively in John's writings, especially in his letters. When we read the letters of Paul, we have the letters of somebody with legal training, [00:01:13] with deep religious training, and somebody whose trained mind is taken up by the Holy Spirit, and he sets out his arguments consecutively and progressively, so that those of us that have perhaps had a little education and have been forced to read a bit of Euclid, perhaps even a bit of Kikouro, and things like that, we find that this sort of sequence is a familiar one to us.

But when we come to the letters of John, we don't have the legal mind.

We have the one who lay in the bosom of the Lord Jesus Christ, the one who was close to his heart, [00:02:02] and the one who could describe himself as the disciple whom Jesus loved.

And you know, I feel perhaps that we err, I don't say it in any sense critically, I say it in a sense of self-examination.

I say that we err in that we always try to get into depths of profound doctrine.

When one is invited to speak at a meeting like this, it seems to be a challenge as to how profound the doctrine may be that we are able to expound. I feel that the Lord would have us get away from this, and he would bring us into the simplicity of the faith as it's been set before us in the epistles by the Holy Spirit's power.

[00:03:02] And in the letters of John, we do get such simplicity in expression, although we get profound concepts which are expressed in his simple language.

I would just give a bit of advice to some of my younger friends.

Years ago, I used to enjoy very much working with some of my younger friends. At present, the Lord has diverted me away from them, and I'm working much more with those who are right at the end of their lives. But I used to enjoy a lot working with my younger friends, and to them I would just give a tip. One of the ways of studying this first letter of John is to trace out the expressions that he uses, and the way in which, with his index finger, he points out, [00:04:01] this is this, and this is that, and this is the other, all through his letter.

And then you can follow another sequence.

He says, by this means, and by that means, and by the other means.

The first being statements of doctrine, statements of truth.

The second being tactics or means by which we can come to understanding or reach discernment in our consideration of the problems of our day.

And therefore, I invite my young brothers and sisters to sit down quietly at home, and to take a pencil and paper, and to write down these sequences, and look at them from the point of view of the thing which is indicated, the context in which it is indicated, and the teaching which he draws following it, [00:05:05] or around it, in the statement which he makes.

And this afternoon, being amongst some of you a relatively young man, although I've been retired for a matter of four years, and incidentally, you know, I would love to see some young men standing on this platform instead of some of the old greybeards that we do have here, like myself. I think some of these young men need to realize that the Levites started their service when they were 30, and also that in certain instances, retirement was at the age of 50. And therefore, you know, I ought to step down right away and leave somebody else to take the place here. However, being a relatively young man amongst those who stand here, I would follow that simple thing that I've suggested to you. I want to pick out just some of those points of truth where the apostle indicates this and this.

[00:06:05] And first of all, I would refer you to the third chapter, just a little bit before where we came in with our reading, and verse 23.

This is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another as he gave us commandment.

And then I would pass you on into the fifth chapter and the fourth verse.

This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

Fifth chapter and the eleventh verse, this is the record, or this is the testimony, [00:07:04] that God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

Fifth chapter and the fourteenth verse, this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us.

Now we might say that in all the word of God you couldn't have more simple and yet more complete statements than those that we've just read.

And I'm not suggesting for a moment that that's anything like a comprehensive list of references, but this is the way the Apostle John teaches in his letter. And I feel that if we follow this kind of an approach to studying his letter, then he will lead us into a more pattern of the understanding of what it is he's setting before us. [00:08:10] And as we think about these statements, we get certain fundamental things before us. First of all, there's believing.

And then there's loving. Then there's victory.

Then there's testimony. And then there's assurance.

And how important those things are in our Christian life. Now this isn't church truth. We don't always need church truth. Church truth is ever so important in its context. But I'm going to put this challenge to my brethren. What is the good of church truth unless we have the simple and vital practical Christian teaching in our own hearts and lives? We tend to get so wrapped up in church truth that we regard ourselves as a kind of a pattern for the whole church of God throughout Christendom. [00:09:11] But when we look at our own hearts and lives, and we look at the hearts and lives of some of the Christian people that we meet from other companies of the church, well, we find that some of them put us to shame. And this is my experience. I have very little doubt that it's yours also. One meets in our town, which is a very Christianized town, if I can use that expression, in our town one meets some most devoted Christian people.

Some people that understand very well these tenets which we've mentioned already from these writings of the Apostle John. And we need to examine our own hearts before the Lord as to whether we are not so concerned with the technicalities of our church teaching and our church observances [00:10:01] that we leave these vital Christian principles on one side.

And I'd like just to talk simply with you about them for the few minutes that we have. First of all, the chapter 3 and verse 23.

This is His commandment.

And you see that the commandment is in two parts. It embraces believing and it embraces love.

In the Christian life, we must start with believing.

Believing on the name of God's Son, Jesus Christ.

I don't know whether I do well if I make an assumption that all the folks sitting here this afternoon have all reached that vital initial stage in their Christian experience.

[00:11:09] I think it's possible to be brought up in a Christian home, in a Christian atmosphere, to hear the Word of God read, to listen to prayers, to be taught a pattern of behaviour, and yet in our hearts not to have reached this vital belief in God's Son, Jesus Christ.

You see, belief is not just a matter of assent.

Belief is a kind of submission.

And when we read that vital text, John 3.16, it's not believing about, it's believing on.

When Paul spoke to the Philippian jailer, he said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.

[00:12:05] And it's a question of putting our faith in Him. It's a question of trusting in Him. It's a question of laying our life before Him and making it over to Him as the only one that can put things right in our lives and the only one that can bring us through and bring us into heaven at the end. There's no one else, none other name given under heaven among men, whereby we must be saved.

I think we have a duty as we stand on this platform to restate this first thing, that the commandment of God, the commandment of God, is that we should believe on the name of His Son, Jesus Christ.

And we ask, perhaps, if we haven't reached that point, we ask the question, why should we believe?

[00:13:01] It's up to us whether we believe or whether we don't believe. But it isn't, you see, because if we look at chapter 5 and verse 10, in the middle of the verse it says, He that believeth not God hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son.

And God, who is the very essence of truth in His eternal and divine being, to make Him a liar, surely that is one of the greatest sins that a man can possibly commit, to make God a liar. And everyone that refuses to believe, everyone that hardens their heart against believing in His Son, Jesus Christ, is in effect making God a liar.

We should come to that a little further down when we reach verse 11 of the fifth chapter and we think about the record.

[00:14:07] Now the result of our believing is that we are born of God.

We become children of God through believing.

There are some folk that would say that the whole human race, we're all the children of God. It's not true.

In the first chapter of John's Gospel we read those words, For as many as received Him, to them gave He the right to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.

But it's through believing on the Lord Jesus that we are born of God. In the fifth chapter and the first verse, Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah, the Anointed One of God, is born of God.

New birth was what the Lord Jesus preached to Nicodemus. And He said, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. [00:15:04] Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. If you haven't reached the point of believing in His Son, Jesus Christ, my young friend, my older friend, then there's no prospect for you ever of entering into eternal blessing.

The scripture talks of a certain fearful looking-for of judgment and fiery indignation that shall devour the adversaries.

So we must say quite plainly that belief is the very first of God's commandments in this day of His grace.

And then the other half of the commandment in verse 23 of chapter 3 is that we should love one another as He gave His commandment.

[00:16:02] Where does that take us back to? Well, it takes us to the upper room, doesn't it? We see the Lord Jesus there with the disciples at the Passover feast.

And there He says to them those words. He says it three times over. He says, A new commandment give I unto you, that ye should love one another, as I have loved you, so ye should love one another.

You know, however much you and I may be striving to love our brethren, however much we may feel that we do love our brethren, we've never reached that level in it, have we, as He loved us? Because His love is the love of one who gave himself.

Greater love hath no man than this, than a man lay down his life for his friends.

[00:17:04] We find a statement of love in verse 10, so far as the love in its origin is concerned.

Herein is love. This is where we find love, we could say, translating it freely. This is where we find love. Not that we love God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. So we find the very source of love in God.

And in verse 16 of the fourth chapter, we have that statement, God is love.

Something that we learn as little children. God is love. Some people turn it round and they say love is God, but that's not right. It's not what the word says, and it means something quite different. But God is love in His nature. It's in His nature to love. And when God comes to the point of carrying out judgment as He must do because of His holiness and His righteousness, [00:18:03] we find in the prophets that it's described as His strange work. It's the work that He's got to do because He's holy, but it's contrary to His nature of love. God is love, and He expressed His love in the gift of His Son.

And then in that same verse 16, we read the words, And he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

So God wants us to live in an atmosphere of love.

He wants us to be surrounded by love, just as in our natural way we're surrounded by a mixture of nitrogen and oxygen. He wants us as believers, He wants us to be surrounded by an atmosphere of love. His love in giving His Son. The Lord Jesus' love in giving His life. And He wants that life to be reflected in us, that we should love one another even as He has loved us.

[00:19:07] In the Old Testament, we're told to love God.

Or those who were given the law were told to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, with all thy mind and with all thy strength. We're not told to do that in the New Testament. We're told to love one another. As I have loved you, says the Lord, that ye also should love one another.

And when we get to chapter 5, we find there are some instructions about this love.

Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and every one that loveth him that begat... Who's that? That's God. God is the one who begat.

Love is also him that is begotten of him.

Now this is a vital reason for us to love our brethren.

[00:20:05] And who are the brethren? We don't spell them with a capital B. They have no relation with Kelly or Lowe or Glanton or any of these other names that many people have the highest regard for. Nothing to do with them at all. Brethren are those that are born of God, those that are begotten of God. And the ones we're to love are all those that are born again. Let us not draw our skirts or our coattails aside from people who call themselves by a name of a denomination or a name of a leader.

If they're born again children of God, we're to love them because we love the one who has begotten them. They're begotten of him and they're his children, and they're our brothers and our sisters, and we're to love them. And we're to love them with the same love with which the Lord Jesus has loved us. [00:21:02] And so I find that there's not to be any discrimination between the love which I may exercise to the brother and the sister with whom I have happy fellowship every Sunday morning and the other children of God that I may meet in the course of my travels through this world as soon as I realize that they're the children of God, then my heart is to go out to them and I'm to love them. There may be things between us which we're not able to resolve, but we're to love them just the same because this is the commandment that we have from God and from the Lord Jesus Christ. This is his commandment.

We should believe on the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another as he gave us commandment. And this commandment is expressed in obedience.

Verse 2 of chapter 5.

By this we know that we love the children of God when we love God and keep his commandments. [00:22:05] The child comes up to his father and says, Oh, Daddy, I do love you. Or his mother, Mommy, I do love you.

And all the time he's been pinching the sugar out of the sugar basin in the sideboard. Why, that's hypocrisy, isn't it?

Love has to be associated with obedience.

And his commandment is that we should love one another. And earlier on in this letter, it says that if a man say he love God and hateth his brother, then he's a liar and the truth is not in him.

And so, my brothers and sisters, we have an absolute obligation before the Lord to love one another,

to practice that love. We may not like one another, but we can love one another. And we must love one another. The Lord requires us to love one another, and therefore we've got to make it our business to love one another, [00:23:03] to express our love even as he expressed his love towards us in giving himself. It may cost us a lot, but it will never cost us so much as it cost him as he took our place on Calvary's cross and bore the judgment of God due against your sins and against mine.

This is his commandment, that we should believe on his son, Jesus Christ, and love one another as he gave his commandment.

Well, now as we pass through this world, we're passing through a world which doesn't believe. We're passing through a world which doesn't love. And it's inevitable that if we're believing, and if we're loving, then we're going to be in conflict with the world. It's the only way for a Christian to be. If a Christian is walking through this world, and he's in the swing with everybody, [00:24:05] and he's good pals with all those that he meets, and he's into every this and every that, well, you wonder whether he's truly a believer.

Paul says, God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world is crucified to me and I to the world.

And for Paul, the cross of Christ stands between him and the world, and it prevents him having any truck with the world, and it prevents the world from having any truck with him. It's a dividing point.

If you or I had one of our family that was taken by the police, and unjustly accused, and found guilty in the courts, and put away in the prison for a term, when he'd done nothing, why, we should feel a bitterness and an antagonism towards the legal system of our country. Many people do do this, don't they? [00:25:02] There's a young man being on the roof of a prison. I don't know whether he's still there, but he was there for a long, long time, through the cold days and nights, because he insisted that he was not guilty. Well, if in fact he wasn't guilty, and I've no idea whether he was guilty, if in fact he wasn't guilty, why, what a very fair reason his family had to feel that they were against the whole judicial system of this country, if their son was unjustly accused and found guilty.

But this is exactly where you and I stand, my brother and sister, so far as the world is concerned. The world has found the Lord Jesus Christ guilty of blasphemy, and they've put him on a cross. And so far as you and I are concerned, that's a bone of contention between us and the world. And God forbid that we should glory save in that cross by which the world is crucified to us, and we to the world.

And so you and I find ourselves in this conflict situation with the world. And as we come back again into Paul's writings into Ephesians 6, we have more about this conflict. [00:26:04] He tells us there, we wrestle not against flesh and blood.

Let me turn to it. I shall quote it correctly. We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Now I believe that this might be divided between spiritual rulers and natural rulers, but they're the world rulers, they're the world powers that we're in conflict with. And you and I are constantly in conflict with them, we're up against them every day of our lives, and we are to have the victory every day of our lives.

And in this fifth chapter, the fourth and fifth verse, this is the victory that overcometh the world, our

faith. And who is he that overcometh the world but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God. [00:27:03] So you and I, with our faith rooted, firmly grounded in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, we can march through the world knowing that we're in conflict with them and knowing that we have the victory. Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world.

The Lord Jesus, as he spoke to the disciples in the 15th of John, again, after the Passover, he tells them about the world there, and he says, If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own, but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. And all these things, he says, shall they do unto you for my name's sake, because they have not known my Father nor me.

[00:28:01] Now don't let's compromise about this matter.

We're in conflict with the world, and the Lord Jesus, Holy Spirit of God, writing through his servant here, we're promised victory. We're promised victory through our faith. We're promised victory because we believe in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that he is the Son of God.

You know, so far as this victory is concerned, I think it's wonderfully illustrated in that story about Elijah, when he was up on the hill, and the Syrians were after him, and his servant was in a state of panic, and Elisha prayed, Lord, open the young man's eyes.

And the young man's eyes were opened, and they are all round the mountain, horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.

You and I, if we're going on in faith, we can be assured of victory. [00:29:03] This is the victory, our faith.

Now we pass on down this chapter to verse 11.

This is the record. This is the testimony. I'm not going to beat about the bush.

Last Lord's Day, I was listening to an American friend speaking on this, and he spoke very simply and very directly, and he gladdened all our hearts. This is the kind of thing that he says.

This is the record. This is the testimony that God has given to us eternal life. He says eternal life, it's a gift.

It's not something that we can buy. We can't reach round for our purse and offer Him some payment in return for it. It's a gift. It's a free gift that God in His magnanimity gives to you and me.

And this life is in His Son.

[00:30:03] Speaking reverently, it's as though He took that gift and He wrapped it up in His Son.

He didn't wrap it up in good churchmanship. He didn't wrap it up in good living. He didn't wrap it up in religion. He didn't wrap it up in any of those things that men and women hold of value in the human life. But He wrapped it up in His Son.

And if you and I have eternal life and praise His name, we do have it. We have it in His Son.

Because we have the Lord Jesus Christ as our own personal Saviour, we have eternal life. And no other reason, we have it as a free gift from God. And then because of this great fact, then we have a division of the human race. Just like this carpet, this blue carpet that runs down this hall. We have the two categories of the human race related to this eternal life [00:31:01] and the gift that God gives to us through His Son. That He that has the Son, He has the gift, He has the eternal life. And He who has not the Son, He has not the gift, and He has not the eternal life. And that's the way God divides the human race. It's not between good and bad. It's not between black and white. It's not between the northern and southern hemisphere or the new world and the old world. It's between those who have the Son and those who have not the Son. And it's every one of us. I come back to this challenge again. Every one of us to be sure in our hearts which side of that line we stand because there's nobody in the middle. Nobody in the middle. My friend, Mr. Jack Johnson, he's got his foot in the middle, but he's not in the middle. He's on that side of the line. That's it. You move it, Jack.

You see, it's as plain as that. There are no seats in the middle. If we obstructed that middle, we should have the authorities after us for spoiling the way out. But no, there's no middle way. [00:32:01] We're either on that side. We either have the Son or we don't have the Son. We can't have a part of the Son or we can't partly have the Son. We either have the Son or we don't have the Son. And if we have the Son, we have Him by God's gift. We have Him eternally, and we have eternal life in His Son. And this is the testimony that God gives to us. And, you know, I believe that this is the testimony that God gives to us to give to Him, to give for Him. Young people say to me, sometimes, they say, you know, it's no good me thinking about preaching. I wouldn't know where to start and I wouldn't know where to finish. Well, this is where you preach. This is how you preach. You preach like this.

This is the record. God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.

And he that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life. And that's a complete gospel preaching. And I believe that many have been converted through that kind of gospel preaching. [00:33:04] Perhaps a bit more explanation, a bit more detail filled in. But there's the essence of the message, and it's a pattern gospel preacher, a gospel preaching for those of us that need a bit of guidance as to how we should begin. He that hath the Son hath life.

This is the record.

Now there's one more thing we've got to speak about, and that's the assurance. And it's just further down there.

Verse 14. This is the confidence. This is the assurance that we have in Him. That if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. Now this only applies to those that have got that blessing, those that have the Lord Jesus Christ in their hearts. Those that have the Holy Spirit, sealed by the Holy Spirit, then they're in this wonderful position, that they have that confidence that if they ask, He hears us.

I was reading a little book about prayer. A good little book, I commend it to you. [00:34:01] I was reading a little book about prayer. A good little book, I commend it to you. A book by somebody with a Dutch name called Prayer, a Christian's Vital Breath.

And there the point is made. The young man says, oh, I'd like a new motor car.

And the girl says, oh, I should like a new dress. And, you know, very often that's just something that we should like to have for our own benefit, for our own enjoyment. But, you know, my wife, when she was a girl, she won't mind me telling you, I'm sure. She'd probably be gunning for me right now. But when my wife was a girl, she really needed a bike. And she wasn't well to do. Her parents were not well to do. And the only sort of bike that she could possibly hope to get was what we should call a heap of old iron in our modern technology. And so she prayed.

And she prayed to the Lord she could have a new bike.

[00:35:07] You know, one day the van drew up, and out of the van came a new bike. It was all wrapped up, you know, the way they wind stuff around it to keep it from being scratched in transit. And there it came.

And it had her name on it.

Relatives of hers had been saving up coupons. They had a shop. Whether they pinched the coupons off other people's packets, I don't know. But they'd saved up lots of coupons. And they'd save the coupons, and they'd say, what shall we get with these coupons? I know we'll get a new bicycle for Annie Richardo.

And so they did just that. There was her prayer.

She needed the bike. She needed the bike to go to school. And she had this new bike. You know, my grandmother, she had a very funny habit. She used to leave her umbrella on the bus.

And she used to say to me, I always ask children to pray when I leave my umbrella on the bus, because then I always get it back.

[00:36:11] Why is it that God hears the prayers of children? I'll tell you why it is. It's because children ask in their simplicity.

Children ask with the confidence.

They've been brought up at their mother's knee to know that God is good. They've been brought up at their mother's knee to know that Jesus loves them. They've been told that they should pray to him and ask for what they have need of. I'm sure you and I, all of us, could tell stories about answered prayer. I'll just tell you one more.

Our dear departed brother who lived at Plumstead, Father Joe Davis, used to tell a story about a dear old lady. She was very, very poor. It was probably wartime, but I can't remember the details. [00:37:03] She hadn't got much to eat.

She just prayed.

Lord, she said, I would like some celery soup.

She went and opened the back door, and there was one stick of celery lying on the step that the delivery man had dropped from somebody else's parcel. There it was.

I'll tell you one more. I met a brother the year before last in the Burj Mountains. He was an elderly brother. He'd been from a mining family in Belgium.

We were talking at table about praying the Lord's Prayer, about saying those words, give us this day our daily bread.

And he said they reached a point during the war where they hadn't had any food.

Excuse me if I get emotional, but it's the way it is. They hadn't had any food for three days. And they reached the point where they prayed, Lord, give us this day our daily bread. [00:38:07] And somebody came and brought them some potato peelings, and they could make some soup, and they were so thankful that God had answered their prayers. Now, this is the confidence that we have in him.

If we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.

And we know that he hears us.

And wherever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him. You know, I feel that you and I as Christians, we don't understand this prayer. We say our prayers. We stand up in the prayer meeting, and we recite miles and miles of sentences. We give the Lord any amount of information he doesn't need because he knows it far better than we do. We don't understand this real, live prayer in our lives.

It's part of the vital Christian teaching that we need to practice. [00:39:02] We need to tell the Lord what the needs are. Not tell him what to do about them, but tell him what the needs are. Mention the names of those that we know that are sick, those on the mission fields. Tell him what their problems. Just like Hezekiah took the letter into the temple and spread it out before the Lord and said, Read that, Lord.

He'll answer. He knows what the needs are. And if we are led of the Holy Spirit, if we have the mind of the Lord in our prayers, then we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.

There's one condition.

We can go back a little further in this letter, and we find it. It's in chapter 3, and it's in verse 19.

So, you see, here's a condition relating to answered prayer.

[00:40:15] The condition concerns the state of our hearts.

Now, I've always found these verses difficult to understand. There are two ways they might be interpreted. And so, you know, I just got my Bible treasury off the shelf. I think it was yesterday. And looked up to see what W.K. says about this.

And he says this.

If a child has been naughty, he doesn't run to welcome his father as he comes in from his business at the end of the day. He goes and makes himself scarce because he has a bad conscience. His heart is condemning him.

But if a child has behaved himself and he's done those things that would please his father, [00:41:02] then he will run to his father and throw his arms around him and welcome him home. And if he wants to ask for something, he'll do it without hesitation. And so there is this condition in our practical walk here. It's the condition of our heart. If our heart is condemning us, our conscience is at work and saying that our walk is not satisfactory before the Lord. We're walking in the light. If we haven't walked in the light in the way that the Lord would have us walk before his face, then it's no good our coming and muttering prayers before him because they won't go any higher than the roof. But if our heart doesn't condemn us, then we have this confidence towards God, the confidence that we've been speaking about, that if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us. May we then have this simple appreciation of the Christian truth, the practical Christian truth for our own individual Christian life. [00:42:01] May we learn to walk by these precepts, to believe with our whole heart on the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, to love one another, all our brethren in him, to experience victory, not once.

In the NIV, if you read it there, it says, because you have overcome the world, but it's wrong. It's the present tense. You are overcoming the world. It's a day-by-day experience, overcoming the world. That we have this witness, this record, the record of God in our hearts, and we're ready to tell it out, that God has given us eternal life in his Son, and that we have this assurance of answered prayer. You know, I believe that if we can do this, then we shall be the kind of Christians that the Lord Jesus looks for, that he intends us to be. And if we're all this kind of Christians, there won't be anything wrong with our assembly life. We shan't have these troubles, these criticisms, these cross-currents, these roots of bitterness [00:43:04] springing up, troubling us, by which many will be defiled, but everything will be orderly, and when the Lord comes into our midst, we shall be able to give him the praise and the honour which is due to his holy name.