

Are You Born of God? - 1 John 5:1-3 -28 Dec 2014

We will look today at 1John and chapter 5, so turn your Bible with me to 1John chapter 5. This is the last chapter in the book of first John and I find it to be a very appropriate three verses for us to consider today. The Bible says,

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome.

(1 John 5:1-3 ESV)

There used to be a professor in biology, who is very strict and unreasonable with his tests. There was one test he set up. He brought his students to a room in which there are pictures of the feet or the legs of birds pasted all over the walls and one by one, he will question the students, what bird does this pair of legs belong to? So, you're supposed to be able to tell what species or specific species of the birds just by looking at the legs. So the students protested, in particular, one of them, someone who studied very hard. He protested, Prof, how could you give us such a test, its so unreasonable? He says, I don't care, you guys have to take the test. He continued to protest, that's not fair, I wouldn't want to take the test.

The Prof says, alright if you don't take the test then you failed the test. Okay, I will fail the test then. The prof, then says to him "What's your name? I will fail you." The boy lifted up his trousers, showed him his legs, you tell me?

You know, some tests are not very reasonable, but the tests here are very reasonable. In the book of 1John. He is actually telling us, how would you know if you are really born again, how would you know if you really have this spiritual life, how do you really know you have this "Zoe" life from God? And so, in this text, John repeats this theme. Actually, we've been going through this book for the past weeks and months. John is like a father, he keeps repeating what is important, he wants his people to really know for sure. Here in this text, he says this is how you know if you are born of God, if you are born of Him.

He doesn't just want you to guess if you are born again. He doesn't want you to imagine if you are born again. He doesn't even want you to hope that you're born again. He wants you to know for sure that you are born again. So this is what we are going to consider in this very last sermon of this year. I want to ask you this question, "Are you born of God?" And I don't want you to guess, I don't want you to hope, I don't want you to, least of all, assume.

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Today based on the Scriptures, we're going to ask ourselves objectively, can we pass these tests, that were revealed to us for sure. Are we really born of God? There are three tests that I can see in this text and it begins with the first one,

1. Ongoing Faith in Jesus Christ

An ongoing faith in Jesus Christ. How do you know for sure if you really belong to God, how do you really know if you have Zoe(Greek)?

Number one, do you have ongoing faith in Jesus Christ? The text here tells us everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God.

Now this faith is not a faith in any other deities or in any other means. But this is a believe that Jesus is the Christ. To believe that the biblical account of who Jesus is, tells us for sure that He is the Messiah, He is the chosen One, He is the anointed One, that's the meaning of the word Christ, Christos(Greek), He is the One anointed by God, He is the One chosen by God to be the Savior of the world. A true man or woman who is born of God believes, that Jesus is God's Son who came to be born to die for the sins of the world, he would believe that He is the only way, the only truth, the only life, he would believe that there is no other name given under heaven, whereby man may be saved.

A man was born of God believes Jesus is the Christ, He is the One who died, He is the One who rose again, He is the One who is able to save us from our sins. But notice, I do not just say faith in Jesus Christ because we stated there is a word that precedes it, and the word is "ongoing faith" in Jesus Christ. The reason is because of the tenses that are used in this text. As you know when the Greeks write their literature, they have very specific tenses that are being used.

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So if you were to read this, in its original, it should read something like this

"every one who is believing that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God",

The ESV translated, the second half well, it is "has been born", it refers to a one time activity, one time event that has its effect up to today, "has been born" is a very good way of translating it. But the first part is better if he were to write or the translators were to write "everyone is believing". It's a ongoing faith. A man who is born of God, keeps believing Jesus is the Christ, he doesn't say, oh, last year, I believe Jesus is the Christ, but this year, I believe Buddha is the one who will save us, he doesn't say. He keeps believing the only Savior, the Son of God, is the One who is sent by God from above to save us from our sins.

What about those who would used to believe Jesus is the Christ, but today, they don't, are they born of God? Well, John is a very black and white person, he doesn't play the gray game, he doesn't fudge around and therefore earlier, he had already told us, in 1John 2:19.

They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us.

(1 John 2:19 ESV)

They went out from us, but they were not of us.

If you thought that he was a believer, who has somehow lost his faith, but John says no, they went out from us because they were not of us, they were not the real stuff, they did not have the real life, because John says if they had been all of us, they would have continued with us. Now this does not refer to someone who changes church and so on, this is someone who departs from the faith, he says I don't believe in what you believe, anymore. John says, if they had been of us, they would have continued with us, but now they went out, that it might become plain, it might become obvious, it might become manifest that they are all not of us.

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Coming back to 1John chapter 5, John says the same thing, in a positive light. Everyone is believing that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God.

So a true believer, keeps believing Jesus is the Christ. That's how you know. Now it doesn't mean that along the Christian path, you can have no doubts. No, no, no, there will be doubts, sometimes, there will be questions you have, especially for young people, you are saved, maybe at a very young age, you made a decision at a very young age, and as you grew up, there may be doubts that come, but you know what, you work through those doubts and, surely, at the end of the day, you still believe Jesus is the Christ.

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By the way, this is a very interesting verse, it tells you something, it tells you that, believing is something ongoing but the birth, that spiritual birth, is something that happened in the past. So, what this is saying, I think if you are really careful about the tenses and you really think through this, it tells you that, the spiritual birth, is not the result of so much of believing, but that the believing is the evidence of the new birth.

Now let me put this in words, so that it's clearer for you,

Believing is the Mark and not primarily the Means of the New Birth.

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Everyone who is believing, is someone who has been born of God.

You are born of God, therefore, you will keep believing.

You see that tense, and again, believing is

The Proof, not the Path to the new birth, it is the consequence, not the course.

"Believing is the Mark, not the Means, of New Birth

The Proof, not the Path to

The Consequence, not the Cause"

Now, I think this is, now this sermon is actually a very simple sermon, I don't want to over complicate this, but for those who are always wondering about this, hey, how is a man saved, have you ever wondered about this, how is a man saved? Because the Bible tells us, we were dead in trespasses and sins, have you heard that verse before, Ephesians 2.

When someone is dead, he doesn't take any initiative right? he cannot respond, he cannot react, he cannot initiate anything at all, he is dead and then, Paul tells us, again in Romans 3, there is none that seeks after God, there is no fear of God before their eyes, there is no way, left to ourselves, man who is dead, who has gone astray, will ever seek God.

So how did that faith come about? Well, the Bible here tells us, believing is the manifestation of the new birth. In other words, Scripture tells us, the reason why you in the past decided to trust in Jesus Christ, was not because you suddenly became a very enlightened person, all by yourself but because God worked in your heart and you who were previously dead in sin, is not given that new birth and as you were given this life, you then made the decision to trust in Jesus Christ.

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In other words, the reason why I believe is not because I'm cleverer or smarter or better than anyone else, but because God's grace is upon my life.

You see, the Bible says,

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,
(Ephesians 2:8 ESV)

Now I understand, there may be different views in this verse. Some believe that the gift of God refers to salvation. Some, however, believe that the gift of God is referring to this faith.

In other words, yes salvation is all of grace, but even the faith to believe, was all of grace. In Philippians 1:29, it is said,

For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in Him but also suffer for His sake,
(Philippians 1:29 ESV)

In other words, according to the writing of apostle Paul, the ability to believe, and the privilege to suffer are granted to you.

The word granted, is the word charizomai, which is to give, it is to grace, it is to bestow favor. By the way, if you suffer for Jesus sake, it is a blessing, not a curse, very

clearly said in Matthew 5, blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness sake. It is a blessing not a curse, and so, Paul is saying, it is God's gift to you, to suffer for Jesus sake, at the very same time, it is God's gift to you that you may believe in Jesus Christ.

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Now, what I'm saying here is that the doctrinal word regeneration, you know what is regeneration? Regeneration means given life. We are dead in sins, we are sinners, who are unresponsive to God, we will not seek after God. But the reason why I will now begin to seek God is because He gives me life, that's called regeneration, and it is according to this verse, regeneration precedes that faith.

Pastor, does that mean then that whatever will be will be, and you know if I'm saved it's because God works and so I can choose not to believe, because, ultimately, He is the One who will work in my heart. No, it doesn't go that way, the Scriptures, equally, commands us to believe, the Scriptures doesn't ask, doesn't make us ask, am I regenerated, am I not regenerated, the Scripture wants you, regardless of whether you know you are regenerated or not, to repent and believe in Jesus Christ, it doesn't minimize our responsibility, it doesn't minimize the fault of ours if we refuse to believe in Jesus, but it does mean this, that when I finally repent and believe in Jesus and then when I see my life change, I will not say to myself, wah you were the one who is so wise, you chose Jesus, no, I will be humbled at the foot of the cross and recognize this gift, that I could see you and I could believe, is all of grace, that's what it would do to you.

This is always a mystery, but I know this is a sidetrack, but look at John chapter 3, for example, I don't have the verses here but John chapter 3, Jesus talks about being born again, being born from above, He tells us in verse 7, in John 3, that being born again, is the sovereign work of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit blows where He desires. In other words, you don't control the wind, you don't determine where the Spirit goes. I have parents who are not yet saved, I have family members who are not yet saved, it's not for me to tell the Spirit what to do, I can pray, I can ask, but at the end of the day, God is sovereign, but Jesus is to say to Nicodemus, ah, okay, la, that all you need to know, lah, you just know God is sovereign and you just wait lah. Nicodemus was told, subsequently, whosoever believes in Jesus Christ, shall not perish but have everlasting life. There is no minimization of the requirement for us to believe, but when we believe, let us remember the Holy Spirit was the One who sovereignly worked in my heart and all glory be to God.

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Again I quote you Spurgeon. He says

“.....faith, wherever it exists, is in every case, without exception, the gift of God and the work of the Holy Spirit. Never yet did a man believe in Jesus with the faith here intended, except the Holy Spirit led him to do so. He has wrought all our works in us, and our faith too. Faith is too celestial a grace to spring up in human nature till it is renewed: faith is in every believer "the gift of God."

CH Spurgeon

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Faith wherever it exists in every case, without exception, the gift of God and the work of the Holy Spirit, never yet did a man believe in Jesus with the faith here intended, except the Holy Spirit let him to do so, he has wrought all our works in us, it is the Spirit who blessed us and gives us this faith too, faith is too celestial a grace, to spring up in human nature till it is renewed. Faith, is in every believer, the gift of God.

So I've gone a long detour to show you, that the first evidence of the new birth, is that there will be an ongoing faith in Jesus Christ, that is not because you are better than others. That is not because you sort of kept yourself there. Yes, you have to endeavor, to keep believing on our human responsibility, but at the very same time, we need to recognize, it is all of grace, you have been born of God. This is the work of grace, and this is how you know you are born again.

It's a bit theological but I think it's helpful, lest you be lifted up in pride, we go around thinking that salvation is something we offer to people. No, it's a work of God, we got to be humble about it, and even as we do the work of evangelism, it is absolute humility, absolute dependence on the grace of God. So, are you born of God, first criteria ongoing faith in Jesus Christ.

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2. Holy Love for the Children of God

There is a second test, you can apply for yourself and that is, do you have a holy love for the children of God.

Now, I'm sure this love is so covered in our series in 1John. I mean, I can remember, a few sermons just dedicated to love, because John speaks a lot about it. There are a hundred and five verses in 1John and there are forty references to love. So, you know, it is a major dominant theme in this book. But here, John reminds us again. How do you know if you are a child of God. Well, you would love the children of God. The argument is very simple. Everyone who loves the father loves whoever has been born of Him, if you love God you will love God's people. Simple, if you love God you will love God's people.

and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of Him.

and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him.

By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments.

1John 5:1-2 ESV

Everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of Him. So loving one another, is a distinctive, it's a Mark, it's a sign by which you know if you're born again. Jesus Himself, says, by this shall all men know you are My disciples, if you have love one for another. John earlier says this is what has been spoken to you from the beginning that you will love one another and that we should not be like Cain, the murderer who killed his brother.

So John, in a very black-and-white says, a true believer will love one another. Now, he goes on, he goes on to say, by this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey His commandments.

So, in verses one and two, the love of God, the love of one another is a very intimately connected idea. So let me put it in this way, the love of God and the love of Christians, they are often spoken of together in the same package. For example, in verse one, we read everyone who love the father loves, whoever has been born of Him. The people who are born of Him, are Christians, simple as that, followers of Jesus Christ and the very same time, it's the same thing, by this we know that we love the children of God when we love God and obey His commandments.

So again when you love God, you will love Christians. So John puts it the other way round, but he's saying the same thing. But let me just put, a very simple observation across for you. If we love God, we will love one another and that's the logic, if you

really love God, you will love one another. There is no such thing as, I hate my Christian friends, I hate my church, but I love God. God says to you, no such thing. Everyone who loves the Father, loves whoever has been born of Him. You know ah, this church ah, I like ninety-nine people, I just don't like this one, I hate this, I will kill this so-called brother, I will kill him, you know. Everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of Him.

This is a very strong statement. If we love God we would love one another. In fact, the greatest motivation, I feel, I believe for you to really love one another is because you love God. This is a picture of Joshua, I'm sure all of you seen him, and if you've not seen him, well, it means that you have not been eating. If you have eaten at all, you will see Joshua running around, and he will be the one laying out the food, preparing the food for you and and you know, I thought I would share with you a story. It's really quite funny, just a few weeks ago, Joshua shared that he had zhui kueh (a form of rice cake). I think zhui kueh, in this church, is the most popular nowadays, almost. While, when you have zhui kueh, people go and get the zhui kueh and after the first service, there was a couple who went a little bit later and the zhui kueh already gone, but there was still some zhui kueh left, but the zhui kueh is left for the second service. So, this couple asked, Joshua, can I have some zhui kueh. Joshua was thinking, already gone, first service, and he needs to reserve for second service, second service, also a lot of people, so he said to the couple, er, sorry, no more, cannot. But for the whole day, for the whole week, he got no peace and rest. (Laughter in the congregation)

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He feels really bad about it. So, you know what he did? The next week, he bought zhui kueh. He bought zhui kueh, so that when the couple comes, even though that's not the zhui kueh week, he bought an extra pack of zhui kueh, so that when the couple comes, he will give to the couple and make up for last week. But the couple didn't come. Wah, he jia lat (colloquial meaning in deep, difficulty) already, (Laughter in the congregation) he began to wonder, did I stumble them, did they stop coming to church, because there is no zhui kueh for them. He really felt that the lack of zhui kueh contributed to them not coming to church, so he brought the zhui kueh, I do not know what happened to it, he probably ate it himself.

The next week, he bought another pack of zhui kueh hoping and praying that the couple comes, but the couple didn't come, and he really felt siow liaow (colloquial meaning like it's crazy already), he has to answer to God, already, because of his zhui

kueh, nobody comes. And then, in the third week, he bought another pack of zhui kueh and this couple came back. He was so glad, he was so happy, he got his zhui kueh and ran, ran after the husband and gave to the husband and wife, here it is, I don't know who it is, by the way. I don't know which couple up here, I've no idea why, but I know, he did this to give to the couple and he shared, I feel so relieved, over a box of zhui kueh. I tell you why, why I say this, I think he serves the people and he shared this, he does this because he serves God. The best servant are those who recognize that they are servants of God, the best lovers of one another, are those who loves God.

For those of you were looking for a spouse, okay, you want to look for a boyfriend, you want to look for a girlfriend. I tell you what you look for, all right, don't just look for his looks and career and everything, look at whether he loves God. That's the most important thing, because if he loves God, he will know how to love you, but if he doesn't love God, you have no foundation on which he bases his love for you, because one day you may grow old, one day you have wrinkles, your teeth, may drop and he will, he will not love you, but because God is unchanging and because his love for God is divinely inspired, he knows how to love you.

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So it is back to this point, if we love God, this is the argument, if you really love God, you love one another, that's the mark of a Christian. You serve one another. By the way, there are those who cannot forgive people, in this church, actually, in any church, God speaks a lot about bitterness and unforgiveness a lot. The reason why you cannot forgive someone, often times is because you say, he doesn't deserve it, isn't it? Look at what he did to me, look at what she said to me, he doesn't, she doesn't deserve forgiveness. Look at this point again, if you love God, you love one another.

The question you need to ask yourself, whether you can forgive or not, is not, "Do you know what he did to me?" That's not the question, the real question is to ask, "What did God do for me?" Why should I forgive him? Look at what God did for you. You forgive someone, not because of whether he deserved it, you forgive someone because of what God has done for you.

In other words, you forgive not because of who he is, but because of Whose he is. He is born of your Father, love him, she is born of your Father, love her. I actually find there is no allowance for animosity or bitterness or hatred to exist amongst believers.

Now I know, practically there is that flesh for us to wrestle with. But never allow yourselves, theologically to settle on that mindset, yah actually there are some people you just should forgive and there are some people that don't deserve to be forgiven. There's no such teaching in the Bible, you love, you forgive, simple as that and the reason? God.

Now, let me also emphasized further that this love one another, is not a mushy indulgence, sentimental feeling alone because real love for others is always according to truth, and John, who is the apostle of love, make sure this is very clear, he is not a sentimental guy by the way, I think. I think he is a fiery guy right, the Bible tells us, Jesus calls them the sons of thunder, I think , he is by nature quite a Type -A person, but real love is not emmmmm, (pastor makes a humming sound), real love is not necessarily like that, real love is, according to truth, you obey, His commandments.

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In other words, real love for others is in accordance to God's law. How do I love you? I love you, if I obey the ten Commandments, do you realize that? When I do not covet, when I do not lust, when I do not hate, but I go to the other extreme, I give, I serve, I forgive, that is what love is. It's according to commandments, it's according to truth. And by the way, I believe this verse tells me that love is sometimes tough, tough love.

If you really love someone, you will confront someone about their sins. Real love is not saying to the Christian who is practicing homosexuality; it's fine, God loves you, it's fine. That's not love, it's not according to truth, it's not obeying His commandments. It's not saying to the drunkard, keep drinking, it's all right, God still loves you, that's not love. Love means the church is willing to exercise church discipline and again church discipline is not to tekan (colloquial meaning for attack someone verbally) someone, not to make things so difficult and unpleasant for someone, so that we show our displeasure. But, church discipline is lovingly restored someone and to restore someone. Sometimes pain has to be inflicted, but the whole purpose is love. Sometimes, we talk about church discipline as if, hah, hah, this is the one I can get back at. No, the whole motivation is love. Real love is according to truth, obey his commandments.

Now, all that flows, from these two verses, but the big picture is this, how do you know if you have real life, number one, do you have ongoing faith in Jesus Christ. Number two, do you have a holy love for the children of God.

3. Joyful Obedience to God's Word

Lastly, that's it for today. The third evidence is a very simple one, that there will be a joyful obedience to God's Word. So, just these three, it is not that difficult, it's not like recognizing the birds, from looking at the legs, I think that's ridiculous, this is very simple, this is what John has been talking, over and over again, and we are putting it in the summary that's all, do you believe in Jesus, do you love one another and would you joyfully obey God.

And he says

For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome.

A man who is really born again, does not say I believe in Jesus and I live the way I want. A man who really believes in Jesus, does not say, eh, don't ask me about my life today lah, you remember I was baptized or not, remember my Christian name or not, you remember my Christian home or not, eh, you know all these, no, no, no. A real man who is born again says, I want to obey God and my life manifests growing obedience to God.

Do you obey God? I'm not saying perfectly, but progressively more and more, there is this man, who met a king and the King was so pleased with this man, that the king invited him for dinner the very next day. So next day, he turned up at the king's palace and the king says, whoa, I didn't know you, you are here. But, king, you invited me for dinner right? The king says, yes, I did invited you but you didn't answer my invitations, so I didn't prepare dinner for you, why didn't you answer my invitation. The man then says, we do not answer a king's invitation, we obey the king's invitation and that's a very good point.

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If Jesus is our Lord, he is our King, then we obey, very simple point. If you really are born again, you obey God, you obey the Lord Jesus Christ. But the key thing again here is that this obedience is not one of slavish fear or or that aaaah, no choice but to obey, but there is this phrase that John adds, His commandments are not burdensome. In other words, it is not backbreaking, it is not heavy, it is not unreasonable, but it is something that delights our hearts, something that we want to do, it is a joy to obey God. That's what he is saying.

This is the obedience, not just on the surface, this is the obedience, from your heart and Paul looked at this, somewhat in Romans 6:17,

But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart
(Romans 6:17 ESV)

But thanks be to God that you were once slaves of sin, you willingly sin, but after you are born again, after the celestial grace of faith, enters your heart, everything changes. Now, you become obedient from the heart, you really want to obey God.

Therefore, the commandments are not burdensome. You say why? I tell you why. Number one. The reason is because you know, you love God and you want to please Him. You love God and you want to please Him and you know, He said, if you love Me keep My commandments.

So now I want to obey God, because I want to please God, in the past I don't want to obey God. So His commandments, of course, it seems, burdensome, cannot do this, cannot do that, eee, why so restrictive, but now that I love God, His commandments are a joy to my heart, I want to please Him. Now, I want to clarify this, we're not saying that you obey God, so that God is so pleased with you, He will give you more things. Wrong thinking alright, obeying God is not so as to curry favor with God. "Curry favor with God" is I do things so that God is pleased with me and now He will give me more stuff. No, I tell you something, even if you don't obey, God is pleased with you. Wah, you say, pastor, are you sure what you're saying is right?

Even if you're not obeying, God still loves you. Yes, because He doesn't love us purely because of who we are, He loves us because of Jesus Christ, His Son. Nothing shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. So, this is the amazing thing about God's love, I obey God, not so much that He will love me more, because He already loves me in Jesus Christ, but I obey Him simply because I want to please Him, that's it.

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I want to please Him with my obedience and I love God and therefore to me I love to obey His commandments. But there is also a very practical reason why I would love His commandments and delight in His commandments and that is because now, I realized, His commandments are the best. Now, previously, I thought premarital sex is great, I thought adultery is wonderful, wah look at all the movies or the pretty

women, handsome guys, pretty women, wah, they sleep all around, Wah, that's the high life, that's what the world tells you, but now that you're born again, you realize that God Word is the best. So you know I shouldn't live like that, God's Word is the best, I should keep myself pure and chaste for my spouse.

In the past, you used to think revenge is sweet. Now as a believer, you realize it is not, forgiveness is sweet. So God has changed you in such a way, that His words that seem to be so unreasonable and so superficial and so unnecessary, is now dear and precious to you. Look at the words of the psalmist, he says

In the way of your testimonies I delight as much as in all riches.
(Psalm 119:14 ESV)

in the way of the testimonies I delight. I tell you if you're not a Christian today, you will never say such things, oh the Bible is such a delight, no, not just to read, alright, but to do. A true born again man says Your Words are what I delight. Goes on to say, I will delight in your statutes, I will not forget Your Word, Your testimonies are my delight.

I will delight in your statutes; I will not forget your word.
(Psalm 119:16 ESV)

Your testimonies are my delight; they are my counselors.
(Psalm 119:24 ESV)

They are my counselors, Your statutes have been my songs in the house of my sojourning.

Your statutes have been my songs in the house of my sojourning.
(Psalm 119:54 ESV)

How many of you sing about your tax returns, Oh, I love to pay tax? (Laughter in the congregation) Anyone? Nobody does that. You don't have the love for the government in that sense or the love for the tax department. But I love God and His statutes are now, my song, O how I love Your law, it is my meditation all day long.

Oh how I love your law! It is my meditation all the day.
(Psalm 119:97 ESV)

but his delight is in the law of the LORD,
and on His law he meditates day and night. (Psalm 1:2 ESV)

Psalm 1 verse 1-2, blessed is the man whose delight is in the law of the Lord and in His Word he meditates, day and night.

How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!
(Psalm 119:103 ESV)

How sweet are Your Words to my taste sweeter than honey to my mouth.

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My friends, what I'm speaking to you today is not what you engineer for yourself. These are the marvels of the new birth, these are the marvels of a changed life. What are they again, ongoing faith in Jesus Christ, a supernatural love, a holy love for one another and the joyful obedience to God's Word. That is how you know if you are the real stuff.

Piper, I end with a quote from him, a long one,

John Piper

I know where true satisfaction is to be found. God has loved me with an infinite love. He promises to work everything together for good for those who love Him. He withholds no good thing from those who walk uprightly. Nothing you offer can compare to the joy of His fellowship now and the glory to be revealed hereafter. World, you have lost your power. I have become the glad slave of a Good Master. His yoke is easy and the burden of His commandments is light.

Would you be able to say these things for your own soul today, on this very last sermon this year. My question to you is, are you really born again?

Let's bow for a word of prayer together. There is no more important question in life than this, really, there is no more important question in life than this. People ask you today what is your job, how many children do you have, how is your career, how's your boyfriend. But you know all these things, are not the real question of life. The question today is, are you born of God?

This morning I like you regardless of who you are, just to ask yourself, even if you are relatively sure you are saved in the past, this morning, asked yourself again the same

questions because if you really are saved, you can answer these questions positively, these tests. It's always good to stand up to test, because it is God's grace in your life. So, everyone regardless of who you are, do you still believe Jesus is the Christ, this morning that He is the Messiah, the Promised One, the Son of God, who came to die and rise again and He is able and willing to wash away all this. Do you believe that there is no other Name but Jesus, do you still believe this moment ?

Number two, is there someone in your heart you can't forgive, and it has been going on for a long time, you won't want to face up to it, you didn't want to admit it, but somehow in the corners of your heart today, you know still, you couldn't forgive, because you've been always looking at who he is, what he has done, but is there grace in your heart to say, Lord, it's not what I am in or who he is and what he has done, it's Whose he is and what you You have done for me and I will be willing to forgive him or her for Christ sake. Do you love one another, are there deeds and acts of service from you to others. Is church to you a place where you consume and you get, or is church, a place for you when you gave and you serve. You say, what's so important about that, it's about your heart, you see, you came to get, but the heart of Christ is that He came to give. Do you see that, do you see a holy love, flowing from your life.

And thirdly, friends. do you read the Bible, do you delight in the Bible, do you study it, do you say this is my delight, or do you say, this is such a chore, pastor, please end sermon quickly, I don't go for Bible studies, I just have fun and games and Your Word is such a boring thing to me and would you say, yes, I truly delight in God's Word, I love to study it, and more than that, I love to do it, because it pleases my Father and because He has enabled me to see that the truth of God's Word trumps over the lies of this world. It's always having the best interest for me.

So, my friends, how'd you score in these tests, are you born again? If you're not it's not too late folks, today is the day of salvation, the way to be saved is not that you now say, I want to delight in God's Word, the way to be saved is not to say, I will now try to serve people the way, the way to be saved is not to say to yourself, I think I will try to maintain believing in Jesus, the way to be saved today is a start at the foot of the cross, recognizing that you are a sinner, recognizing that you cannot save yourself and then looking up to Jesus Christ, who died for your sins.

The Bible says, repent and believe and if you believe, Jesus promises you, you shall not perish but have everlasting life. So, come back to the Gospel, the Good News of Jesus, that He died for your sins and you need to repent and believe. My friends,

today as you do that as you are humbled to recognize that even the desire to do that is the grace of God and to cry out to God today, He tells us, he that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out. There is salvation for you, I pray today, would be the day you are truly born again, not just coming to church, not just imagining, assuming, hoping you are saved, but that you are really saved.

For those of you who have passed these three tests, aah I'm sure, you will not boast in yourself, but you will praise God, thank Him, because you know what, this is the most important test of life. You may have failed your PSLE, your O levels, but this one, you can't afford to fail. But now that you have passed it, you recognize this, it's not that you passed this, but God blessed me with it. Then my encouragement to you, according to the Scriptures, beholding them, seeing them, the mercies of God, would you present your bodies a living sacrifice, from year 2015 onwards. Would you pledge your life for Jesus Christ, because you know what, you are born again, you have a new life.

Would you give Him your time, your talents, your treasures, not just Sunday mornings, not just a 10%, not just a little here and there, but all of your life for Jesus sake. My friends, today, would you pray for your loved ones, even your own kids, they have been coming to church with you, but you look into their lives and you see no marks of grace, you see that they do not like God's Word, you see that they do not serve others, you see that they are struggling with who Jesus is, even if it is, would they even want to believe in Christ. My friends, those are things you should not ignore. But in the new year, would you endeavor to point them to Jesus, all the way, you can't save them, but God can, and the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that their believes. Keep praying for them keep pointing them back to Jesus and as a church, as we look forward to 2015, 2016, and Punggol and beyond, let's be very clear what this church is about, it's not about attendance on Sunday, it not about a show, it's not about entertainment, but is this, that would be leading generations into a life changing relationship with Jesus Christ. Let us be faithful to preach the pure Gospel, not mixed with man's ideas, not mixed with our own interpretations of what is easy for our culture, but give a pure Gospel, because, salvation is of the Lord, would you be faithful to Him. Father we thank You this morning for Your work and Your Words. I pray that this truth, would find good soil in our hearts. I pray for those who need to be saved today. Lord, would You draw them to Yourself for those who need to surrender their lives to You. May this be the day they do so and would You keep this church faithful and loyal to Your pure Gospel, we thank You today that You and the miracle of life change. Do that in our

lives, do that through our lives, Christ lives in me, that's our..., That's our desire,
that's our goal. We asked these now in Jesus Name. Amen!