

RYF DEVOTION MONDAY APRIL 20TH, 2020

TODAY'S READING: 1 JOHN 1:1-4

1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life — 2 the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us — 3 that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. 4 And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.

REFLECTION

Why should we read 1 John? In the opening to this book, we see two important reasons. First, we should read it because this was written by someone who actually saw Jesus! John saw Him, touched Him, and knew Him (v. 1). Also, **this book was written for your joy**. As verse 4 makes clear, this book was written so all Christians, people who fellowship with the Father and His son Jesus (v. 3), would have completed joy. I don't know about you, but I certainly want to have complete joy! In the midst of whatever you are going through, maybe its online school, missing friends, struggling with your siblings or parents, you can have joy. Let's read on together in this book to see this joy.

PRAYER

If you are a believer, give thanks that the Lord gives joy to His children! Ask that you would be reminded of this joy in midst of difficult times. If you aren't a believer, consider reading on in 1 John to see what this joy really means and why it comes from Jesus.

FOR FURTHER READING

Paul's prayer for God to complete His work in us in Philippians 1:3-11

RYF DEVOTION TUESDAY APRIL 21ST, 2020

TODAY'S READING: 1 JOHN 1:5-7

5 This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. 6 If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. 7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.

REFLECTION

What does light do? Light allows us to see what is true. Without light, we wouldn't be able to do much of anything. We couldn't move without running in to something or someone. We need light. **Here in 1 John, we see that "God is light" (v. 5) because He reveals to us what is true, indeed He is truth.** Because of this, if someone is walking in darkness, then they are walking away from God. But how can we follow God? We don't always follow the truth, so is there hope for us? Yes! **God's light also rescues us.** In verse 7 we see that the blood of Jesus (called elsewhere the light of the world) actually washes away our sin, our walking in darkness. Because of what Jesus has done, we can now walk in the light with other believers and obey the command of Jesus to "let our light shine before others" so they may see God too (Matthew 5:16)

PRAYER

If you are a believer, spend time asking God how you can spread His light in the midst of a dark world. Think about specific people you can love and show God's light to and ask for opportunities to do so today. If you are not a believer, what do you think reveals what is true? Where does truth come from?

FOR FURTHER READING

Jesus calls believers to be lights in this world for God's glory in Matthew 5:1-16

RYF DEVOTION WEDNESDAY APRIL 22ND, 2020

TODAY'S READING: 1 JOHN 1:8-10

8 If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

REFLECTION

We live in a world where we all seek to show others the best version of ourselves. We post the best pictures, share the best quotes, and spend time trying to craft a spotless image of ourselves for others to see. However, the image we show is not reality. We all fall short of our crafted image, but what's worse is that we fall short of the image we are meant to be: the image of God. We all sin, we aren't always obedient to God's law nor do we follow Him as we should. This passage tells us that we can't simply sweep our sin under the rug and craft an image of ourselves before God. God knows what is true and we need to confess our sins. **We can't ever hide anything from God. But God does not look at our sin and hate us, instead He loves us, and as we confess our sins there is forgiveness.** What is something in your life that you have been trying to keep from God that you need to confess today?

PRAYER

If you are a believer, give thanks for the mercy and grace we have in Jesus, and for the forgiveness of our sins. Ask the Lord that He would continue to show you your sin so that you might confess it and turn away from it and to God. If you are not a believer, what would it look like to be able to live a forgiven life?

FOR FURTHER READING

We all fall short, but there is righteousness for believers in Christ in Romans 3

RYF DEVOTION THURSDAY APRIL 23, 2020

TODAY'S READING: 1 JOHN 2:1-6

1 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. 2 He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. 3 And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. 4 Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, 5 but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: 6 whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.

REFLECTION

What does Jesus have to do with our sin? This question is at the very heart of the Christian faith. Whenever there is sin, which is in all of us, the consequence is death. God is perfectly just and so sin, rebellion against the God who created all things, means death. So what hope do we have? We have Christ Jesus, God Himself! This passage calls Him both our "advocate" and "propitiation." He is our advocate, meaning He takes up our case; He represents us. He is also our "propitiation" which means He is the perfect sacrifice for us. **Jesus dies instead of us and so takes on Himself the death which we deserve, and instead gives us life!** What glorious news! And what do we do with that news? We serve God. We seek to obey His commandments and walk like Jesus walked. This is why John gives these two things as signs that someone knows Jesus, that they keep His word and follow His pattern of life.

PRAYER

If you are a believer, give thanks for the life that you have been given in Jesus! Ask that the Holy Spirit would reveal to you ways in which you can be obedient to God and follow Jesus today. If you are not a believer, consider what would be truly just in relation to your life.

FOR FURTHER READING

This justification by faith worked out in the life of Abraham in Romans 4

RYF DEVOTION FRIDAY APRIL 24TH, 2020

TODAY'S READING: 1 JOHN 2:7-11

7 Beloved, I am writing you no new commandment, but an old commandment that you had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word that you have heard. 8 At the same time, it is a new commandment that I am writing to you, which is true in him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining. 9 Whoever says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in darkness. 10 Whoever loves his brother abides in the light, and in him there is no cause for stumbling. 11 But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

REFLECTION

In this passage, John refers to an “old commandment” and a “new commandment”, what does he mean? First, the old commandment comes from the Old Testament and it is that we are meant to love God and love others. The new commandment is these same truths, but said by Jesus in the New Testament: that we are to love God and love one another (see John 13:34-35). **This is why it is so important how we treat one another, because it reveals our obedience to the words of Jesus and love for God.** This passage is not shy about saying that if we hate our brothers and sisters (both our actual siblings and the people around us), we are blind and walking in darkness. However, if we love them, we “abide” in the light. This passage is especially important right now. We have so many opportunities on a day to day basis to love those we are quarantined with, to love our siblings, parents, and children. This doesn't mean that people are always easy to love, but by the Holy Spirit, God strengthens us to do this daily. How will you do that today?

PRAYER

If you are a believer, ask the Lord to show you how to show love your brothers and sisters today. If you are not a believer, how do you love those around you?

FOR FURTHER READING

The Holy Lord commands Israel to love one another In Leviticus 19:1-18

RYF DEVOTION SATURDAY APRIL 25TH, 2020

TODAY'S READING: 1 JOHN 2:12-14

I am writing to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven for his name's sake.

I am writing to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning.

I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one.

I write to you, children, because you know the Father.

I write to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning.

I write to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one.

REFLECTION

Where are you in the Christian life? Are you a newer Christian, a "little child" in the faith? Maybe you are older in the faith, with strength and gifts, ready to serve God. Maybe you are a spiritual "father" nearing the end of your earthly journey? **John addresses all stages of the Christian life in these verses and gives words of truth for them.** For those young in their faith, he writes so that you know both that your sins are forgiven, and that you know God the Father who has forgiven them. If you are a "father" in the faith, he writes so that you will find rest in continuing to know the God who was from the beginning of all things. If you are in the middle of your spiritual journey, he wants you to know that by the Holy Spirit God's word is in you, you have strength in Christ, and have overcome the evil one. **Wherever you are, there is always comfort in the gospel, comfort in God.**

PRAYER

If you are a believer, give thanks for these words of truth given for our good. Ask that God's word would continue to give you strength, wherever you are in the Christian life. Think about which category you might fit in and reflect on John's words to you.

FOR FURTHER READING

Putting on the new self in Christ, regardless of your position in life in Colossians 3

RYF DEVOTION SUNDAY APRIL 26TH, 2020

TODAY'S READING: 1 JOHN 2:15-17

15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. 17 And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.

REFLECTION

When we read about “the world” in this passage, John doesn’t mean the people living in the world, or the creation itself, we are called to love and care for both those things. So what does he mean? Here “the world” refers to the sinfulness, the evil, that exists in the world. In this sense, we are not meant to love the world, but what does loving the world look like? It looks like loving our bodily desires and what we can make of our life, rather than loving God. It is loving to make yourself feel good at the expense of loving and serving God. **Who or what do you love most? God, or yourself? The deep problem with the desires of “the world” is that they put themselves above the God who created the world.** This passage is clear: these evil desires will be gone, but God and those who serve Him will remain.

PRAYER

If you are a believer, ask the Lord that He would continue to change your heart to love and serve Him more. Ask that by the Holy Spirit you would find ways to serve God rather than your desires and pride this week. If you are not a believer, Who or what do you love most?

FOR FURTHER READING

Jesus stands up against temptation for the evil desires of this world in Matthew 4:1-12

RYF DEVOTION MONDAY APRIL 27TH, 2020

TODAY'S READING: 1 JOHN 2:18-23

18 Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour. 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. 20 But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all have knowledge. 21 I write to you, not because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and because no lie is of the truth. 22 Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son. 23 No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also.

REFLECTION

The first thing we see in this passage is that John uses the phrase, "it is the last hour." Was he wrong to say that because so much time has passed after he wrote this? No, not at all. When we read "it is the last hour" it means that the next, and also last, big thing God will do will be the return of Jesus and the setting up of the new heavens and new earth. **After Jesus was raised from the dead and ascended into heaven, we now wait for His return. So in this way, like John says, we are living in the last hour.** Unfortunately, as this passage also makes clear, people that seem to be with us, actually don't believe in Jesus and so will leave. But we can have confidence that all who are true followers of Jesus will be raised with Him on the last day, and we can take confidence now in the fact that we have the truth, given to us in Jesus.

PRAYER

If you are a believer, thank the Lord for giving us the truth. Ask that you might live as a faithful witness to the truth. Pray also for those you know who don't know the truth, that God would work in them to bring them to Himself. If you aren't a believer, what do you think about this claim of John, that Christians have the truth in Jesus Christ?

FOR FURTHER READING

Christians are to stand firm, despite lawlessness and evil in the last days in 2 Thessalonians 2

RYF DEVOTION TUESDAY APRIL 28TH, 2020

TODAY'S READING: 1 JOHN 2:24-27

24 Let what you heard from the beginning abide in you. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, then you too will abide in the Son and in the Father. 25 And this is the promise that he made to us—eternal life. 26 I write these things to you about those who are trying to deceive you. 27 But the anointing that you received from him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone should teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about everything, and is true, and is no lie—just as it has taught you, abide in him.

REFLECTION

We need to be careful of people who try and teach us a gospel of “Jesus and...” This could be someone who says you need Jesus and your own good deeds in order to get eternal life. This could also be someone who says that you need Jesus and the teachings of this specific leader outside of the bible to find salvation. **The bible clearly teaches that salvation only comes from the work of Christ on our behalf, and that we receive it simply by faith. There is no “Jesus and...” in the gospel.** This is what John tells believers we have heard, the good news of eternal life in Christ alone. We need to beware of those who will try and teach us something different. John encourages his readers that we have been set apart by God, given the Holy Spirit. Of course, we still need to be taught more about God, that’s why letters like this one were written, but we must be cautious about people whose teaching contradicts what the bible says.

PRAYER

If you are a believer, ask the Lord that by the Spirit you would be able to recognize people teaching a “Jesus and...” false gospel. Ask the Lord also where He would reveal areas where you are relying on something other than Jesus. If you aren’t a believer, what do you make of the claim that all you need is faith in what Jesus has done?

FOR FURTHER READING

A call to perseverance, even in the midst of trials and false teachers. Read the book of Jude

RYF DEVOTION WEDNESDAY APRIL 29TH, 2020

TODAY'S READING: 1 JOHN 2:28-3:3

28 And now, little children, abide in him, so that when he appears we may have confidence and not shrink from him in shame at his coming. 29 If you know that he is righteous, you may be sure that everyone who practices righteousness has been born of him. 1 See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. 2 Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. 3 And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

REFLECTION

As the school year starts to come to a close, as restrictions begin to be lifted after this time of quarantine, we are all looking forward. We look forward to summer camps, time with friends, or maybe just to be able to leave the house. But what are we ultimately looking forward to? **Where is our ultimate hope? John is clear, we have hope because Jesus will come back. Though we face opposition in this life, we are God's children now and He has not left us.** In fact, when Jesus returns we will be given new, glorious bodies, and we will get to see Him face to face! What a beautiful hope. And because of this hope, we continue to grow in the understanding and working out of our faith.

PRAYER

If you are a believer, thank the Lord for our future hope. Ask the Lord that He would show you ways to live with that hope right now. If you are not a believer, what do you think of the Christian hope?

FOR FURTHER READING

Christ's return and conquering of the forces of evil in Revelation 19:11-21

RYF DEVOTION THURSDAY APRIL 30TH, 2020

TODAY'S READING: 1 JOHN 3:4-8

4 Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness. 5 You know that he appeared in order to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. 6 No one who abides in him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him. 7 Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous. 8 Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.

REFLECTION

Why is “sin” such a big deal? Why do we hear about sin all the time? Because sin is evil. Sin is going against God and His law. Not only that, but we all have sinned. **The reason Jesus came was to take on the punishment for our sin, and to destroy such evil. This is why we don't make a practice of sinning.** If we do sin, we quickly confess (1 John 1:8-9) and turn away from such things. This is why the Bible says that the one who continues to sin, who practices sinning, is disregarding Jesus because those actions go against all of who Jesus is. This is why we, as Christians, don't practice sinning and instead do as this passage says, we “practice righteousness.” How can you both flee from sin and practice righteousness today?

PRAYER

If you are a believer, pray that the Lord would help you flee from sin. Also spend time confessing your sin. If you are not a believer, what do you make of the idea of “sin” and sin being evil?

FOR FURTHER READING

The struggle of the Christian life in Romans 7:13-25

RYF DEVOTION FRIDAY MAY 1ST, 2020

TODAY'S READING: 1 JOHN 3:9-10

9 No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him; and he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been born of God. 10 By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.

REFLECTION

It is possible for Christians to read this passage and be somewhat discouraged, but John is actually reassuring us. As we have seen, believers do sin (1 John 1:8-10) but there is forgiveness. With this in mind, **John is giving us comfort. That, by God's power at work in us, we can fight against sin and not make a practice of sinning. And as we practice righteousness, as we fight against sin, this is something that helps assure us that we are children of God.** John is telling us of the tension present in every Christian life: that though we still sin, the power of God is transforming us and so we are quick to turn away from sin and to turn to God. And while "practicing righteousness" sounds big and hard, John gives us something very concrete. We are to love our brothers and sisters.

PRAYER

If you are a believer, give thanks to the Lord His Words of assurance to us, and the strength He gives us to fight against sin. Ask the Lord to reveal places in your life where you need to fight against sin, and ways that you can love your brothers and sisters, both in your family and in the faith, today. If you are not a believer, consider your motivation and strength for doing good deeds.

FOR FURTHER READING

Jesus explains why we must be born of God in John 3:1-21

RYF DEVOTION SATURDAY MAY 2ND, 2020

TODAY'S READING: 1 JOHN 3:11-15

11 For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. 12 We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous. 13 Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you. 14 We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death. 15 Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

REFLECTION

In this book so far, John has been showing us that there are two paths: life and death. The path of life is shown by love, and the path of death is shown by hatred. He now goes on to give examples of each path. The example of the second path, the path of death and hatred, is Cain. Cain murdered his brother Abel out of hatred (Genesis 4). **But John is clear: we all were on the path of hatred and death. Only by God's mercy have we "passed out of death into life" (v. 14).** And because we have passed into life, therefore we love one another.

PRAYER

If you are a believer, give thanks that through Jesus you have passed from death to life! Ask the Lord that He would give you strength, not only to love others, but also to endure the hatred of the world. If you are not a believer, what do you make of these two paths?

FOR FURTHER READING

The story of Cain and Abel in Genesis 4:1-16

RYF DEVOTION SUNDAY MAY 3RD, 2020

TODAY'S READING: 1 JOHN 3:16-18

16 By this we know love, that one laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. 17 But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? 18 Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.

REFLECTION

How do we know what love is? Everyone seems to want it, and yet it seems like everyone has their own definition for it. But what really is love? This passage tells us. The ultimate expression of love is that Jesus laid down His life for us. When we see that we too should "lay down our lives" for others, we might wonder how to possibly do that today. A circumstance where you can lay down your life for someone is very rare, so what do we do? Are we off the hook? No! We show love when we provide for one another, when we help those in need. We look to the interest of others, rather than our own interests. **Love is as deep and profound as the sacrifice of Jesus, and yet we can show it so simply as we serve others and put their needs before our own.** Today we will all be faced with many small choices of whether to love others or put ourselves first. Let us be on the lookout for them and take advantage of them.

PRAYER

If you are a believer, pray that you would love others as Jesus has loved you. Ask the Lord to help you be sensitive to the needs of others and love and serve them. Think about who you can help in their time of need today. If you aren't a believer, consider what love is. Is there a better definition than what the bible says Jesus has done?

FOR FURTHER READING

Read more about Jesus as the model for our love, humility, and service in Philipians 2

RYF DEVOTION MONDAY MAY 4TH, 2020

TODAY'S READING: 1 JOHN 3:19-24

19 By this we shall know that we are of the truth and reassure our heart before him; 20 for whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything. 21 Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God; 22 and whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him. 23 And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. 24 Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us.

REFLECTION

What do we do when we question our faith? We all go through times of struggle where we wonder if we do believe what we say we believe. In these times, we need assurance from God. This passage gives us three different ways we can be assured of who we are in Jesus. First, if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our hearts. If you have a nagging doubt that you don't love enough and aren't good enough, God is greater than our doubt. He knows us and still loves us. Another assurance for our faith is that we love one another. Since, as we have seen in John, our love comes from the love of Jesus, our love testifies to the love that Jesus has for us and that we are saved in Him and not through ourselves. Lastly, we are assured of our faith because we have the Holy Spirit! By the Spirit we understand God's word and through the Spirit we came to know the Truth. The Spirit bears witness that we are children of God! (Romans 8:16). **If you are facing doubts, if you need reassurance, know that God's power and love is greater than then any condemnation of your heart and He gives you assurance by His word and Spirit that you are truly a child of God.**

PRAYER

If you are a believer, spend time considering these assurances in 1 John. Thank the Lord for them and that He is truly greater than any condemnation from our hearts or from others. Ask the Lord to be with you in the midst of doubt and guide you deeper into His truth.

FOR FURTHER READING

Even in the midst of doubt, The Lord is our Rock and our Fortress in Psalm 18

RYF DEVOTION TUESDAY MAY 5TH, 2020

TODAY'S READING: 1 JOHN 4:1-6

1 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. 2 By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, 3 and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already. 4 Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. 5 They are from the world; therefore they speak from the world, and the world listens to them. 6 We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

REFLECTION

How do we know who to trust? This is a hard question, even when it comes to normal relationships, but what about when it comes to spiritual teaching? Today we have preachers on TV, the radio, YouTube, authors writing about their experiences of heaven, and people that claim to have all the power of God. **How can we possible know who to trust? We trust those that believe the bible, most importantly, what the bible says about Jesus.** And what does it say? That Jesus is the son of God, fully man and fully God, who took on a human body, lived a sinless life, went to the cross for our sins, was raised on the third day, and ascended into heaven. This is how we know who to trust, by what they make of Jesus. But if this still seems difficult, look at the comfort in verse 4. We have already overcome! Though we still struggle, our victory is sure. Not because of our own strength or smarts, but because God, who is in us, is greater than the world!

PRAYER

If you are a believer, give thanks for the greatness of God and that He is greater than anything or anyone in the world! Ask God that He would help you be wise as you listen to other people and help you to test what you hear with His word. If you are not a believer, what do you make of the biblical witness to Jesus?

FOR FURTHER READING

Paul describes the coming Day of the Lord and gives encouragement in 1 Thessalonians 5

RYF DEVOTION WEDNESDAY MAY 6TH, 2020

TODAY'S READING: 1 JOHN 4:7-12

7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. 8 Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. 9 In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. 10 In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. 11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 12 No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.

REFLECTION

Why should we love one another? Is it so we can live a happy life? Is it so other people love us back? Or maybe, so we can be obedient to God and then He will accept us? This passage, indeed the whole bible, gives a very different answer. **As Christians, we love because we have been loved.** As this passage says so well, "In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son..." **When we were separated from God, God became a man in Jesus and He sacrificed Himself so that we could be rescued!** The beauty of this love is that it's not only an example for us, but now we also have the power to love! For just as Jesus loved us when we didn't love Him, now we have the Holy Spirit which is working in us so that we can love like Jesus. As we will see later in 1 John, we love because He first loved us (1 John 4:19). The example for our love, and the power to love, comes from God alone.

PRAYER

If you are a believer, give thanks for the love of God showed in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus! Ask that, by the Spirit, God would help you to love others. Spend time praying and thinking about ways to love others today. If you are not a believer, what do you make of this definition and example of love?

FOR FURTHER READING

The place and practice of love in the Christian life in 1 Corinthians 13

RYF DEVOTION THURSDAY MAY 7TH, 2020

TODAY'S READING: 1 JOHN 4:13-15

13 By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. 14 And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. 15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.

REFLECTION

In this passage, we see two further assurances for our faith. John has already talked about our loving others as an evidence of our faith, but now he adds two more assurances for believers. First, we are in God because we have been given the Holy Spirit! The Holy Spirit, our "helper", is what not only allows us to understand God's word, but also turned our hearts to pursue God in the first place. The second piece of assurance in this passage is what we confess. And what do we confess? That God sent Jesus, His son, to be the savior of the world. **So, in 1 John we see that believers are assured that they are in God by our love for others, the Holy Spirit we have been given, and our confession about Jesus.** When we struggle with our faith, we can return to these assurances and hope, not simply a hope in ourselves, but a sure and certain hope in what Jesus has done and what God is doing in us right now.

PRAYER

If you are a believer, spend time praying and thinking about these two assurances. Ask that the Lord, by His Spirit, would reinforce your faith by His promises.

FOR FURTHER READING

God's glorious message of salvation to all who believe in Romans 10:5-13

RYF DEVOTION FRIDAY MAY 8TH, 2020

TODAY'S READING: 1 JOHN 4:16-18

16 So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. 17 By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as he is so also are we in this world. 18 There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love.

REFLECTION

What is our confidence as Christians? Our confidence is not in our own love, our own work, but it is in the love of God. Our passage today puts it this way: **at the day of judgment we do not need to fear. Instead, We have confidence because God's love is perfect and casts out our fear!** We have confidence in what Jesus has done for us. And while we do sometimes fear, we must remember that God is making us holy. He is perfecting us and He will carry that work to completion.

PRAYER

If you are a believer, give thanks to the Lord for His perfect love and the confidence we have in Him. Take your fears, worries, and anxieties to the Lord today and rest in His love for you. If you are not a believer, what confidence do you have in the midst of fear?

FOR FURTHER READING

Dwelling in the Shadow of the Almighty God in Psalm 91

RYF DEVOTION SATURDAY MAY 9TH, 2020

TODAY'S READING: 1 JOHN 4:19-21

19 We love because he first loved us. 20 If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. 21 And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.

REFLECTION

1 John 4:19 is a fantastic summary of the whole book. **Our love for others is only possible because of God's love for us.** This is why John can connect our love for others with our love for God. This is the same reason why Jesus said the first and greatest commandment is to love the Lord with all of our heart, soul, and mind and the second commandment is like it, "love your neighbor as yourself." Without the love of God for us, we have no hope of loving other people and if we don't love others, we need to continue to look back to the love of God for us. It isn't always easy to love one another, it can actually be really hard. But the love and power of God, the power and love that Jesus showed when He went to the cross and rose from the dead for us, is the same power that is changing us, by the Holy Spirit, to love and serve God and one another more and more.

PRAYER

If you are a believer, spend time thinking about how you love other people. Thank the Lord for His forgiveness and ask that He would reveal to you how to love others around you more and more, even today. If you aren't a believer, what empowers your love for other people? Is it enough?

FOR FURTHER READING

The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant in Matthew 18:21-35

RYF DEVOTION SUNDAY MAY 10TH, 2020

TODAY'S READING: 1 JOHN 5:1-5

1 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. 2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. 3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome. 4 For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. 5 Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

REFLECTION

What comes to your mind when you think of the words “obedience” and “commandments?” We often hear those words and we think of a heavy weight of things we have to do. **But this passage explains that obedience to God, following His commandments, is not a burden. It is actually what we were meant to do.** To disobey, to go away from God, actually is what brings the burden. But as God’s children, as John says, we overcome the world. We overcome it, not in and of ourselves, but because of our faith, because of Jesus. Jesus has won the great victory at the cross, and all of history is moving towards His eternal kingdom. By God’s grace, we participate in that victory! This means that obedience to God is not a burden, but rather a great privilege and joy for the believer.

PRAYER

If you are a believer, thank the Lord for your rebirth in Christ and that you participate in His victory. Ask the Lord that you would see obedience to Him as a joy and as rest, rather than as a burden. If you are not a believer, consider what your response should be if the God of the Bible really is who He says He is.

FOR FURTHER READING

See the Beauty of God’s law in Psalm 19

RYF DEVOTION MONDAY MAY 11TH, 2020

TODAY'S READING: 1 JOHN 5:6-9

6 This is he who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ; not by the water only but by the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. 7 For there are three that testify: 8 the Spirit and the water and the blood; and these three agree. 9 If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater, for this is the testimony of God that he has borne concerning his Son.

REFLECTION

Sometimes we look at the bible as simply a bunch of different books just tossed together. There are even people who would say that these books just happened to be the ones certain people selected to be in the Bible. But **the more we read and study it, the more we see that there is a deep unity of witness and purpose in the Bible.** Here John talks about the witnesses of water, blood, and Spirit. What does he mean? By “water” he is referring to the real baptism of Jesus on earth. By “blood” he is referring to the actual death of Jesus on the cross for us. By “the Spirit” he is referring to the Holy Spirit given to believers. Verse 8 is clear, these three things agree and they all hang together. Even more than this, the bible isn't simply the testimony of men, it is from God. We can have confidence that God has given us His word and that it is all united in testifying to who God is: God the Father and Creator, Jesus the son of God who became a man, died on the cross for us, and was resurrected, and God the Holy Spirit that enables us to love and serve God and understand His word.

PRAYER

If you are a believer, thank the Lord for the testimony He has given us in His word! Ask the Lord that He would make you eager to read and study it, both with others and by yourself and to see its unity. If you are not a believer, what do you make of the witness of the bible?

FOR FURTHER READING

The Baptism of Jesus in Matthew 3:1-17

RYF DEVOTION TUESDAY MAY 12TH, 2020

TODAY'S READING: 1 JOHN 5:10-12

10 Whoever believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself. Whoever does not believe God has made him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has borne concerning his Son. 11 And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 12 Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

REFLECTION

We live in a world full of options. We face questions as simple as what to wear and what to eat, but also more complicated ones like what to watch, and what to say. All of these questions, it seems, have many different ways they can be answered. Many people will say that it's the same for what to believe: "just pick one of the many options and it's not that big of a deal. They are all basically saying the same thing." **But there are really only two options. Either we believe that Jesus is the son of God, we believe in God as He reveals Himself in the bible, or we don't.** If we believe in Him, then we have eternal life and rest secure. If we don't believe in Him, we make God into a liar and so, rightly, will not have life. At the end of the day it really is this simple: What do you believe about Jesus?

PRAYER

If you are a believer, give thanks for the life given to you in Christ! Ask the Lord that through you others would come to know the true life to be found in Jesus. If you are not a believer, what do you make of these two options?

FOR FURTHER READING

The Glory of the Gospel for all Believers in Ephesians 1:3-14

RYF DEVOTION WEDNESDAY MAY 13TH, 2020

TODAY'S READING: 1 JOHN 5:13

13 I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life.

REFLECTION

As this book starts to come to a close, we are reminded of why it was written. While we've heard much about loving others and obedience to God's commandments, this is what it all points to: **this book was written so that those who believe in Jesus would know that they have eternal life. It was written for our assurance as believers.** There will certainly be times where our faith is tested and we have questions and doubts, but so long as we hold fast to the truth of the Gospel, to Jesus, we will stand secure. We can't weather the storms of this life on our own, but God is our refuge and strength. So in times of doubt, in times of questions, in times of suffering, we return to God's word to find assurance of who God is, and the great love He has shown us.

PRAYER

If you are a believer, bring your pain, your questions, and your doubts before the Lord today. Spend time reading and praying over God's word and resting in His truth.

FOR FURTHER READING

God is our Fortress (Psalm 46)

RYF DEVOTION THURSDAY MAY 14TH, 2020

TODAY'S READING: 1 JOHN 5:14-15

14 And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. 15 And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.

REFLECTION

There is power in prayer. When we hear verses like these we might doubt that, because we know that we don't always get everything we pray for. But the bible clearly testifies to the fact that there is power in prayer and it is effective. So we need to understand what prayer is and is not. Prayer is not bringing a list of requests to God to be answered as we see fit, and if we only ask in the right way they will be done. Instead, **prayer is laying our lives before the Lord: our burdens, requests, and pain, and asking the Lord for His help. We do ask for Him for things, but we also submit ourselves to His will, not our own. And By His grace and mercy He hears us!** Prayer is exercising the faith we have in God because we are going to Him, believing in His power, and aligning our desires to His.

PRAYER

If you are a believer, spend time in prayer today. Bring to God the things that are on your heart and mind. Don't hesitate to bring your requests to God, but also spend time asking for His will to be done and to align your will to His. If you are not a believer, what do you make of prayer?

FOR FURTHER READING

The Power of Prayer in James 5:13-20

RYF DEVOTION FRIDAY MAY 15TH, 2020

TODAY'S READING: 1 JOHN 5:16-18

16 If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, he shall ask, and God will give him life—to those who commit sins that do not lead to death. There is sin that leads to death; I do not say that one should pray for that. 17 All wrongdoing is sin, but there is sin that does not lead to death. 18 We know that everyone who has been born of God does not keep on sinning, but he who was born of God protects him, and the evil one does not touch him.

REFLECTION

When we read this passage we immediately are curious as to what is and is not a sin that leads to death (see the further reading for another passage to help shed light on this topic). Such a question is not bad, but it actually takes us away from a major point of these verses. **The big idea in this passage is that we should be praying for one another, especially as we see sin! For there is grace, mercy, forgiveness, and life for all who are in Christ.** We should come before God in prayer for our fellow Christians. Also, we often don't know the full extent of someone's sin, but rather our responsibility is still to pray and to protect one another.

PRAYER

If you are a believer, first confess your own sins to God. Then, pray for the life of other Christians and their faith. Ask the Lord to show you ways to encourage them today.

FOR FURTHER READING

Consequences for the rejection of the Gospel in Matthew 12:22-32

RYF DEVOTION SATURDAY MAY 16TH, 2020

TODAY'S READING: 1 JOHN 5:19-21

19 We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.
20 And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true; and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.
21 Little children, keep yourselves from idols.

REFLECTION

If you could choose them, what would your final words be? Here we have the final words of John, closing out the letter. He takes the time to sum up what he has said so far: That either we are children of God, or in the power of the evil one in death. And we have only come to know God through Jesus who is God, who came to save us. **The last verse brings us back to the theme of our life: to live for God alone.** We are meant to love, follow, and honor God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit alone, and to keep ourselves from worshipping or following anything or anyone else.

PRAYER

If you are a believer, give thanks for the understanding God has given us. Ask that He would reveal things that you are trusting in rather than in Him. If you are not a believer, what do you make of this message in 1 John?

FOR FURTHER READING

We wait for God alone because He is our salvation in Psalm 62

RYF DEVOTION SUNDAY MAY 17TH, 2020

TODAY'S READING: 2 JOHN 1-3

1 The elder to the elect lady and her children, whom I love in truth, and not only I, but also all who know the truth, 2 because of the truth that abides in us and will be with us forever: 3 Grace, mercy, and peace will be with us, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ the Father's Son, in truth and love.

REFLECTION

When reading the bible, we tend to read quickly past introductions to letters, but they really have a great deal to tell us. This introduction is no exception, so we will look at two quick ideas. First, this was written to "the elect lady and her children" which, for reasons we will see, means a local congregation of Christians. This is an important reminder that we are not lone Christians, out on our own, but rather members of the Church, also called the bride of Christ. How can we continue to be this bride while apart from one another? Second, in the third verse, the blessings of grace, mercy, and peace *will* be with us as we are in Christ. The grace God has shown us is the root, and from it grow the fruits of mercy and peace in our life. As we remain, in John's words "abide", in the grace of Jesus, mercy and peace will also be with us from God our Father.

PRAYER

If you are a believer, give thanks for the fellowship of other Christians in the Church. Ask that the Lord would give you grace, mercy, and peace today as you continue in faithfulness to Him. If you aren't a believer, consider what it might mean to have grace, mercy, and peace

FOR FURTHER READING

Encouragement to continue in the faith in Hebrews 13

RYF DEVOTION MONDAY MAY 18TH, 2020

TODAY'S READING: 2 JOHN 4-6

4 I rejoiced greatly to find some of your children walking in the truth, just as we were commanded by the Father. 5 And now I ask you, dear lady—not as though I were writing you a new commandment, but the one we have had from the beginning—that we love one another. 6 And this is love, that we walk according to his commandments; this is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, so that you should walk in it.

REFLECTION

If you have been following these devotions through 1 John and even from John before that, you have heard the command repeated: love one another. It isn't a new command to you, just like it isn't to those John is writing to. But we also see, in verse 4, that John bumped into some Christians from this church and he found them "walking in the truth". This caused him to rejoice greatly! **What would John find if he were to run into us?** Would he "rejoice greatly" as we are loving one another? By God's grace, this is how we are meant to walk as Christians.

PRAYER

Reflect on what it means to love those around you, even as life continues to change. Ask the Lord that He would give you opportunity to love others and so obey Him.

FOR FURTHER READING

To live is Christ and to die is gain in Philippians 1:19-30

RYF DEVOTION TUESDAY MAY 19TH, 2020

TODAY'S READING: 2 JOHN 7-8

7 For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. Such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist. 8 Watch yourselves, so that you may not lose what we have worked for, but may win a full reward.

REFLECTION

These verses help reveal why this little letter was written. It seems the church was facing people who claimed to be Christians, but who were really deceiving them. But how did they, and how do we, separate what is true from what is false? It all depends on what people say of Jesus. **True Christians confess that Jesus has come: that He is God and became man, and that He died and rose again. True Christians also confess that He is coming again.** This is why a reward is mentioned in the second verse, because when Christ comes, He will not honor those who have not honored Him. But by God's great mercy and grace, He will carry on His work in us, in believers, to completion at the day of Jesus Christ (Philippians 1:6)

PRAYER

If you are a believer, give thanks that the Lord will complete His work in you, and that you will rejoice at the return of Christ. Ask that the Lord would give you wisdom as you study His word and listen to others. If you are not a believer, what do you make of the Christian confession?

FOR FURTHER READING

The unity of believers on Christ's sure foundation in 1 Corinthians 3

RYF DEVOTION WEDNESDAY MAY 20TH, 2020

TODAY'S READING: 2 JOHN 9-11

9 Everyone who goes on ahead and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God. Whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. 10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house or give him any greeting, 11 for whoever greets him takes part in his wicked works.

REFLECTION

We live in a world of next steps, the next big thing culture. You go to middle school, high school, graduate go to college, and so on. You get the next iPhone, laptop, or other accessory as soon as it's out. It seems there is always some next place to go, next thing to do or get. But we need to be careful not to think of our faith in this way. Within the Bible, there is always more to learn, always more to apply, always more to understand, and we never "graduate from" that. **There is great danger in someone who thinks that once they understand the bible, there is more to "go on ahead" and see.** There are groups that claim to be Christians, but will say that there is something further than the Bible you need to read or understand, some further words about God. In the time of this letter, when churches met in houses, John says to not allow that person within your Christian fellowship. Do not greet them as you would a brother or sister in Christ. When we read this passage, it is a warning to take care, because we all want to take next steps, to grow, and to create, but we must always abide in the teachings of Christ, in God's word.

PRAYER

If you are a believer, ask that the Lord would renew your heart to study His Word and you would begin to see the depths of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God. If you are not a believer, what do you think of this "abiding", in our fast paced, next big thing, world?

FOR FURTHER READING

There is no other Gospel in Galatians 1:1-10

RYF DEVOTION THURSDAY MAY 21ST, 2020

TODAY'S READING: 2 JOHN 12-13

12 Though I have much to write to you, I would rather not use paper and ink. Instead I hope to come to you and talk face to face, so that our joy may be complete. 13 The children of your elect sister greet you.

REFLECTION

Normally, when I read an ending like this, I would only see that John wanted to visit this other church. But now, I think we all see this with different eyes. We can begin to understand the complete joy that comes from being together, only because we have been apart for so long. Most of us have only been able to talk screen to screen, not face to face. **There is something beautiful and right about gathering as a church, and we are missing this right now.** As we think about what we are missing, let it be a reminder of the joy that it brings to meet together and may it help us to commit to being a constant part of our church community.

PRAYER

If you are a believer, reflect on what it means to meet together as the church. Ask that the Lord would help us to be able to meet again soon. Ask also how to best love other members of our church in the midst of this. If you are not a believer, is there another place where you can find such complete joy?

FOR FURTHER READING

The Lord brings Joy and Restoration to His people in Psalm 30

RYF DEVOTION FRIDAY MAY 22ND, 2020

TODAY'S READING: 3 JOHN 1-4

1 The elder to the beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth. 2 Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, as it goes well with your soul. 3 For I rejoiced greatly when the brothers came and testified to your truth, as indeed you are walking in the truth. 4 I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.

REFLECTION

When is the last time that you got a letter? Think about the thrill of looking through the mail and seeing something for you, especially from someone you care about. It isn't very common in the Bible to find a book or letter addressed to a specific person, but that's what we have in 3 John. Here we have a letter of praise and encouragement to an individual Christian named Gaius. John, again calling himself "the elder", is like an old, beloved grandparent writing to someone he loves. Wouldn't we all like to get such a letter? Do we live in such a way that someone would send us one?

PRAYER

If you are a believer, thank the Lord for the gifts He has given you, such as health, family, and food to eat. Spend time considering what it means to "walk in the truth" and ask the Lord to help you do this today. If you aren't a believer, what do you think it means to "walk in the truth?"

FOR FURTHER READING

What a worker approved by God looks like in 2 Timothy 2:14-26

RYF DEVOTION SATURDAY MAY 23RD, 2020

TODAY'S READING: 3 JOHN 5-8

5 Beloved, it is a faithful thing you do in all your efforts for these brothers, strangers as they are, 6 who testified to your love before the church. You will do well to send them on their journey in a manner worthy of God. 7 For they have gone out for the sake of the name, accepting nothing from the Gentiles. 8 Therefore we ought to support people like these, that we may be fellow workers for the truth.

REFLECTION

In the next part of the letter, John describes how Gaius has been faithful. Apparently, Gaius was helping Christian travelers. These people can be compared to modern day church-planters or missionaries. Although they were strangers to Gaius, he was helping them as they passed through his town. Though he himself wasn't going anywhere, he was able to help them do their work and so help God's Word spread even further. **While some of you reading this may become missionaries and plant churches, many of you will not be called to that. However, we all still have a role to play in spreading the gospel, both in where we are, and in supporting those who are leaving their homes.** Think about the people we already support as a church. How can you, your family, and our church family continue to support people like this?

PRAYER

If you are a believer, give thanks for those you know who are traveling like this to spread the gospel! Ask that the Lord would provide for their needs and give you ways to support them. Ask the Lord to show you the role you have in spreading the good news about Jesus.

FOR FURTHER READING

Giving cheerfully to God's work in 2 Corinthians 9:1-15

RYF DEVOTION SUNDAY MAY 24TH, 2020

TODAY'S READING: 3 JOHN 9-10

9 I have written something to the church, but Diotrephes, who likes to put himself first, does not acknowledge our authority. 10 So if I come, I will bring up what he is doing, talking wicked nonsense against us. And not content with that, he refuses to welcome the brothers, and also stops those who want to and puts them out of the church.

REFLECTION

In this book we have seen the faithful example of Gaius, who showed love to other Christians. Now we have the opposite, the example of Diotrephes. We read that, far from showing love to other Christians, he was only interested in his own power. Imagine receiving a letter from the apostle John and refusing to acknowledge it! I doubt any of us has done something quite like that, but notice where it comes from: he likes to put himself first. When we make a habit of putting ourselves first, we begin to refuse to listen to other people, even those who are rightly in authority over us. If we do this long enough, we eventually actively work against them! Living faithfully as a Christian means submitting to proper authorities, most importantly God's Word. What would it look like this week for you not to put yourself first?

PRAYER

If you are a believer, give thanks for the power of God's Word. Also thank the Lord for the authorities He has put in your life, from our government to parents, pastors, and teachers. Ask the Lord to help you put others first, rather than yourself. If you are not a believer, what do you make of the idea of authority in God's word?

FOR FURTHER READING

Authority in the Christian life in Romans 13:1-7 and Acts 5:17-42

RYF DEVOTION MONDAY MAY 25TH, 2020

TODAY'S READING: 3 JOHN 11-12

11 Beloved, do not imitate evil but imitate good. Whoever does good is from God; whoever does evil has not seen God. 12 Demetrius has received a good testimony from everyone, and from the truth itself. We also add our testimony, and you know that our testimony is true.

REFLECTION

Who do you imitate? We sometimes like to think we are very independent, that our actions aren't influenced by anyone else. But that's not true. We see and try to copy celebrities, athletes, musicians, artists, influencers, and even friends and family. But who should we choose to imitate? Here John encourages Gaius to imitate good, and sent Demetrius, who is trustworthy and true to him. **We need to think about who or what we imitate and whether or not it's good.** One of the great beauties of the Church is that we get to see other Christians and learn from them, even imitate them in some circumstances. However, there is one person we must imitate above anyone else: Jesus. And we imitate Him, not in His being God and being the ultimate sacrifice for us, but in His model of love, service, and submission to God the Father. Today I encourage you to compare Jesus to the other people we often imitate and see the difference.

PRAYER

If you are a believer, give thanks for the life, love, and example of Jesus. Thank the Lord for His mercy to us, and ask that you would be quick to imitate what is good. Pray for specific ways to do so today. If you are not a believer, who do you imitate and why?

FOR FURTHER READING

Our newness in Christ and the imitation of Him in Ephesians 4:17-5:2

RYF DEVOTION TUESDAY MAY 26TH, 2020

TODAY'S READING: 3 JOHN 13-15

13 I had much to write to you, but I would rather not write with pen and ink. 14 I hope to see you soon, and we will talk face to face. 15 Peace be to you. The friends greet you. Greet the friends, each by name.

REFLECTION

As we saw at the end of 2 John, it is always better to talk face to face, rather than through pen and ink, and, we might add, better than screen to screen. There will come a time, hopefully soon, where we will be able to meet again. Even if that means meeting outside and staying six feet apart, we will meet again. **And though we can still communicate while apart, we are meant to be gathered together; we are meant to talk face to face. I hope and pray this time apart has given you a hunger and thirst for not only God's word, but also for meeting together.** May the Lord continue to give us peace as we wait to gather as His body, the church. May He also bring us back together soon, so that we may honor and praise Him.

PRAYER

Pray that the Lord would make it possible for us to meet together soon, both as a church and as RYF. If you are not a believer, consider gathering with us when we meet again.

FOR FURTHER READING

The sure and certain hope of all believers in Revelation 21