

## Commentary on 1 John Chapters 4 and 5 by Chuck Smith 3.9.25

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### January 2025 memory verse (NKJV)

Luke 24:45 And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.

### February 2025 memory verse

Luke 24:46 (NKJV) Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day,

### March 2025 memory verse

Luke 24:47 (NKJV) and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

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### CHAPTER 4

Now, as he begins chapter 4, John says,

Don't believe every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world ([1Jo 4:1](#)).

Jesus, in His Sermon on the Mount, chapter 7 of Matthew's gospel, said, "Beware of false prophets who will come to you as wolves in sheep's clothing." And so it's hard to tell a false prophet by his looks. He looks like a sheep.

Now, one of the deceptive things is that we think that a false prophet is going to be false in everything he says. When oftentimes a false prophet will tell 90% truth; that's what makes them deceptive.

There's a lot of false doctrine, and there are a lot of false prophets. And unfortunately, there are a lot of people following these false prophets. Beware when someone says, "Now look, the scripture is sort of a difficult book to understand. It's best that you not read the Bible. We encourage you to get into the Bible and read the Bible

Now, God didn't say anything weird, and if your interpretation of a scripture is weird, then you've got the wrong interpretation. God said what He meant, and if you'd just read the Bible the Spirit of God will teach you the truth.

Hereby do we know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus is come in the flesh is of God ([1Jo 4:2](#)):

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And every spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is the spirit of antichrist, whereof you have heard that it come; and even now already is in the world ([1Jo 4:3](#)).

There is a great spirit of antichrist in the world today. A lot of people opposed to Jesus Christ.

Now you are of God, little children, and you have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world ([1Jo 4:4](#)).

You see, going back to verse 24 of chapter 3, God has given to us the Holy Spirit who abides within us, and greater is He that is in you than the spirit of antichrist that is in the world.

Now they are of the world: therefore they speak of the world, and the world hears them ([1Jo 4:5](#)).

Their message is a popular message that the world enjoys hearing, but they deny the real power of God.

Now we are of God and he that knoweth God hears us; and he that is not of God does not hear us. And hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error ([1Jo 4:6](#)).

First of all, we know it by their witness of Jesus Christ. Secondly,

Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. And he that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love ([1Jo 4:7-8](#)).

The second way I know the Spirit of God is the fruit of the Spirit in my life will be love. Love for one another. Beloved, let us love one another. Love is of God, and it is the proof that the spirit that dwells in me is the Spirit of God, if the fruit is love coming forth from my life.

Now he that loveth not, knoweth not God; because God is love ([1Jo 4:8](#)).

And so this word is used to define the nature of God, "God is love".

In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him ([1Jo 4:9](#)).

God does not seek to prove His love to you except in one place, and that's sufficient. It is sufficient so that you should never ever doubt the love of God again. So whenever Satan begins to challenge the love of God and you start to go under, look at the cross. For therein God demonstrated His love for you once and for all. And He says, "Hey, you

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question My love, just look at the cross." "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son."

Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that God loved us, and sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins ([1Jo 4:10](#)).

God manifested His love towards us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for the ungodly. In this was manifested the love of God towards us because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world that we might live through Him

Now, if God so loved us, then we ought to love one another ([1Jo 4:11](#)).

We are often exhorted in the scriptures to Christ as our example in forgiveness and Christ our example in love. And that we are to love as He loved and forgive as He forgave. "Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted forgiving one another even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you" ([Ephesians 4:32](#)). What should be my measure of forgiveness? God's forgiveness for me. Jesus said, "Love one another even as I have loved you." Now that's a pretty big order. And yet, that is what God requires of us, and that's what God's Spirit will do in us as we are filled and I can know that it is the Spirit of God, because of the love that He has given to me. So herein is love, not my love for God, but God's love for me in sending His Son to take my sins and to die for my guilt in order that God's righteousness might be propitiated and He can receive me in fellowship. If God so loved me, then I ought to love one another.

Now no man has seen God at any time ([1Jo 4:12](#)).

What about Moses? Well, I have to believe that no man has seen God at any time, and what about Moses? Well, he saw the afterglow. God says, "Hey, you can't see Me and live. You get here in the rock and I'll pass by. And when I pass by, then you can look out and see the afterglow." And that radiated him to the extent he had to put a veil over his face. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. But before I can see God I've got have a new body, this old body just couldn't take it. No man has seen God at any time, but

If we love one another, God dwells in us, and his love is perfected in us ([1Jo 4:12](#)).

And that is the work of the Holy Spirit within our lives, perfecting in us the love of God. And as I yield to the Spirit, and as I am filled with the Spirit, that work of the Spirit in me ultimately is to perfect God's love within my life. That I will indeed love as He loves.

Hereby we know that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he has given us his Spirit ([1Jo 4:13](#)).

That is the same thing he said, basically, in verse 24 of chapter 3. "Hereby we know that He abides in us by the Spirit which His has given us. Hereby we know that we dwell in Him." We know that He abides in us by the Spirit, and we also that we dwell in Him by

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the Spirit that He has given to us. How do we know what we know? And so here we are coming across several of these "Hereby we knows."

And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world ([1Jo 4:14](#)).

Now you remember chapter 1, dealt with the purpose of the coming of Jesus Christ to bring us into fellowship with God. "That which was from the beginning, which we have seen, which we have heard, which we have touched, we declared unto you that you might have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship was with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ." The purpose of His coming, chapter 3, to take away our sins. Now here again, he gives you another purpose of His coming, "That He might be the Savior of the world."

Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwells in him, and he in God ([1Jo 4:15](#)).

The confession that Jesus is indeed the Son of God, not a son of God as the Mormons would make Him, one of many. *The* Son of God. Or as the Jehovah Witnesses would make Him, a son of God. But if your testimony is that Jesus Christ *is* the Son of God, God dwells in him and he in God.

And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. For God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwells in God, and God in him ([1Jo 4:16](#)).

So, dealing with the proofs, how can we know the Spirit? There are a lot of false prophets in the world. Believe not every spirit. Satan is able to come as an angel of light to deceive. How can I know it's the Holy Spirit dwelling in me? The fruit, the love. God is love; His Spirit in me will be manifested in love.

And herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in the world ([1Jo 4:17](#)).

Again, Christ our example in love. As He is, so are we. How is He in the world? Loving. How many times do you read, "Jesus looked upon them and had compassion upon them"? And rather than looking and turning away with a cold calloused indifference, if Christ is really dwelling in us, we also will be moved with compassion over the needs of people.

"Herein is our love made perfect, we might have boldness in the day of judgment." When God's love is perfected in me, I don't have to fear the judgment seat of God at all. Boldness in the day of judgment. Why? Because I'm in Christ; I'm secure.

Now, there is no fear in love ([1Jo 4:18](#));

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If fear has gripped your heart, it's because God's love is not perfected in you. You're not totally assured that God loves you. "I'm not really sure that this is gonna work for good, this may destroy me. This may be the end of my road. This may be all she wrote. This looks bad, I don't see any way out. What am I gonna do?" Well, you see, if God's love were perfected, if you really knew God loved you, so totally loved you, that whatever and anything that may happen to you can only happen because God allows it to happen and He loves you supremely, then I don't worry about what happens to me. "Man, what a mess, but I know that God loves me and so He's gonna work it out some way or other, you know. Well, they just foreclosed and took away my house, you know, but God loves and He's gonna work out something, you know." Oh, the confidence that comes when I know that God loves me and His love is perfected in me, I can accept what comes without fear.

perfect love casts out all fear: he that fears experiences this torment. [Fear is a very tormenting thing.] And he that fears is not yet made perfect in love. We love him, because he first loved us ([1Jo 4:18-19](#)).

Again, God is the initiator and man is the respondent. Beware of teaching that would make man the initiator and God the respondent. And that is a very popular teaching within many churches even. I heard that teaching for years.

Now if a man say ([1Jo 4:20](#)),

Now this is the seventh thing we've found that men are prone to say. And this is a great thing, if a man say, "I love God," isn't that beautiful? We ought to all be able to say that. We all should be saying that. "I love God." We should be able to say that. I'm not putting down saying that; we all ought to be saying that.

But, If a man says it, and hates his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? ([1Jo 4:20](#))

Like Snoopy said, "I love the world; it's just people I hate." But I can't say, "I love God," and yet hate my brother. That's an inconsistency.

This commandment we have from him, That he who loves God love his brother also ([1Jo 4:21](#)).

Jesus was questioned by a lawyer as to what the greatest commandment was. And Jesus said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. And the second is like unto the first: thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, and on these two are all the law and commandments" ([Matthew 22:37-40](#)).

## CHAPTER 5

Whosoever believes that Jesus is the Messiah is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him ([1Jo 5:1](#)).

So I say, "I love Jesus. He is the Messiah. Yes, I'm born again. Oh, and how I love Him." Well, if I love Him who has begotten me into this new life, then I will also love all those who have been begotten--the family of God, my brothers and sisters in Jesus.

And by this we know [another proof of how we know what we know, by this we know] that we love the children of God, when we love God, and we keep his commandments ([1Jo 5:2](#)).

Jesus said, "A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another even as I have loved you" ([John 13:34](#)). Now, when John seeks to bring down the commandments of Jesus, Jesus gave us the Old Testament commandments in a concise form. "Love God supremely, love your neighbor as yourself, in this is all the law and the prophets." And it's all wrapped up right here, very concise. Now John also capsulizes, gives us the essence of the commandments of Jesus. He does that over there in chapter 3, and this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment ([John 3:23](#)).

For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous ([1Jo 5:3](#)).

They're not that hard. Now tell me, what's... well, I take it back. Well, the first one is not so bad, believing on His Son, Jesus Christ. Now, the second is more difficult, loving each other as we love ourselves. That is more difficult, and that does take a work of God's Spirit within my heart.

Yes, it's true; there are people with whom you are incompatible. They're too much like you. It's amazing how horrible our sins look when some one else is committing them. You know, if I'm committing them, they're not too bad. But if you start committing my sins, well, they are ugly and horrible. I can't stand you. This kind of love takes a special work of God's Spirit within my heart.

For whatsoever is born of God overcomes the world: and this is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith ([1Jo 5:4](#)).

It is awfully hard to trust somebody you don't know. If a total stranger walks up to you on the street and asks to borrow fifty dollars, "I'll meet you here tomorrow and pay you back." You'd say, "I don't know you. How can I trust you to be here to pay me back? I don't know you." Hard to believe or trust someone you don't know. But when you know someone, know them well, know that they have a tremendous reputation for honesty, uprightness, character, then you don't have any trouble trusting them.

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Your problem in trusting God is that you just don't know Him. Your problem in trusting Jesus Christ is the lack of knowledge. Why does Jesus want you to learn of Him? Because there is where your faith is increased. The more you know Him, the easier it is to trust Him. And so we overcome by this faith.

And who is he that overcomes the world, but he that believes that Jesus is the Son of God? ([1Jo 5:5](#))

My faith in Jesus Christ brings me victory over the world. Now,

This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth ([1Jo 5:6](#)).

What does it mean, "He came by water and He came by blood, not by water only but water and blood"? There are two parts to this verse. The first part is water referring to His baptism.

The second part is blood which refers to the crucifixion itself. the blood.

Now, verse 7 did not appear in any of the early manuscripts. It did not appear the manuscripts until about the tenth century. And so this verse probably was not original in John's writing, because of the fact that it doesn't exist in any early manuscripts that existed before the tenth century. So verse 7 probably should not be here in the scriptures. This is the only verse of which I would declare that in the New Testament. There is an early church father who quoted from an ancient manuscript, no doubt, in which he quoted this particular passage. Now, what manuscripts he had, we don't know. But there is only one church father that made reference to it, early church father, and so it is generally conceded that this does not belong as a part of the original text. But you should go from verse 6 to verse 8. Removing verse 7 does not change the meaning or message of this chapter.

The Spirit bears witness, because the Spirit is truth. Of what does the Spirit bear witness?

And there are three that bears witness in the earth, the spirit, the water, and the blood: and these three all agree ([1Jo 5:8](#)).

So the Spirit bearing witness of Jesus Christ, and of that salvation that we have through Jesus. John said, "We bear record of it. We saw it. It is true, and we bear record of it that you might believe

The Spirit bears witness that the blood of Jesus Christ that was shed cleanses us from all sin. Three that bear record, the record of God that there is forgiveness provided for you and for your sins from God through Jesus Christ and His sacrifice on the cross for you.

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Now, if we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater. Our whole legal system based upon the witnesses of men.

You've got two or three people that give you an identical story and they put the finger on the same fellow, and you say, "Yeah, it's got to be the fellow." He's guilty. They've built up the case. They show all the evidence to show your guilt, and you are judged guilty because of the witness of men.

If we accept the witness of men, the witness of God is greater ([1Jo 5:9](#)):

And it is interesting that there are men who will believe men but won't believe God. They'll accept the word of men who are often untrustworthy, "But he told such a convincing story, you know. I was sure his grandmother was dying. You know, he cried." And we believe the word of men. Well, if we believe the word of men, the witness of God is greater, we ought to believe God.

and this is the witness which he has testified of his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God then has this witness in himself ([1Jo 5:9-10](#)):

The Spirit bears witness, the Spirit within me, and so there is that internal witness within me testifying to the truth of Jesus Christ to my heart. That's why there are no doubts. I know because of the witness of the Spirit within my heart.

He that believeth not God has made God a liar ([1Jo 5:10](#));

If you don't believe the witness of God, you are, in essence, saying that God is lying. And that's a pretty horrible charge to make against God. But that's the charge you make when you refuse to believe God's witness to your heart, and that's what basically the sin against the Holy Spirit is. It's not believing the witness of the Holy Spirit that Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world. Your only hope of eternal life is in Jesus Christ, and if you don't believe that, that's unpardonable. God's made no other provision for your salvation apart from Jesus Christ. And so that's the sin against the Holy Spirit. You're calling Him a liar when He bears witness to you of your need for Jesus and surrendering your life to Him. So this is the record, you've called God a liar.

because you did not believe the record that God gave of his Son ([1Jo 5:10](#)).

What is the record that God gave of His Son? What is the witness that God has made of His Son? Just this,

This is the record, that God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. And he who has the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life ([1Jo 5:11-12](#)).



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That's God's witness to you. God has given to us eternal life, but the life is in His Son. You cannot have eternal life apart from the Son. And as we pointed out this morning, eternal life is much more than quantity or duration of time. It is a quality of life.

Next John wrote,

These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you might believe on the name of the Son of God ([1Jo 5:13](#)).

So the purpose of the epistle: to bring you assurance of that eternal life. This is the record God has given: that God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in the Son, and I write these things to you that you might have this eternal life and that you might believe on the name of the Son of God.

And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he hears us: And if we know that he hears us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him ([1Jo 5:14-15](#)).

Notice though, the conditions there is that if we ask anything according to His will. You just can't ask God for anything and get it. You see, the purpose of prayer is not to get your will done, and that's a common mistake that people make about prayer. They think that it's some genie in a bottle that's going to pop out and grant you your three wishes. Not so. The purpose of prayer is to get God's will done.

If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death ([1Jo 5:16](#)).

There are sins that are not unto death. There are sins that we commit. The word *sins* means "missing the mark." And a lot of people miss the mark. In fact, we have all missed the mark. We are told that in the first chapter. And if we say that we haven't missed the mark, then you are only deceiving yourself and the truth isn't in you. What is the deadly sin? The rejection of Jesus Christ, that's the sin unto death. When a man turns his back deliberately and willfully upon Jesus Christ, that's the sin unto death. And John said,

I don't say for you to pray for that ([1Jo 5:16](#)).

You see, that's a line that God won't cross. God won't cross your free will. He has given you the power of choice and then He honors it. He won't cross your free will and He won't save you against your will..

So when a brother is sinning, we should pray for them. Now, quite often they cannot see their own error, Satan is very deceptive and he comes as an angel of light to deceive. He brings a strong delusion that man might believe a lie rather than the truth.

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But if a person deliberately and willfully turns his back and rejects Jesus Christ, then pray also for him, but not, "God, save him." Because God won't save him against his will. Pray that God will bind Satan's power and work, and God will open his heart to the truth. You can't really say, "God, save him," because that's something God won't do against a person's will. So,

There is a sin unto death: I do not say that you should pray for it. All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death ([1Jo 5:16-17](#)).

We know that whosoever is born of God doesn't practice sin ([1Jo 5:18](#)); Because we have a new nature. Paul said, "How can we who are dead to sin live any longer therein?"

but He that is begotten of God ([1Jo 5:18](#)) Who is it that was begotten of God? Jesus Christ.

He that is begotten of God keepeth him, and the wicked one toucheth him not ([1Jo 5:18](#)). I am kept by the power of Jesus Christ. He, Jesus, who is begotten of God, keeps me, and the wicked one touches me not.

And we know that we are of God, and the whole world is lying in wickedness. And we know that the Son of God is come, and has given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true; and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. And this is the true God, and eternal life ([1Jo 5:19-20](#)).

So he now closes out with, "We know, we know, we know, we know that whoever is born of God does not practice sin. We know that we are of God, and the whole world is in wickedness. We know that the Son of God has come and given us the understanding that we may know the truth."

The word *know* is the word *ginosko*, and that is, we know by experience the truth. We have experienced now that which is true. That we are in Him who is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

And then the final exhortation,

Little children, keep yourself from idols ([1Jo 5:21](#)).

But what an important exhortation, because it is so easy for us to get hung up with idols. Oh, I don't believe that any of you have a little statue in your room with a candle in front of it and you sit and chant in front of it in the evening hours. We are too sophisticated for that. Your idol probably has one eye and is in your living room or family room. And you stare at it for hours on end. Sometimes bursting out in laughter, sometimes yelling and screaming, but very devoted to your idol.