

**Threefold Theme of 1 John:**

(1) Connect to Community (2) Build Community (3) Protect Community

**Community** is the intentional setting aside of personal interest and desires and the joining with one another for the common purpose of honoring Jesus Christ.

**Satan does not** have to get someone to deny Christ or become an atheist. Satan is more than glad to keep people within the context of Christianity as long as they will embrace a form of it that is not Biblical.

We must **connect, build, and protect** community because **there are two types of religious people:** believers and unbelievers. In any church, there are those who truly know Christ and those who are going through the motions. One test of true faith is the love for others (**1 John 4:7-8**). True followers of Jesus Christ will be able to see evidence of their salvation (**1 John 4:13**).

Connecting, building, and protecting community is **God's** desire for every believer.

**2 Corinthians 11:12-15** *But what I do, I will also continue to do, (protect community) that I may cut off the opportunity from those (who distort Biblical truth) who desire an opportunity to be regarded just as we are in the things of which they boast. <sup>13</sup> For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. <sup>14</sup> And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. <sup>15</sup> Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.*

**1 John 5:14-15** *Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. <sup>15</sup> And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.*

It is possible to spiritualize our desires and make them look like they are for God. Often, we do this by using prayer.

**James 4:3** *Yet you do not have because you do not ask. <sup>3</sup> You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.*

**1 John 5:16-17** *If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin which does not lead to death, he will ask, and He will give him life for those who commit sin not leading to death. There is sin leading to death. I do not say that he should pray about that. <sup>17</sup> All unrighteousness is sin, and there is sin not leading to death.*

“There is no doubt that this a most difficult and disturbing passage.” William Barclay

**Mark 3:28-29** "Assuredly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they may utter; <sup>29</sup> but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is subject to eternal condemnation"—<sup>30</sup> because they said, "He has an unclean spirit."

Let's not miss the point John makes in verse 16. We need to care enough about our brothers and sisters in Christ to them when they continue in obvious sin.

**Three big tasks at hand for the GBC Community:**

1. Convince every member that God has called us to **care enough to confront**.
2. Once convinced of task #1, have members who will accomplish this task.
3. **Have members who will accomplish these tasks in a God-honoring ways.**

**Galatians 6:1** Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.

- We can be biblically accurate and personally insensitive.
- We can misapply truth and damage relationships in the context of God's name.

**1 John 5:18-20** We know that whoever is born of God does not (practice) sin; but he who has been born of God keeps himself, and the wicked one does not touch him. <sup>19</sup> We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one. <sup>20</sup> And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

"**Born of God**" is language to communicate that salvation is a permanent relationship.

**1 John 5:21** Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.

- An idol of the heart is anything or anyone we place above our devotion to God.

**Ezekiel 14:1-3** Now some of the elders of Israel came to me and sat before me. <sup>2</sup> And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, <sup>3</sup> "Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their hearts, and put before them that which causes them to stumble into iniquity

"**The Christian life became impossible**, that is, **it became supernatural**. Now there was only one hope, the sovereign grace of God. God would have to transform my heart to do what a heart cannot make itself do, namely, want what it ought to want. Only God can make the depraved heart desire God." John Piper

**There is nothing more pleasing to God**, more refreshing to believers, and more appealing to non-believers than a church that is functioning Biblically. God's family behaves as God's family by when they love one another through compassionate confrontation.

**Commending Biblical truth** involves more than saying, "Do it because the Bible says so." That kind of approach may result in obedience that is so begrudging and so empty of delight and heartfelt affirmation that the Lord is *not* pleased with it at all. Therefore, not only must an accurate interpretation always be presented, but there must also be a presentation of how God's Word

satisfies the **heart as well as the head**. We must commend the **beauty as well as the truth**; we must show that God's Word is not only **right but also good!**