

# Am I Really Saved? Five Tests from 1 John



## 1 John 5:11-13

There are a few moments when you're a kid that just really stick out. They're vivid moments you can go back to that you can even smell what it smelled like. One of those memories was my baptism when I was seven years old. I remember going into the foyer, everyone shaking my hands, and saying we're so proud of you. I remember one guy asking, "How do you feel? Do you feel different now?" As a seven year old kid, I remember processing that as the strangest question ever. What did he mean about feeling different? I had asked Jesus into my heart and I'm going to Heaven now, but what did he mean about feeling different? From that point on, there began in the back of my mind, I wondered if I really did this thing right. Really, when I got into middle school and high school, a reoccurring question came up in my mind. Am I really saved? That's a question I kept dealing with. It would usually happen when I would sit through a church

service and I would hear about what I shouldn't be doing. I would hear the gospel and think I'm not living that way. I would ask God, "Ok God, if I'm not saved, will You save me?" It was a repeated question that I would ask probably about a hundred times. I just kept asking that question because I wasn't sure. I think for some of you who have been in church for a long time, there has been a moment in your life where you have asked that question. Am I really saved? We've been talking about salvation for a few weeks now, and we want to make this very practical this morning, and just ask the question as a group. Are we really Christians? For you personally, am I really saved? That's the title of our message, that's where we're going, and that's what we're going to talk about, just this one question that you've probably asked at some point. It may have been as recently as this week, or maybe in the back of your mind, you've asked yourself, did I do this right? Did I say the prayer right? Did I walk the aisle right? Did I confess right? Did I believe right? I know I have faith, but is my faith real? Am I really a Christian?

We're going to get some answers from the Bible because when you have that question, you want to go to the Bible. You want to go to the Word and the Spirit in prayer. That's how you decipher the answer to this question. Let's go to 1 John. John is writing for various reasons, but one of the reasons he is writing this letter to a group of Christians is so they could examine their own salvation and he wants them to know. He wants them to know that they know that they know. He wants them to be for sure that they know the Lord Jesus Christ, that by believing, they have life in His name, and by believing, they know they have eternal life. Let's begin our reading in chapter 5 and we will see the truth and get answers about if you are really a Christian. We're going to walk through 1 John.

### **Scripture**

**"And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. 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."**

“And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life...” Here's a testimony; here's a truth. God gave us eternal life. Think about how great that is. “...and this life is in his Son.” So, we're already learning something. Eternal life is about the Son. Eternal life is about Jesus. When you ask this question, am I really saved, what you're asking is do I have the Son? Do I have Jesus? Because eternal life is actually in the Son, eternal life is Jesus Christ. “Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.” So, if you have Jesus, you have eternal life. If you don't have Jesus, you don't have eternal life. The question isn't just do you have professed faith; it's do you possess Jesus. Do you have a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ? “I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God...” So, he's writing to people who believe that they're believers. He's writing to people who say we believe Jesus, we've confessed Him as Lord and Savior. He's writing to that group of people for what reason? “...that you may know that you have eternal life.”

He's writing to a group of believers and he wants them to know if they have eternal life. That nagging question, am I really saved? John is working this letter out to try to answer that question. Am I really saved? Do I really have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ?

There are a lot of things going on in 1 John, and John kind of throws out a theme and then goes back to it. It's not always in order, so we're going to jump around a little bit, but we're going to look for evidences that we have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. We're going to see John's salvation test. He's got a lot of things to test our faith on, but we're only going to drill down on five of those. We're going to have five tests that we can look at objectively to see if these things are true in your life. To answer the question of whether you are really saved, we're going to look at your life. You might look at this and think it means salvation if of works. I mean, if we're looking at our works and life, then, doesn't salvation mean it is by works? We've already dealt with that for the last two sermons. Salvation is by faith alone in Christ alone. It is a God thing. It is a gospel thing. There are no works we can do to earn salvation, but here's the deal. Once we're a Christian, we are going to have a life of good works. I love how Luther put it, “We are saved by faith alone, but the faith that saves is never alone.”

That's such a great way to explain salvation. We're saved by faith alone. The only way into the Kingdom is through faith in Jesus, but when you have faith in Jesus, it is never alone. That faith is never alone. Faith always produces fruit and works. That's what John is going to help us to see.

Can we look at our life and see whether or not we are a true believer? Here's what we know from Scripture, salvation is a supernatural work of God. Salvation actually works. When we believe in the Lord Jesus, something actually happens if we have true belief. Ezekiel 36 says God does heart surgery. He takes out a heart of stone and puts in a heart of flesh. John 3 says we are born again. In other words, when God saves you, He changes you. That little statement is what we want to stick with you. The reality is if God saves you, He changes you. You cannot be saved by the God of the universe and then be the same. If God saves you, He changes you. The question is this, are you changed? Have things happened? Have I experienced new birth? Have I had a regeneration of my heart? Am I born again? Have I become that new creation that 2 Corinthians 5:17 talks about? We're going to ask this morning, according to the Scripture, do you have a changed life? Do you have fruit that is bearing witness to profession that you make?

We're going to look at five tests: walk test, sin test, obedience test, love test, faith test. We will go five different places in Scripture.

### **Walk Test**

Believers Walk in Light. If you're a believer, you walk in light. Your lifestyle is about light rather than darkness. 1 John 1 says, "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. If we say we have fellowship with Him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. 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." I love where John starts. See, John starts with God. When we think about whether we are really a Christian or really saved, John goes to God. Let's talk about God for a moment. God is light. Why is that important? A lot of times when we wrestle through that question, we don't go to God; we go to our neighbor, our sister, or brother.

We go to somebody else and think maybe I'm not that good, because she's like a superstar Christian, but I'm not that bad either because he's pretty low, so I think I'm somewhere in the middle, so I must be good. We look around and compare ourselves to other people, and based on how other people act and how we act, then we determine that I must be a Christian because I'm better than him, though not as good as her so I'm somewhere in between; and hopefully, God judges on a curve. John starts with God. What do we know about God? "God is light, and in Him, there is no darkness at all." There is no sin at all in God. He is perfectly holy, perfectly good, perfectly loving. He is holy, holy, holy. What does John say about us? "If we say we have fellowship with Him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth." I love John's bluntness in this letter. He just straightforwardly says what he's thinking, what is on his heart, and what the Holy Spirit is leading him to say. He says, look, you say you're a Christian, you have professed you're a believer, if you say you have fellowship with a God who is light, holy, and good, yet you walk in darkness, you're a liar. You don't really have a relationship with God. If you did, something would happen. Verse 7 says, "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." A believer walks in light; a non-believer, a person who doesn't possess Jesus, can live in darkness and be fine with that. A believer who knows God, fellowships with God, who is light, will walk in light. The truth is light expels darkness. If you walk into a room that is completely dark, completely black, when you flip on the light switch, the darkness flees. That's what has happened to you if you're a believer. Through God's Holy Spirit, He came into your life, flipped on the light, and it causes the darkness to flee.

So, how is your walk? Let's talk about your walk for a moment. Some people get confused because they did a dark thing this week or had a dark moment this week, so maybe you think it means you're not a believer. It's always based on if you're good today, you must be good, but if you're bad yesterday, you must not be good. Walk refers to our lifestyle. What I really want you to see is what John is trying to do through this whole letter. He's not talking about the moments of our lives; he's talking about the momentum of our lives. So when you ask, am I a Christian? Am I really

saved? We're not looking at the moments of your life; we're looking at the momentum of your life. What is the overall totality of your life? Are you inching further and further towards Christ, and farther and farther away from Adam? Are you inching towards light and inching away from darkness? It's the difference between a picture and a camera. When you have a picture, you can lie. You can take a snapshot.

I used to do wedding videography in my early days. I would take my video camera, but I didn't do still pictures. I did some weddings where the couple didn't seem that in love, just to be honest. They didn't really even seem they were that excited about getting married, but when they smiled for the camera, they looked so in love. They looked so happy when they kissed, but doing the video, and the video looked more like groom was more into hanging with the groomsmen than he was to his soon to be bride. See, with a video camera, you saw the whole picture. That's the difference between a still shot and a video. The video tells much more of the truth.

In these salvation tests, when you think about whether you're walking in darkness or walking in light, don't look at the pictures of your life because you're going to have some really bad pictures. You're going to have some screaming moments. If we saw some of your pictures, we would say you are definitely not a believer. You can't be a believer because look what you did. But John doesn't want us to look at our pictures; he wants us to look at our walk, not the moments, the momentum. He wants to say if we put a video camera on you and showed your whole day, your whole week, there will be some blemishes, some mess-ups, some things you want to edit out, but when you look at the video, what does it say? Does it say you are pursuing after light? Are you confessing your darkness and running to light because you fellowship with a God who is light? The first question is how is your walk. We've got to be honest, be humble. Ask a friend. If you were to describe me, would my life be darkness or light? What would your best friend say about you? What would your spouse say? What would brothers and sisters say about you? Would they say you're pursuing light, or would they say you love darkness because the world is truly all about you? How is your walk? Are you walking in light, or, are you walking in darkness.

## Sin Test

The second test is the sin test, and we are going to see that believer's confess sin. Do you have a regular lifestyle of confessing sin? One of the evidences you can know as to if you're a believer or not is if you confess sin. 1 John 1, beginning in verse 8 says, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us." John really talks about three different relationships when it comes to sin. The first relationship with sin is that first verse we read. This is a group that ignores sin. 'We don't have sin.' 'What is sin?' This would be our popular culture. Our culture is very good at saying there is no sin. Yeah, we might have some injustice, there might be some things wrong with the world, but when it comes to God; we haven't offended a holy God. We don't have sin in that capacity. There is really no such thing as sin. That's just ignoring sin. You don't even think about sin, you don't care about sin, you just ignore it in general, you ignore it altogether. I'm not guilty before God. He loves me no matter what.

In the second group, we see a group that denies sin, really particularly. They say we have not sinned. This would be the religious folks. They don't deny sin; sin is a real thing, but sin is what 'they' do. Sin is what others do. This was the Pharisees and the scribes. Sinners are the tax collectors and the prostitutes. They are the ones who sin, not us. In fact, the Pharisees would pray, God, I thank You that I'm not like them, a sinner. That's what religious folk do. They believe in sin. They really believe in it and it causes them to judge and look down on others, not point the mirror back to them and think what about my pride...what about my arrogance...what about the sins in my heart. There are two ways that people can deal with sin. One is to deny it altogether, and one is to say I'm not a sinner, but they are; look at them. You feel prideful and arrogant about your own life. The third group is the group who actually confesses sin. He says if you confess your sin, God is faithful and just to forgive you of your sin and cleanse you of all unrighteousness. Who are those who have the faithfulness of God, the cleansing of God? It is those who confess their sin. Confession of sin is a

mark that you are a true believer because you're walking with a God who is light, and the closer you get to light the more you realize you have a lot of darkness and when you see darkness, you confess it. You say, God, this is dark. I'm agreeing with You that this is dark. Cleanse me from this because I want to walk in light. The reality is that believers battle with sin. I'll quote Luther again. He says, "The whole of Christian life is one of repentance." Luther, the great reformer sums up all of Christian life and Christianity...it is repentance. If you are a Christian, you are a repenter. Why is that? It is because you walk with a God who is light. The more you see how holy and good He is, the more you want to be cleansed to be like Him. It is not because you feel like it is your moral duty, or because you have to clean yourself up. No, in a relationship with God, you want to be more like Him because you see how good and gracious God is.

John will go on in chapter 2 and say, "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. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world." This is why John includes the sin test. If you confess your sins, then it's pointing to you knowing Jesus. You're a believer. Why? It is because you get the gospel. You remember the cross. Jesus was the wrath absorbing sacrifice. That's what propitiation means for your sin. He has been the sacrifice that was applied to you by faith, and now, by faith you have been cleansed. Remembering the cross, you have a new relationship with sin. Sin is the thing that killed Jesus, so you don't even want to mess with it. You don't even want to play with it.

I remember Bro. Mike, one of Katie's pastors, told this illustration that's pretty morbid. He said, "Just imagine that you have a newborn baby and you walk into its room, see a crib, and around the baby there is a boa constrictor that has taken the life of your newborn. Imagine how you would feel in that moment. Now imagine that your reaction is to take the boa constrictor and love it as a pet. You feed it, nurture it, and put it in a tank. You look at it, play with it, and enjoy it. How sickening would that be?" He connects that with sin to a believer. Sin, the thing Jesus had to die for to make us right with God, how dare we go and play with it, feed it,

and enjoy it! If you know the cross and the empty tomb, you are going to be one who might still be allured to sin and tempted to sin, but when you sin, you are going to confess because you want to be cleansed. You want to be holy like God is holy. See, salvation works. Salvation actually saves us from our sins. That's why John says I'm writing that you wouldn't sin, because salvation does something in you. It's a supernatural heart change that's going to cause you not to want to live in sin, but to walk in light. A believer will flee from sin, not pursue it.

### **Obedience Test**

This next test is kind of the other side of the coin. It's the obedience test—believers pursue righteousness. This is the truth. Believers pursue righteousness. Believers love righteousness. We love the 'do this' commands in the Bible. We love those. We want to do those. When Jesus gives us a command, we want to walk it out and live in it because believers pursue righteousness. 1 John 2:3 says, "And by this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments." This is a big statement. By this, we know that we know Him. This is an evidence, a truth. If you want to know if you know God...here is a way that you can tell if your faith is real. We know 'if we keep His commandments.' How do you know that you know that you know? Do you keep the commandments of God? Do you love what God says? Do you long to hear what God says in His Word? You know that God's Word reveals God's will, and you want His will to be true here on Earth as it is in Heaven, so you align yourself with the words of God. We know it by the way we keep His commandments.

In verse 4, John says, "Whoever says "I know Him" but does not keep His commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in Him..." Again, we've seen that same phrase. If we say, if we do this, but we actually don't live or walk it out, we're lying and we don't practice the truth. He goes on in verse 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..." So again, by this, we know we are in Christ. He's given another evidence. Here's how you know you're in Christ. Whoever says he abides in Him ought to walk in the same way which He walked. It's pretty straightforward. If you say you love

Jesus and you say you're following Jesus, then you should be walking like Jesus.

Again, let's point out that obedience doesn't save, but the reality is believers obey. Obedience doesn't cause a believer, but believers definitely produce obedience because they are now in love with God. They want to follow God with their lives. A real question right now to process...do you really care about what God says? Do you care enough to open up your Bible and actually read what God says so you can know His will, His plan, and His word for your life? When you see a command from the Lord Jesus, do you say yes, help me do that more because I want to walk with You? Do you say you are my King and I love You? I want to follow after You. John 15:10 says, "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love." Jesus says if you keep My commands, you're abiding in My love.

How do you know if you're in Jesus' love? It is by abiding in His commands. It's doing the commands that He has set forth for us. We are going to see if we are really a believer by our lifestyle. In 1 John 3, will put the two together, sin and righteousness, sin and obedience. Verse 7 says, "Little children, let no one deceive you." There are probably people trying to deceive them. People are probably patting them on the back and saying don't worry about whether you sin or obey; just go live your life.

Everything is fine. You're going to find the same people when you ask the question 'am I really saved.' People will say don't worry about it! Once saved, always saved. You're good to go! That is a true doctrine. Once you are saved, it's a forever thing, but the real question is have you really become a Christian. Are you really saved? All through Scripture, there is a false faith, a false belief. People think they're Christians who aren't really Christians. John, I think, is dealing with this group of people. They say the right things, but they don't have a new birth, a new heart, or new nature from God because they're not really a believer.

Verse 7 goes on to say, "Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as He is righteous. Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning." That's pretty straightforward. There is no way to twist those words to make them feel a little less sharp.

They're pointed. Remember, we're thinking about practice here. He's not saying whoever does a sin is not in Christ, and whoever does a good work is in Christ. He's saying what is the practice. Remember, it's not the moment; it's the momentum of your life. What is the momentum? Is the momentum of your life I love me, I do everything for me, I love sin, I don't repent of sin, I walk in sin, I'm ok with sin? John would say if that's you, then it's evidence you're of the devil, not of God. If you're of God, you're going to confess when you see light and dark heart. You confess because you want to walk more like Jesus. It's not the snapshot; it's the video camera. What does the video say about your life? Are you pursuing righteousness, or are you pursuing sin?

### **Love Test**

The love test is that believers love believers, not the world. When I say world, I'm not talking about the people of the world, but the arrangement of the world, the world system that is opposed to God. What we do love are the believers of Christ. We're going to see that as John works it out. First, the negative one is we do not love the world. We're not talking about creation or people; we're talking about the arrangement, the twisted nature that is against God that we find all over our culture and all over the world. Culture is not bad, the world is not bad; it is the twisting of those two things that can be bad things. Those are the things we can't love if we're a believer. John says in chapter 2:15, "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." So, if you love the things of the world, if you love the arrangement of the world that is anti-God, that is against God, John says God's love can't be in you. In other words, love for the world and love for God can't co-exist. You have to love one or the other. He's trying to get you to see which one you love. Do you love God, or, do you love the world that is against God? Notice that he goes on to explain the world, "For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh..." Those flesh desires you have, those impulses, urges you know are not godly; those are from the world. He goes on, "...and the desires of the eyes..." It is those things you see that you know you shouldn't look at, you shouldn't lust over, but you continue after them, those are the world's system tempting you to not have your

eyes on the Lord Jesus. Then John says, "...and the pride of life..." The flesh and the eyes culminate into the pride of life. You think you are great. That's really the center of the world system compelling you to think you are great. You are the best. The whole cosmos is about you, not King Jesus. That is the world's system, and John says if you love yourself most, you can't love God most. The two can't co-exist. Then he says, "...And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever." Why should we not love the world? It is because the world is passing away. The world has an expiration date on it. It's going to dissolve and pass away, but the Kingdom of God, the culture and cosmos on the side of Christ, is going to continue forever, so believers love that, not the world that is passing away.

I just want to pause and ask the question. Do you love the world that starts with the love for self? Do you love yourself more than you love anyone else? When you make decisions, when you are left to your thoughts, are your motivations self-centered all the time? Or, do you love Christ supreme and your neighbor as yourself? Do you just go by your fleshly impulses? Do you just grab whatever you look at and like, or, do you bring yourself under control of God's Holy Spirit? Do you practice the fruit of the Spirit? Do you practice patience, and kindness? Are you generous with your stuff in your life? John says if you love the world, that arrangement that is anti-God, then you can't also love God, which means you're not a true believer.

The second thing we see is we love believers and we love people. In chapter 3:11-15, John says, "For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. 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. Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you. We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers..." We know we're a believer, we know we've passed from death to life because we love the brothers. Our love shows us that we have new life, "...Whoever does not love abides in death. Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life

abiding in Him.” How do you love other people? Specifically, John is talking to the church. How does the church love one another? We’re commanded to love one another, so how are we doing in that? How are you doing in loving one another? We have Cain who is evil. He didn’t do what was right. He got jealous of his brother and actually murdered him.

We see that we should be the people of love. Just this week, think about the headlines that have come out on all the social media posts. We see this reoccurring epidemic of racism, hate, and all these different things that we can see. It gives us a picture of how the world should not be. The world should be a place where we love all people because all people are created in the image of God. John is writing to a church that had both Jews and Gentiles. The Jews and Gentiles didn’t grow up loving one another. They grew up being told that the other one is the enemy, and now, they’re in a church together. John says you want to know how you’ve come to Christ? How do you love each other? How do you see beyond the distinctions that the world makes? How do you see each other as truly one blood, from one descendant? How do you see everybody as image bearers of God? Your disposition should be love toward all people. The way you love shows whether or not you know God because God is a creator who created all people in His image. If we don’t love, if we hate, then we’re hating people made in the image of God. It shows we don’t truly understand God’s plan for the cosmos, which is to have all people in Heaven, multi-ethnic people in Heaven worshipping the Lamb. How are we doing right now? How are we doing, not just with people like you, but also with people who seem unlike you? How are we doing when it comes to love?

Notice John says murder is from the evil one, but love is from God. We continue in chapter 4:7, “Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God.” If you love, you’ve been born of God and you know God. How much more evidence do we need? Verse 8 says, “Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.” God is light, but He is also love, so love will flow from you if you know God. Verses 9–12 say, “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. 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. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and His love is perfected in us." I love that last point. No one has ever seen God, but if you abide in God and love one another, God is among you. In other words, how is the world going to see God? It's by the church loving one another. Our love is evidence that we're born of God and that we know God. In a world that is filled with murder, hate, even evils like racism, we should be a church that lives differently. We should be a church that we come together, whether you're young or old, left or right, black or white, we love one another because we are family. We are brothers and sisters in Christ. We don't just love in word; we love in deed. We serve and lay down our lives for one another. If we don't know God, then we wake up every morning thinking life is about me. But if we know God and love God, then we wake up and think life is about everyone around me. I'm going to love every person as I love myself. I'm going to lay down my life for my neighbor. I'm going to love my brothers and sisters in Christ. As we love each other, we display for the world to see what God is like. God is a God of love.

So, how is your love? How are you loving? Are you loving yourself most, or do you love God and others? Does your love compel you to act and serve others, or do you only think about yourself? Love gives evidence as to whether you know Christ or not.

### **Truth Test**

Believers believe that Jesus is God and King. In 1 John 5:1–5 says, "Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of Him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?"

I love the first sign in the last line. If you are a believer, there are things that you actually believe about Jesus. You believe that He is both King and also God. The first line says that everyone who believes Jesus is the Christ has been born of God. That word, Christ, has all sorts of Old Testament frayed with it. It is filled with meaning that sometimes we miss. Christ means that Old Testament word of Messiah. It means the anointed King, the Son of David. When we confess Jesus as Christ, we are saying He is Lord, meaning He's the King. He rules over everything, and He rules over me. We don't really do well at that as Americans because we like democracy. We like to get a vote. I'll vote if I like it, and if I don't like it, I won't do it. I'll do what I want, or I won't if I don't. In the economy with God, we don't have a democracy. Jesus is King; we do what He says. We are obedient, but the reality is we're obedient to a good king. When it comes to the world system, with all kings, in some way or another, there can be corruption. We see that the more powerful they get, the more often they are corrupt. What we see in Christ is that He is a good king who rules perfectly over His children and the cosmos. We serve a king that is not only all powerful, but He is also good and He loves us. As His children, he you're really in Christ, you love that He's king over you. If you're a true believer, you do not want a vote. You don't want to ask Jesus to take your plan. No, you want Jesus to chuck your plans. You only want His plans because He knows more and altogether wise, He loves you more than you love yourself, so you just want to follow Him. Jesus is King and Lord over your life. That's what a true believer believes about Jesus, and so a true believer puts their life under Jesus. It's not a duty; you love it. You want Jesus to tell you what to do and where to go because He knows better than you do.

We don't only believe in Jesus as Lord or as Christ, meaning King, but we also believe that our faith is what overcomes the world. What is our faith in? It is in the belief that Jesus is the Son of God. We not only believe He's the King; He's the divine King. He is God who is King. He is the forever King, the wise King, the all-knowing King, the King who is the grand architect of the universe. He is God. That's what a believer truly believes about Jesus. Some of you may have believed in the Lord Jesus, but you haven't believed in the right Jesus. You've believed in somebody who is going to save you from your sins and you can do whatever you want.

That's not Jesus. When you come to Jesus, He saves you from your sins, but He also becomes your Lord and your God, and you follow Him. You are brought into His Kingdom. Your life changes when you come to know the Lord Jesus Christ.

We spin back around to that question. Am I really saved? Hopefully, you've been asking that question this whole time with prayer and humility. So, how do you know? You look at the Bible, you pray, ask the Spirit to reveal in your heart if you are really a believer or not. In 1 John, we've seen five different tests.

1. The walk test—Do you walk in light?
2. The sin test—Do you confess your sin?
3. The obedience test—Do you love the Word and follow the Word?
4. The love test—Do you love and serve others?
5. The faith test—Do you really believe Jesus, not just as some guy who will get you somewhere, but as the King and God of the universe whom you love to follow with your life?

Let's be clear. Salvation doesn't come by passing these tests. That would be works salvation, which is completely anti-gospel. Works salvation is going to lead you to two places, either to pride or to despair. You're going to be really good and be prideful, or you're going to be really bad and be in despair. The gospel brings us from pride and despair and gives us hope because it's only in Jesus that we can have eternal life. Salvation comes through faith in Christ alone. It is all by His grace. But here is the truth. Salvation works. Salvation actually works. When God saves you, He changes you. Everything is different about you. It doesn't happen just all in one moment, but the totality of your life is things begin to change because salvation is a supernatural work of God. It is something He does in you. He takes out your heart of stone and puts in a heart of flesh. He gives you a new birth, puts you into a new Kingdom, makes you into a new creation, and He gives you an inheritance that is going to last forevermore. If all those things happen, how could we not be different? Salvation works. If God saves you, He changes you. You can't be the same.

Has God changed you? When you made that profession of faith in Jesus, no matter your age, did something happen? Did the Lord save you and is He still changing you. John would ask not just what is your profession, but what is your possession. Do you possess the Lord Jesus Christ? I still remember as a seven year old boy standing in that foyer. My hair was still wet and dripping and that guy asked how I felt. "Do you feel different?" I didn't know what he meant. The truth is I didn't feel any different. Now I know. Now I know what he meant because when I was twenty and I actually truly believed in the Lord Jesus, when I truly repented of sin and trusted in Christ, when I truly became a believer, everything began to change because when God saves you, He changes you. When God finally actually saved me, I began to change. The question for us to wrestle with as we conclude is this thought. Am I different? Have I been changed?

Friday night, Katie and I watched a little documentary on AI, artificial intelligence on the Discovery Channel. It kind of freaked us out a little bit. They showed this woman, really a robot that looked like a woman. She could talk, carry on a conversation, and had eye contact. You almost didn't know it was a robot because it did all the things that a human does, but it wasn't really a human. It was really hard to tell the difference. The same can be true for Christianity. There are some of us who can look the part. We're watching the livestream, we have our bibles in our hands; we're doing some of the right things, but in reality, we're not truly a believer. So, how do you know that you know? How do you know that you know that you know? That's why John is writing this letter. He wants you to know for sure. He's not trying to cause you to doubt; he wants you to know that you are a true believer. He wants you to know you have salvation! He says to take your life and evaluate it based on Scripture. Does your life match the Word of God? Do you have a love for God? Is there evidence? Are there signs of life? If you have a new heart, that heart beats for God. Every heartbeat gets stronger and stronger for the Lord. You will walk out a life, not perfection; you will stumble quite a bit, but walk out a life loving the God who saved you more and more. Am I really a Christian? Am I really saved? The reality is if God saves you, He changes you. John is writing this letter so you can know that you know that you know. So, do you know? Do you know that you're a believer in Jesus? If you're still asking and saying

I'm not sure, spend some time in this letter this week. Read 1 John prayerfully and ask the Spirit to reveal whether you know Jesus or not. If you don't, repent and believe in the gospel because that is how we get salvation, through Christ alone by faith alone. We're saved by faith alone, but our faith is never alone. Are you really saved? That's between you and the Lord. Spend some time walking in Scripture this week and praying this week because God wants you to know that you know that you know.