

# Instructions for the Preservation of the Church: Love One Another

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Date: 08 March 2009

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[0:00] 2 John, beginning in verse 1. The elder to the chosen lady and her children whom I love in the truth,! And not I only, but also all who know the truth, because of the truth which lives in us and will be with us forever.

Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Father's Son, will be with us in truth and love. It has given me great joy to find some of your children walking in the truth just as the Father commanded us.

And now, dear lady, I am not writing you a new command, but one we have had from the beginning. I ask that we love one another. And this is love, that we walk in obedience to His commands.

As you have heard from the beginning, His command is that you walk in love. Many deceivers who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh have gone out into the world.

Any such person is the deceiver and the antichrist. Watch out that you do not lose what you have worked for, but that you may be rewarded fully. Anyone who runs ahead and does not continue in the teaching of Christ does not have God.

[1:11] Whoever continues in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not take him into your house or welcome him.

Anyone who welcomes him shares in his wicked work. I have much to write to you, but I do not want to use paper and ink. Instead, I hope to visit you and talk with you face to face so that our joy may be complete.

The children of your chosen sister send their greetings. 20 years from now, you open up your newspaper and see in the obituary section this.

Grace Fellowship Church, 1984 to 2029. Grace Fellowship Church of Bremen, Indiana, recently passed away when the driver of the car that she was riding in drove off the road and into a tree. Her death was already inevitable. Having been diagnosed with a nearly incurable cancer of hatred and bitterness, funeral arrangements have yet to be finalized.

[2:20] The death of any church is not pleasant to imagine, let alone the death of this church. But, brothers and sisters, churches do die, and we are not exempt from that.

It's not anywhere in our Constitution said that we will last forever. And so, although Grace Fellowship Church will never have a funeral and will never be in the obituary section, the possibility of death is real for us.

And so, thankfully, Jesus is not silent. He speaks to us through his word, and he tells Grace Fellowship how we can thrive and grow in the book of 2 John.

So, this little book, it carries a big message. It's only 13 verses, but it has a lot of truth packed into it. So, if we listen and obey it, Grace Fellowship will thrive.

And if we ignore it, if we ignore what it teaches us, we will wither and die. So, we're going to be only looking at the first six verses this morning.

[3:32] But before we get to the message of the text, before we get to those first six verses, we have to do some introductions. We have to find out who wrote this book, and who is he writing it to.

And as you see in verse 1, who wrote the book? It says, the elder. It bears the name of John, the Apostle John. And it's always been a sign to him.

There's not a good alternative. It has the same style as 1 John and 3 John. And it has a lot of the same content as even the Gospel of John.

And so, we're fairly certain that the title is correct, that this is John's book. He gives himself the name, the elder. And that was sufficient to identify him.

John was well known by the people that received this letter. And that title, the elder, was all that they needed to know to recognize him. So, John, by the time that he was writing this letter, he had already left Jerusalem, where he had lived with the apostles for years.

[4:41] And he had been an elder at the church in Ephesus. And so, this letter probably comes from around the area of Ephesus. And it's very likely written to another church in the same area, who he's had extensive personal contact with.

He's their elder. And so, he calls himself the elder. And he's also probably very old at this time. He was probably in his 80s or his 90s.

And so, the term elder is a very fitting title for him. Little else needed to be said. He was their elder. He had been around the block. He knew these people.

They knew him. And so, little else needed to be said. So, who is he writing to? Who is he writing to? Well, it says, to the chosen lady and her children.

And on the surface, that seems to say that this was a woman and her children. But there's reasons to think that we're not actually talking about a literal lady and her children.

[5:46] We're talking about a church and its members. It's a personification of the church. So, he switches back and forth several times between the singular use of the word you.

So, you in the singular. And the plural use of you. So, in English, we don't really make that distinction anymore. We used to at one time. In the South, they still do.

And so, if I'm talking to Brooke, I say you, singular. But if I'm talking to y'all, I'm using y'all. Well, in Greek, it works the same way.

Okay? So, he's going back and forth between you, singular, and you, plural. And so, it probably means he has a group of people in mind. Like, I can talk about Grace Fellowship in the singular. And then I can talk about you in the plural. But, that being said, we don't know for sure. It's not impossible to imagine that this is a woman and her children.

[6:47] But it doesn't seem very likely. It doesn't seem very likely. More than likely, it's written to a local church, just like us. And it's written to the members of the church, just like you.

And the chosen sister, in verse 13, is probably another local church that he's writing from. Either way, God meant us to have this book.

And he meant for us to read it and understand it. So, it was written to keep a local church, just like us, on the right path. To avoid the death that can come to so many churches.

So, to unfold this text, we're going to have three questions this morning. The first is, how do we relate to one another? How do we relate to each other? If Grace Fellowship wants to thrive and grow and be healthy, how do we relate to each other?

This book tells us. And it's an all-important question. If we want to be viable, if we want to be healthy, we have to relate to one another in the right way. Now, we have a couple visitors here.

[7:56] And I have some news. You're with sinful people. We have sinful desires. We have sinful ambitions. And we're a hodgepodge of people.

From all different ages and careers and backgrounds. We have the young here. And we have the old here. And this is a recipe for disaster.

It really is. So, that means, if we want to stay together, if we want to thrive and grow as a church, we have to relate to one another so we don't fall apart.

And you've seen this in professional teams. So, here they are. They're really good players, aren't they? They're professionals. They get paid to play.

This is their life. They play baseball. And they make money doing it. Yet, as great as they are individually, they're horrible as a team. Because they don't relate to one another.

[8:54] They don't play well with others. So, there's personality clashes. And the team falls apart. And what was a group of really good individuals makes a horrible team.

Because they don't know how to relate to each other. So, John shows us how we are to relate with one another. How am I supposed to relate with you and you with each other? He says in verse 2, To the chosen lady and her children whom I love in the truth.

And not only I, but also all who know the truth. So, we see here in this verse, the first time we have this pair. We have love and we have truth.

We must love in the truth if we're going to relate successfully to one another. So, what's binding together John and this congregation? John's writing and this congregation's receiving this letter.

What's binding those two together? Well, it's two things. It's love and it's truth. And what's the only two things that combine grace fellowship together? It's love and it's truth.

[10:01] So, John loves these people. He's emphatic about it. And you can see it even more in the original. He's like, I, I love you. If anyone loves you, I love you.

And if anything's true, it's true that I love you. My heart goes out to you. Your pain is my pain. Your joys are my joys.

You're in my heart. And I love you. And he wants them to know that they're not, he's not the only one that loves them. He says, and all those who know the truth.

It was good for this church to know that there were other churches that loved them. There was others that were concerned about them. So, what was the common ground?

What did John and this congregation and the other churches all have in common? It was the truth. He says, I love you in the truth. And all who know you love you in the truth as well.

[11:01] So, truth is that powerful glue that binds the church together in love. All Christians know the truth. And that's why we love each other. And this truth isn't just a head knowledge that is just up here.

It's a heartfelt knowledge. They know the truth. Like a husband and wife know each other. This is a soul committing knowledge. They were intimately acquainted with the truth.

It was inside of them. John is saying, I love you. And my love runs out to you in the pipeline of truth. So, I'm over here and you're over here. And what's connecting us? It's the truth. So, we all have this in common. Brothers and sisters, we all have this in common. We have known the gospel.

We have known what the truth is. And later, he's going to tell us specifically what the truth is he's talking about. It's the teaching of Jesus Christ.

[12:02] It's the commands of God's word. So, we all know Jesus. And we're all sitting underneath God's word. And so, we love one another.

So, it's not a superficial grasp of the facts. Just because you are good at Bible trivia. And you have the whole Bible memorized. It doesn't mean that you're able to relate to one another.

It's that heartfelt. It lives within us. Look at verse 2. It lives in us. And it will be with us forever. So, this truth, it's not a small part of our life.

It's at the core of who we are. It's not out there on the perimeter. As something that we can do without. Or if we have it, that's fine too. It's in the core of who we are.

This truth about Jesus. It's living within us. It's shaping us. It's changing who we are. It's motivating us. It's the very heartbeat of what it means to be a Christian.

[13:05] It means, it's the very heartbeat of what it means to be who we are. So, it's obvious then. How do we relate to one another? It's obvious. We have to foster and encourage love for one another.

And that's nothing complicated. But we need to be reminded again. This church needs to be a greenhouse where love is watered.

And love for every saint is grown and warmed. And we don't just say, okay, now you go love each other. Because there's no power in that.

It's just like me telling my daughters, okay, you go run along and play nicely. That command has no power. God's means. He tells us how we can grow this love.

His means is a passionate commitment to the truth. So, we love in the truth because of the truth. And so, therefore, as a body, we must encourage one another.

[14:10] We must encourage one another in the truth. So, after sermons, we need to have fellowship with one another. We have to talk about what we heard.

The reality of Jesus has to be at the heart of our relationships with one another. And it's good to speak about other things. But this is the one thing that always has to be there.

It's a love for Jesus. I love Jesus. And so, I speak of him. And you love Jesus. And so, you speak of him. And we love Jesus. And so, we love each other.

So, let me ask you. When was the last time that you had a spiritual conversation with one of your brothers and sisters after church?

When was the last time you had real communion over the truth with someone? Where you fed on Jesus together? And many of you know the blessings that are founded.

[15:10] The blessings of a relationship that are founded on the truth. That truth is like a post. And it's buried in the ground. And your relationship is anchored to it. So, you know the sweetness of

what I'm talking about.

You know what it's like to have your heart drawn out to your brother or your sister. And you love each other. Because you have the same Savior. But maybe some of you might be slow to speak. You feel awkward. You feel like, I can't say anything the way they can. I don't know the fancy language. But if you have the truth, you have what it takes to fellowship with one another. So, you can start taking steps right away. If you are a Christian, there is nothing keeping you back from having fellowship with other Christians. And so, make it your goal to have one good spiritual conversation sometime today over the truth.

And you'll just see. Just taste and see if it's good. You'll find that it is. You'll never go back. It could be that you don't have a relationship.

[16 : 24] Or you don't have... You don't talk about the truth for another reason. And that is, you're not connected to the truth. Everyone else here seems...

They're all connected to the truth. Like spokes on a wheel to a hub. We're all connected to Jesus. I'm connected to Jesus. And they're connected to Jesus. And so, we have this union.

But you're not connected to Jesus. You don't understand. You don't know this truth, what I'm talking about. And so, let me ask you.

If it isn't the truth living in you. And motivating you. And is the basis for your friendships. What is it? If it's not the truth.

Then it must be a lie. And it shows if you don't love the saints here. It shows that what's inside of you is a lie.

[17 : 22] It shows that you don't really know Jesus. Because all those who know Jesus love the saints. So, if you'd rather be anywhere else. Anywhere else than here.

Then that shows you don't have the truth in you. You're still in the dark. So, the truth is in Jesus. That's the core message of this section.

That the truth is in Jesus. Everything else is a lie. It's a masquerade. You're just pretending. You have a life. But it's a fake life. See, Jesus Christ.

The Son of God. Who came in the flesh. And who is still in the flesh. Who was hung on a tree. Who was raised on the third day. That's the very heart of the truth.

John 14.6 says, I'm the way, the truth, and the life. If you don't have Jesus. You don't have the truth. If you don't have him.

[18 : 19] You're building your life. Your friendships. On a lie. And it will disappear. So, will you stop living a lie?

Who wants to live a lie? Who wants to come to the end of their life and say, It was all for nothing. It was a fake. It was a fraud. Come to Christ.

He is the truth. And you'll find everything that you need to live in him. So, that's the first question. If grace fellowship is to thrive and grow, How do we relate to one another?

We relate to one another by love and the truth. We love each other and the truth. So, John answers a second question.

A very important question next. He says, How do we nurture a relationship with God? Because if grace fellowship is going to thrive and grow, We have to have a good relationship with God.

[19 : 21] And that seems pretty basic, But that's the heart of it. That's the truth. So, how do we do that? How do we nurture a relationship with God? And we see that next. John, in verse 3, Includes a blessing to his readers, As Paul did many times.

As was very common. But he puts a twist on it. It's not just a regular blessing. He teaches them how to relate to God in this blessing. Look at verse 3.

He says, So, John gives them a wonderful blessing.

He says, Grace. Grace. God's undeserved favor to you. Mercy. And what's mercy? It's that pity.

That when you've fallen and you've sinned, God picks you up.

And when you're weak, He strengthens you. And he says, Peace. It's abiding blessedness. Abiding joy and happiness. In the chaos of this life and in this world, We can have peace.

[20 : 36] Because God can give us that peace. The knowledge. We know that our God reigns. It's chaos out there. But our God is in control. So, here's a young man.

He's in high school. And this blessing is upon him. He's saved from his sin. And he has a living relationship with God. So, he's at school.

And there's pressure to be silent. To not speak of the gospel. But here comes grace at the same time. Here's pressure. And grace comes and upholds him.

And so, in the midst of the trial, He's able to speak and to maintain His witness. But He wants to keep Himself pure. And this world is just full of snares.

And here's grace. To protect Him. To block all those snares from capturing Him. But He's sinful and weak. But here's pity.

[21 : 38] Here's mercy. And God picks Him up out of every pit. And there's the hard questions of, How do I live?

What am I going to do for a living? Where should I go to college? Who should I marry? Questions that are so momentous. And you're so young.

And you don't know. But God gives peace in that situation. That you don't know. But God knows. And He's going to take care of that.

So peace secures that young man in the middle of complex problems. But then here's a church. With the same blessing. Where God is blessing them.

They've been chosen by God. They're the elect lady. He loves them. Like a husband loves his wife. And they're chosen. Precious to God.

[22 : 36] And they experience grace. Day by day. So God honors the word that's preached there. And grace is just raining down on them. And they're producing fruit.

They're persevering in the face. In the face of a hostile world. They're faithful. But they're weak. Their pastors are weak.

They are weak. They have spiritual weakness. And physical weakness. And they're sin. But God is merciful. And He picks them up. And He brushes them off.

And He sets them on their way. But this church. It's just like our church. We live in a hostile world. And there's financial problems.

There's problems within. And there's problems without. But there's God's peace upholding them. And so at the core of what at this church. There's not anxiety.

[23 : 37] There's peace. Because God is reigning there. He's promised to take care of them. He's promised that all things are going to work together for their good. And so they have peace. And we would say.

What a happy church. So how can we have that blessing? And John tells us. How can we have that blessing? He says the Father's blessing.

Jesus Christ's blessing. Comes to each church. As we dwell. As we are in truth and love. So we meet this pair again.

We have truth and love. How do we maintain our relationship with one another? By staying in truth and love. How do we maintain our relationship? How do we nurture our relationship with God? We stay in truth and love. So we've heard a lot about tax breaks lately. And some people are going to get tax breaks.

[24 : 31] But not everyone. You have to meet certain criteria. Your income has to be in such a place. You have to be a citizen of the United States. You have to.

There's all sorts of criteria. Now. In the same way. God's blessing comes to those people. Who meet a certain criteria. Who are within a certain boundary.

And the boundary. Is this hedge. It's a double hedge. Of truth and love. And whoever's staying in that. Circle of blessing. God is going to shower.

His blessing upon them. Or you can think about it a different way. Suppose. A father has an inheritance. To give to his children. And if you're to receive the inheritance.

You must be in good standing with the family. You must be a member of the family. If you. Have. Had a major falling out. Or you're not. A member of the family. Then you're not going to get the inheritance.

[25 : 31] So God's blessing rests upon the person. And the church. That is committed to the truth. That they're committed. To the family of God. And so God commands his blessing to that church.

That church that's staying there. In truth. And in love. Love. So we don't compromise the truth at all. That's our goal. We don't compromise the truth at all.

When liberals come and say. Well. Jesus really isn't God. He was a good man. And the incarnation. That wasn't real. It's nice to believe. If you want to believe it.

But it's not necessary for faith. We stand up to them. That's not the truth. It's not the truth of what we're going to find out. Next week. And then when certain.

Maybe well-meaning. Fundamentalists come and say. Well. Jesus. It's just not enough to have Jesus. You need to. Obey these certain rules.

[26:27] In order to be saved. Or in order to keep your salvation. And we stand up for salvation. In Christ alone. Because that's the truth. The truth must be important to us.

And so we don't compromise. Our confession at all. And when there's hard doctrines. That pinch people. And that are unpalatable. To people's ears. We don't change them.

We don't change them. We don't dumb down the truth. To make Jesus more acceptable to people. We stick to the truth. And so. When truth is in vogue.

We're in vogue. And when truth is. Unpopular. We're unpopular. But let me tell you. Brothers and sisters. That means that we're going to be unpopular. And so be it.

If we're unpopular. We're unpopular. We need God's smile. We need God's blessing. More than we need man's blessing. So.

[27:24] Brothers and sisters. If we're going to stay. In fellowship with God. If we're going to have God's blessing. We have to stay inside the circle.

That he's drawn for us. And if we don't stay inside the circle. If we err. And we go away from the truth. We could just put Ichabod.

On the front sign. And we can go home and play golf. Because. If God's not here. There's no point to us meeting here. We're just a social group. And I could do without.

So. So. Some men have love. Some men love the truth. And some men love people. And some men hate the truth.

And some men hate people. But John is calling us. To love both. That we love the truth. And we love people. And so we must be very careful. How we live.

[28:16] We don't only. Stick to the truth. We don't have that zeal. Like I talked about a couple weeks ago. Where we have the zeal for truth. But it's a harsh zeal. And it hurts people. And it's not loving.

We love in the truth. So we speak the truth. But we speak it in love. So we must be very careful. How we live with one another. We have to love one another.

Or God will not bless us. So that's how we nurture. A relationship with God. We stay in the love. We stay in truth. And we stay in love.

The third question. That I want to ask is this. How do we walk? If Grace Fellowship is going to thrive. And grow. How do we walk?

How do we live? So we see in verse 4. John writes to church. And tells them. How pleased he is. To see some of the children.

[29:13] Some of the children. Some of your children. Are walking in the truth. And I don't think he's saying there. At that verse. That some of the members. Are not walking in the truth. And then. But others are.

He's just saying. I've had some acquaintance. With some of your children. And I'm so glad. To find out. That they're walking in the truth. They're living the way. They're supposed to live. The truth is important to them.

Jesus is important to them. And that makes me so glad. They're clinging to the truth. And that makes John's heart. Go out to them in love.

He's so happy for them. Now if you look at verses 4 through 6. You're going to find this common theme. Of walking. The children.

In verse 4. Are walking in the truth. And in verse 6. It says. This is love. That we walk in obedience. Then at the end. His command is. That you walk.

[30:09] In love. So this walk. This walk. That Grace Fellowship. Is supposed to have. Is a combination of three things. And each part is essential.

We have. The walk in truth. And the walk in obedience. And the walk in love. And it's like a braid. Girls you have the braids. And they go in and out.

Each part. Each braid. Is. Is separate. But it's interwoven together. And that's the way our walk is to be. We have love. And we have truth. And we have.

Obedience. And they're all mixed together. If we don't love. Then we don't have the truth. Because the truth. Stirs up love. The truth is how we love one another.

And if we don't. Have obedience. Then we don't have love. Because love. Is. An obedient love. It's a law keeping love. And if truth is not shaping our obedience.

[31:06] Then we obviously don't have obedience. They're all interdependent on each other. Well how do we know that we have the right kind of love? I'm telling you to love.

So how do you. How do you do that? What. How do you know you have the right kind of love? John tells us. This is love. That we walk in obedience to his commands.

So. Love. Equals. Obeying God's commands. But. Isn't love an emotion? Don't you have to feel something to love someone.

And. Surely you can't. Make someone. Love someone. Because you can't make someone like someone. And if. My brother doesn't like me. Then I can't tell him to love me.

And if I just don't like my sister. How can I love her? How can I get along? When we just don't get along. Well. John turns.

[32:06] That thinking on its head. He turns it on its head. And I think he'd agree. And I hope everyone here would agree. That love is an emotion. I mean.

You show me a husband. That's loving his wife out of duty. With no delight. And I'll show you a marriage that. Has some problems. So love is emotional.

We don't just say. Love your sister. But you don't have to like her. It is emotional. But love. Is not. The goddess. Of our heart. Love does not rule in our heart.

Like that. God's commands. Shape. Christian love. God's commands. Guide. And direct. Christian love. So kids. You've.

You know. Jell-O water. And you pour the Jell-O water. Into. Let's say. A flat pan. And. The Jell-O. Takes the shape. Of the pan. And if you were to put the Jell-O.

[33:01] In a long tube. Like that. The Jell-O. Would form. A long tube. So in the same way. God's love. Shape. Our God's commands. Shape.

Our love. It gives them direction. It shows us. How. We are to love. One another. And so. When you come right down to it. If we boil things down.

Love for God. And love for man. Is nothing less. Than obeying. The Ten Commandments. So Christian love. What does it look like?

Well. It's making God. The first thing in your life. Where there's no idols. And Christian love. Is thinking. The right way about God. That he's not.

Like. What I think he is. He's like. What he says he is. And love. Is careful about. How we talk. To God. And about God. And love.

[33:57] Is spending time. With God. That's what the. Lord's Day is about. Is spending time. With God. And with one another. So. Love. Is obeying. The authorities.

Like our moms. And our dads. That he's put into our lives. And if we don't do that. Then it shows. We don't have love for God. So love. Love is. Not doing any harm.

To your neighbor. It's not hating him. It's not hurting him. And love. Is loving your wife. With full devotion. Where nothing comes between you two.

That's what love is. And love. Is not taking your friends things. The things that he's worked for. You don't take them. Because love. Considers others. Better than themselves. And love.

Doesn't tell lies. About their brother and sister. And love. Doesn't want what God has given to them. If God's given your brother or sister.

[34:53] Or something nice. Love isn't saying. I want that. I'm not happy that they have it. And I want it. So to love. To love God. And to love one another.

Is to keep his commands. So I ask you. Are the commands of God. Shaping your love. Do you think of his commands.

When you think of love. Because that's what John is telling us. That love isn't this thing. That's out there. That's ethereal. That doesn't have any shape. John's saying. God's commands.

That's what it means to love. So. If it's not God's commands. Shaping your love. What is it? It must be something else. It must be your own ideas.

Your own desires. And saying. I'm going to love like this. And I'm going to love this person. Like that. Because I think that's right. That feels right. So.

[35:53] High school ladies. Think about this. So you love a boy. And your heart is wrapped all around him. And you love him. But God's commands aren't in the picture.

God's commands aren't shaping your love. So that's sin. It is sin. And in the name of love. You will do things. That you never thought you would do.

Because you love him. And you will go places that you never thought you would go. And you'll be miserable. And you'll be in ruin. Because your love. Was not shaped.

By God's commands. Well. God's commands. They're shaped by. The love that God has commanded us.

Is shaped by God's commands. And also. To love. Is to walk in the truth. To love. Is to walk in the truth. Of Jesus Christ. And that just means.

[36 : 51] That if Jesus Christ. Isn't the central feature. In your life. Then you can't love. One another. You can't. You'll be stuck.

In your box. That we heard about. Only Jesus. Is strong enough. To come inside. Of a person. And change their heart. So much. That it breaks their box. And so that they can actually.

Look outside their box. And actually love people. Where they didn't have any love before. Where everything else was manipulation. And you might have loved someone. But it was for your own good.

In the long run. So then how is a church to walk? Well we walk in love. And we walk in truth. In verses 4 through 6.

We see four times. John uses the word command. Command. The father commanded us. To walk in the truth. And I'm not writing you.

[37 : 48] A new command. This is love. To walk in obedience. To his commands. And his command. Is that you walk in love. So how are we to walk.

Grace fellowship. How are we to walk. We walk in love. We walk in the truth. And we walk with an eye. On God's commands. We are God's children.

And God is telling us. In his book. How to do. This church thing. It's the instruction manual. Now. Fathers. You know what I'm talking about. Somewhere in our. Wedding vows. Someone slipped in there. That it's our job. To put all the toys together.

On Christmas. And. So. We have our instruction manual. For our 289 piece. Kitchen set. And we. Thumb through it.

[38 : 44] And we got to do this right. Because if we don't. We're in trouble. Now maybe some of you can do it. Without the instruction manual. I can't. But. Either can the church.

We can't do. This church thing. Grace fellowship. Doesn't have the resources. The wisdom. To do. This church thing. So.

How do we. Do it. We pay attention. To the manual. We look. And keep our eyes. On God's commands. And. This is John. The elder. Talking. He's really.

Old. At this time. He's in his 80s. He's in his 90s. He's the one. Who was one of the first. Disciples of Jesus. He probably knows. The most.

Of everyone living. About Jesus. He's the one. That leaned back. On Jesus. And. He was the one. That. He said. This is the disciple.

[39 : 39] That. Jesus loved. John. Knew. The Lord Jesus. And. He had walked. With Jesus. For a long time. But. This is his message.

Walk. With your eyes. On the father. He's given us. Commands. We need to walk. In those commands. So. You are. A loving people. Grace fellowship.

You are. A loving people. In a. A remarkable way. Your love. Is unique. It's unique. And. Maybe. That's why. God. Has been. Blesses us. With so much.

Peace. And unity. Is because. We are. Staying inside. That circle. Of love. And truth. But. Can we do more? Can we do more?

Can we love more? Can we go further? And I think. We can. We don't want to. Stay where we are. We want to keep. Striving. To love one another more. And to have. More focus.

[40 : 33] On the truth. And so. If we're not. Advancing. If you're not. Advancing. You're retreating. If you're standing still. You're going to fall down.

It's like running on a treadmill. We're running. And we're running. And we have sinful hearts. And so it's hard. And we're running. But the minute we stand still. What happens? You fly off. And in the same way.

Grace Fellowship. We can't. Stand still. We have to advance. In this area. Of loving one another. And. Walking. In the truth. But.



With our hearts. With our hearts. It's impossible. We can't just. Up. And love more. We don't have the strength. And so.

Thankfully. God has said more than. Just love more. He's. He's mapped it out for us. He's told us. How we love. One another. And he's. Given us.

[41:29] Jesus Christ. And when Jesus Christ. Is in us. We have a power. That is stronger than. Any indwelling sin. And we have a power.

That's stronger than. Anything in this world. That it wants to press us. And makes us. It wants to scatter us. Because when Christ. Becomes part of us.

Our focus. On the truth. And on love. Grows. And so. As we keep. Our. Focus. On. God's commands. And we keep.

Our. Focus. On. The teaching. Of Jesus Christ. And on. Obeying his word. We find that the Lord. Stirs up our heart. And so.

We don't just say. Go up. And love one another. We say. Go to the truth. Focus on the truth. The truth is in Jesus. When we look at him. And we contemplate him.

[42:23] And we put our faith in him. We have power. To do what is impossible. For us to do otherwise. So this is how a church. Thrives and grows. This is how grace fellowship.

Is going to thrive and grow. And how we're going to avoid. The obituary page. And how we're going to avoid. The funeral. 20 years from now. Is we do these three things. We love one another.

In the truth. And we nurture. A relationship with God. We put our relationship with God. Before anything else. And when we concentrate.

On having that good relationship. We will walk. In the truth. And we will thrive. And grow. As a body. So it's nothing complicated. It's nothing.

That you didn't know. But it's impossible. Without grace. And so we have to pray. For grace. To preserve us. That we would have the mind of Christ.

[43:21] About us. That we would consider others. Better than ourselves. So. Let's pray now. Heavenly Father. I thank you for your word. I thank you for the letter.

Of 2 John. That. That. Tells us what we need to know. About. How to walk with one another. How to live with one another.

I pray that you would. Work. Beyond us. That you would work beyond. Our capabilities. And our. And our strengths. And.

That you would. Arm yourself. That you would arise. Oh Lord. And do something great here. For your name's sake. That you would make us to love. One another more than we've ever loved. Each other. And that you would make us to. Love the truth. More than we've ever loved the truth. And that Jesus Christ. Would become the focus. And more so.

[44:16] Of our life together. Father. Will you. Forgive us for our sins. And I pray that you would help us to walk. In unity. And in love.

That 20 years from now. We will still be. A thriving. Vibrant church. To your glory. We ask this in Jesus name. Amen. Now dear lady.

I'm not. Telling you a new command. But. One that we've had from the beginning. I ask that we love one another.