

Introduction

Good morning. We are continuing our series through the Book of First John called "Overcome." Today, we are looking at overcoming isolation, and the oneness, the intimacy that God has extended us with Himself but also that He has built into the Body of Christ. We want to look at that today.

So we're in First John chapter 3; we're going to start in verse 1 and go through verse 10. He writes, *"See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know Him. Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who thus hopes in Him purifies himself as He is pure.*

"Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness. You know that He appeared to take away sins, and in Him there is no sin. No one who abides in Him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen Him or known Him. Little children, let no one deceive you. 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. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God. By this it is evident who are the children of God and who are the children of the devil; whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother."

The Right to Sonship (vv. 1-3)

So, before we dive into all that, "no one keeps sinning" and "anyone who keeps sinning isn't a child of God..." the things that maybe jump out of that passage at us, let's start at the beginning with verses 1 and 2. I want to point out some of the things here that I think are pretty distinct: We're talking about the "Right to Sonship." I want to talk about that invitation that God has extended to become children of His. In verse 1 it says, *"See what kind of love the Father has given to us..."* Your translation might say, "Behold." It's this kind of an exclamation, to consider this great love. The translation of the Greek literally means, "Of what country or of what tribe is this love?" I think it's kind of the equivalent of "what in the world is with this foreign love?... what-in-the-world kind of love is this?" This is kind of what John is saying here. It doesn't make sense. It's foreign to our understanding. It doesn't jive with what you would expect. It's not, "There's an obligation to love here," or "There is some kind of condition that this love is based upon." It's just God extending love, an invitation to become children of His to people who are separated from Him, people whose hearts are far from Him, who are far off from Him. We read in Scripture that we're brought near by the blood of Christ, when we were once far off. So this love, this invitation doesn't make sense, and John starts off with "Consider... Behold... See this great love, because it doesn't make sense, this foreign concept of this love being extended to us." It doesn't make sense to the world. So he goes on to say in verse 1 "the world does not know us, because it did not know Him." This foreign love, this weird extension of love, this act of love doesn't make sense. So if we are in Christ, we are strange. We are, in Scripture, called strangers and aliens in a place where our character, our nature, and our purpose is different than the world around us. We often don't make sense to the world around us, so John is saying here, "The Christian life, the Christian purpose and culture, and that surrendered life to Jesus doesn't make sense, but that's okay because Jesus didn't make sense. Right? The world doesn't know you because it didn't know Him. There's a sense in which, if you are in Christ, you are different than the world around you. You are in the world but not of the world, so it's often confusing to the world around you. But if you are in Christ, this kind of love

should make sense. If I've received the grace of God and responded to His Gospel by faith, then that great love that John is saying, "Consider... Behold..." —it makes sense to me. I experience it and I understand it. The love that we show each other and that we show our enemies and our neighbors and all those things that God has called us to, it makes sense to the Christian heart and the Christian mind because we have spent time experiencing and understanding.

I kind of relate this to communication with my wife. She's not in the room now, but she heard this the first hour, so I'm not talking behind her back. I love my wife! She often speaks a different language than I do, even though we are both using English words. The other day she was talking about a restaurant... she was referencing this restaurant, and she said, "You know, Country Crock..." and I thought, "Country Crock... Do you mean Cracker Barrel?" and she said, "Yeah... you know what I meant, you know. Don't slow me down with details. You understood what I was talking about." (Laughter) So, I think that's an example of, because I know my wife, because I spend time with my wife, because I do life with her and communicate with her, I understand what she's saying. That may not make sense to the outside world, but I speak "Danielleanese," and so I can interpret these things and understand what she's saying.

So there's a sense about the Church that is like that. If you're a "called-out one," that word "church" means that you were called out by God for His purposes, surrendered to His way and to His will. It doesn't make sense to outsiders, but it should make sense to you, the things of God, and it should make sense to each other in the Church, these things that don't seem right or seem off or seem strange to the world. So, if you are in Christ then you are part of something that not all of the world is a part of.

In verse 2, he says, *"Beloved, we are God's children, now..."* Who are God's children? ...The "Beloved" that he is addressing; this is the Church. He has given the Church the right to become sons of God. To dispel one of the great myths, I think, of Christian culture today is that not all of humanity is God's children. You hear that all the time. "We're all God's children... God loves all His children." Let me clarify: "We're all God's Creation, God loves His Creation. God loves humanity." Not all humanity is God's children. Scripture is very clear on that. Those who respond by faith to Christ are God's children. In John, not First John, but in John 1:10-13, he writes about Christ and says, *"He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, yet the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and His own people did not receive Him. But to all who did receive Him, who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God."* New life in Christ. Spiritual life where there was spiritual death. Being born again as we read about in John 3:16. THAT is what enters you into the family of God. THAT is what makes you a child of God. There's this great relationship that doesn't exist naturally when you're born into this world. It only comes through faith in Christ, when you're brought into the family of God and you become a child of His. So, it's this great foreign, what-in-the-world kind of love is this that God, before we would pursue Him or consider Him and, in fact, have hearts that rebel against Him, He has extended this invitation. He has extended His grace and love and said, "I invite you to become a child of Mine." Once you trust, by faith, in Christ you become a child of God.

Today we're not reading just a bunch of verses about mothers, so if you were expecting that, I apologize. Hopefully you're all encouraged, no matter what your earthly family structure is, to know that you don't have to be alone or isolated or burned or just exist in the wake of abuse or anything that has happened because of the broken nature of our fallen world, but that you can find relationship and family in the Father, in God the Father, in a Heavenly Father Who will never fail you, Who will never leave you, Who will never forsake you. We have a promise from Scripture, from God in His Word, that He has extended this

invitation to be children of His. So, you're not alone in Christ. You are not alone and you are not left or forsaken or isolated... you're in Christ and so you are in the family of God, and you have a Heavenly Father. That is a what-in-the-world, crazy kind of foreign love. I don't understand that. Right? We didn't earn it. We couldn't buy it. We couldn't say some magic chants to make it happen. God has extended this love to us. We trust, by faith, in that reality and that transformation, and that spiritual life becomes true for you if you are in Christ, a child of God, a child of the King. You have that Heavenly Father. That, by itself, is amazing.

But what we're about to see, I think, is kind of an extension of the Creation story of how we're designed as humans. Just because we have a Heavenly Father, it means something else. It doesn't stop there. If I'm in Christ, God's my Heavenly Father. If you're in Christ, He's your Heavenly Father. What does that make us? ...Brothers and sisters. We have brothers and sisters in Christ. We have a spiritual family in God, under the Heavenly Father; that is built into the structure of Christianity. It's built into the design for humanity. Adam, in the garden, with God was awesome: Fellowship with the Trinity, between God and man. It doesn't seem that you would need anything else, but God had designed Adam for needs humanly, physically, and so He created woman so that there was fellowship and intimacy with another human. God has designed all humans in this way. So, yes... we have a Heavenly Father when we come to Christ and that's awesome and that's amazing, and that is enough. But... God has designed us for more than that, so that when I'm in Christ and you're in Christ, we have each other as brothers and sisters in Christ. We have a family. Because of a spiritual reality, there's a physical expression of that. I think it's an amazing extension of our God who is incarnational in His ministry. Right? God exists in heaven. Christ humbles Himself, pours Himself out, takes on flesh, comes to earth, dwells among us with skin on so that He can be in relationship with us, so He can experience things and He can sympathize with us more fully, that He can take the curse upon humanity on the cross and pay the price for sinners. There's an incarnation to His ministry, and so He has built into us incarnation, into our ministry to each other. It's not enough to just say, "I'm in God and I'm good and that's it." There's more to it than that because if I'm in Christ and you're in Christ, we are connected; we are united. Christ prays in John chapter 17; He prays for unity in the Church, so that people would recognize that we were His, that we were His followers, that we were one with one another because we're one with Christ and we're one with the Father... Christ said, "I pray that they would be one, just as You and I are One." As Christ and the Father are One, He wants to see that unity in the Church. That's built into us. It's not just a blessing. It's also a responsibility. If you are in Christ, you are obligated to your brothers and sisters in Christ, to be family to them, to know them, to care for them, to meet their needs. Scripture says, "Yes... love those and bless those who persecute you... Love your enemy..." all those kinds of things, but it also says, "Show love, especially to those in the family of God." ...Particularly to brothers and sisters in Christ. We are to love each other as family, and not just as an analogy or a picture but because we are family. (singing) "We are family...cha, cha, cha" (Laughter) We have to do this. It's not an option. I think there's been a breakdown in church culture. I don't know which side it started on, if it was from this side or from that side, and it may just be the influence of culture and society in general. The family aspect has really been pulled out of Church, and there's really this consumer mentality, this consumer approach where it's nice. Right? We want to present a very good product to you so that you enjoy your experience here, so that you choose to continue to come here, but it's so that you will hear the Word of God. I say, "We." I mean church leaders... not just HNW but church culture. There's this mentality from church attenders who want to go to a place where the coffee is the best or the lighting or the music is the right style... That kind of thing, so the focus or the priority has kind of shifted. We have this idea that I can just come and I can sit and I can receive and I can grow and have this awesome relationship with God the Father, but I'm totally discounting my relationship with my brothers and sisters in Christ. If I'm in Christ

and you're in Christ, we are brothers and sisters in Christ. Just like we don't get to pick our earthly family, we don't get to pick our spiritual family. We're in it together... forever... Like, forever ever. More than just your earthly family... eternity. We need to be really careful about how we approach these things, how we look at these things, because, as we think about those who may not have an earthly father and may not have an earthly mother and may not have earthly children, they have a family in the church who should love them, embrace them, be the hands and feet of God in their lives. It's built into the church, so don't think, "Well, I've got parents and I've got kids and I'm good. I'm here for my relationship with God." God might be calling you to be the spiritual mother or father to someone. God might be calling you to be the spiritual child of someone, to reach out and say, "I need mentorship. I need guidance because I don't have that in my earthly family." That is what God has built into the Church, that support system. That's why we read in Scripture that we are a family, that older men are to treat younger men as sons, and older women are to treat younger women as daughters, and we're to treat each other as brothers and sisters in Christ, because there is an intimacy, a oneness, a unity and a forever-ness that you can't say, "I don't want any part of that. I'm going to step away from that. I choose not to participate." It's not an option. We have family. If I wanted to opt out of family vacation growing up, it would not have gone well. Right? "You don't have a choice in this. Get in the station wagon." "Okay, alright. I thought we could negotiate." "No... you can't."

So spiritually, why would we think any different? Why would we think, "Well, I don't like what he said" or "I don't like the way that guy thinks about this, so I'm going to go down the street and I'm going to attend this church. I'm not in fellowship with them, I'm still in fellowship with God, and this is my church now." That is so backwards and anti-Gospel. If you are in Christ and the brother or sister is in Christ, you guys are family... spiritual family. You've got to work it out.

Growing up with my brother, I may have really disliked him at times and we might fight all the time, but guess what? We were still in rooms next door to each other. We woke up the next morning and we were still under the same roof. We were still eating at the same table. We can't just dismember ourselves. That's become too easy in the culture and has become far too easy in the Church to say, "This is not my family. This is my family now." Guess what? If you are both in Christ, you're still family. Figure out how to work it out. Because when we figure out how to work it out, it's a strong testimony to the world around us that goes, "Behold, of what country is this love that these two people work out a difference when they could have just gone their separate ways? They obviously are devoted to something bigger than themselves, and so they're surrendering their preferences and their desires and their stubbornness to say, 'Let's work through this because we are brothers and sisters in Christ.'" What a powerful testimony. That's the design that God has built into us. Right? He doesn't call people just like us to go to heaven. He calls all kinds of different people. This has always stood out to me when I've been able to go overseas or to other countries and spend time with believers in other countries. Hopefully there's someone that speaks enough of the language that you can understand, you know, in the day-to-day things like ordering food or whatever. But when you worship together, you understand, "Oh, wow. This spiritual family is multilingual. It's multicultural." You see in other cultures where they still call each other "Brother," or they still call female Christians "Sister." Then you say, "Okay; there's a unity here, there's a oneness. Even though I just met you... I just got off a plane and met you and you call me "Brother," and it's not just slang, like, "Hey... You're my brother." It's "Brother." Right? "You're in Christ; I'm in Christ." We have the same purpose. We have the same direction. We have the same "called out-ness," so we're different than the world around us. There's unity in the diversity because Christ wants that testimony... God wants that testimony in His Church.

There's a spiritual family that He's set up for us. It's really amazing. "See what kind of love... Behold, this what-in-the-world kind of love that God has for us and that we demonstrate when we love each other."

2. The Righteousness of Sonship (vv 4-10)

So we're family... we also have, not just the right to Sonship but the righteousness of Sonship. If you remember last week at the end of chapter 2, in verse 28... If you don't remember, it's probably on the same page, if you've opened your Bible. Verse 28: *"And now little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears we may have confidence and not shrink from Him in shame at His coming. If you know that He is righteous, you may be sure that everyone who practices righteousness has been born of Him."* So this idea, again, of being children of God and being born of Him, an evidence or a proof of that or a result of that, we have the righteousness of Christ so that we can stand before God. We've been brought into family with Him. It's evidence or proof within ourselves that we are children of God. It's also evidence to those around us that we are children of God, when we live righteous lives: The Righteousness of Sonship. If we are truly God's children, we will have the character of God because we have been indwelt by the Spirit of God. Our new nature—born of the Spirit, having the character of God—works the character of God through us. The fruit of the Spirit, this righteousness from Christ, is proof that we are children of God. So, if you want to know, "Am I really a son or daughter of God? Am I in Christ?" This is one of the strong determining factors that you can think about. It's kind of scary in the language, so let's try to navigate some of this. When John writes, *"No one who abides in Him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen Him or known Him. Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as He is righteous. Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil..."*

You might think, "I sin a lot; I don't know if I would call it 'practice' but I'm pretty good at it. It's not practice anymore." We want to make sure we know what this passage doesn't say by what we know that the full Word of God says to us. We call that interpreting Scripture with Scripture. So, what we want to say is that we know that once we are saved, we are always saved. Nothing can separate us from the love of God. No one slips through the hands of Christ. If you are in Him, you are eternally in Him. We are sealed by the Holy Spirit. All these things that we see in Scripture tell us that if you are in Christ... if you have trusted, by faith, in Christ... you are forever in Christ. This passage can't mean that if I sin once a week or once a day, or whatever, then I lose my salvation. That's not what he's trying to say here. We're not sinning our way out of salvation. We know that once we are saved we are always saved. We also know, Scripture tells us, that saved people sin. We saw in 1 John 1 that if we say we don't sin then we're liars; the truth is not in us. If we say that we haven't sinned, then we don't know the Father. That's to say, before Christ we can't claim that we didn't sin, and in Christ we can't claim that we don't sin. So John acknowledges that saints sin. Christians sin. That's not what John means here. He is not saying, "Okay... If you're in Christ, you're perfect now; you're never going to sin again." So let's throw that off the table. It doesn't mean I can lose my salvation; it doesn't mean that I'm a Christian so if I sin ever, I'm not a Christian. Then what does he mean?

I think what he's getting at here is that when we look at some of the evidences he points us to... if you are in Christ, he says, *"No one born of God makes a practice of sinning..."* (verse 9) *"...for God's seed abides in Him..."* That character of God, that indwelling of the Holy Spirit, that new nature that we've been given, we've been repurposed. Right? There's a new creation there. Second Corinthians 5:17: "The old has gone, the new has come. You are a new creation in Christ." It is not a reassembled creation; not taking the parts that are there: A new life, a new character, a new Spirit that wasn't there before." If that is true... if you're in Christ and that is true, then that's your new character. Right? That's your new purpose. That's your new

trajectory... your new orientation. Everything surrendered to that, that nature of God in you. So he says, if you make a practice of sinning, basically you're incongruous, you're out of character, you're out of the nature that's within you... so you can't continue in that sin without any conviction by the Holy Spirit. If you continue in sin without any conviction of the Holy Spirit, then you are not saved because the Spirit of God in you convicts you of sin. So, we're not perfect. He started chapter 3 by saying that. Look... what we will be, we don't know yet. But we know that when Christ comes back He will transform us and we will be like Him. We're not like Him yet. Right? We're not sinless and we're not perfect yet. So, he knows you will sin. What he's saying here is if you continue in a life characterized by sin without conviction by the Holy Spirit, then you are not in Christ. You are not saved, you are not of God, because the Spirit of God within you should be the marking characteristic of your life.

One of the commentators used this illustration which helped me understand it a little bit. He said, "If you're watching a football game and a player has a uniform on and you think, 'Okay, I know what team that person's on because of their uniform. You know what team they're on, what purpose, what their goal is because they line up a certain way... if you understand football, then you understand these things. At the very least, you know what team they're on by their jersey. He says, "Imagine somebody who picks up the ball, they have a certain uniform on... You think, 'I know which direction they are going to go because that's their end zone, that's their goal. They're going to head that direction.'" He's saying, "Imagine that player taking the ball, turning around, and going the opposite direction... willfully, purposefully, intentionally going the wrong direction with such intent and such force that his team is like, 'What in the world?' And they have to chase him down and tackle him." He says that is so out of character. Right? It would cause you to go, "What in the world? This is so inappropriate, incongruous... If it's your team, you might have some more creative words to say about that, but it doesn't make sense. That's what John is writing here. "If you're in Christ and the character of God is within you because the seed of God has been imbedded in you... abides in you... grows in you, then the character of God is what comes out of you." Your life is marked by the character of God. So, when you practice sinfulness in such a way that that characterizes your life, he says, "That's out of character for you. That doesn't make sense. Something is out of whack." If you're in Christ, you should know, "My purpose, my goal, my orientation, my will is surrendered to God." So when you step outside of that in willful disobedience, it's out of character. It's contrary to the nature that's within you... the new nature that's within you. If you do it in such a way that you practice sinfulness for this indefinite amount of time, again without any conviction by the Holy Spirit, John is saying, "Those people are not of God," because the Holy Spirit within you will not let you go without conviction. The Holy Spirit and the character of God will not put up with a lifestyle of sin, so that you are marked and characterized by sin. If you are in Christ, you are not marked and characterized by sin. You might commit sins. You might struggle with sins for a long period of time. This is what makes this passage really difficult. But if you know... "the character of God is within me, the Spirit of God is convicting me of this sin... of this lifestyle... then I'm in Christ. I've just been deceived." That's what John says. "You've been deceived so you're going contrary to the spiritual nature within you." He says the antidote to that is to abide. We saw that in chapter 2, in the verses that we just read; in verse 28: "*Abide in Him so that when He appears we may have confidence...*" Then he says it again at the end of chapter 3, that we need to abide in Christ. When we abide in Christ we won't be deceived. And when we're deceived, we fall into that temptation and that sinfulness and that stuff that is out of character.

So, "abiding"... We think, "Well, what does that mean? How do I abide?" To abide, to dwell, to remain... "How do I do that? If I can't lose my salvation, what does that mean? If I can't step outside of salvation, if I'm always God's, what does it mean for a Christian to abide in Christ?" It means that moment-by-

moment, by faith, you're trusting that God's Word, God's plan, God's will is better than yours." Whatever you want to do sinfully and selfishly is not what God wants for you. So when you abide, you are: "moment-by-moment, I'm trusting in God and who He is... Pressing into His character... Letting the fruit of the Spirit come out in me because my will is surrendered to God's will for my life. So, when I abide I am trusting moment-by-moment. If you trust God's will moment-by-moment over yours, you're going to be marked by obedience to God's will and not disobedience. You're going to be marked by righteousness and not by sinfulness. So John says, "Listen. Children... Beloved... Brothers and sisters in Christ, those who are children of God, one with the Father and one with each other... if you want to avoid practicing sinfulness, if you want to avoid the lawlessness that is rebellion from God's will, abide in God... Abide in Christ... trust moment-by-moment that by faith His will is better than your will, His way is better than your way, His purpose is better than your purpose, His goals are better than your goals. When we line up with what God wants for our life, we're marked by righteousness, the fruit of the Spirit, the character of God, and there's a testimony over our life that says, "This person isn't perfect but more often than not, their life is characterized by righteousness and the character of God and I see that." So John encourages us, he exhorts us, he warns us, "Abide in Christ. Abide in the will of God so that you can avoid the temptation and the deceitfulness of the world that wants to pull you away from what God has called you out to." That makes it a lot easier too, to work out that "brother-" and "sister-in-Christ" stuff that we talked about it. If I claim that I'm in Christ and surrendered to the Father and yet I don't get along with any of my brothers and sisters in Christ, something is wrong. He ends verse 10 with that. He talks about the righteousness: "...*whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.*" That righteousness of God in you is not just a righteousness in your will, internally submitted to the Father, but expressed through my love for my brothers and sisters in Christ. It's a whole picture. My whole life is surrendered, so how I treat those around me testifies to the character of God within me. It's not just me growing, learning, getting puffed up with knowledge... never to give back, never to bless others, never to try to be selfless and reach out to anyone else. Through my growth in Christ and through pressing into Him, the character of God comes out in how I relate to other people. It's further evidence that I am a child of God and I get along with my brothers and sisters in Christ. Let that be a challenge to us this morning. Let that be an encouragement to those of us who need family... who need that embrace... who need those things, who say, "I hear that God has extended love to me, but I still would love sometimes that hug, that high-five, that smile, those kind words... God has built that into the Church. Be encouraged. Know that God has extended you an invitation to be a part of His family. That is built into not just His Fatherhood... there's siblings, there's brothers and sisters. If you're in Christ and I'm in Christ, you're my brother or my sister. Welcome to the family. Right? Let's get to know each other.

If you are already in the family of God, if you are already in Christ and you know that the character of God is within you and the Spirit of God is within you, consider "How can I be that encouragement? How is God calling me to be some kind of mentor, some kind of spiritual father or mother or brother or sister to someone else to encourage them? I might have all the earthly family I need, but someone else doesn't. How can I be that to them as an extension of what God has called me to?"

We're going to have a time to respond in just a moment, and I would ask that you would just respond to what God has laid on your heart through the truth of His Word, by the power of His Spirit. There are going to be people standing up here who you can pray with, they can encourage you, they can point you to the truth of Scripture, and they can try to answer your questions. The steps are available if you need to come and just pray, if you need to confess or you need to repent or you need to get back in line with abiding in Christ and you've been led astray and deceived by the things of the world. If all those options scare you,

you can just fill out that response card that you have in the worship guide, but respond to how God is working in your life. Respond to how God has called you out to something greater than the broken world around you, the broken families around you... the generations of abuse, of addiction, of brokenness. God has extended an invitation greater than that, to call us out from that, that we might be sons and daughters of His.

Let's pray. "God, thank you so much for this "what-in-the-world kind of love... this crazy, foreign, doesn't-make-sense-to-our-culture kind of love... God, that You would extend to us this opportunity to be children of Yours. Scripture promises us, God, that we who were once far off have been brought near... brought near by the blood of Christ. So, God, I pray for those today who have never responded by faith, never trusted by faith for salvation, never surrendered their lives to You... to receive that salvation, that great gift... Not just of salvation, righteousness, and justification, but Sonship... to be a part of the family of God. God, quicken their hearts and minds to understand, to believe. Give them the faith, God, to trust in You. God, for those who are in the family of God, who are brothers and sisters in Christ that are in this room, God I pray that You would help us to understand how to be family, how to be family with each other. Not to take it lightly, not to think that we can just pick up our things and leave whenever we want but that we would fight through our struggles and our differences because we are in this together. In our unity, God, Your Gospel is proclaimed. God, I pray that You would minister to our hearts and minds. God, I pray that You would comfort those... comfort those today God that Mother's Day is not a happy occasion, for whatever reason: through loss, through unfulfilled desires. God, I pray that You would comfort them, surround them with Your love. God, Your Son Jesus promised us that He would be with us always. You never leave us alone. You haven't left us on our own. We have unity with You, and we have unity in the Body. Encourage our hearts and minds with that today. We ask these things in the name of Jesus. Amen."