

## **Dr. Robert Yarbrough, The Johannine Epistles, Session 6, 1 John Full Scale Faith, Section 2 [2:7-17 Central Commandment], Section 3 [2:18-3:8] Key Counsel**

This is Dr. Robert Yarbrough and his teaching on the Johannine Epistles, Balancing Life in Christ. This is session 6, 1 John, Full-Scale Faith. Section 2 [2:7-17], Central Commandment. Section 3 [2:18-3:8] Key Counsel.

We continue our lecture series in 1 John, and I'm calling this series the Johannine Epistles, Balancing Life in Christ. In the previous lecture, we saw the interplay of faith in Christ that comes about through the ministry of the gospel word and how that changes behavior so that people obey the commands of God that go along with Christian faith.

But they also transform people relationally, so whereas people may believe in God in the abstract, they have a personal relationship with God through their faith in Christ. And these things are growing, faith grows, our compliance with God's ways for us, his commands, his teaching, they grow, and our love for God and our senses of reality grow, but that's the balanced life where the work of the word of God is growing us in faith, in works, and in relationship with God. And in the previous lecture, we did the first section of John, in which we talked about the central burden of 1 John, and that burden is about God and who he is, his character, his activity, and John summarizes that by saying God is light and in him there is absolutely no darkness.

And he says that I think because he's writing to a situation in which, in various ways, darkness is evident, and he wants the people in this situation, the congregations, he wants them to enjoy the light of God and not to walk in the darkness away from God or against God. So, in this particular lecture, I want to do the next two sections, and they're marked in blue on the chart up there, and you can see that section 2 is in chapter 2, and then section 3 wraps up chapter 2 and moves into chapter 3 of 1 John. The first words of section 2 are beloved, I'm writing to you, and that section I'm calling the central commandment, embodying the age-old message, and we'll see what that message is.

So, we move from central burden in the first section to central commandment in the second section, and then in the third section, the last half of this lecture, we'll talk about the key counsel that John has. He's describing things, he's urging things, but he has some very particular advice which is getting down toward the center of the epistle for, we could call it, success in living in Christ. So, let's look first at this first

part of section 2, and section 2 is the central commandment, engage the age-old message, and we can break that down into two parts.

First let me make this blue because I just like blue as summarizing, separating out these headings. So that's section 2, central commandment, embody the age-old message, and let's read the verses that we're looking at. Notice there are no red letters in this section, he's not talking about God explicitly, he's talking to people, and he's describing people, but this is a rare section in John in which there's no reference to divinity directly.

Beloved, I'm writing to you no new commandment, but an old commandment that you had from the new commandment, or maybe I should say it is a new commandment that I am writing to you, which is true in him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining. Now there was an indirect reference to divinity right there, the him, that would be true in God or true in Christ, because it's true in him it's also true in them, because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining. Whoever says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in darkness.

Whoever loves his brother, and here brother I think refers to fellow believer, abides in the light and in him there is no cause for stumbling, but whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes. So what do we see in these verses which give us the nature of the message and implications of the message? Well first in one sense there's nothing new about the Christian message. That message has precedence in the Old Testament and it's explicit in Jesus' life and Jesus' teachings and Jesus' death, and that's the message to love one another.

God is light, but God is also love, we're going to learn, and Jesus taught the great commandment. He not only taught it, he lived it out. The great commandment is to love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength, but a corollary to that that Jesus said the second great commandment is like the first, love your neighbor as yourself.

So, this message is not new and yet it is new. It's true in a new sense in that it's true in Christ and it's true in them, and I'm going to space this down a way so I can get the verses right above the box. Remember verse 8 says it's true in him and in you.

It's true in a new way because of the progress of redemption. There's an unfolding of the fulfillment of God's promise to redeem the world throughout Old Testament times, and the Bible teaches that it was in the fullness of time, at the right time, that God sent his son, and as redemption, as God's redemptive work in the world unfolds, there's a progressive, we could say, radiation of grace out into the world. Once in a while, the things that John says are stated more explicitly in some other biblical

writer, and when I can track down such a place, I don't mind looking at those verses, and such a place is Romans 13, where John says the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining.

The Apostle Paul puts it this way in Romans 13:11 and following. He says, I can make that bigger so it might appear on the screen, you know the time that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep, for salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. The night is far gone, the day is at hand, so then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.

Let's walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy, but put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh to gratify its desires. That's an expansion of what John says when he says that darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining. Because, as I said, God's saving work has progressed with Christ having come and Christ having died and raised and ascended, and the work of Christ going on through the church, it's a new day.

It's a new day in God's work of redemption. With respect to verse 9, the person saying he's in the light, but not loving his brother, we can observe that talk of saying one thing but living differently echoes what John has already said in previous verses. And the further we go in John, the more we're going to be saying that it's 1 John.

The further we go in 1 John, the more we'll say to ourselves, haven't I heard this before? Because he repeats the same thing from a lot of different angles, making slightly different points. And this is, you know, we're beginning to see that repetition. But it doesn't only echo what comes earlier, this talk about walking in darkness and hating your brother, and so forth.

It foreshadows something that's going to happen in just a few verses. In the next section, we're going to read about a break. We're going to read about something that probably involves people cutting each other off, or what John would call hating others.

And so, John here is laying a foundation for what he's going to report as a problem in the churches that he's talking to or writing to. Finally, in this section, we see that the Gospel sets the reader, sets John's listeners before two ways. Whoever loves his brother abides in the light.

But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness, walks in the darkness, doesn't know where he's going. Darkness is blind in his eyes. This is the nature and implication of a God who is light.

God is light. He offers light and he offers life. I think he offers life in the light, but that leaves those in darkness who refuse his son.

So, this is John's teaching about the nature of the message and the implications of the message. It's both old and new. The message is to love one another.

There's a problem with people saying they're in the light, but not loving others. And that might be actively working against them. Or as we study this out, I think we would see that one form of hating is apathy, that we just don't care.

So sometimes I think when people read this, they think, well, this doesn't apply to me. I don't hate anybody. But the biblical call is to love your neighbor.

The biblical call is not to be neutral or be indifferent towards your neighbor and you'll be fine. And so, this is why for John, it's either love or hate. Because if you're following the commandment in the presence and with the strength of God to care for others, that's an active engagement.

Not to be actively engaged where you need to be or where you should be would be to hate. Recently, we had bad storms in our area and we had a lot of trees down on our property. And one of my neighbors came up, and she has acreage, and she has lots of trees and forests, and she has a road.

And she said, there's a tree down. It may fall on my road. It's getting lower and lower, but my husband and I will take care of it.

And I took her at her word. But later on, my wife and I left, and then we came back, and I could see down the road on their property that her husband and she were out with a skid-steer machine and some tools, and they were trying to remove a tree that was down over their road. And I could have said, well, she said they would handle it and I've got my own problems to deal with.

But from a Christian point of view, if your neighbor is in need and you don't do something that you could do, then you're hating your neighbor. Now, I don't hate my neighbor. I didn't have any strong feelings about it.

In fact, I was quite happy for her to take care of her own business. But from a Christian point of view, if you can do something good for someone, then that's what it means to love your neighbor. And so, I took my tools down there and it turned out they were in over their head.

It was a big tree. There was no way they were going to get it off the road. You know, human pride, sometimes we don't want to ask people for help.

And it was getting close to dark, and it was a Friday night. They were not going to get anybody in for a long time. Then how would they have gotten off their road? So I went ahead and helped cut the tree out of their road.

This is the kind of care for others because we know God, and God cares for us. Christ has cared for us. John says Christian people, people who know Christ, should walk in the light as he is in the light.

When he saw the needs, he felt compassion. And he felt like, I need to do something about this, as the Father directs me. And he did.

So in this section we're looking at, this blue section, the central commandment embodies the message. First, we saw the nature and implications of the message. Now we're going to look at a pastoral appeal in view of the message.

And in this one section, I greened a few words that refer to God, not by name, but with a pronoun. So, this is an appeal from this pastoral leader, John, to his readers. I'm writing to you little children because your sins are forgiven for his namesake or on account of his names.

I'm writing to you fathers because you know him who is from the beginning. I'm writing to you young men because you have overcome the evil one. I write to you children because you know the father.

I write to you fathers because you know him who is from the beginning. I write to you young men because you are strong and the word of God abides in you and you have overcome the evil one. Do not love the world nor the things in the world.

If anyone loves the world, the love of the father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life is not from the father, but it's from the world. And the world is passing away with his desires, but the one who does the will of God abides forever.

So that's the pastoral appeal. And we can break that down into three parts. We see first a commendation.

You know, I'm writing to you and these are positive things he has to say. It's a commendation of representative stages of spiritual maturity or physical maturity or both as believers live out the message and as believers are grounded in the character traits that are necessary to embody the message with effectiveness and integrity. Everywhere you read in John, one of his underlying motives is to encourage his readers to love.

And he's just gotten done talking about loving, and he's going to talk more about loving. But to love as John wants you to love, there have to be certain things true about you and your life and your character. For example, to love as God wants us to love, as it enables us to love, we have to have our sins forgiven.

We have to know God. We can't know God if we're weighed down by our sins. And so Christ came to take away our sins so that we can have a relationship with God.

And so he commends the people he calls little children. Some people think these are young believers. Some people think these are newer believers.

We don't know. But we do know that their sins are forgiven. And this is one of the traits that's necessary to embody the message.

You can't love if your sins aren't forgiven. I'm writing to you fathers because you know him who is from the beginning. There's that Z coordinate in the box we looked at earlier, the personal relationship with God.

They don't just believe in something. Through their faith in Christ, God has opened up a relationship with them, and now they find themselves in a dialogue with God. We're often in dialogues with ourselves.

We think to ourselves as we're driving and we're lying awake at night, maybe we're reflecting. There's a dialogue in our head. When you have believed in Christ, you find that God enters into that dialogue, and you become aware that I have something I need to say to God.

And I need to listen and open myself up to God's guidance or God's assurance or God's peace, God's direction. He's writing to you, fathers, because you know him. The God who is, don't say who was, the God who is.

He exists. He's eternally existent. This is the great and magnificent and incalculable transcendent God.

But you know him through the ministry of Christ. And then to young men, you have overcome the evil one. And then he backtracks to the children again.

He says, You know the father. And he backtracks to the fathers, you know who it is from the beginning. Says the same thing about them.

And then the young men, he says, something has the same effect, but it's a little bit different. You are strong, and the word of God abides in you. They're reading the scriptures.

They're hearing the scriptures. They're growing in the scriptures. And you have overcome the evil one.

They've made a break with the hold that the devil had in them earlier when they didn't know Christ. So, these verses commend the character traits, whether you're young, whether you're old, whether you're a child, or a father, or a young person. And of course, it's phrased in masculine language, but it applies to women as well.

It applies to all people who know Christ in their various stages. And this letter overall continually calls us to certain behaviors, certain responses. And this is a great character description of what the message about Christ and the presence of God equips us to be and to do and to know and to be affected by, to be changed by.

Now, verses six, 15, and 16, we can think of as a pre-command. We're supposed to love our neighbor. We're supposed to love God.

And that kind of love is, it describes a magnitude. It describes a focus that it's like, and I said in an earlier lecture, it's like the first commandment, you shall have no other God before me. There should be a loyalty and devotion to God that's not rivaled by anything or anybody else, because the love of God, the true love of God, the veneration of God, the honoring of God, it's expulsive.

It expels all rivals because God is greater than anyone else or anything else. And so to love him is to treasure him above anything else. So here's a pre-command: do not love the world.

If anyone sets their ultimate affection on the world, obviously their ultimate affection is not on God. The love of the Father is not in him. And that may mean their love for God, or it may mean the love that God would like to have for you, but you can't receive it because you love the world so much, you don't want God's love.

And if we love the world to the wrong extent and in the wrong way, it's toxic. Because instead of the desire for God, instead of the desire to gaze upon God, instead of our confidence being placed in God, we will be focused on the desires of the flesh, the desires of the eyes, the pride of life. And these are attempts to translate words that have a rich meaning.

I'll just talk about the pride of life. That word pride is sometimes translated as "vainglory." So, it's a rather unusual word.

And the word for life there is not the word *zoe*, which is associated with eternal life. That's something we should long for. It's a vitality that God gives.

But the word for life here is bios. We get the word biology from it. And bios, in this sense, means your daily living.

You work for a living, you earn, you spend, you consume. It's the material life. And so, this expression, vainglory of the material life, as we all know, or at least probably most of us know, it's a glorious thing, especially when you're young and you're strong, and maybe you have some spending power, you've got friends.

Bios, everyday life, making a living, living for the weekend, going to concerts, having parties, celebrating. Maybe you're an athlete. Maybe you work in publicity.

Maybe you're a musician. I mean, the human enterprise is a glorious thing. But if we treat it like it's God, then it's very empty.

There's no real meaning to it. And as you age, or maybe you have a financial reversal, or maybe you have a health reversal, suddenly you have nothing. Because of the pleasure and the pursuit of the pride of life, it only takes you so far.

Plus, it's not necessarily conducive to rich and meaningful human relations. A lot of marriages break up because one or the other partner in a marriage doesn't really want to come together and live for each other. They want to party.

That person wants to party. And if all you want to do is party, or if that's your main goal, you're probably not going to be able to have a sustained relationship with somebody beyond that partying stint that you're in. So, John wants people to love God.

He wants people not to live in such a way that life is a party. And to do that, they have to decide, I'm going to make a break with the world as I used to pursue it, where it was everything to me. The last verse of this section, John says, the world is passing away.

The world, for the world's sake, labors have no future. The things that we do in the world as if the world were the end goal of it, of what we do, that's passing away. But doing God's will has a never-ending quality and a never-ending benefit to it.

And if you want to read in 1 Corinthians 3, Paul talks about how all the things we do, all of our works are going to be tested, and some things are going to endure the test, and some things are going to burn up. So, in John's language, he's just saying, if you do the will of God, you'll abide forever. Your works will last.

Your relationship with God will survive whatever comes down the line in the future. So that's section two. And in the next few minutes, I want to do section three, which moves us from chapter 218 to chapter three, verse eight.



And it begins with the words, children, there's that affectionate pastoral address again, children, it's the last hour. And in this section, we're going to get what I call a key counsel. And the counsel is to remain in his anointing.

And because we remain in that anointing, we receive eternal life. This section breaks down to an A and a B and a C and a D. So, we're going to have to move quickly. And we can do that.

First of all, there are considerations that inform the counsel to abide. Children, it's the last hour. And as you have heard, the Antichrist is coming.

So now, many Antichrists have come. Therefore, we know it's the last hour. They went out from us, but they were not of us.

For if they had been with us, they would have continued with us. He's talking here about a church, what we call a church split. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us.

But you have been anointed by the Holy One. And you have, you all have knowledge. I write to you, not because you do not know the truth, but because you know it and because no lie is of the truth.

So, a few inferences from that verse, first of all, evil and judgment are at the door. We see now that John is writing this letter, but he's writing a letter in an era of crisis because there has been a division in the community of faith. And we learn from verses 19 and 20 that many are not abiding.

In 2 John, he talked about people going ahead, you know, stepping outside the boundaries of apostolic teaching and life. So this is the form that the crisis is taking. There are people who are not abiding.

They're going ahead. They're opposing the apostolic message. And you remember that Paul in Galatians 1 talks about even if an angel from heaven or Paul himself were to preach something different than what the gospel message was at the beginning, then people shouldn't listen to it because the message that has been received at the beginning and from the beginning is the true message.

And the truth of that message prevents switching sides. He says to the people who've stayed, you've been anointed by the Holy One. And remember the whole point of this passage in the blue up there, the key counsel is to remain in his anointing.

We'll talk about what that is. You have all knowledge through this anointing, or excuse me, you all have not, you don't have all knowledge, all of you have knowledge. And he's writing here not because they don't know the truth, but because they do.

And because the truth is exclusive of the lies that have informed people who have left the community. He talks then about the truth that abides. What is this truth? Who is the liar? But he who denies that Jesus is the Christ.

Apparently, the people who have left disagree with John regarding the nature of Christ. This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son. No one who denies the Son has the Father.

Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also. Let what you heard from the beginning abide in you. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, then you too will abide in the Son and in the Father.

And this is the promise he has made to us: eternal life. I write these things to you about those who are trying to deceive you. That would be, I think, the people who have left and who wish they could have taken more people with them.

But a lot of people have stayed behind, and John, you know, recognizes them and praises them. But he's writing to them so that they won't fall into the deception of those who have left. So, in these verses, we see, first of all, the way things really are.

I call them true indicatives. Jesus is the Christ. That's the way it is.

He is the Messiah. He's the fulfillment of God's promises. Some say, going all the way back to Genesis 3:15, that the seed of the woman, the seed of the serpent, will be crushed.

The head of the serpent and his seed will be crushed. So that's how he starts out in talking about the truth that abides. It's a Christological truth.

It's a certain way it can't be massaged over into something else. And if it is, then it's no longer the truth. It's a lie.

If you deny that Jesus is the Christ, this is not a new, fresh idea that we should try out. This is a manifestation of the anti-Christ, you know, the spirit and the personifications. It's not just one person in this case.

It's people whose religious convictions do not represent Jesus as he really came and as he really exists now, one with the Father. There's a logical imperative that follows

from the true indicative. If Christ is a certain way, then, in verse 24, you should let what you heard from the beginning stay there.

And if what you heard from the beginning stays there, it abides in you, then you'll abide in the Son. What you heard from the beginning conveyed the Son to you. If you stay in it, the Son will stay in you, and you'll stay in the Son and in the Father.

And so the imperative here is to stay put, and there's a motivation for that. The motivation is eternal life. And we don't want to leave it because we don't want to leave eternal life.

At least, I don't want to leave eternal life. I like the idea of blessedness with God into the infinite future. He moves on into this abiding thing even more in terms of commanding them to do it, urging them to do it.

I call it the imperative to abide. And he says the anointing that you receive from him abides in you. Now, I need to just pause there and say most commentators say this anointing is the Holy Spirit, and certainly any blessing from God that we receive and that abides in us, it's a ministration of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is our personal presence of Christ with us. Christ in his second person of the Trinity locality and being, he is at the right hand of God the Father. But he said, if I go to the Father, I will send another comforter to you.

And he sent his Holy Spirit. So, the anointing certainly involves the Holy Spirit. But as I have studied this passage through, I think the anointing is the word of the gospel, which conveys the Holy Spirit to us.

But the anointing is not the Holy Spirit. The anointing is the gospel message. It's the word of God that we learn and that abides in us and that mediates God's Spirit to us.

There's a substance to it. It's not just a religious intuition, not just a spirit. It's the Holy Spirit that comes with the word of God to us, the message of Christ, and for that matter, all of scripture, which is given by the Holy Spirit.

The Bible teaches that the anointing that you receive from him abides in you. The truth of the gospel ministered by the Holy Spirit abides in you. And you have no need for anyone to teach you.

But as his anointing teaches you about everything and is true and is no lie, just as it is taught you, abide in him. And now the 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 assured that everyone who practices righteousness has been born of him.

We see here first the power of the anointing. In verse 27, the anointing lifts us above a slavish dependence on somebody to give us guidance in every way about everything. He says you've been liberated from that.

You don't have any need for somebody to micromanage you. Nobody needs to teach you in that sense because the anointing teaches you. The word of God teaches you.

The Holy Spirit is there to apply the word of God. That directs you. And it's true.

It's not a lie like the things that the people who have left are teaching. So, because of the power of this anointing, let it work. Stay connected.

Keep seeking the Lord. Keep being responsive to what you've begun and what God is outworking in your life. It's a very powerful benefit and grace that believers receive from God, the anointing of the word of God, the guidance of God, the Holy Spirit of God.

Then there's a benefit and mark of this anointing and abiding. The anointing and the abiding go very closely hand in hand. And the benefit is the confidence that is coming.

Every generation of Christians that thinks about it knows that the Lord could return. And John knew the Lord could return. And what was he going to find? You know, Jesus told stories about, you know, be ready.

The Son of Man is coming at an hour you don't expect. So, readiness is very important. And we all may have been in zones in our lives when we weren't living in a way that we were ready for the Lord's return.

We didn't have confidence. Well, John is saying a benefit of the anointing is confidence and not cowering or shrinking away from the idea of Christ's coming. You may be sure everyone who practices righteousness has been born of him.

So, the mark of anointing is the pursuit of godliness, the pursuit of a right relationship with God. So that's the imperative to abide. Then the glory of abiding, the last section.

See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God. And so we are. You know, the ones who are abiding are those who believe in Christ and have the status of God's own children.

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.

There'll be some transformative effect of laying our eyes on God or Christ. 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 in order 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. So we're wrapping up this section.

I'm calling it key counsel. We remain in his anointing and receive eternal life. And the words we just read nearly teach themselves.

That first verse marvels at what believers are called to receive and to remain in. Not depart from, like the people who broke out of the church and left, but we're called to gaze upon the love that the father has given and the status we have as his children. And how that does isolate us from people who don't know that or want that, but it's worth, you know, it's worth the stigma if you want to call it that.

Then we get a couple of verses that talk about believers' hope and believers' response. You know, our hope is in his appearing, and our response is that we're going to grow in our purity. We're going to grow in our holiness, in God's direction, because we want to be ready to meet him.

And that's what he enables us to do. That's what he calls us to do. That's what abiding means.

And we don't want to be like those who are headed in the opposite direction. Verses four through six describe the fruit of abiding, and that is freedom from sin. If you are practicing sin, you're practicing lawlessness.

And he appeared for us to have a better life than that. The fruit of abiding is freedom from sin and destruction. And I'll just make a final comment here, because there are a number of verses in this context that talk about being no longer sinning or free from sinning.

And I think what we basically have is one of two things. And this translation, most translations in the modern era, say something like everyone who makes a practice of sinning, verse four or verse eight, whoever makes a practice of sinning. In Greek, the word is just sins.

And it can be translated as does sin continually, continues to sin, because it's present tense. So that's how the translators justify saying everyone who makes a practice of sinning, because they're looking at that present continuous tense and kind of spin it out. The way I take it is when John talks in absolute terms about sinning like this and practicing lawlessness and sin being lawlessness, I think he's talking about sin in the sense that he's warning about in this letter.

And just as we have a threefold way of being right with God, faith works in love, we have the possibility of sinning either by being heretics and not believing what we're told, by being antinomians, by not obeying what God says, or being hard-hearted and not loving God. No one who is born of God fails to exhibit the qualities of the child of God. If you're really born of God, you're going to believe what God teaches, you're going to obey what he commands, and you're going to know God.

You're going to have a personal relationship with God. You're going to love God. Now, John's already made it clear that we do sin.

And he writes so that if anyone sins, we have an advocate. And if we confess our sins, so he knows about a kind of sinning that later on I think he's going to call the sin that's not unto death. And he even says if anyone sees a brother sinning a sin not unto death, you should pray for that.

Pray for that person. In other words, restore one another when we sin as we will sin, because we're not sinless. On the other hand, there is a level of devotion away from God to the world, not to the true doctrine of Christ, not to the commandments, not to the personal knowledge of God who is holy, who takes away our sins, who brings us into a relationship with him.

That's the kind of sinning I think when he says everyone who sins practices lawlessness. That is, sins in the sense I'm warning you about. I'm warning you don't go down that road of saying Jesus is not the Messiah.

Don't go down that road of hating your brother. Don't go down the road of failing to love God. That's a sin that means you're not a child of God.

So that's how I take these. Either one works. You know, the idea is that sinning and a personal relationship with Christ don't go together.

We can be forgiven of sins, and so if we sin, let's confess it. Let's grow away from it. He came to take away sins.

That doesn't just mean forgive them. It means rooting them out of our lives. If we're loving the world too much, let's figure out a way to love God instead.

But whichever way it should be taken, sin is not a friend of the Christian, and John discourages it. And in terms of faith and works and love, the Gospel message enables us to come into full compliance and full fellowship with God, which increasingly minimizes the presence and the effect of sin. This is Dr. Robert Yarbrough and his teaching on the Johannine Epistles, *Balancing Life in Christ*.

This is Dr. Robert Yarbrough and his teaching on the Johannine Epistles, *Balancing Life in Christ*. This is session 6, 1 John, Full-Scale Faith. Section 2 [2:7-17], Central Commandment. Section 3 [2:18-3:8] Key Counsel.