

10.29.2023

3 John

(v. 11) Do Good

3 John 1:11: “Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. The one who does good is of God; the one who does evil has not seen God.”

When we come to this passage, John is encouraging the man that he’s writing to not to mimic that which is evil, but to imitate that which is good. It sounds like a very simple thing to do, but it is a very necessary thing to do. Really, doing it is actually the hard part because you can talk about this, but doing this is very difficult.

When I come to this interesting epistle, we understand that the person that he’s writing to, Gaius, as it says at the very beginning of the passage, seems to be right spot on. Would you agree with me on that? In fact, one of the statements that he makes in verse 3 is “I was very glad when brethren came and testified to your truth, that is, how you are walking in truth.” This guy is just doing everything right. There seems to be a complication because John tried to write to the church, but verse 9 says, “I wrote something to the church; but Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them, does not accept what we say.” It seems to be conveying “I tried to write the church, but this guy wouldn’t let the letter come to the church. So, I wrote to you.” The individual that he writes to, Gaius, is an individual that is walking in the truth and doing the right things. More specifically, he’s not only acting faithfully, but he’s doing it in such a way that he is building up the body. He is accepting and really shoring up those that are proclaiming the truth; embracing them and building up the body. He is focusing on what is good and what is right.

The case in this text is that some of the leadership has gone astray and are acting really belligerent; thinking only of themselves. Obviously, the passage says that Diotrephes, who loves to be first is clearly exalting himself in this scenario. He’s not wanting anybody else to take his position. He’s guarding the position; fighting for the position; vying for his position. In so doing, he seems to be extremely critical.

If you look in verse 10, “For this reason, if I come, I will call attention to his deeds which he does, unjustly accusing us with wicked words; and not satisfied with this, he himself does not receive the brethren, either, and he forbids those who desire to do so and puts them out of the church.”

So, here, you have somebody wanting to be first. Then, on top of that, trying to undermine other people, being critical, slandering, and doing all kinds of things. "A church can't be a mean place, can it?" Well, mean people go into church. I've often said that you can't necessarily control the people that come in the doors, but you can control the people that are in office. If there's a problem, you just get them out, but you don't want them hanging around the office too long because then that begins to permeate when they're in leadership. So, what we have here is a problem in the leadership and there's great concern because of this.

The main point that he's trying to get across to Gaius is that you don't want to get mixed up with this guy. It's an interesting way of introducing it in this verse that we're going to be looking at today. He's going to be talking about the fact that you want to keep your focus here. As we've been talking about 3 John, to me, the great emphasis of the book is that it explains what true brothers do. "Faithful are the wounds of a friend" (Proverbs 27:6) and "a friend loves at all times." (Proverbs 17:17) We begin to realize that there are things that literally define what brotherhood is about. Of course, the brotherhood of Christ is what we're talking about in this setting. What is it? What does it look like? As we've been going through, we realize that true brothers are really united in truth; true brothers will wish the best for their brothers and think of other people more highly than themselves; true brothers will support the name of Christ. Sometimes we think about the fact that "maybe somebody will like me if I just do more wonderful things for them." Do you know what will really draw the brotherhood together? If we lift up the name of Christ. By lifting up the name of Christ, it will unite our hearts to love Him even more, and to love each other more. Then, to receive the message and those that are loving the gospel.

One of the great texts, Philippians 1, is about unity and we oftentimes make mention of that.

(Philippians 1:27) "Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel."

That's a great way to put it, isn't it? That when you and I begin to proclaim and focus on the message, we forget about ourselves, as the song goes, and just praise the Lord. As you begin to lift Him and the gospel up, then it just does a uniting of the brotherhood.

Now, he turns to him, and he says, "Above all, don't mimic what is evil." He actually uses the term "mimic" in the Greek within the passage; which makes reference to imitating or trying to look or be like somebody. It seems almost strange to me that he would be saying this to Gaius because he's the good one. So, he's doing things right. It's telling us how easy it is to fall into that. If it wasn't something that could possibly happen, he wouldn't have written that. He is clearly concerned for a godly man; that he might be prone to fall into the evil.

So, let's see exactly what he's saying and let's hopefully define what he is talking about as he's saying, "Don't mimic what is evil."

(3 John 1:11) "Beloved..."

Obviously, somebody that he loves and that he is close to because of their comradery in the truth.

"Beloved, do not imitate what is evil..."

"*Mimeomai*," which is where we get the word "mimic," is the word that is being used. He doesn't want them to imitate what is evil. Underline the word "evil." It is the Greek word "*kakos*." The best way you can oftentimes describe words in Scripture is to see how they're used. Then, we will define the word as we go.

There are a lot of passages that use this word, but one of them is found in Matthew 21:41. In that particular passage, it is defined in that text as "wretches." It says, "He will bring those wretches." It's a particular parable that Jesus is using of those that killed a son within that particular setting. He turns to the Pharisee, then says, "So, what do you think they ought to do to him?" They answered, "Kill those wretches!" They're talking about a mindset or a heart of a kind of people that are just plain wicked. So, in many respects, when we're dealing with this word, we're dealing with people that have a mindset that is just plain mean.

Another passage is found in Matthew 24:48. It talks about the evil slave that "says in his heart." It's interesting in that particular text that it's now being brought into terms not only what the slave did, but what was in his heart and what made him do that.

Jesus says in Mark 7:21 that "out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts."

Scripture could have used the word "*ponēros*," which would have more of a focus on an effect. In other words, "Wow, that was really a bad thing that happened." However, in this passage, he's saying "Don't imitate what is '*kakos*'." Ok, now we're dealing with intrinsic nature; what's in the heart. It's a very interesting distinction that Scripture wants you to have.

Romans 1:30 talks about those who are "inventors of evil." What you see is an intrinsic nature; thoughts coming out of the heart; a disposition in which we're talking about. You realize that there are times that we all do things that are hurtful, destructive, and can cause great disturbances and problems, but the question is are you evil in nature? How are your thoughts? What's stirring here? It's talking about mimicking, "Don't mimic that." Now, why would he say that? If you back up, we understand that Diotrephes is what we would call evil in nature. He's stirring up things, but his heart is one to create division and strife; to bolster himself. He's a hateful person. It's very easy when you're surrounded by people that are hateful to begin to allow that to rub off on you.

The passages in Matthew 27:23, Mark 15:14, Luke 23:22 all say the same thing in that context; and that is when Jesus was brought before Pilate, Pilate goes, "I see no evil in this man." That's an interesting way of putting it. He doesn't say, "I don't know of anything bad that He did." He's saying, "We've examined Him, and this guy doesn't seem to be what you say He is." This is

because while being reviled, we know that He doesn't revile in return even when hanging on the cross. You can't say that He's a malevolent, hateful, mean-spirited individual. You can't, and Pilate couldn't come up with that conclusion. He said that there's not a speck of anything hateful in this person. His nature is such that it's very kind and gracious. So, when we're talking about this, we're talking about that kind of spirit.

Scripture talks about this as well in Romans 7:21, as it makes reference to that evil that comes within their hearts. There is a contrast that I want you to see in a passage found in Romans 13:10. It talks about the contrast between love and those that are doing evil. It says, "Love does no wrong." See, you and I would naturally define that as just something that somebody did wrong, but that's the word "evil." Love doesn't have a mean-spirited nature in it. It's not trying to be destructive. That's what it's talking about. You could love somebody and still make mistakes, but it's saying that you don't have that nature. Love doesn't have that nature to hurt somebody.

"Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law."

Paul will talk about this in Romans 12. So, he begins to talk about what we should be doing, such as presenting our bodies as a living sacrifice and building up and encouraging the body. He then goes into guarding against and helping the people guard against the fact that they're going to be prone from time to time, even in their goal to do something good, to fight back; maybe to even allow evil to rub off on them.

So, the passage goes on to say that you and I are members of one body; we're all part of the same. (Romans 12:4-5)

We need to serve one another. (Romans 12:7)

We need to exhort one another. We need to love one another and be merciful with cheerfulness. (Romans 12:8)

Our love ought to be without hypocrisy. (Romans 12:9)

"Be devoted to one another..." (Romans 12:10)

"Not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit," (Romans 12:11)

"Rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, and devoted to prayer." (Romans 12:12)

"Contributing..." (Romans 12:13)

Those are all very focused, good things to do. Then, he turns, and he says, "Oh yes... and you're going to have people that persecute you." (Romans 12:14) What do I do with that? "Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse." Why would he say to not curse? You're going to have a tendency to curse them. Now, you might not say it out loud, especially if the pastor is

around. Quite frankly, on some occasions, if you did, I might even say, “Amen,” but I don’t really think I should because it’s so easy for our hearts to go that way.

It goes on and says,

(Romans 12:15) “Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.

(Romans 12:16) Be of the same mind toward one another...”

Then he says this, “do not be haughty in mind”. Well, that’s going to be the problem because once again, when you’re attacked, it’s easy to become defensive.

Then he says in verse 17, “Never pay back evil...” Guess what word he uses? *“Kakos.”* So, he’s not talking about a deed that’s done; he’s talking about a spirit that’s been conveyed. I know that sometimes we think, “I didn’t kill him.” We’re not talking about that; we’re talking about the spirit; how you felt and what you conveyed when you did it. Now, what’s interesting is verses 17, 19, and 21 are all going to tell you what not to do. Verse 17, “Never pay back evil for evil to anyone.” Verse 19, “Never take your own revenge.” Then verse 21, “Do not be overcome by evil.”

Now, in verse 17, he’s actually going to add on what you should do. So, verse 17 will read this way, “Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men.

(Romans 12:18) If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.”

So, it’s like you’re pursuing peace rather than pursuing maybe getting even.

(Romans 12:19) “Never take your own revenge...”

So, he doesn’t want you to pay back evil for evil and he doesn’t want you to take your own revenge; you’re going to leave room for the wrath of God. Then, if you drop on down to verse 20, “BUT IF YOUR ENEMY IS HUNGRY, FEED HIM, AND IF HE IS THIRSTY, GIVE HIM A DRINK; FOR IN SO DOING YOU WILL HEAP BURNING COALS ON HIS HEAD.”

Then he says an interesting phrase in verse 21, “Do not be...” Up to this point, it’s been “Never pay back evil for evil”, “Never take your own revenge”, but now, verse 21, “Do not be.” “Do not be” what? “Do not be overcome by evil.”

The passage is telling us that evil is a pretty strong force. The same word will be used in Corinthians when Paul says, “Do not be deceived, bad company”, *“kakos”*; evil company, hurtful, bad natured, “...corrupts good morals.” In other words, when you hang around people that are just plain bad in nature, it’s going to rub off on you. It will overcome you. “Don’t be deceived.”

(Romans 12:21) “Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”

Now, he uses the term that is the opposite of this particular word that's been used, which is "agathos." "Agathos" is that good which once again, makes intrinsically good. It makes that which is good by nature and seeks to benefit rather than to destroy; seeks to help rather than hurt. It's a different kind of nature. He is saying not to have this kind of nature because it will take over. It's sort of like with Cain, it's knocking at your door; its desire is for you. You can sense that there is this nature that comes in; especially in particular kinds of setting where people are anything but kind.

If you look with me in 1 Thessalonians 5, you will almost see a repetition of this.

(1 Thessalonians 5:15) "See that no one repays another with evil for evil, but always seek after that which is good..."

It's the same thing that he's saying in 3 John; it's the same thing that he said in Romans. It's obviously a problem. Otherwise, he wouldn't have to deal with this so many times.

(1 Thessalonians 5:16) "Rejoice always."

Why do you think he says "Rejoice always" in verse 16? I'm going to tell you why. It's because evil has a way of rubbing off on you. It's such a bizarre thing. You know what I'm talking about. You just get so mad. Do you know what is even more bizarre? You can't think about anything but that. I mean, your mind just gets focused on that. You're thinking about that during the day and when you go to bed, you're thinking about that. You're thinking to yourself, "Man, I should've said this... I should have let him have it." Ok, come on. We all have had wonderful dreams like this. Some people would call them nightmares; some people would call them dreams. It just depends on where your heart is, but you know the feeling and you can't do anything. Then you end the day, and God goes, "Ok. So, what did you do good?" and you'll look back on the day and say, "I did nothing good. Not one good thing." You can't; because your mind is not there. Your heart is not there. Your nature is someplace else. You've been tainted by the things of the world. That's why he says "Rejoice always" in this passage. What do you think rejoicing does? It gets you out of the anger. It's impossible to rejoice and be angry.

(1 Thessalonians 5:17) "pray without ceasing;

(1 Thessalonians 5:18) in everything give thanks..."

Have you tried giving thanks? "Thank You, God, for this...I'm not going to say it, but thank You for this person." Now, you've got to mean it, right? As you're giving Him thanks, God's beginning to change your heart. So, you're beginning to get into the world of productive, rather than destructive. It's an interesting transition, isn't it?

"In everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

"I thought the will of God was for me to get even?" No, no. God already told you that He would take care of that. He's going to take care of that, but He wants you to build up the body. That's why he goes on, and says, "Do not quench the Spirit". (1 Thessalonians 5:19) You can hear the

Spirit of God. What is the Spirit of God? Love, joy, peace... Ok. So, none of those has anything to do with getting even if you look at the list.

What does he say in verse 22?

“Abstain from every form of evil.”

You might redefine it as “righteous indignation,” but what is it really? How do I know if I’m there or not? Well, are you doing good? “No, I’m not doing good.” Then, you’re in the evil section.

As he begins to talk to this individual, he says, “Beloved, do not imitate what is evil.” It’s going to be easy to do that, but what is beneficial? What is good? What is building up the body? What is productive in the body’s life? It’s getting that focus that we need to have.

I want you to take a close view of the statement that he makes at the end of this verse. It reads this way, “the one who does evil has not seen God.”

Scripture is telling us that doing good, pursuing good, is a way in which we fellowship with God. Have you ever thought about that?

One of the problems when you and I begin to take on those hearts that are hostile, angry, and hurtful is that you can literally feel yourself going away from God. If in fact it’s true that God is love, then what do you think He wants us to do?

(1 John 4:10) “In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us...”

Of course, he has already written this and makes it very clear; but 1 John 4:8 says, “The one who does not love does not know God.” So, the act of love edifies according to 1 Corinthians 8; is building up.

“The one who does not love does not know God.” So, if you want to know God, what do you have to do? You have to work in the realm of building up rather than the realm of tearing down. Now, look, I’ve been there a thousand and one times; and I can tell you that as much as I may have wanted my anger to be productive, it never has been. “The anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God.” (James 1:20) James is very clear about that, but somehow, we like to convince ourselves that it’s accomplishing something. It will not; but the worst that happens in this scenario is that I’m drawn away from Him and my fellowship with Him begins to break. I can still use His name, and I can still act like I’m doing God a great service, but He knows, and I know that I don’t know Him; because our fellowship has been broken. James talks about this in James 1. I appreciate Josh bringing some of these passages to light. People can begin to think, “Well, I’m pretty smart. I’m pretty religious.” So, God goes, “Ok. Prove it.”

The way he says it in James 1:22, “But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.”

There are a lot of people that say, "I know what the Bible says." He goes, "Yeah, but you're not doing it."

(James 1:23) "For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror;

(James 1:24) for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was."

He was probably an older person too. It doesn't take long to forget. Speaking from experience.

(James 1:25) "But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does."

Now, it's interesting that verse 26 will start off "If anyone thinks himself". So, he does the contrast between people thinking and people doing. In other words, it's the process of doing that actually brings you close to God; not the "I know, I know."

(James 3:13) "Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior..."

"Excellent behavior" would be another way of putting it. Peter will use this particular word to describe what we should be doing in the midst of suffering. "Keep your behavior excellent."

"Let him show by his excellent behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom."

"Gentleness of wisdom" - Why do you think he does that? If we're going to be proclaiming the word of God, and we're proclaiming... Let's see... What is that message again? Oh, that's right. God loves you. So, if we're going to be proclaiming that message, then we're probably going to need to come across like "God loves you."

It goes on and says,

(James 3:14) "But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart..."

That would be the word "*kakos*"; a nature of someone.

"... do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth."

(James 3:15) This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic.

(James 3:16) For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing."

How do I know that I'm going down the wrong path? There's disorder and every hurtful, mean, malevolent spirit. It's just all over the place.

(James 3:17) “But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle...”

I like that word, “reasonable.” If I were to define it directly from the Greek, it would be “willing to yield”.

A number of years ago, somebody had come up to me, and they said, “Someone (an eastern group of people) has a contract to take my life.” I said, “What happened?” They said, “I did something to offend them, and they’ve already taken a contract up to kill me. What do you think I should do?” I said, “Well, did you do something that was offensive?” The person said, “Well, yeah, but I didn’t know it was offensive.” So, I said, “Well, let’s go and apologize.” They said, “I don’t think I can do that.” I said, “I’ll go with you.” So, we got in the car. It was nighttime, probably about 10 o’clock at night. I went ahead, and the individual said, “Can I sit in the car?” I said, “Sit in the car. I’ll tell you when to come in.” So, I went in. There were about five of them in a huddle together. I said, “Look, so and so did this. The fact of the matter is that we were wrong. We offended you and we should not have done that. We’re asking for your forgiveness.” Clearly, we could have fought this thing, maybe, I guess, or found some way, but the gentleness of wisdom said, “Just admit that you did something wrong.” I brought the other person in, and I said, “Tell them what you feel.” They shared how very sorry they were, and to the best of my knowledge, the contract was done away with.

You realize that there has to be a sense of humility, and you’re not looking for a fight. You’re looking for the peaceable way. There are a lot of angry people out there, and it’s going to rub off on you. You’re going to find some way to somehow try to get back at them, but you can’t go there. You can’t go there in your mind; you can’t go there in your deeds. You have to do that which is good. What can I do to build this back? How can I save it? Do you see what I’m saying? You’re thinking that way. Clearly, there are people that are so evil that you just want to avoid them, and that’s why it says, “bad company corrupts”. (1 Corinthians 15:33) So, don’t say, “I’ll just hang around them, and get them to like me.” That’s not going to happen. They’re very corrupt people, and they’re probably just going to off you. If in fact you can take care of this and right a wrong, you want to look for that gentle corrective moment in which you can say something. James talks about this, and he says that you have to be willing to yield. I oftentimes think of that Psalm, in which the psalmist says, “What I did not take I had to repay”. There are times where you might just have to say, “I’m sorry. What do I need to do?” Maybe it wasn’t really anything that you did, but you’re looking for a way to make it right. You have to be willing to humble yourself in this. John is concerned that Gaius is going to start thinking like this other guy; protecting his turf. It’s so amazing how people are so worried about saving face, isn’t it? People are pretty proud, aren’t they?” Let it go. Why do you have to be number one, and why does everybody have to understand you? Just let it go.

“But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy.”

(James 3:18) And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace."

Paul will oftentimes talk, especially in 2 Thessalonians 3, he'll use the phrase "mimic". Then, in 1 Corinthians 11:1, he'll say, "Imitate me as I follow Christ". One of the reasons why church is so important is because there are going to be times when people need to see a life that is actually doing the right thing. We all need examples. God has so ordained the church that it would be a light set on a hill. As Paul would say, sometimes you're so immersed in the difficulties of the day that you don't know what to do. God goes, "See that gracious person there?" You go, "Yes. That's the one." Follow that example. That's somebody doing something good and building up.

In 2 Timothy 3, you begin to see that we live in a world that's not going well. So, he's going to say in the passage that things are going to proceed from bad to worse. This world that we live in is full of dirt. When you walk in the world, you're going to get your feet dirty. This is why you have a passage like John 13, Jesus washes the disciples' feet. Peter says, "Wash all of me." Jesus says, "No, just the feet." He then turns to him, and he goes, "You guys saw something I did here?" They responded, "Yeah, You washed our feet." He says, "That's right. You're going to need to do that for one another because you guys are going to go out there and get dirty; when you come back in, you're going to need to clean the dirt off of each other." Sometimes we come into this body; I'm feeling upset about something and you're feeling upset about something, and we begin to talk, saying, "Yeah, but God tells us to do this." And we go, "That's right!" You can just feel the dirt falling off, can't you? What a great focus it is. That's what brothers are for. See, that's why we come together. That's what this letter is about. It's about a brother talking to another brother who is walking in truth, and he's gotten some dirt on that truth. So, we've got to wash it off.

Now, you and I know that the truth of the matter is that God takes care of us. We know that all we have to do is be right with Him, and He will vindicate us. We know that, but we've got to get that dirt off because everything out there is telling us, "You need to fight for whatever you get." 2 Timothy 3 tells us that there are going to be horrible things because the world is going to be very selfish. Men are going to be lovers of self and lovers of money. If they are lovers of self or lovers of money, they're not going to like you because they are only going to see you as somebody that takes away their position or money. So, they're not going to like you.

What do we do? Well, if you look at this, we know that people are going to sometimes look godly, "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." Things are going to be very depraved and twisted.

2 Timothy 3:8 talks about "men of depraved mind, rejected in regard to the faith."

(2 Timothy 3:9) But they will not make further progress..."

Because God is going to deal with that. He's going to make it obvious to all.

Verse 10 starts off, "Then you". So, we're seeing a direct difference between them and you. The world is going to be very selfish, self-centered; very focused on what they want. "Now you..."

"Now you", what?

(2 Timothy 3:10) "Now you followed my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, perseverance,

(2 Timothy 3:11) persecutions, and sufferings, such as happened to me..."

"You mimic me." You didn't mimic evil; you patterned your life after good.

(2 Timothy 3:12) "Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted."

(2 Timothy 3:14) "You..."

That would be another "Then you".

"...continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them."

Look, you can live your whole life going, "Look at that person." You can form all kinds of excuses of why you're not going to be godly. You can go into church and find somebody that's doing the wrong thing. You can use them as a pattern to follow in your life or you can search for the right things, do what you know is right, and find a pattern that is pursuing that. That's why when you consider these things, it's so important that we imitate the right people; that we have the right people in office and put forth the right examples because we need that. We all need a sense of washing from time to time. I need a sense of washing from time to time. When I see some of you, for instance, that are far kinder and gentler than I am, it speaks to my heart. It does some washing in my life. It keeps me from being too abrupt. The world is very abrupt and hateful. Jesus is saying in John 13 that we owe it to each other to help each other stay clean. So, very simple words, don't imitate what is evil; imitate what is good. In so doing, you'll get to know God. The words that he uses for "seen God" is actually experiential. No man will experience God if in fact you're pursuing that which is evil. If in fact you do what is good, it's like walking in His shoes. If you want to get to know somebody, start patterning your life after them. That's why Paul will say in Philippians 3, "that I might know Him...and the fellowship of His sufferings" and "the power of His resurrection." Once you begin to do the things that God tells you to do, you realize that there is a fellowship. Peter will say, "If you and I suffer for doing what is right, and we do it in a way that Christ did it, "while being reviled, He did not revile in return, but gave a blessing instead;" If we'll suffer the way that Christ did, Scripture says, "the glory of God rests on you." Now, isn't that fellowship with God? Isn't that feeling the presence of God with you? Have you ever done that? Have you ever done right to such an extent that you had to suffer for it? Then, you just look at the Father, and you go, "How's that Dad?" He responds, "Great, son." Have you ever felt that? "Well done." You've never felt closer to God than at that moment.

Then, on top of that, you feel the power of resurrection. All of the worries and concerns just dissipate. It's like a new life. That's for us.

Closing Prayer:

Father, I thank You for this passage. I thank You for the clarity and the simplicity of it. Lord, keep us from having a heart that is so weighed down with anger and frustration. That's the world; that's not us. You've freed us from this. How wonderful it is that we can have that relationship with You; that walks in the spirit of joy and thankfulness all day long. We don't have to go to bed angry or upset at somebody. When we've done the right thing, we leave it in Your hands, and we give You thanks. Lord, help us to encourage one another in this. Better than that Lord, help us to live in such a way that it gives somebody an example to live by.

With your heads bowed and eyes closed, I'm asking you to present your bodies as a living sacrifice before God. I'm asking you to ask God, "God, use me in the lives of others. Help me to spend my life doing things that build up the body, rather than thinking of things that are just destructive. I don't want that old dirt to stick on me."