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The Sermons of Dan Duncan

1 John 5: 13-17

2011

"Prayer Warriors"

TRANSCRIPT

Thank you Mark, and good morning. We are continuing our studies in 1 John. This morning we're going to look at a very interesting text, one that's troubling for some, but really shouldn't be. 1 John chapter 5, verses 13 through 17,

¹³These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life. ¹⁴This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. ¹⁵And if we know that He hears us *in* whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him.

¹⁶If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not *leading* to death, he shall ask and *God* will for him give life to those who commit sin not *leading* to death. There is a sin *leading* to death; I do not say that he should make request for this. ¹⁷All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not *leading* to death.

1 John 5: 13-17

May the LORD bless this reading of His Word.

(Message) There was an ancient Chinese philosopher who had an odd experience; he dreamed he was a butterfly. It was a pleasant dream. He floated about happily.

But when he woke up he was puzzled. He didn't know if he were a philosopher who dreamed he was a butterfly or a butterfly dreaming he was a philosopher. That is confusing and unusual.

But Christians suffer something similar when they doubt their salvation. And if they don't know who they are, they live in confusion and without progress. Doubt produces uncertainty and hesitation; and it robs a person of the joy of his or her salvation. And that's not uncommon in genuine believers.

It happens for various reasons. 1 John was written because a church in Asia had split over some teaching that denied the fundamentals of the Christian faith—and claimed that they had 'higher knowledge' that leads to eternal life. The teacher, or teachers, were convincing: They were attractive individuals, and a number of people fell under their sway and followed them out of the church.

Not everyone did; and those who remained stayed true to the faith. But they were very confused and wondering about the things they had been taught by the apostles. Were they correct? Were those things true or were these new teachers the ones that had the truth?

And so, as I say, they were confused. They were wondering who it was that really had eternal life: Or, 'Are we philosophers, or are we butterflies?' Are we of the light or are we of the darkness? Are we children of God or children of the devil?

So, 1 John was written to help them out of their confusion, to give all believers a guide to spiritual stability. John wrote to give assurance of salvation. That's what he says in verse 13, "These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life." Now you might recognize here a similarity in style with the fourth Gospel where John states his purpose for writing it at the end of the book. The obvious parallel in style between the two books suggests that John was stating the purpose for his letter in the same way that he stated the purpose for his Gospel.

In John chapter 20, verse 31, he states that he wrote the Gospel, "...so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name." The Gospel was written so unbelievers would be saved. The epistle was written so that believers would know that they are saved; that they have eternal life.

Earlier in the epistle's first chapter, in verse 4, John states, "These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete." And that too, is John's purpose in writing this book; and it's a purpose that's in perfect harmony with our verse here, verse 13. John and the apostles joy would be made complete by clearing up the confusion; the spiritual confusion from the minds of these fellow Christians by giving them assurance of their salvation.

Only then could these believers have the joy of eternal life and the confidence to live it consistently and boldly—and do the very thing that John is about to urge them to do—and that is, 'be a people of persistent prayer.' Eternal life, as Jesus defined it in John 17, verse 3 is *knowing* God and *knowing* His Son. That's fundamentally what eternal life is: It is fellowship. It is a relationship with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. And prayer is basic to that. And assurance is essential for the healthy prayer life of a believer. It's essential for growing in that relationship with the LORD. Doubt is uncertainty, which causes confusion and regression, not progression.

So how can we know this? How can we know we have eternal life to clear up the confusion? How do we do that? Well, Jesus gives us an indication of that. He said, in Matthew 7, verse 16 that, "You will know them by their fruits." You'll know a false prophet by the fruits of his life, by the things he says, by the way he lives. You'll know a genuine person by the fruit of his or her life. You know a good tree by the good fruit that it produces. You know that a tree is bad if the fruit on the limbs are bad.

And so it is with us. We will know ourselves as we are, by the fruit of our lives—by the fruit of the new life. So John gives that. He explains what that fruit is, what the evidence of the new life is; and he does that in a series of tests for self-examination:

The doctrinal test, the moral test, the social test—the tests of faith, the test of obedience, the test of love, to show that we are children of God.

Now, he doesn't give us the test of perfection, (and we've said this numerous times), that's not what John is stating. That's not the evidence of salvation. Perfection, no one has that. And none of us can consider these tests, these three tests of doctrine, morality, and affection for the people of God without some pang or regret. No one lives up to these standards as he or she ought.

But that itself, really, is a sign of salvation. We want to; it's our desire to do that. And the recognition on our part that we are sinners saved by grace alone, that we do believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and we seek to live obediently and love those for whom Christ died—that supports our conviction that we are born again. Assurance of salvation is having the certainty that we possess it.

It's not necessary for salvation. True believers lack assurance, oftentimes. These individuals did. *Westminster Confession of Faith*, chapter 18, has a section on assurance. It's very good, and those Westminster Divines made the statement that true believers often lack assurance. Doesn't mean they're not saved. Saved people lack assurance sometimes.

So assurance of salvation is not necessary for salvation. But it is necessary for progress in salvation, for a joyful and productive experience of eternal life. So John has been grounding these confused Christians in the assurance of their salvation. He has been giving that all through this letter; and that's the purpose he has written this letter. It's going to make his joy, (and the joy of the other apostles), complete when they come to that assurance.

But he's been giving that to them all along. And having done that, he now encourages them to grow in their Christian life by growing in their relationship with the Lord, which they do by practicing prayer.

That's the subject of verses 14 through 17. These verses divide into two parts; verses 14 and 15 are verses that speak about *how* we pray—we pray with confidence. So John is telling us here to pray with confidence. And then in verses 16 and 17 he speaks of

praying for others: How we pray within ourselves and for ourselves and then praying for other people.

First he encourages Christians to develop their own relationship with the LORD by drawing near to Him in prayer. And the encouragement John gives us is that we can do that with absolute confidence. Verse 14, "This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us." He is the living God. He is the God who hears, the only One who hears.

In Psalm 115, verse 6, the psalmist mocks the idols. "They have ears," he says, "but they cannot hear." They're not real. The world is filled with false gods. It's filled with images and things that people rely on for help and security that really can't give any help and are no security at all. And they certainly can't answer prayer. They can't answer us when we cry out to them because they're no gods.

Christians are sons and daughters of the God, the true God, the living God, who hears; which means He hears us favorably, which means He answers our prayers. What He hears, He answers—that's the point that John is making. God is deeply concerned about us. He's not indifferent, He's not arbitrary—He's not hot one day and cold the next. He is the same every day. His love is constant and He answers our prayers.

Knowing that, John says in verse 15, 'We know that we have the requests that we make of Him.' We know that our prayers will be answered. That's what John says in verse 15, in whatever we ask we know that He's going to answer that. That's the confidence we have to approach God in prayer. "...we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him." (vs15b).

And we have them *now*; that's the sense of what he's saying. Not just that God answers our prayers but He answers them when we pray. "...we *have* the requests"—that's in the present tense. It means 'Right *now* we have them.'

Now, we may not gain the answer right now, when we want it: but we have the answer and it's going to be given in God's time; which is always the best time; always the right time. So that's the confidence we have.

John, in speaking of this, isn't speaking in a vacuum. He had been given this very instruction on prayer by the Lord Himself, all through the upper room discourse in John, chapters 14, 15, and 16. In each of those chapters Jesus speaks on this subject of prayer and makes great promises to them—and to us as well. "Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do." (Jn 14:13). "If you abide in Me...ask whatever you will, and it will be done for you." (Jn 15:7). "...ask and you will receive." (Jn 16:24).

John says, "we have the requests". (vs15). That is reason for confidence in prayer. God is no closefisted miser who grudgingly gives help. No, He's just the opposite. He's openhanded and generous.

Now, of course, we shouldn't think that God will grant any and every request that we make, as though He exists to satisfy our desires, even when our requests and desires are selfish and foolish.

Everything John teaches here is based on the qualifying statement in verse 14, that we ask, "according to His will." And you're thinking, 'Ah, I knew there was a catch.' Well be glad that there is. What loving father would give his children whatever they ask for? He won't give them what is harmful. And God is our loving and all wise Father—He won't do that, either. He gives wisely and lovingly to us. He gives us the best. He deprives us of what will harm us.

We have examples of that in the Bible: Right at the beginning, in chapter 3 of Genesis, Adam sins and the first couple is expelled from the Garden of Eden as a consequence. They're fallen, they're sinful, and as God expels them from the garden, He blocked their entrance of return to that garden by posting a guard at the entrance—an angel with a "flaming sword". Now He wasn't being unkind; that was really a blessing. It was done for their good; and that's explained in that passage. God was keeping them out of the garden so that they wouldn't return and eat of the tree of life, and in so doing, live on forever in their fallen, corrupt, sinful state. He was protecting them from something terrible.

God always gives His children the best, what is helpful—and He deprives us of what is harmful. Now we don't always recognize that; very often we don't. We know what we want, we think we know what's best for us, and we tend to trust ourselves on those things—but we're to trust the LORD. We may not understand it all but we are to rest and rely upon Him because He always gives what's best for us—and deprives us of what is not best. That's always true.

It's as the hymn writer, William Cowper, put it, "Behind a frowning providence, He hides a smiling face." Even in the difficulties, something good is being done for us. And we may not sense it or see it—and you may not know it until you enter into glory in the years to come; and then it'll all become clear. But this is how we must live, trusting Him.

So, to have what we ask for we must pray according to God's all wise will. And that's Jesus' teaching in John 15, verse 7. "If you abide in me," (if you live where I am, if you are nourishing yourself on Me), "ask whatever you will, and it will be done for you." That involves growing in Christ. That involves developing our relationship with Him so that we know Him better, we love Him more, and we trust Him completely. All of that is eternal life. It is knowing God. It is having a relationship with Him. And the more we have that the more mature we become. And the more mature we become, "The more", (in the words of I. Howard Marshall), "we learn to want what God wants. Then we have the joy of receiving His answers to our prayers."

That's really the key to a powerful prayer life—and a contented, prosperous life. It is learning to want what God wants. Not what we want—but learning to want what He wants. Then we have great blessings. But that comes through study, it comes through obedience, it comes through prayer—communion with God. That is how we mature, and that is how we become useful for others; useful in God's service to those around us, and especially to those in the church.

That too, is part of eternal life. It's not only inward, it is outward. It's not only about knowing God, it's also about knowing God's people, knowing the body of Christ and serving them.

That's what John urges in the next two verses, praying for others. And we all desperately need the prayers of one another. "If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not *leading* to death," John writes, "he shall ask and *God* will for him give life to those who commit sin not *leading* to death." (vs16).

This is intercessory prayer—prayer for the needs of others. It's what the high priest of Israel did for the nation. It's what Jesus, our great high priest, does for us constantly, what He's doing at this very moment for each of you. It's what we can do for one another, because we, too, are priests. Every one of us.

Every believer in Jesus Christ; male, female, young, old, we're all believer priests, and we have this intercessory ministry. It's a ministry that we have for one another. For ourselves and for one another.

Some Christians have, it seems, a special gift for it. We call them "prayer warriors". They have a great ministry. They are a lot like medics who go out on the battlefield to rescue the wounded, to bandage them up to treat their injuries, and give them the medical help that they need.

That's really what prayer does in the spiritual war that we are in; and we're all in it, and we're in it constantly. It is going on at this very moment. It never stops. We're all in a war. And all around us we experience it. All around us is the enemy; and the enemy is continually firing the fiery darts at us and seeking to undermine us. And he's successful. The evil one is successful at times. Christians fall; they fall into sin.

We need people who spend time alone 'in their prayer closet', so to speak, by the side of their bed, or various places during the day, carrying our names and needs to the throne of grace. Some people, as I said, seem specially gifted for that ministry and they are a blessing to the church. They're a blessing to the preacher, all of whom need their prayers continually. We need those prayers. I think it's going to be interesting someday to enter into the presence of God. He's going to give us our life, show us all the

things we didn't realize happened. And I'm going to learn of all the people, (you), that prayed continually for me and all the things I avoided and was rescued from without even knowing the dangers—because of intercessory prayer. We all need the prayers of one another continually. So we need those prayer warriors.

But the reality is, that's a responsibility of all of us. It is part of loving the brethren. We are to be looking out for each other and praying. That's what John tells us here in verse 16, "If anyone sees his brother committing a sin..."; that is 'practicing a sin'; that's the sense; it's persisting in a sin, we're to pray that the Lord would rescue him—bring him to his senses so that he would flee the situation, get out of it. But of course, to do that requires some involvement in the lives of people and the life of the church. You have to know who the brethren are to be able to recognize those who are in sin.

Now I don't think that that means, (and I'm certainly not suggesting this, that we pry into people's lives, into their private lives, at all), but certainly it implies involvement in the body of Christ. And caring about other people; not living apart from them, not being indifferent to them. And the fact is, as we live obediently and walk by the Spirit, thinking about the things of God, in His providence our paths intersect with those paths of other people.

Our lives come in contact with other people and we see things; and we learn things unexpectedly, oftentimes good things about people that we didn't know. Things they were doing that we weren't aware of—and sometimes those are not such good things. As Moses warned Israel, he said, "Be sure your sin will find you out." (Num 32:23). And things just have a way of getting exposed. And when they do, and when we are privy to those things, when we learn about them, we're to care for the person caught in the sin—not to gossip about them but to pray for them and seek his or her welfare.

Now the scope of ministry here is very large. We have all kinds of needs and there's all kinds of gifts within the body of Christ to meet those needs in a variety of ways. But certainly, the sinning brother or sister in Christ is in desperate need of a caring brother or sister. Those not caught in a sin need a caring brother or sister.

Now, John has something particular in mind, it seems, from the context. The problem would seem to be Christians who were drifting into error—either theological or of a moral error. They'd come under the influence of these false teachers—and some had already left, of course. But some were still there and being enamored of this new teaching—and maybe somewhat on the fence. And so John may have reference to those people when he's speaking here about praying for those in sin. It may be error of a theological nature or of a moral nature.

An aspect of Gnosticism which seems to be the particular problem that John is addressing here was sensual. It was not only a philosophical error, a theological error, but there was also moral error connected to it. There was aberrant sexual behavior connected to it. Now that was a problem they were dealing with in historical context of this letter, but today it's a little different. It's not so much a problem with Gnosticism, but there are lots of weird ideas out there that are comparable to it.

Today I think it's more a danger of falling under the spell of 'the spirit of the age'; of materialism and pleasure seeking; of worldliness and all the temptations that are in the world and appeal to the flesh; that appeal to us. That's what we deal with. The promise is that if we see this in a brother or sister and pray, God will answer. He will help. The LORD will, "give life to those who commit sin not *leading* to death." (vs16b).

Then John writes, "There is a sin *leading* to death; I do not say that he (*you*) should make request for this." (vs16c). In other words, some prayers aren't going to be answered as we hope that they would be. Life isn't given. Death happens. It makes you wonder, what sin is this that even the power of prayer cannot prevent its deadly effects. Is this some heinous sin? Is this the sin of murder or adultery or blasphemy?

Well, there's a lot of speculation; lots of conjecture on that very point. One guess is that this is the sin of apostasy: Which has some credence because the book deals with heresy and those that John said back in chapter 2, verse 19, "...went out from us." "They went out from us", he said, because, "they were not *really* of us." They're not genuine believers. So, it's believed that John is saying, 'Don't pray for them. They have rejected

the Christian faith. They have demonstrated by their faithlessness that they never were genuine believers. Don't pray for them.'

Problem is, John calls the sinner a "brother". (vs16a). Christians cannot commit apostasy. And there's no sense given here that this is anything other than a genuine believer, a real brother or sister in Christ. Christians do fall into sin. They're prone to wander. They do stupid things. We all do. No one, no matter how mature he or she is, is beyond the pale of sin's enticements.

Paul warns us of that. He warned in 1 Corinthians chapter 10, verse 12, "Let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall." Sin is alluring. It is tempting, because it is so attractive. It appeals to us. It makes great promises to us. It promises everything. It promises happiness, fulfillment—all kinds of things. What it delivers, though, is death. Sin is poison. Regardless of how attractive it may appear to us, it is deadly. That's John's meaning here.

Some people die physically as a consequence of their sin. It's God's discipline that removes the person from this life—not from salvation but from this life. And there are numerous examples of that in the New Testament. In 1 Corinthians chapter 5, in verse 5 Paul says that he delivered a young man in sin, (who was persisting in this sin), he delivered him, "...to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus". —Delivered him over to physical death.

Later in 1 Corinthians 11, in verse 30, Paul says that a number of Corinthian Christians "sleep", (which means they were dead), because they had abused the Lord's Supper. Remember, they were going to the Supper; they were eating all the food before the poor saints got there; drinking too much wine and becoming inebriated. —It was a shameful thing. And they kept doing that, and some of them, Paul says, "sleep"; they've been taken out of this world.

And then in Acts chapter 5 gives us the example of Ananias and Sapphira, who were dishonest about money that they contributed to the church. They 'lied to the Holy Spirit' and they were struck dead on the spot.

So there is a sin, or a pattern of sin, that when a person persists in it results in physical death. Your prayers won't help that person. But about that, John says, 'Don't make requests for this.'

That doesn't mean don't pray for the person, don't pray about this sin, about the sin that he or she is involved in. Rather it means, 'Don't try to discover the nature of the sin; if it is sin unto death, so that you might know whether or not you should or should not pray for this person.'

Now the New International Version, if some of you are reading that, doesn't translate this word *request*. It translates it *pray*. I think that's a wrong translation. I don't think he's saying, 'Don't pray for these people.' The word *request*, as it's translated in the New American Standard Bible, means *request information*. And so it's different from the word *ask* in verse 14, '...if we *ask* anything according to His will...', that's the *asking* of prayer, the *asking* of petition to God. This word *request*, "I do not say that he should *make request* for this" means to, 'seek information about the sin.'

To make the point maybe a little more concretely, to give some evidence of it, we see this demonstrated, (the difference in these two words and the meaning of them), where they're used together in John 16 in verse 23: Where *ask* and *request*, as I say, are used together; and Jesus is using them. He speaks to His disciples, and He says, "In that day," (that is, in the future), "you will not *question* me about anything." He would be leaving them; they would no longer have an opportunity for question and answers from Him. They "will not *question*" Him "about anything", He says. That's the word here translated *request*.

But then Jesus says, "Truly, truly I say to you, if you *ask* the Father for anything in My name," (meaning pray to Him, petition Him), "He will give it to you." (vs23b). So in that passage, in John 16:23, those two words that are used here in this passage, are used together, and they mean '*ask questions*' on the one hand, and *praying* on the other.

That's what they mean here. What John is saying is, 'Christians are to pray; you are to pray for sinning saints.' When you see someone in sin, pray for that person. Pray

with confidence that God will answer our prayers. And we can do that, we can have that confidence because in praying for them, we are praying according to God's will. That's what He would have us to do. And He will bless our prayers by giving life to those who sin. He will rescue them.

But not always. Sometimes the saints persist in sin, and they persist in sin unto death. They've gone beyond the help of our prayers.

'Don't try to figure that out', John is saying. 'Don't try to figure it out ahead of time.' John didn't mention a sin unto death in order to give us some kind of standard for examining people in order to decide if we should or should not pray for them. Pray for all. Pray for everyone, and leave the outcome to God. If we pray for a sinning saint, we have prayed according to God's will. If he or she dies, it's not due to a failure of our faith or our prayer, but because God overruled our prayers in order to discipline that individual.

So John's words here are a kind of caveat or caution, so that we would be prepared when our prayers didn't gain life for the person for whom we prayed, and not be discouraged in praying, and not be shaken in our assurance. He's saying, these things happen. It's not a sign that God doesn't hear your prayers, or that you're not part of His family. So when you pray, and you see your prayer not answered, it may be that this was something that God was doing; He was disciplining the person. Don't be discouraged in your prayer life.

So, "There is a sin leading to death", (vs16b), and he says, "a sin not *leading* to death." (vs17b). That doesn't mean there are some sins that are serious; and some sins are not serious—that some sins are deadly and some others aren't. All sins are serious, and all sins are poison. All of it is deadly.

And if persisted in, any sin could result in death. Those sins that we saw earlier, from 1 Corinthians and the Book of Acts, are all different kinds of sin. They're not the same kind of sin; they're all different. But they were persisted in, and they brought about this kind of discipline from the LORD. —And that could happen with any sin.

And to make that clear, to make the seriousness of sin clear, John writes in verse 17 that, "All unrighteousness is sin." In other words, all sin violates God's moral standard. So all sin is deadly serious. That should give all of us the incentive to pray for ourselves, continually, and be praying for one another. And further incentive is given in the reminder that, "there is a sin not *leading* to death." Our prayers may be used of God to gain life for the person we are praying for, and rescue that person from a life of shame and pain. God uses prayer to that end.

Now that's the main lesson that John is giving here. Pray for each other, pray earnestly and confidently, and don't quit. We need it desperately. We all need to be prayer warriors. It has been said that Satan trembles when he sees the weakest saint upon his knees, so he tries to keep us off our knees. He tries to do that in a variety of ways by entangling us in a sin or entangling us in the stuff of this world; just the details of life, all kinds of distractions around us. Or he does that by afflicting us with doubt. That's a fiery dart of the evil one, to plant a seed of doubt in a person's mind about whether he or she is saved.

A doubting Christian is a confused Christian, and an ineffective Christian, a non-praying Christian. So John wrote this letter to give his friends, to give us, to give saints down through the ages assurance that we who believe in Jesus Christ as God's Son and our Savior, would know that we, in fact, do have eternal life, and should therefore actively live that life and live it confidently.

So when we doubt we should test ourselves with the tests that John gives us; the tests of faith, 'Do we believe the Gospel?' The test of obedience, 'Do we seek to obey God's Word?' And the test of love, 'Do we love God's people?' We sometimes hear a warning against that, a warning that we shouldn't be 'fruit inspectors'; and there is something to that. I would agree, there's something to that. We need to be careful

about judging other people. We don't know a person's heart. We can't see in it. Only God can do that, and that's for Him.

But it's surely right to test teachers by the Word of God to insure that their instruction is sound, and that they are sound. And there's nothing wrong with examining ourselves. Not me examining you but me examining myself. Examining ourselves according to the standards that John gives. That, I think, is apostolic. Paul told the Corinthians, "Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith." (2 Cor 13:5). Peter wrote that we be "diligent to make certain about God's calling and choosing of us." (2 Pet 1:10).

Where there is life there will be fruit. Jesus said, "You will know them by their fruits." (Mat 7:16). You'll know a bad tree by bad fruit. You'll know a good tree by good fruit. And there is fruit that comes naturally from the regenerated live, the new life that we have in Christ.

There is faith. Not perfect faith, not all-knowing faith, but there's faith in the truth.

There's obedience. Not perfect obedience, but certainly that's the trend of the life, and that's the desire of a person's life.

And there's love. We love the brethren. Not perfectly, again. But we love the brethren.

And I'd add to that there's prayer. There's fellowship with the Lord. That is eternal life, fellowship with God. It is in prayer of praise and thanksgiving. That fellowship is in prayer of petition for ourselves; that fellowship is in intercessory prayer for one another, prayer for the body of Christ, for fellow believers. That's love for the brethren. It's a great ministry. May God help us each to take it very seriously and practice it, to be prayer warriors. We need it. Sin is dangerous. It's unto death.

If you've never believed in Christ, you are in danger of death. We all die physically, and you will too. But you are presently living in death. You're living in spiritual death, and that death is eternal. It never ends. It's forever. The only way to avoid that and gain life is through faith in Jesus Christ, faith in Jesus Christ as God's eternal Son,

who became a man in order to die in the place of sinners, to pay for their salvation, to ransom them from death and destruction.

So believe in Him, trust in Him. Those who do are received by Him immediately and forever—and live forever. May God help you to do that. Come to Him.

And you who have believed, rejoice in the Lord Jesus Christ, and all you have for Him. Let's pray.

Father, we do thank You that You give healing, You give grace. It's all from You. We give You praise and thanks for that. Thank You for Your Son, our Redeemer, for all that He's done for us, the salvation He's obtained that can never be taken away. May we live in that and progress in it. Help us to mature in Christ and live what He promised to give us, which is the abundant life. We'll do that by Your grace. We thank You for that, in Christ's name. Amen.

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