

Imposters

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Bible Text: 2 John 7-13
Preached on: Wednesday, January 26, 2011

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I would like to invite you to look in your Bibles to 2 John and verses seven through 13.

We touched on a part of this last time and I want to come back to it and, Lord willing, finish up this second epistle and talk to you about imposters. What is it to be an imposter? And how are they identified as far as the gospel is concerned?

You know, I think we assume that the world is getting worse and that today we have more out in the world that are preaching a false gospel than ever before. And yet when we read what John says here in verse seven, “For many deceivers are entered into the world.”¹ Not shall enter, but are entered.

You know, it is a little bit like Noah’s ark. We assume that when the Lord destroyed the world and preserved these eight in the ark that when they came out it would be a perfect world. Well, guess what? It didn’t take long even for Noah to fall. And it is a reminder that sin is within us, that we are born in darkness. Unless the Lord gives light, men will remain in that darkness. And that darkness is manifest throughout Christendom, throughout religion among people that talk about Christ and talk about salvation and yet are but imposters.

The reason I brought up Noah is because I believe that many think that, ok, when Christ died it reset the clock. And so from the cross forward the Church would remain pure. But our Lord himself showed us that even among those that profess Christ there are imposters. There are sons of perdition. And Judas himself being an example.

So the deceivers have always been and they have always been among the wheat. That is why the Lord said there in Matthew chapter 13 when the disciples came and said, “Well, the enemy has sown tares among the wheat, shall we go pull up the tares?” The Lord said, “No, let them alone,” because he has purposed that they grow together. It is the Lord’s to divide.

John the Baptist preached that, that the Lord was coming with a fan, a winnow in his hand, that he would divide the wheat from the chaff. Ours is not to try to figure out not

¹ 2 John 7.

the service who is and who isn't. And we have often spoken of Paul himself being an example. For a while he appeared to be a tare. He appeared to be a reprobate. He appeared to be one cast off. And yet to everybody's amazement he was actually one of the Lord's and it had not yet been revealed that he was.

And so my purpose in this message is not to cause us to look around, but rather by God's grace to look within. You know, am I the Lord's or am I not? Paul wrote to the Corinthians in his second letter in chapter 13 verse five, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith."²

And particularly here with regard to preachers he gives us this warning that many deceivers are entered in the world. Those deceivers could be preachers. But they could be professors of religion as well, ones that have made profession and go out into the world testifying based on their profession. And yet it is a false profession.

The Lord had to show me that I was one of those from the age of 17 or actually 15 all the way to age 30 approximately for 15 years. I witnessed. I testified. I went to school and studied how to preach. And yet did not know the Lord. And when the Lord opens your eyes, it causes you to see that I am that deceiver and have been. The Lord brings you low and it makes you realize that but for his grace, but for him giving light, but for his Spirit teaching this poor sinner's heart, I would go the way of all these others.

So John tenderly here warns the Lord's people, again, the elect lady who we see and, understand as being his true Church to beware, "For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. Look to yourselves."³

There it is, see? All the while we are thinking, well, let's look around. No, look within.

"Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward."⁴

So what is John talking about when he says that we lose not those thing which we have wrought? Well, he is talking about the wood, hay and stubble. He is saying all the while that there are these deceivers in the world and many that perhaps may be among you don't you be deceived. May the Lord grant you a discerning ear and to speak up whenever something doesn't sound right to say something. Don't be silent. Don't be led away yourselves.

I fear that in many Fundamentalist circles or even in Baptist denominations and others there is this notion that you never say anything to the preacher that, ooh, that is the Lord's anointed because they have set themselves up to be that. But John here is warning that we be not deceived, that we not just follow a man because he says he is a preacher, not

² 2 Corinthians 13:5.

³ 2 John 7-8.

⁴ 2 John 8.

follow a man just because he puts reverend in front of his name which is an abominable thing anyway, that we not follow a man simply because he has some titles that men respect.

And John says, “Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.”⁵

What he is talking about the full reward is that in the end the gospel that was preached among them, have that fruit in their hearts in that they remain true to the gospel.

I think, again, we falsely assume that because the apostle Paul went about preaching the gospel and the doctrine that those that confessed Christ as a result of his preaching were necessarily saved. That is not the case. Look at the example even of our Lord who is truth and preached. You know, I hear some men talking about the prince of preachers and they refer to a man. The prince of preachers is Christ himself. He is the author of this very Word.

But look at the people that followed him out of false pretense to the point where in John two Christ said he did not commit himself unto them because he knew their heart, he knew who they were.

So let’s not presume that just because a man is preaching the gospel that everybody that goes to hear him and stays with him is necessarily the Lord’s. That is not in any way the case that we find in Scripture. There were many that in time, as we know in John six, as the Lord clearly instructed and talked about his death that he should die and why he had come and that none could come to him except it were given him of the Father that they also went away.

And the Lord in the end looked at the remaining disciples and asked them, “Will ye also go away?”⁶

And Peter, by the Spirit made that confession, “To whom shall we go? Thou art the Christ, the one that has the words of the eternal life.”

So there is a need to be careful. Look to yourselves that we lose not. We being the preacher, lose not those things which we have wrought. In other words, the seed of the gospel sown being then crushed out or snuffed out by the snares of this world, the cares, the thorns, but that we receive a full reward.

The joy of one who preaches the gospel, just like John mentions here concerning this elect lady in verse four, is that... he says, “I found of thy children walking in truth.”⁷

⁵ 2 John 8.

⁶ John 6:67.

⁷ 2 John 4.

That is what brings joy to one that the Lord has raised up to preach the gospel. It is not a salary. It is not a big church building or a huge congregation or, you know, driving the latest car or even having a huge following.

You know, be careful what you ask for. Sometimes you might get a little bit despondent and think, well, we are just meeting in such small numbers. That is fine. You know, everyone is here even now that is supposed to be. And many times people in order to build a larger congregation what they do is go out and use the methods of the world in order to make it bigger. We could do that. I don't think I could in good conscience, but I am just saying it would be possible if that were our goal to fill this building. It wouldn't take four months, four weeks. We could fill it. But in so doing it is like a preacher told me years ago.

He said, "Be careful what you use to bring people in, because whatever you use to bring them in you are going to have to continue to use to keep them in." Entertainment, you notice particularly today the Sunday evening service is... has been idolized as a tradition. I have heard preachers say, "Oh, you can never give up a Sunday evening service."

Well, you think about where Sunday morning service came and where Sunday evening service came. It came from Catholicism which had a morning mass and an evening mass. And so when people left that organization they came over and they just... they continued to pattern it after.

So that tradition has been maintained down through the years. But what do they do on Sunday evening to get people back because it is such a forced format? They have youth programs. They have concerts, take up offerings. You know, that is... I heard one preacher say, "Well, that is the one way that we help pay the bills by the end of the month. We have these singing groups come through and we take up a love offering and we pray the singing group what they need and the rest goes into the coffer to help pay for the big church building that everybody wants.

These are ways that men think and act. And the other blasphemy of it is that they use the name of the Lord to do it. They are those that handle the Word of God deceitfully. And so John says, "Don't you be deceived." That is basically what he is saying, that we lose not that full reward, that joy of seeing you rejoicing as a needy sinner in the message of Christ and him crucified.

Now verse nine.

"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into..."⁸

You see "your" is in italic. "...into the house, neither bid him God speed."⁹

⁸ 2 John 9-10.

⁹ 2 John 10.

Now it is not talking about your personal home, necessarily. You might have relatives and family over that, you know, are tied up in false religion and it is not saying don't you dare let them into your house. But it is talking to those that met in homes. These are churches. These were gatherings of the Lord's people. And even as in our day there were in John's day those that would go around and try to take advantage of these small groups.

Over the 15 years that I have been here in Shreveport and in the years that I preached in Africa there are always these people that come by and think they are going to help you. They assume since you are small you are not doing something right. And so they offer to come in and offer to help build your church. You know, they might be somebody that says, "Look. We can get a whole lot more people attending if someone just started a youth program and my wife and I feel that we are called of the Lord to minister to the youth. So why don't you let us be the youth ministers."

There is people that go around that way and they look for a place. They prey on the Lord's sheep. They don't pray for them. They prey on them. They are looking to bring honor to their own name. And those are the ones that John says, "Don't even receive them. And don't bid them God speed."

In other words, don't help them along the way, because verse 11 says, "For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."¹⁰

"Having many things to write unto you, I would not write with paper and ink: but I trust to come unto you, and speak face to face, that our joy may be full."¹¹

There is the reward. That is what he is talking about up there in verse eight, that when he comes he finds them true to the gospel, rejoicing in it and delighting in the Lord, the Redeemer, the one who paid the debt for his own.

And then he concludes in verse 13, "The children of thy elect sister greet thee. Amen."¹²

There was a sister congregation where he was to whom he was ministering and they send their greetings. And then he concludes with "Amen."

So imposters. The reality is they are all around us, just like today the big thing is identity theft. How do people get their identity stolen? Well, they are not careful. They give away just enough information and someone is there ready to take advantage of it. And if the person being taken advantage of really knew that those imposters knew who they were, they would never give that information.

But they make it look like the real thing. How many have gotten an email that is from their bank and has all the right things on it to make you believe your bank just sends you

¹⁰ 2 John 11.

¹¹ 2 John 12.

¹² 2 John 13.

an email and asks you for some information? And you put it in there and the next thing you know, you are cleaned out. And people's lives are affected. That is just something that is temporal. Imagine in things eternal.

The stealers of men's souls. Those that Christ called thieves and robbers, that don't come through the door, which is Christ, but they climb over the wall. And they come in some other way with some other doctrine in order to steal away those that would be sheep.

We know in the end that there are not any of the Lord's sheep that can ultimately be taken away and deceived. But nonetheless we don't presume that we are one of the Lord's sheep unless we do what is instructed here by John. Look to yourselves.

“Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.”¹³

These are things that we do as we sit and listen to the gospel, as we listen to Christ. You know, I don't believe it is wrong as we hear to weigh this Word in light of what is in our hearts. I can't see what is in your heart, but you know, what is there. And we dare not just put up a fence and think, “Well, I am the Lord's so I don't need to hear that.”

These warnings that are in this Word are for us individually and corporately as a congregation. So first of all, how are these imposters identified?

Well, we saw last time in verse seven they confess not Jesus is come in the flesh. So it has to do with his person and it has to do with his coming. Those two things are so vital as to our salvation. It is in the person of Christ, but they deny Jesus Christ, because they deny, why? He is come in the flesh. They deny that he is come in the flesh. They deny that that man in the flesh is none other than Jesus the Christ.

And so, you know, they deny God himself because God is the one who sent his Son. And why did he send his Son? That whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life, that he should be lifted up and that he should pay the sin debt for those for whom he came and fully accomplish their salvation. So to deny any part of his person, to deny him his glory as God, to deny him his glory as the perfect man... Everybody is talking about finding the perfect man. Well, he has already walked this earth. It is Christ, none other could do.

They deny what his death accomplished. You know, if he came in the flesh there is only one reason he came in the flesh. Blood is poured out of the flesh. God cannot die. So it was necessary that he be a man in that that blood be let, be shed. I know our hymn books talk about it being spillt, but spillt gives the implication that it shouldn't have flowed, but it was purposed to flow.

Just like the Old Testament sacrifices, the bloody sacrifice there was blood all over. And that is why Christ came in the flesh. But these already were denying that Christ was less

¹³ Proverbs 4:23.

than human. In their minds that is why the Pharisees crucified him. How could you be God in the flesh?

Well, the only reason we believe it is because the Spirit has given us eyes to see it. But that is what it is. You know, logically, if you sit down and think about what we are banking our entire eternal destiny upon a man that lived and breathed and walked and died some 2000 years ago that was in a Jewish body of Jewish descent and that we are proclaiming to people today as Gentiles that he is our salvation. I have never met him physically. I base entirely this hope on what is revealed right here in this Word.

Some people look at that and think, boy, that is foolish. You know, you need to add some works of your own. No. It is all based upon what this man, Jesus Christ, the God man did when he came in the flesh.

And so that is an area where we cannot budge.

Now, that is how they are identified. Listen to what men have to say about the Lord Jesus Christ. Listen to what they have to say about the death of Christ.

When you get some of these knocking on your door and they want to talk to you about the future earthly kingdom or, you know, what your view is about marriage or death or hell, in all of that you can just set aside and tell them, first, let me hear what you have to say about the Lord Jesus Christ. Do you believe he is God in the flesh?

You are going to eliminate a bunch of them. You know, do you believe that salvation is entirely accomplished in that work that he finished there at Calvary? Christ plus nothing. You can eliminate another whole group of people.

You know, they will say, "Yes, but you still have to believe."

Well, faith is one of the graces that Christ purchased in his death. And if I believe it is because he paid the debt and he causes me to believe. He causes me to look to him, to run to him. Otherwise I would not. There is no aspect of our salvation that we could ever claim as our own. It is given and it is accomplished through the Lord Jesus Christ.

And so John here speaks of that danger in verse eight. He identifies the imposters in verse seven. He speaks of the danger, not only to the congregation, but to individuals.

When he says, "Look to yourselves..."¹⁴ he was referring to the congregation that was meeting because he describes that there that when he comes he hopes to speak to them face to face, but he is also giving word of warning to individual souls not to look anywhere but to the Lord Jesus Christ alone.

And there is the exhortation to persevere in that faith of Christ until we are made like him. That is the full reward.

¹⁴ 2 John 8.

If you look in Hebrews chapter three, you know it begins in verse one.

“Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.”¹⁵

So that is where we are to look. Then look down to verse six, the exhortation that is given there.

“But Christ...” compared to Moses. Moses failed. He could not lead the children of Israel into the Promised Land. The law cannot give us rest. That is the message.

“But Christ,” verse six, “as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.”¹⁶

Those that persevere unto the end shall be saved. It is not how you begin. It is how you end. I think many times we look at someone how they began. But there are many shooting stars. There are many that seemingly are the Lord’s, but in time are drawn away by these deceivers, by these imposters, by the deception of their own hearts.

It is not a sprint. It is a marathon. You know, if the Lord has taught you however long he gives you to live, you are going to be found in this gospel. You are going to be found drawing in it and abiding in it, in the doctrine of Christ until the end.

No one or nothing is going to be able to dissuade you.

In verse 14, again, compared to the disobedient generation of which the writer writes in verse 12, “Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you...”¹⁷

He is writing to the congregation as a whole here.

“...any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.”¹⁸

So you can’t really just... you can’t blame the imposter. You can’t blame the preacher. It is the hardness of your own heart that causes you follow after such men.

“For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.”¹⁹

¹⁵ Hebrews 3:1.

¹⁶ Hebrews 3:6.

¹⁷ Hebrews 3:12.

¹⁸ Hebrews 3:12-13.

¹⁹ Hebrews 3:14.

The if there is not a condition. But it is an evidence. If you hold fast the beginning of your confidence as was described there in verse one, looking to Christ alone and to his finished work at Calvary, confident, steadfast unto the end, then that is the evidence that you have been made a partaker of Christ.

So that being the case there is never a time that you stop. There is never at time that his heart is ever drawn away. All right?

So that is the danger. It is within us. It is in our heart and it among us. It is around us and how we need the Lord and his grace to continue to teach us.

But, thirdly, coming back to 2 John in verse nine, what is the error? We have talked about the imposters, how they are identified. We have talked about the danger, but what is the error?

Well, verse nine says, “Whoever transgresseth...”

Now that doesn’t mean just any kind of transgression. If that were the case then none could be saved because we are sinners by nature. We sin moment by moment. We are sin. But here in the context he is talking about one who transgresses with regard to the Word of Christ, the doctrine of Christ, transgresses with regard to the gospel of Christ, denies the very doctrine that gives Christ all the glory.

“Whoever transgresseth...”

And the word “and” could be translated “even.”

“...abideth not in the doctrine of Christ.”²⁰

Notice it is not even saying, “abideth not in the doctrines of grace.” See, as I came in contact with people that held to the doctrines of grace, that became a standard. This is even before the Lord opened my eyes to show me that I was lost. I embraced the doctrines and I would endeavor to incorporate them in my preaching until the Lord was pleased to open my eyes and my heart to see it is not the doctrines of grace, it is the doctrine of Christ.

You say, “What is the difference?”

Well, you can believe in total depravity without ever seeing your own depravity. You can believe in unconditional election. But what is unconditional election other than God the Father in mercy and grace from eternity choosing out a worthless lot of people, guilty, lost, condemned, and giving them to his Son, putting them in his Son’s hand as their surety.

²⁰ 2 John 9.

You can believe in limited atonement. That is the L of the TULIP. But it is one thing to argue, you know, tooth and nail that Christ didn't die for everybody, he just died for his elect, without ever seeing that when Christ died it was for sinners that the Father had given him. It has to do, the doctrine of Christ has to do with who died and what his death accomplished and why he did it. None of us merit it. And I believe as Christ is revealed, as we see that doctrine that gives him all the glory, there is that humbling in our heart that even to argue about it with people that want to argue is to take something precious and to cast it before swines.

You know, I am speaking by experience. Before the Lord opened my eyes I was ready to fight and argue with anybody over these doctrines. But today when people begin to argue with me about it, you know, it causes me to kind of recoil, go back in within myself and to realize that were it not that the Spirit of God had showed me the particularness of Christ the Redeemer, the particularness of his death, I would be just like that person arguing. You know?

And the best advice I know to give is how did the Lord open your eyes? Wasn't it through the Word? You know, wasn't it through this Word and the Spirit? Commend them to the Word. Go back and read what Ephesians one says. Go back and read John 17. Go back and read Isaiah 53. And ask the Lord to open your eyes. That is the best advice you can give to a blind sinner.

And if the Lord is pleased to teach him, he will.

But that is where your whole view of Scriptures changes. And I remember being like a hungry baby, thirsty for the milk of the Word, going back even though I had had all this education and degrees, but go back and just read just like a new born babe desires the sincere milk of the Word. Go back and read to find Christ. Because the doctrine of Christ is everything that God has to say about his Son and it is revealed right here. It doesn't have a title called Calvinism. It doesn't have a title called grace. It has a title called Christ. And, you know, it behooves us to search the Scriptures whether these things be so.

You know, when Peter was questioned or all the disciples were questioned by our Lord, but Peter answered when Christ said, "Some say... who do men say that I am?"

And everybody had a viewpoint. He said, "Who do you say that I am?"

"Thou art the Christ."²¹

There is the doctrine. "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."²²

And what did the Lord tell him?

²¹ Matthew 16:16; Mark 8:29.

²² Matthew 16:16.

“Flesh and blood haven’t revealed this to you, Peter, but my Father which is in heaven.”

And so the doctrine of Christ that concerns his person as the Son of God but has to do with his offices as the Mediator, as the Surety, as the Prophet, Priest, King, everyone of those is symbolic of his character. It has to do with his redemptive work. See, it is about his obedience. When you know something about your own nature, you are not interested in hearing someone’s testimony about their obedience.

When I hear the passage in Genesis 22 I want to hear of Christ preached from that passage. And when Abraham was told to go up and offer his son, it... in the heart and mind of a regenerate sinner automatically you are thinking forward to Christ. But how many preachers will just.... they are going to preach about Abraham’s obedience and how he was faithful and how for that reason, you know, God blessed him.

No, it is not our obedience. It is Christ. It is not our suffering. It is Christ. It is not how we die. It is how he died. It is not how we are going to raise. It is the fact that he raised from the dead.

If he raised from the dead, we were raised in him. I am not worried about the details of how this can be and dissecting and figuring it out, you know.

His ascension. When he ascended we ascended. When he was glorified, we were glorified. That is the doctrine of Christ. Every bit of salvation is tied up in him.

One final point that I bring out here is the warning that we have in verse 10.

We saw the danger, but, again, John gives a warning.

“ If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine...”²³

You know, what say ye of Christ?

“...this doctrine, receive him not into your house.”²⁴

In other words, if there comes to your congregation... Again, they met in homes. But under the character of a preacher or a teacher of some religious leader and today they don’t even have to be physically present. We have... you know, I have run into some that I have asked them, “Well, what are you, you know, what do you do during your worship service?”

These are congregations that would profess to believe in the doctrines of grace. And I remember asking a friend of mine one time up in Michigan, “What are you doing? What are you preaching on?”

²³ 2 John 10.

²⁴ Ibid.

And he told me, “Well, I am not really preaching right now. We are going through a series of videos by R C Sproul on the pursuit of holiness. And so we sit and watch a video.” You know?

I talked to another that said, “Well, we are a little concerned about our families in the congregation so we are going to through a series of teachings by Jim Dodson on families and how they are supposed to, you know, how you are supposed to live, how the husband is supposed to love his wife, how the wife is supposed to be submitted to the husband.”

These are ways today that you can bring in imposters, you know, over the internet or whatever it is, just as easily as letting somebody come into your pulpit. These are things that all need to be weighed prayerfully and that is what John is saying. If they come who does not preach this doctrine and if a man doesn't preach it, that means he denies it. That means that he despises it. Not to preach it, to allow such a one to even have a place, I can't tell you how many times I have had people call me or write me, email me offering to come by here and preach. You know, some so-called missionary. They have a work. They want to be able to present it to this congregation.

I have always responded back, “I don't let just anybody preach here. You know, what is your view of Christ? How is it that you would in coming even set him forth?”

I am talking about, you know, organizations even here in town that are... you look at them and you think, well, these are good works to support because they help the needy. They, you know, they are helping abused children or abused women. And so give us just... give us a Sunday morning to come in and present.

It makes you look like you are a mean spirited person because you tell them no. You know? And the reason is that is not the purpose for our gathering together. We need to hear Christ and we need to hear of his glory and of his person. And to entertain any other person than one who is going to come and exalt the Lord Jesus Christ, that is what it is, entertainment. But that is not why we gather. It is to worship.

And that is why John very pointedly says, “Don't receive them. Neither bid him Godspeed.”

Don't even give him the normal greeting that you would when you say good bye to somebody and say, “Good day,” or “God bless you.”

How flippantly that particular phrase is used. You know, “God bless you.”

Who does God bless but those who are in his Son? They are blessed indeed. But apart from that there is no blessing. And so, again, it takes strength. It takes courage. It doesn't mean you have to be mean about it, but it takes firmness.

You know, that is one of the reasons, quite honestly, why at the end of a service I don't go to the back and shake people's hands. I don't want them to have to feel like they have to tell me that was a great message when in reality when they go out that door they may hate it. But people put on a smile and say, "You know, enjoyed that message, preacher."

I don't want to put them in the position to have to lie. Now I appreciate it when different ones of you come up and we have discussed the message and you are thankful for it and that is a different spirit, but the focus is on Christ, not on me. It is on the Word that was preached and not on the preacher. But men love to be, as we saw in Matthew 23 in our reading, they love to stand in the streets and be heard and seen and have people call them rabbi and master. That is why the Lord said, "Don't call them master. Don't call them rabbi."

You know, don't accept the title reverend. I have had people do that and I will just kindly tell them, "I appreciate it if you wouldn't refer to me that way, because there is only one reverend and that is the Lord Jesus Christ. He is to be revered. He is to be honored. He is to be glorified."

And so you can see the conclusion.

"Having many things to write unto you, I would not write with paper and ink: but I trust to come unto you, and speak face to face, that our joy may be full."²⁵

There is a oneness with those that are taught of the Lord, you know, as you meet together. They might be complete strangers initially, but as you sit down and start talking about how the Lord has taught you. Those that I have the greatest fellowship with are those that love to speak of the Lord, speak of Christ.

Don't ask about the work. You know, people say, "Well, how is the church doing?"

Well, you know, it is 70 feet long maybe and 30 feet wide. I don't know. You know that is what most people think of when they talk about a church, building, numbers. But the Church is the redeemed. It is those that the Lord has been pleased to redeem in his death and in time by his Spirit to draw unto himself.

And therein is our fellowship. If you go back to the first epistle of John chapter one, when he wrote this in verses one through four it ends the same as what we have here, "that our joy may be full."

But he says, "That which was from the beginning..."²⁶ And that could be translated, "The one who was from the beginning."

²⁵ 2 John 12.

²⁶ 1 John 1:1.

“[Whom] we have heard, [whom] we have seen with our eyes, [whom] we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it.”²⁷

We have seen him.

“...and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) That which we have seen [or the one whom we have seen] and heard declare we unto you.”²⁸

There is the doctrine of Christ.

“...that ye also may have fellowship with us.”²⁹

If it is not in Christ there is no fellowship.

“And truly our fellowship is with the Father.”³⁰

And there is the word “and” again.

“[Even] with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.”³¹

All right.

²⁷ 1 John 1:1-2.

²⁸ 1 John 1:2-3.

²⁹ 1 John 1:3.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ 1 John 1:3-4.