

# 1 JOHN



Day 334

## “God’s Emergency Room”

November 30 - 1 John 1:1-2:11

**G**ood Day,  
Have you ever been in a car accident? Years ago I was stopped at a light when I heard a loud screech from behind, the slamming and locking of breaks, and then—bang, crunch!—I was rear ended, and my VW van was totaled. My passenger and I weren’t hurt, but it was very upsetting.

Some accidents happen to us and others are our fault. In some we are the only ones hurt, in others we impact someone else. Accidents happen. All of us hope our insurance will be sufficient to cover whatever problems arise. Sometimes that’s true and other times it isn’t. No matter what the accident entails, it makes us feel crummy. We are left to deal with tough emotions. We feel hurt, frustrated, fearful. We sometimes want to point fingers and assign blame in an attempt to lessen the burden we feel.

If you are like me, you usually avoid going to the emergency room at all costs. For some it’s because of the money. Recently a family member of mine had a bad fall. He thinks he may have even broken a bone. When he went to the emergency room they would not accept his insurance for some reason, so he chose to not accept treatment. As his pain mounted he had second thoughts, however. I think some people are a bit embarrassed to be in the emergency room. I once saw someone come in who had glued his own eye shut with Super Glue. They see it all in the ER.

Whether we injure ourselves or others, physically or morally, from time to time we all need to check in at God’s Emergency Department (G.E.D.). We probably

need to check-in more than we do. The Great Physician will be there to help us with some of the most upsetting dilemmas in our life. You might be wondering what it’s like in the GED. What do you need to do? What will the Doctor do for you?

First of all, we need to meet the Doctor. When you go to a hospital emergency department you usually get whichever doctor is on duty at the time. That’s not the way it works with God’s E.D. There, you will meet not an angel or a saint, but Jesus Himself. John makes it clear at the beginning of this short letter that Jesus himself is the one who came to give life. “In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.” As we read previously in John’s gospel: “But as many as received Him (Jesus) to them He gave the authority to become sons of God, even to as many as believed in His name,” (1:12). Do you believe in Jesus? Have you received the gift of salvation by asking God to forgive your sins and be the Leader of your life? If so, you have met the standards to come to G.E.D. Your card is current.

Now you can come. No appointment necessary. Jesus makes house calls or office calls or will meet you in your car or anywhere else you may be. The next thing to do is be completely honest with Him about what you have done. How did you get yourself into this mess? What was the root cause of the problem? Talk to Him about it. Don’t leave out any details. John says, “Confess your sins.” Confess means to agree with God’s Word that what you have done is wrong or sinful. Jesus knows the sincerity of your confession. As we all know, some confess their wrongs to merely

get off the hook. Jesus wants us to be truthful, so that we can replace that sin with God's antidote and keep from repeating it over and over.

At this point Jesus faithfully takes your sin and cleanses you from all sin. You are now in the light, forgiven, cleansed, walking in truth. But that's not all.

A good doctor always gives us the advice we need in order to stay healthy. He may say that we need to eliminate some stress in our life by eating better and exercising. He may put us on some medication in order to make sure the infection we have doesn't spread.

Well, the Great Physician gives us His word so that we will know the next step. We may need to spend some time in the hospital recovering. There, nurses will follow the doctor's orders regarding our health. We may need an infusion, or we may need to

have physical therapy. Think of the nurses as the Holy Spirit, Who comes into our lives to make us more like Jesus, to practice the life patterns of Jesus and to walk with Jesus from day to day.

No one is without sin. If you say that, John says you are lying. It's those of us who visit G.E.D. who know what it is like to continually walk in the light.

How about you, do you need a lift to the hospital? We all do.

John wrote these things so that we would see the negative impact of sin on our lives and be more interested in walking in the light. But he was also realistic when he said, "But if anyone sins..." (2:1ff.).

See you in G.E.D.,  
God's blessings bring true spiritual healing,  
Pastor Steve



Day 335

## "Temporarily Out Of Order"

December 1 - 1 John 2: 12 - 27

**L**ife goes by so fast. Before you know it we won't be here. Someone will, but it won't be us. Even if you have 60 years to go, before you know it you'll be at the 59-year mark. My grandma lived to be 92. To her, her life was like a vapor. Eighty-seven may sound old to you, but talk to someone who is 86 and in pretty good health and they'll tell you that 87 ain't that old. Time flies.

Bottom line: this world is only temporary. The Bible says that some day God will fold it up like an old coat or scroll. One day there will be new heavens and a new earth; the former things will pass away. So what is the benefit to dwelling on the present when it is just going to disappear? It would be like buying 8-track tapes at a garage sale. What are you going to do with them? They are obsolete. Remember when you first heard the Partridge Family album? You were

overjoyed that you could bring them into your home. Now you would be embarrassed if anyone found out you once liked them. Everything passes away. Well, not everything; John says that the person who does the will of God will last forever.

Because of the temporary nature of this world, John tells us not to love it. The world system (John does not have in mind the beautiful aspects of creation) won't last, so don't put your stock in it. It will deceive you into thinking that good times will go on and on, but they never do. Life will run out soon enough and then God will wrap things up once and for all. Those who hang on to this world end up being frustrated by all of the disorderliness of it. This world has a great big "Out of Order" sign hanging between North America and Europe and another one on the other side of the globe. If you buy into this world you

will go belly up.

All that is in the world that really tantalizes us will be so fleeting in the end.

"The Lust of the flesh." All of the pleasures of the flesh remind us that we've got to have more. Lust never satisfies, but makes us thirsty for "some more of that." Sometimes I think of the relationship of Joe DiMaggio and Marilyn Monroe, which ended in divorce not long after they married. She said of him that he was built like Michelangelo's David and, of course, she was like a goddess. You would think that would be sufficient, but it wasn't. He just couldn't accept the sex appeal of her image and the kind of schedule a movie star kept.

"The lust of the eyes." The eyes are never satisfied. They always want more. They look and envy others who have what they want. They stare until they get what they want and then when they have it, they are off looking at someone or something else. Jesus said, "The light of the body is the eye: if therefore your eye be single, your whole body shall be full of light. But if your eye is evil, your whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!" (Matthew 6:22,23). It is not a coincidence that the very next verse in Matthew's gospel talks about money. Jesus says that money will oftentimes come between a person and the Lord. If we turn our eyes to the Lord, we will be full of light. If we turn our eyes on the sinful pleasures in this world we will be shrouded in darkness, a very great darkness indeed.

"The boastful pride of life." Man thirsts for godhood. He wants to be king of the hill. He wants autonomy. Man competes with God for first place. Once a person experiences independence and/or wealth and/or popularity and/or acclaim, he will be tempted to worship at the altar of ego and give his devotion to himself. Man may feel like a god for a moment, but in the end, like Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel's day, he will be humbled. God is able to humble those who walk in pride.

This verse in John echoes what is written in Genesis when the woman was tempted to eat the forbidden fruit. "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food (like the lust of the flesh), and that it was pleasant to the eyes (like the lust of the eyes), and a tree to be desired to make one wise (like the boastful pride of life)...she took...and ate...he did eat," (Genesis 3:6). The devil's temptations are no different today. He still pulls us to things that are going to bring us down.

Are you putting too much stock in the temporary things?

Do you need to do a spiritual inventory, adding some lasting things and taking some of the worldly things off of the shelf?

The things of this world will pass away, but God's things will last forever. Let's take in God's things and give them out to the thirsty ones around us. "The Lord is my Shepherd, I have everything I need."

God's blessings are not temporary,  
Pastor Steve



Day 336

## "KISS"

December 2 - 1 John 2:28- 3:10

**T**he Spirit Takes You On His Wings Today,  
God is always at work in His true children.  
He has taken up residence in them and leads

them from the inside out. They walk in the light by their ongoing confession of sins, and the result is continuous cleansing by the blood of Jesus. Both

God's indwelling and the work of His Word and Spirit guarantee that you will not walk in sin. John is clear that those who continue to walk in sin are actually children of the devil.

There have been a few times over the years of my Christian life when I wanted God to leave me alone. Disappointment with my circumstances was eating away at my faith. I, like many others, struggled with why God was allowing me to go through such tough things. I remember wishing that God would just leave me be. I was tired of trying to figure out how He fit in my world. But you know what? That very night I found myself talking to Him like a little kid would talk to his daddy. I couldn't help it. I needed to talk to Him and give Him my pain. I felt alone much of the time during those days, but I did sense that God was with me when I came to Him in my feeble way.

The Spirit moved me even when I was the guest of honor at my own pity party. Part of me was tired and upset at all of the confusion around me, and the other part of me—the God-centered, Spirit-filled part—was there to guide me when I was unable to make a way on my own. It is like the instruction Jesus gave to Peter, James and John in the garden in the wee hours of the crucifixion day. Jesus told them to pray, because the flesh was weak even though the spirit was willing. Despite these words, the blurry-eyed apostles could barely stay awake. They wanted to be there for the Lord in His hour of trial, but they were too fatigued to keep going.

Jesus came to take care of the "strong man," the devil. The devil is busy tearing down anyone and everyone for his own pleasure. Jesus was revealed to destroy the devil's works. He takes what is broken down and bedeviled and makes something beautiful out of it. God plants His seed, which is a picture of His word, in each believer. This seed begins to grow so that the believer desires to flee sin or confess that he has sinned. Let's look at some very helpful parallel verses:

"Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart. For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. For, 'All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field, the grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of the Lord endures forever.' And this is the word that was preached to you", (1 Peter 1: 22-25).

"Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you," (James 1:21).

"I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts" (Hebrews 8:10).

The Word of the Lord is a powerful force in the life of the believer. It insulates us from the devil and it keeps us from walking in sin. John says that no one who is born of God walks in sin. He cannot, because of the powerful influence of the Word in his heart. Psalms says that the Word of God in a person's heart guarantees that his steps will not slide (Psalm 37:31). Remember that Jesus used the Words of God when he was doing battle with the devil in the wilderness.

John is very simplistic. If you do right you are of God; if you don't, you are not of God. If you walk in sin, you are in Satan's camp. If you do righteousness, you are in God's camp. No one who is born of God can stand to continue in sin because the Spirit in him will prompt him to make it right. He will confess it to God, find forgiveness, and seek to repent by learning what the Bible says about finding freedom from his sin.

Have you been telling God to leave you alone lately? Have a talk with Him before you hit the hay. He is there and He will guide you to do the right thing. KISS = Keep it simple saints.

God's blessings overcome the devil and give you spiritual confidence,

Pastor Steve



## "Oh, My Conscience"

December 3 - 1 John 3:11 - 4:6

The weeping prophet, Jeremiah, had much to say about the human condition. God had called him to go right up to the most public place in Jerusalem and proclaim the Word of the Lord. In an often-quoted verse the sage says, "The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?" (17:9). Let's face it: sometimes we do not have the ability to make heads or tails out of the condition or direction of our hearts.

I would liken the conscience to the transmission of a car. As the transmission takes the power of the motor and gears the vehicle forward or backward, so the conscience takes the energy of the heart and gears it in either a positive or negative direction. The conscience is the mechanism in us that is sensitive to right and wrong behavior. If your conscience is malfunctioning, then you will feel stuck, unable to go anywhere, even if your motor has all of the power it needs to perform. Our conscience is tricky and needs to be well tuned in order to work in sync with our heart.

Some people live their lives in first gear because they have never been able to conquer the high demands of their own conscience. Our consciences have been developed in us from the time we were born. All of the stimuli in our lives, whether good or bad, have had an impact on how our conscience is developed. Some people's consciences are so sensitive that they are always feeling guilty, even for things they have not done.

On the other hand, there are those who have a seared conscience. Paul talked to Timothy about these folks in his first pastoral letter to him: "The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron," (4:1-2). The conscience can be so hardened

or calloused that it is unable to respond to what is good and sound.

The conscience can work overtime when a person has unresolved conflict in his life. That's why it is tough for feuding couples to live in the same home. Their consciences become like targets, and the verbal zingers their spouse gives them from day to day penetrate like darts, causing a world of discomfort. Unless the conscience is cleared, the couple will probably end up in divorce court. There is only so much one conscience can take before it feels like it will explode. The Apostle John talks about the conscience condemning us. Who cannot relate to that?

Think back to Hebrews, where there was a key verse about our conscience: "Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened to us through the curtain, that is, His body, and since we have a great high priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water," (10:19-20). There is hope for the conscience, because once it is cleansed it can operate in a more fluid and efficient way.

A bad conscience is equated with bad behavior. A good, clean conscience is equated with good behavior. This is similar to what Jesus said about a good and bad tree; the fruit of the tree is determined by the condition of the tree. If the tree is healthy then the fruit will be good; if the tree is unhealthy then the fruit will correspond.

A story I have already shared bears repeating: When we moved into our home several years ago we had a pine tree in our backyard. It was a beautiful and stately tree in my estimation, because of its lush green color and huge size; it was probably 60 or 70 feet tall. My wife didn't like the tree because it blocked what

little sun we get in Oregon, and she wanted to have the tree removed. I refused. Then the needles began to brown and die and fall off the big tree. When we had the tree uprooted and taken away, the excavator showed me that the tree was rotten from the base up about twelve feet. My wife was vindicated and I was glad the tree came out before a wind storm landed it on our roof. After all, at its core it was a bad tree.

John's advice about the conscience is so helpful. Follow me as I sum it up like this:

The person who is walking in the light and loving his brother and doing good things for others has no reason to let an overly sensitive conscience bother him. Why? Because God knows the truth about us. He knows whether we have a cleansed heart and conscience. So if our heart condemns us He is much

greater than our heart and knows all things. He knows the truth about us and does not Himself condemn us. I think John would emphasize that if you are struggling with conscience, try showing your love with your actions rather than talking about how you love others. When you combine this with the truth about what God has done for us in Christ, and our ministry to others, you will develop a conscience that is healthy and constantly experiencing the cleansing promised in the Word.

How is your conscience today? Do you need cleansing? Are you focused on things that are disrupting your inner wellbeing? Go in today for a transmission service. God has the Midas touch.

God's blessings clear the conscience,  
Pastor Steve

knew love. That is why he could write so fluidly about love.

He says, "This is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins." Love is not to be measured by human means. So often this is the way we define love and the result is a watered-down feeling that will not last. This can be very detrimental when one person compares his love with another's. You can quickly get disillusioned when you believe your friend is loved more than you. When we measure ourselves against others we will end up playing the fool. On the other hand, when we measure our love by God's love, we will be satisfied. We will always have the love of God.

"Dear friends, since God loved us, we also ought to love one another." John's reasoning is not complicated. God's love for us motivates us. It is not there to just make us feel good. It is there to motivate us

to love others. Like my friend, if you struggle to care about and love others, you can begin to love people because you yourself are loved by God. Do you want a reason to make a change in the love department? Consider the love of God. Look at the cross and see the love God has for you. Then see others in the light of that kind of love. It is sacrificial, messy, down-and-dirty love.

When you love others in Jesus, people will see God in that love. Do you want your life to count for the long haul? Do you want your tombstone to talk about love someday? God will be visible in you if you His love work in you towards others.

Friends, let us love one another.  
God's blessings are full of His love,  
Pastor Steve



## "Motivation To Love"

December 4 - 1 John 4: 7 - 21

Recently I heard a friend say that she loved people now, comparing her present state of mind to a time in her life when she could take 'em or leave 'em. God had taught her to love people. I had an uncle who said that love was what made the world go around. I'm not sure about that, but I do know that love is the single greatest motivator in our lives.

Things that we love can take charge of our lives. Consider a typical teenage love story. A lethargic, unmotivated and lazy young man can suddenly leap buildings at a single bound in order to impress the love of his life. A well-meaning parent may tell him that he's going through a phase and will be over it soon, but he scoffs at the thought. He thinks his parents just do not understand the depth of his devotion. He would walk across hot coals and swim the English Channel for the love of this young lady. I admit that this was my story when I was 13 or 14 but I probably

never acknowledged that my folks were right in the end. What kid does?

The Apostle John knew something about love. He was very close to Jesus. Among the 12 disciples, he was included in the inner three who were able to spend more special time with the Savior. He was leaning on Jesus' chest at the last supper, and he was one of the first to the empty tomb. Jesus entrusted Mary to him while suffering on the cross. John was particularly near to Jesus.

Well, love begets love. A loved person loves. Love motivates and spreads to others. John was the "Love Apostle." When you read his gospel, you see that he wrote to emphasize the Lord's deity. John was in love with God, because he was able to touch God in the flesh. John then took his experience with Jesus and spread it to all of us through his inspired writings. He is the authority on the subject of love because he



## "Welcome To The Candy Store"

December 5 - 1 John 5:1-21

What my dad called the liquor store, my friends and I called the candy store. You could buy both there. The man who owned the business was a big hulk of a guy we called Mac. My dad was known as Mac too, so when they saw one another they exchanged Mac greetings. "Hey Mac, how's it going?" the owner would say. Then my dad would shoot back, "Good Mac, how's it going your way?" Macs have a bond; that's just the way it is.

One of our favorite pastimes as a kid was exchanging Pepsi bottles for cash and using the money to buy our favorite candy. Mac had it all—Abba Zab-bas, cigarette candies (we loved to pretend we were smoking those), Big Hunks, Sugar Daddies, licorice (my personal addiction), jujubes, candy necklaces, Good and Plenty, Sugar Babies, Sour Tarts, and a hundred

others I have forgotten about. You could even buy bubble gum in a little treasure bag and the gum looked like gold nuggets. Does anyone remember those?

Some sections of Scripture are like a spiritual candy store, and 1 John 5 is one of them. Let's try a bit of it on for size. Caution: If you don't exercise it, it is so sweet you are bound to get spiritually fat and lethargic. So take it and eat it and believe in it and do it, and you will find spiritual strength for the day.

John says if you love and believe in God, then you will love Jesus and want to do what He says. Interestingly enough, John says that the Lord's commands are not a bother. Have you found that to be true? Have you, like Job and Jeremiah and Jesus, found that the words of God are a delight and not a burden? Jesus

# 2 & 3 JOHN



## “Postcards To Those We Love”

December 6 and 7 - 2 and 3 John

said, “Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” Jesus didn’t come to condemn us but to save us and to build us up in Him. When we take in the Word we will have the spiritual energy to do His will.

Do you want to do His will? John says that this is an indication that you have been born of God. On the other hand, are you the type of person who is always weighed down by the law? Do you often feel guilty and unable to measure up to God’s standard? Then you may not have been born of God yet. Those who are God’s children find encouragement in His Word.

Are you an overcomer? This is another indication of faith. Most people do not feel like overcomers. They feel like they might just squeak by if they are lucky. That was not John’s attitude. John so identified with Jesus that he knew he shared the Lord’s victory. Have you ever felt like you shared in someone else’s victory? Maybe this happened on a sports team or in a drama production or on a project. When paramedics come to the scene of an accident, their objective is to help the victim. It doesn’t matter who gives CPR, there is a shared relief and sense of accomplishment when someone is helped back from the brink of death because the entire team was there.

John says that faith in Jesus overcomes the world. Is the world getting you down for one reason or another? Take the time to acknowledge that Jesus has overcome what troubles you. Jesus said, “In the world you will have trouble but be of good cheer, I have

overcome the world,” (John 16:33). In God’s family, every single individual who has faith in Jesus is an overcomer. Remember reading in Daniel, “...but those who know their God will be strong and do exploits,” (Daniel 11:32, KJV). Faith in Jesus goes a long way.

If you have the Son of God, then you have “a testimony in your heart” and you have “life.” John says, “And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life” (5:12). What a gift: eternal life! Have you received that gift? God offers it to you. All you have to do is take it and enjoy. Paul said, “...the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord,” (Romans 6:23).

Based on all of these truths, John says that it is his desire for his readers to have the assurance that we have eternal life. Not “maybe” or “I hope so,” but “so that you may know.” Amazingly, a person who has tried all his life to keep some imagined standard to feel blameless or worthy only needs to receive God’s free gift of salvation, and he will know the assurance that gift brings.

There is still more in the back of the candy store. But I think you’ve digested enough calories for one setting. Once you’ve worked out the ones above, go on and apply the rest of the chapter. How sweet it is!

God’s blessings are pure honey,  
Pastor Steve

**F**ellow Laborers,  
As the Apostle John grew older, his fatherly care for the flock intensified. He, like Paul and Peter and others, knew that outsiders would bring in destructive heresies to challenge the truth of the gospel. John’s heart was for his “dear children” and he wanted nothing more than for them to grow in the truth and of God.

It is so difficult to see our children get into things that will harm them. I’m still not sure how my parents survived the onslaught of the wacky things I explored in the late ‘60s and ‘70s. It is tough for parents to watch their kids go down paths that they know may be dangerous. This is especially true when parents think their kids aren’t listening. We do not want to see our kids hurt. But you know what? We learn some of our most valuable lessons when we hit dead ends, wake up to our mistakes, and head in a better direction. It is tough to see this happen to those you love, but it is true for them as well. In the meantime, I’d encourage you to stay as close to them as you possibly can and give them good instruction in the ways of a godly life. Remember that this is caught more than taught; your kids are watching you, looking at the decisions you are making and the roads you are traveling.

A friend of mine has been divorced now for about a year after almost 20 years of marriage. I have so appreciated his practical concern for his kids through the process. He knows that if he were to date again,

that it would be very important for him to show his kids how to date in a godly way. He knows what God’s standards are and he wants to make sure that he sets a good example for them. He knows that God does not want him to live with someone before marriage. He knows that he must treat the opposite sex with respect. He is aware of his responsibility to give priority to his children over any dating relationship.

Truth and love must be wedded in order for true spirituality to happen. When Jesus taught about true worship He said that the Father was seeking worshippers who would worship Him “in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24). Love without truth is sentimentality. Truth without love is legalism. Love and truth together create a real spiritual life.

Sometimes people will think they have had a “spiritual experience,” but the truth is that they have felt the temporary satisfaction of a watered-down love. False teachers come along all of the time and promise great things, but their true intent is to trap you in either a web of sentimentalism or a dose of out-of-context Bible verses.

Everybody wants to be loved. And so, because of this, people are easily deceived into believing that so-and-so really cares, when the truth of the matter is that so-and-so only wants your money or is using you to satisfy his own lusts. False teachers, sexual predators, and obsessive manipulators all have the same thing in common: they want to use others for their own selfish gain. They will play on a person’s weak-

ness for attention and exploit them recklessly. People are vulnerable because they crave love and respect. But because they are unaware of the true intentions of their “friend,” there is a deep gap between what they are looking for and what they can truly expect.

On the other hand, some people desire to know what is true: the truth about life and love and happiness and whatever else is unknown. Some even allow themselves to be manipulated and controlled in order to hear what they think is true wisdom. False teachers—those who do not know the gospel of Jesus or the teaching that leads to godliness—will prey on the spiritual blindness and intellectual weaknesses of their victims. Jesus warned that false teachers would arise. He said they would be wolves in sheep’s clothing. They would look good, but really they were there to tear you apart. Do not have anything to do with them, He warned. Flee to the Shepherd who will give you safe pasture and food aplenty.

Here are a couple of things to think about. John was writing to those in home fellowships. We need to meet with friends in our homes for interaction around Jesus today. This will build your faith and prepare you for the challenges in your week. Also, note how close John feels to these people. He is very interested in their welfare. He wants nothing more than that they

would thrive in the Lord. Are you thriving in the Lord lately? If so, keep it up and don’t hold back; keep on encouraging the church. If not, think about instilling more love and truth this week. Remember from John’s first letter: we are to love in deed and in truth. Step out this week and love others from the heart. But do not neglect your Bible. When we get away from the solid food of Scripture we will weaken our hold on the sure Word of God.

Lastly, note John’s connection of physical health with spiritual health. I think there is something very important here. So many of our modern day maladies are connected to stress. Stress produces all kinds of bad reactions in our bodies. John wanted them to prosper physically, even as their souls prospered. The soul is the control center of our lives. We must guard it and maintain it in order for our bodies to run efficiently. Proverbs says that as a man thinks in his heart, so he becomes. The soul will give life to the body as we grow strong in the Lord and live in the power of His might.

In a few days we will be exploring some of John’s writing again. Until then I trust that you are prospering in body as you are in soul.

God’s blessings give health to the body,  
Pastor Steve