

Pastor Ray (00:00:01) - We have made it all the way through this New Testament to third John. And that's amazing. And we'll do the whole chapter today of third. John is the shortest book in the whole Bible and it's the shortest book, obviously, in the New Testament. Second, John was the second shortest book. And next week we'll do the Book of Jude, probably do that in about two weeks, and then we'll be rolling in to the Book of Revelation. So how about that? I mean, I don't usually like to say much about myself, but surely the rapture is near and we're going to be the church that's in the Book of Revelation. When the Rapture happens, how awesome is that going to be? Well, next week would be good. Then we can just or today would be good. But I love it that the Lord leaves us this word and we get to just go through it. And today we're picking up a book that we call it a book, we call it an epistle, but it was really a letter written from an aged apostle in his probably 90s.

Pastor Ray (00:01:09) - He's going to be coming home, going home to see the Lord real soon. And he writes what's probably a younger man, Gaius, and he's going to tell him some things on his heart. He's going to do what is a wonderful gift that all of us get to have, and it's the gift of encouragement. And he's going to encourage Gaius. He's going to remind Gaius of these great attributes and these great features that he's walking in spiritually. He's going to give them an exhortation of what to be on guard about and to make sure that no one gets him off of that trail and rails as we're going to look at a man who came in and was about himself and not about the Lord. And it's just a wonderful letter. It's like a postcard. And it's been preserved for us. And, Lord, I thank you that you would give it to us and you would save it for us and that it would be something that we get to meditate on. And lord, a short book, 14 verses, but wow, what power and Lord, I have no greater joy verse four than to hear that my children walk in the truth.

Pastor Ray (00:02:23) - The elder John writes it to this man, Gaius, whatever his age may be. Yet he calls him his son in the faith. And you would speak the same to us. And I pray, Lord, that every person here would hear your pleasure, that you have no greater joy to hear that we're walking in the faith. We're walking in the truth. We're still standing even with all that the world's thrown at us and all the hardship of humanity. And yet here we have you hold us and keep us. And yes, we're desperate for you, Lord. The very breath of God, the very Word of God. It's what sustains us. And I thank you for every last one of my brothers and sisters here that they're still standing. And, Lord, that you would keep us and hold us. And I pray this in your name. Amen. A beautiful, wonderful book for us. And yeah, the title No Greater Joy, and it's the Lord speaking to us. And he's going to give five things that are the attributes.

Pastor Ray (00:03:31) - And you know what? There are five things that the Lord takes pleasure in so that we, I can immediately take and go, Well, I can take these five things and I can do these on a I can do these every day. God bless thee. And but then we're going to see when this man doctor fees, he comes in, he literally comes in to disrupt the the church, to draw people to himself. And we're going to see, well, one person can't be drawn away and it's guys and that's a word that the Lord gives us. You know, he was doing these five things, therefore he was immovable. And, you know, we think so much. I got to look, I got to guard. I got to watch. And, you know, yeah, there's that's what the theme of first, second and third John is. But there's this

place of, you know what, as long as I'm walking in these five things he's going to be talking about, we literally become immovable, that we can't be deceived, we can't be knocked out.

Pastor Ray (00:04:25) - Because when you're busy about the things of the Lord, the Lord is busy about your life and the two of you are walking together and we'll see him says that my children are walking in the Lord. Well, who's he walking with? We walk with the Lord. And so beautiful passage for us. Let's just get right into it. Verse one, Even though it's the shortest book I know, it's still going to be hard to do it in one setting, but it is meant to be put together because there's this light darkness, good, evil comparison between Gaius and this man who has crept into the church, which the elder John warns against. Verse one, The elder to the beloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth. So again, probably that Gaius was one of John's converts, John, when he preached wherever this man Gaius is living, a church has been established in John's right in a letter to him, and we'll see it at the end. He's going to say, I got a whole bunch more to say to you guys, and I can't wait to see you face to face.

Pastor Ray (00:05:35) - You know what? I think the Lord says that to you and me today. I can't wait to see you face to face. And we have this writing and it is the word of God. It's living. But you know, he's going to go he's preparing a place for us and someday he's going to take us away. Age, accident or circumstance, and we're going to be face to face with him. And this is what John is heart. You can just read it, man. I wish I could see you. I remember when you received my witness of the gospel and you became the God's son. And then you became like a son to me in the faith. And oh, I just love you. Uses this word beloved, like four times in the opening here. And it's the word agape. And in the form of it, agape is unconditional love. And John's making a statement. And unconditional love is the love. When you read it, it's directed toward something. It's an object that the love is directed to.

Pastor Ray (00:06:39) - And that's what the Lord speaks to us, My love. You're the object of my love. You're not some randomness, some one of a number. No, you're an object of my love that I would come and give my life for you because you were worth it. And John here and he's speaking. That man. You're the object of my love, Gaius. And I just direct my love towards you. And I had to sit down. I had to write this letter to you. And it's just the beauty of what the Lord does here. And like I said four times, we'll see this word, beloved. There's. There's a heart connection between these two. How about you? Is there anybody you need to say today? Hey, beloved, maybe it's a letter, maybe it's a phone call. Maybe it's just that spouse or children beloved, can I just share my heart with you? You're the object of my unconditional love. I'm so treasured to have you. And John knows, like anyone would know, in their age of an elder, I don't know how much longer I'm going to be here, but I want to take this opportunity to tell you and we never know what tomorrow may bring, right? So maybe today is just a good day to let someone know, Hey, you're my beloved, You're my object of my unconditional sacrificial love.

Pastor Ray (00:07:59) - And this is what Gaius will do. And John, so proud of him. In verse two, he's going to start talking about, you know, what he's hearing about him, how proud he is. Verse two. Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health just as your soul prospers. Now, of course, the name it, claim it. They they love. Well, this one, right? They love

to see, hey, God wants us all to be prosperous, wealthy and healthy. And that's anything but the truth. And it's really. History is a beautiful thing when you can get your hands on it. Not that it can only compliment our study of the Word of God. It's never in place or triumphs the Word of God. But I got to read some ancient texts this week, and it was it was so fascinating, the recording of these the Greek writings at the time, how many letters opened with this beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health just as you, your soul prosper.

Pastor Ray (00:09:05) - It's literally a common greeting of the day. And we do the same thing, right? Hey, the Lord bless you. That's what we're saying. And we have this. Hey, I pray that you're doing well. And how many times do we send a letter? Hey, I hope all's well with you. And hey, I'm looking forward. But we start with I hope all's well with you. Well, this is what's being said here. And of course, why do I need to say that? Because. Well, because there's a lot of false teaching out there. And the false teachers come and say, well, see, the Lord wants us all to prosper. Well, the writer of this book would go, I don't think so. That's a pretty great leap. He's going to make the point we live in a fallen world and therefore we're were subject to the consequences of a fallen world. The man who would write this book is John, and he would write it after walking with the Lord, watching all that the Lord would go through.

Pastor Ray (00:10:04) - But church history would tell us, and I believe the order of these books is that this is probably the last order of it, that the Book of Revelation has already been written. And this is probably John's last writing of these things. And so what's my point? Is the book of Revelation that John wrote, he wrote the Gospel of John first, second and third John. So he's got five of these 27 New Testament books that we have in our hand today and that he's been through Patmos. He however long he was exiled on Patmos, the church fathers would say he went to Patmos because they tried to kill him and they couldn't because God determines when the sparrow falls. He determines when man's breath he holds it. And so they couldn't kill John. They tried to dip him in boiling oil, and that failed. And so they exiled him to this island, which was rugged terrain. Patmos And there he was as an elderly man, older and, you know, no seven elevens, no restaurants he would have to scour and forage for and grab whatever he could and eat.

Pastor Ray (00:11:22) - Can you imagine what that was like digging through whatever the the gravel to find some something there, picking berries and all these in this state that surely had to be painful after the persecution of the oil. And there is but you know, there's a place for all of us. John writes And I look forward to the Book of Revelation, not just because it's the last days and we get to see how it shapes all of our world. But I'm so thankful that John went to Patmos. And when I tell him, I'm going to say thanks for enduring Patmos for me because I needed Patmos. It's a long journey in this world and there's a lot of pain, there's a lot of heartache. And as I watch people, I love perishing passing. When I watch people enduring hardship and pain, whether it's financial, relational and marriages, when I watch people in the health and these type of things is hard. It's ever so hard. And I want to say to John, thanks for enduring Patmos for me so that I have something to tell people.

Pastor Ray (00:12:38) - I have something to tell myself when I start the Book of Revelation, I'm going to do the overview and I'm not going to go verse by verse through chapter 21 and chapter 22, but I'm going to overview it and I'm going to start with what's at the end of all of that tribulation and sorrow and heartache. It's a new heaven and a new earth. That's what I'm going to start with. So when we're going through the book, we'll constantly go through As bad as this is, this is what's waiting for us. A new heaven, a new earth, a new Jerusalem coming down. You know, I don't think we talk about heaven very much, do we? I mean, we talk about we're going to heaven, but I think almost because it seems like there's so few verses about it that we don't really know what heaven is, disembodied, you know, spirits and souls and what all that. No. God gives some. Clarity of what a new Earth looks like. He gives a clarity of what a new heaven He gives a clarity of where we'll be living.

Pastor Ray (00:13:40) - Because as Jesus says, I go and prepare a place for you. What does that look like? He describes it in Revelation 21:22, and I could start there right now, but we will stay in our order in this place that I say. John thank you for enduring Patmos for me so that I can have something that I know is waiting for me. And you know, Christian sometimes and it's been said rightly, sometimes we need a Patmos experience. The revelation of Jesus Christ to get a fresh revelation of Jesus Christ. John will say or Paul will say, But we can all experience it. I mean, he knows it. He's endured it. I consider that the suffering of this present time not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. There's a Patmos that brings a revelation. And Paul would go, Man, I've been through it. But, boy, there's a glory that's going to be revealed. And it takes us and it relieves us and it takes us out of this world.

Pastor Ray (00:14:49) - And that the world says this is put it all in here and we go, Man, this is not the place to invest. There's something greater that comes. And may I say this to you? Unless I just speak to myself. But I can say, you know, when I go through my Patmos experience, sometimes when I go through Paul, I consider the suffering of this present times. I'm always the one. And I've been I've been teaching the Bible for a couple of decades now. I've been walking with the Lord for multiple decades and I still come. Lord, is there something that you're displeased about? Lord, is. Is there something that, you know, if I would have yielded or heard? And I think there's a place that we always come to that that we we question why is this happening in our life? But the fact is they just keep telling us over and over it's the false prosperity doctrine preachers that want to say wealthy and healthy and it's not. So I consider the suffering of this present time not worthy to be compared to glory.

Pastor Ray (00:15:56) - It's going to be we live in a fallen world. And so don't sit there and beat yourself up over these things. When you come into these things, just know that the Lord's holding you and the Lord sees you and He goes and prepares a place for you. It's interesting, and I think it's worth. A moment to speak of this. He says to this one that he loves that I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health just as your soul prospers. Yeah, that was a common greeting at the time. But now, John, literally he means this. He's speaking to this. This man that's so beloved and dear to him. He's like, Hey, I've been hearing great things about you and I pray that your health and your soul prospers to that same degree. And that because as great as you are in the spirit, man, I would just pray that that's the same that's across the board

for you. But did you ever think and wonder, because we say it all the time, but I body, spirit and soul, Boy, I tell you, when you study through those words in in the Hebrew, in the Old Testament Genesis and the creation account of the spirit and the soul and the breath of life, when you come into the New Testament and you're reading through the same things the spirit, the soul, the life, I mean, the words become so intertwined that they almost become indistinguishable.

Pastor Ray (00:17:29) - And there's a purpose and there's a reason behind it. Now, first, Thessalonians 5:23, it's the only place that I found that you'll find body, spirit and soul in the same verse. So you think about that. So he's not double counting. Right. Soul and spirit. He's not double counting. He's literally dividing that body, spirit and soul. So do you ever think through what all that means? Well. It's way lofty, deeper than I'll ever be able to understand and express and teach. But there's enough there that it's clear enough. Here is the body. And we say this thing about the soul, that the soul, you know, that's in us. It's not that there's a soul in us. We are a soul. Do you follow what what The difference of that means is we are a soul. And what you see and what you hear, all this animation and all this expression that's coming out of this body. It's not the body that is the expression in the animation. It's the soul that God has put in me.

Pastor Ray (00:18:41) - It's what he's made me. It's the personality and the giftings and the lacs of the gifting and these type of things. For all of us, what you're seeing is the soul alive. And then, of course, God puts a spirit in when we receive Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. Now, the spirit of the living God in us and Christ in you, the hope of glory. Well. The importance that I make about this is. Jesus would say these words Unless a man be born again, you cannot see the kingdom of heaven. Every man, woman, every person is a soul and the soul is eternal. And so there's this place of today that people think when this body ceases, that's it. But the Bible says nothing like that. The soul will live forever and the soul that isn't reborn, if you would, the when this body dies, the soul has to go somewhere. And if the soul hasn't been bought back out of sin that separates us from the Holy God. Jesus will say in Matthew 10:28 Do not fear those who kill the body, but cannot kill the soul, but rather fear him, who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Pastor Ray (00:20:05) - He's making it clear, Oh, I'm preaching something that nobody wants to say the word hell, but a man or woman that has not been purchased back for the breaking of God's holy law. God saying that soul lives forever and it's just a quality of life. And the difference is there's a place called hell. But as we started, there's a place called heaven that he says, I go prepare a place and we need this spirit. You must be born again. We die once in the flesh, into the ground it goes. But now the soul has to make a place. And it's the spirit of God that takes that soul while we're still alive and envelops it. Christ in you, the hope of glory. And then when we die from this life, He takes that. And now we have this soul and spirit that ascends into the heavenly. So I say that for anyone here today, your soul will live forever. You must decide where will that soul resides when this body takes its last breath? So he makes it clear and he speaks these words.

Pastor Ray (00:21:11) - And when we ask Jesus for the forgiveness of sin, we saw there in John 20, and when he had said these, he breathed on them and said to them, Receive the Holy Spirit.

And the key is, if you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven. If you retain the sins of any, they are retained. It's not that they have the power to decide if sins are forgiven. It's just a declaration. You receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Your sins are forgiven if you reject Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, your sins stay upon you. And then as 18 will say, the soul that sins it shall die. What a beautiful. Just a word that you know, we don't think about. But oh, the promise. Because now I can come and I can make that declaration that anyone here today I pray your soul and spirit prospers because of what Christ has done for you and the spirit of a living God. Well, verse three, as he goes on, he's going to speak like any proud father, because the spirit that is upon.

Pastor Ray (00:22:14) - Gaius, verse three. For I rejoice greatly when brethren came and testified of the truth that is in you just as you walk in the truth. Verse four. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in the truth. That word there. For I rejoiced greatly when brethren came the verb tense and the context of of this sentence structure. John is saying wherever he's at, people are coming back from seeing Gaius. And we're going to see that Gaius He would open his home to receive the traveling missionaries and that he would open his home. And these missionaries, these itinerant teachers sent out, probably from John, they would come back to John after the mission trip was over and go, Man, we stayed at guys's man. John, I got to tell you how great he's doing. And as a spiritual father, you know, he has to be like, Yeah, wow. Oh, I have no greater joy than to hear it. Cannot all of us attest to that. Every one of us who have children.

Pastor Ray (00:23:18) - And I'll tell you what, if you have spiritual children, whether they were your flesh and blood or not, when you hear that someone you're investing in and they're doing well, don't you just feel this overwhelming joy? You're like, Oh, man, I'm so awesome. There is no greater joy. But I think everybody knows what I'll say next. When they're not, there's no greater sorrow. It is heartbreaking. Like you were once my spiritual son. You were once my literal child. And to hear that you're not prospering in the things of the Lord, it just breaks my heart. We want to tell you, because the Lord says my house should be called a house of prayer. And we take that seriously. We believe that there's a power in prayer and we got these prayer cards all over the building. You got a prodigal, you write their name on here, you can leave your name anonymous. You don't have to get specific, but you write that and you say, I got a prodigal.

Pastor Ray (00:24:19) - And if you want to put their name, you put their name. You don't have to put yours, but you want to put yours, you put yours, you put that prodigal and you write that. You put it in that prayer basket in the back. I want to share this. You know, we developed this with purpose. In the front. It's kind of a seal in a circle and it says Genesis one one and it says in the beginning, God, you know what? If you can believe that first verse, then you can believe everything else in the beginning God, and we can take and say, Lord, you said, come boldly before the throne of grace. You said, Ask, be given, seek and we shall find, knock, and it shall be opened. I am going to the God who in the beginning has the power. And at the end, as we're going to literally finish our study today in Revelation 22, the last verse You're the God that when you said it's done, it's done and there's power.

Pastor Ray (00:25:16) - And Lord, I believe I'm coming to the king of power who can do this? You bring it, you pray, you put this in the box and we'll pray with you, because that's what family does together. Well, John, he's just in this beautiful glory happy man. It's so awesome. They keep coming. They keep telling me what's going on with guys. And we're going to see some say, Gaius, you know, I don't know how to pronounce these words, but he was known for five things. And this is what I was saying. Oh, if we're going to be known for five things, let them be this. And as I'll say and I'll wrap it back, this is what protected guys from the deception was these five things. And he was simply just walking, you know, and there's a place when you just keep walking these things that try to trip you up and snag you, you just keep walking past them. Guys is going to be known. Verse three, we read He's walking in the truth.

Pastor Ray (00:26:15) - What is the truth? It's the word of God. He believed that the word God said what he meant. He means what he says. He believes that God is who He is and God does what he says that he will do, and that this word is the perfect word of God. And may I remind you of that when we open this up, perfect love wrote this, John First John four eight as we studied a couple of weeks ago, God is love. Perfect Love wrote this book. Perfect love, Agape love, unconditional sacrificial love. Who would go to the cross for us? And when he speaks to us, it's perfect. And I know when I first got saved, I questioned, I don't know, is this outdated or are you still this part of the word still apply to me and these type of things? Well, in the beginning, God, that's what he said in the beginning and every other word that he said. 31,102 verses. Every word is perfect, every word is pure and every word is a shield.

Pastor Ray (00:27:16) - And when we come to that place that, you know what, Lord, doesn't matter what my feelings are. And this was last week, study. The notes are online, the the audio and everything. Doesn't matter what my feelings are. This is what your word says. Therefore, this is what I'm going to do and believe. And this is what Gaius is doing, regardless of what's stirring around him or how he may be feeling, how hardships may be, or the prosperity and the likes, well, he's known for his faithfulness. We'll see in verse five. And then he's going to be known for his hospitality. He's going to be known for his giving, and he's going to be known for his love, because love looks like something. Here's what love looks like. It's walks in the truth. It's faithful, it's hospital and it's giving of itself. And that's what kept him in these great strengths. Well, verse five and six. Beloved, you do faithfully whatever you do for the brethren and for strangers.

Pastor Ray (00:28:12) - Who have borne witness of your love before the church. If you send them forward on their journey in a manner worthy of God, you will do well. So the word keeps coming back and John just keeps reminding, just keep doing it. And I know it can be hard and I know, you know, being faithful can be tiring. And sometimes we go, I just need a break. Well, the problem is that when we take that break, then I'll say we can find ourselves. Instead of continually moving forward, we can find ourselves becoming stagnant. We can find ourselves no longer moving in the direction that God's flowing. So before the days of Motel six, are there Motel six anybody that still exists, or is it just I'm expressing my age? And so before the days of Motel six, whatever they would be, you know, Book of Genesis is a great example. When the

Angels came to Sodom, you know, it would be dangerous to sleep out in the town square. There was no hotels and you would be subjecting yourself to great risk.

Pastor Ray (00:29:17) - Well, nothing's changed then. It would be the same here for today. If you went up to ten minutes up the road and you went into the city and you didn't have a place to stay. We all know what our city is like. Top ten of the murder of of the of the country or top 20. So these missionaries, these itinerant preachers, they would be sent out by John. Most likely what we're seeing. Hey, I want you to go into that church in that region and there's a man there that you can stay with. His name is Gaius. That just brings peace right there. I'm going to go in and I got a place and it's safe, and this is what he's commanded. Just keep doing it, guys. It's awesome what you're doing. You're providing a safe haven. They're going to come. They're going to be able to get a respite. They're going to be able to rest, prepare themselves. They're going to go deliver a word and minister to the Saints and the apostles.

Pastor Ray (00:30:16) - I mean, the the Saints and the various people in that region sent out by the Apostle John. Go. And he says, and, you know, you prepare for their journey. Guys just keep doing what you're doing and we're going to see this great. There was a faithfulness to continue and there was a hospitality. There's so many definitions of hospitality. But, you know, here's the greatest definition of hospitality. Church It's a safe haven, That's all. It's a place that people can come and their soul and their spirit can be safe. I can entrust you with what I'm going to share with you and you're going to cherish it. You're going to protect it. And if they stay at your house and you bless them, you know, it's a safe haven that they come and go, man, when I come to the house or you take them out to the restaurant, it's just the place that I am accepted, it's safe. And they ministered to me. And then I can go further on my journey.

Pastor Ray (00:31:14) - I don't think we realize that and I hope this church will always be the type, you know, that people come here. To get there safe haven to get a respite. To continue on their journey. And this is what he says. Who have borne witness of your love before the church. If you send them forward on their journey in the manner worthy of God, you do well. And there's just this beautiful place when we get to send people on in their journey. Well, there's a beautiful journey that we're on, by the way. And sometimes I think I forget to say it enough. And that's why I'm looking forward to, you know, taking a look see it in Revelation 21, 22. Every one of us are on this same journey who have been sealed and rescued by Jesus Christ and the price that was paid. We're on a journey to heaven and I go and prepare a place for you. And I think there's just this great place that we get to tell people all the time, Heaven's near.

Pastor Ray (00:32:14) - We're on a journey together and there's a place that he's preparing what that place must look like. Let not your heart be troubled. John. 14 one. You believe in God believe also in me. In my father's house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. What it is? It's the new Jerusalem. It's 1500 miles squared cubed. 1500. He is preparing a place. He's been preparing a place in the time of the Jewish history of the Jewish nation that when the father he had his inheritance, his allotment that was given to each of the tribes, they would get a piece of property they would build, the father would build a house. Then when he would have a son, he would say, Now you go get the bride.

And they would build a room. And that's what the word mansion means room. They would build a room off of the father's house. Then when it was time, they would go get the bride and bring the bride to the father's house.

Pastor Ray (00:33:22) - And they would then be the room and they would live in the room that was attached to the father's house. This is what Jesus is speaking of us, and he's building this beautiful place that will talk about the new Jerusalem and 1500 by 1500. You know, that equals when you do the math area of a cube, it's like 13,000,000mi². There's room for you. There's room for me. It's going to be amazing. It's going to be awesome and glorious. And I think we want to tell people God's preparing a place. We want to join us. When you're going through the hard time, God has a place. He's preparing it. It's going to be glorious. It's going to be beautiful. And he goes on to say in verse seven, because they went forth, because they went forth for his name's sake, taking nothing from the Gentiles. This is beautiful. You know that. We don't need the Gentile, the world. That's what's being spoken of. Hey, I'm sending these men went and the church took care of them.

Pastor Ray (00:34:26) - And, you know, church Christian, we as a church, we don't need the provisions of the world to pay our rent or anything. God will supply our every need. But can I say this also, though, we don't need the wisdom of the world. The world has no wisdom to supply us for our journey. And the supply is for walking. We don't need to go to all the people who think they're so smart, because if you don't know Jesus, then you can't come and speak the truth of what he thinks about you and what he's doing for you and the power. Instead, it all comes down to a man made wisdom and a man made need. And of course, we watch a world that everybody wants to say So you need me. Keep coming to me, keep coming to my political party and these type of things. And the outer Johnny saying, man, they were they didn't need anything from the Gentiles. The church was taken care of them. And guys, you were you were wonderful because they went forth, these men who went out to tell people for his name sake.

Pastor Ray (00:35:32) - Now, we would think, you know, and it seems like it would be right that his namesake, that, hey, we're going to go tell people about Jesus. And it's true. But the way this sentence structure is for his name, it's kind of it's an absolute form of the name. It's Jesus. But the name. What he's speaking of saying, these men went and they spoke the whole nature of who Jesus is. When Moses was going to Egypt, this was way more than let me tell them the name. What the Lord spoke to Moses was Go tell them all that I am and who I am. Then Moses said to God, Exodus 313. Indeed, when you come to the children of Israel, they're in Egypt and say to them, The God of your fathers has sent me to you. And they say to me, What is his name? What shall I say to them? And God said to Moses, I am who I am. And he said, Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, I am has sent me to you.

Pastor Ray (00:36:47) - Moreover, God said to Moses, thus you shall say to the children of Israel, the Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob has sent me to you. This is my name forever. The word literally means I am. That I am. It means the becoming one. When they ask who, what's his name? And you say the becoming one. And this is how the Lord speaks to you and I. What's my name? The becoming one. What do you need

me to become for you? John wrote The Gospel of John eight I am statements. I'm the shepherd, I'm the door, I'm the life. And that's what he speaks to you and me. What do you need? Let me become that to you. It's more than a name than we say. Oh, Jesus. It's like my name comes with all that I am. And I come to you to become all that you need. What is your need? Oh, that He would speak to you today and Philippians 4:19 and my God shall supply all your needs according to his riches and glory in Christ Jesus.

Pastor Ray (00:37:51) - That's way more than financial provisions. What's your emotional need? What's your relational need? What's your spiritual need? Let me become all that you are. And so he's saying, Yes, man, we heard how mighty, how awesome. And so before I move on, because we're going to see this counter before we finish here and just the back end of our study here, which is rather short, we saw he was walking in the truth, the word. That's what the truth is. Verse five. He was known for his faithfulness. You know, that's all we need. Just be faithful. Lord, what do you what can I do? What do you need me to do? What do I need to just be faithful? What I need to be faithful. Just to my word. Whatever my words. Speaking to you today, just be faithful to it. How about next week? Don't worry about next week. Today? What's the word that I'm speaking? Just be faithful to it and you will find yourself well done, good and faithful servant.

Pastor Ray (00:38:54) - I'm glad it wasn't successful. Servant I'm glad it wasn't multiplying. Servant I'm glad it wasn't recognized. Well known servant Just faithful. And you know what? I can be that you and I can just be that. But you know who determines faithfulness? Yeah, you do. I do. I get to determine how faithful I'm going to be to God's word. Today, I get to determine how faithful I get, the love I get to determine how faithful or not I shall be. And so here he sees and he points out he was faithful because he was faithful. He's going to be unmovable. He was known for hospitality. He opened his home and made it a safe haven. And he was known for his giving as he provided and took care of these missionaries and sent them forward. Hey, you know, as a church, I just got to take the moment to say, you know, we as a church, we we invest we invest on the journey of others. And you would think that the whole world has heard the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Pastor Ray (00:40:07) - But there's still plenty of places that haven't. And we as a church, we got to invest. And next month it will be the sending of the missionaries. It's in a region I won't say the name because somebody could die for going to go do this, but they're going to go into a remote part of the the world that has never heard the name of Jesus, and they're going to rescue people and tell people and guess, guess who's part of it? Everybody in this room, because we got to invest in that. We got to provide to prepare the way. And so there's a great fruit that someday we'll hear somebody's going to say, thank you. We're going to Who are you? Oh, I was the gayest that came out of that mission trip that somebody came and told me the gospel. And then we see, as I said, he was known verse six for his love. Love looks like something. It walks in the truth. It's faithful, it's hospitable, It's got the safe haven and it's a giving heart for the need of others.

Pastor Ray (00:41:14) - When verse eight, he says, We therefore are to receive such that we may become fellow workers for the truth. And if you remember last week study, he was telling the the woman, the elect lady, hey, be careful, Don't just open your house to let anybody in. And so there was that warning there. But in our passage today, as he speaks to Gaius, like, hey, don't be so protective that you don't let anybody in and there's this balance. Well, how do I know? I wake up every morning and in the faithfulness, I say, Here I am, Lord, speak to me and God will speak to us and he'll give us the warning. And I just know we walk in the truth. We're faithful, we're hospitable. We're giving we're love because we're walking, we're moving. We're not going to be wrapped up and taken away by what he's going to warn here. It's this man die trough. This verse nine, an egotist. Self. What I can counter to guys verse nine, I wrote to the church.

Pastor Ray (00:42:16) - Diotrephes, who loves to have the preeminence among them, does not receive us. Therefore, if I come, I will call to mind his deeds, which he does priding against us with malicious words and not content with that. He himself does not receive the brethren and forbids those who wish to be wish to putting them out of the church. Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. Verse 11. And he who does good is of God. But he who does evil has not seen God. If you can believe it. The great last apostle living. Probably 80 years since he rested his head on the heart of Jesus in that upper room, endured Patmos, endured all the persecution, came and invested in this church that now has bloomed. And if you can believe it, there's a man with and I like how NIV says this. I wrote to the church. But Diotrephes who love to be first will have nothing to do with me. So if I come, I will call attention to what he's doing, gossiping maliciously about us.

Pastor Ray (00:43:36) - Not satisfied with that. He refuses to welcome the brothers. He also stops those who want to do so and puts them out of the church. And he says, Don't. Don't be like him. Don't even. The great apostle. There's still that someone can come with the malicious gossip and tear him down, that the people would actually believe it. And then those that he would send and those that he would come. This man was so convincing that and so fearful in the church that if people said, But wait, let's receive them. He says, Well, you're out of here. I mean, I just look and go, How can someone be this convincing? Well. Entertain an ear to gossip and you can be deceived of anything. But let's just look at this point for the clarity of Gaius wasn't That's what the point that I want to make. I can talk about these people come in to steal, kill and destroy. That's the evil that Satan sends. It's generational. They don't just destroy that one person.

Pastor Ray (00:44:47) - They. They destroy the whole generation of the parent with the kids and the kids kids, because they all become affected and infected by this. But the point that I want to make is there was a man who wasn't. And that's what I want to speak to the people that are here. There is a man whose name is Gaius. He wasn't swayed by it. He wasn't moved by it. And neither will you, and neither will I. Because when we are walking in the truth, whatever that story is, whatever the gossip is. Wait. What does the word God say about this? That you're saying when we're known for faithful? You know what? I'm just going to be faithful to the Lord and he's going to carry me through all these things. And then we see that love was looking like something that the hospitality and the giving there was Gaius. He was involved. And when

you're involved in what God's doing, the Spirit of God's going to move in you. And when you're loving the agape love that God has given to all these things, these type of things, they won't stick.

Pastor Ray (00:45:43) - They can't touch you. And that's the word that we see here. And I could go on and I could talk a lot about this man, but instead I talk about Gaius because I look at us and go, We can't be touched when we're just walking in these things of the Lord. So. So powerful was he that he could block people from coming in and even throw them out of the church? But John says, I'll deal with him when I get there in verse 12. Demetrius So now you've got these bookends. Gaius On one side. Demetrius on Demetrius has a good testimony from all verse 12 and from the truth itself. And we also bear witness. And you know that our testimony is true. Who Demetrius is. Maybe he delivered this letter because John was too aged to do it, but he speak. And here's another man of truth. He's coming. He's willing to and he has this great testimony, receive him. And then John comes and he finishes and so shall we. Right here, verse 13 and 14.

Pastor Ray (00:46:48) - I had many things to write, but I do not wish to write to you with pen and ink. But I hope to see you shortly. And we shall speak face to face. Peace to you. Our friends greet you. Greet the friends by name. I have. I'm Gaius. I'm like, I can't wait to see you. And I think there's people in our lives. They just can't wait. Wow. I can't wait to hear from you. My heart's warm that you would speak to me. I missed you. And here's the John. Say, man, I just want to see you. I just want to see you face to face that we can break bread together and share this time and life together. And I like it. Three of his latter three of these four. Talk about revelation here in a minute. And this is where I close in John 21, the Gospel of John. Here's how he ended. And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.

Pastor Ray (00:48:01) - He's literally saying, I got so much more to tell you about Jesus, but man, the volume of the libraries couldn't contain it all. Then here last week we ended have many things to write to you. I do not wish to do so with paper and ink, but I hope to come to you and speak face to face that our joy may be formed. By the way, last week, if you missed it, I said, You know, there's just a time, Christian, you got to go face to face. This social media and this this digital stuff. You know, there's a place that just gets disconnected. And I think we need to just remind I need to see you face to face so you can feel the warmth of my heart. You can hear the the passion and cry of my heart for you. So here's these two. And as he closes here today, third John 1 13 I had many things to write to you, but I do not wish to write to you with pen and ink.

Pastor Ray (00:48:52) - When he's talking about him getting to him and seeing him. I got so much more to say. But I love how he ends the Book of Revelation. 22, verse 18. For. I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book. If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book. And if anyone takes away from the words of this book, of this prophecy, God shall take away His part from the book of life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. He who testifies to these things says, Surely I am coming quickly. Even so, come Lord Jesus, Maranatha, the grace of our Lord

Jesus Christ be with you all. And I just close with this statement when John's talking about, I want to come, I want to talk to you. I want to share my heart with you. I got so much more to say. And pen and ink is just not going to do.

Pastor Ray (00:49:50) - And I need to get to you face to face. But when he says Jesus, he goes, There's not more to say. Revelation 22. Everything that's been said that we need to know about the becoming one, it's been said. And now we got this complete volume that we can go, What do I need to know about Jesus? I am that I am. I'm the becoming one and that's the call for us. I just spend my time in this word and as I do, he becomes to me, speaks to me. And I can speak to him all that I need, all that he will become. Let's worship him and read ahead. Jude will probably do this in two weeks. There's so much there that's just a power packed short book, but we'll pick that up next for the next two weeks. And so, Father, I thank you and I bless you. It is done. And when you went to the cross and you cried out, it's done. There's nothing more to say about what it takes to be forgiven of my sin.

Pastor Ray (00:50:52) - I just look to a cross. And when I do, that's whenever my sin is washed away. And I have the new life that's breathed into me because of the resurrection power. Nothing more to say. It's done. And Lord, anything and all the things here that's needed among my brothers and sisters, you'll become to them what they need. Because you're everything. You're all that we need. We don't need to go looking out the world, the Gentiles, the those that weren't part of the church family. You will speak through your word. You'll speak through your heart. All these things. It's a complete it's a complete volume of your heart and your love for us. And, Lord, I pray for anyone again. Maybe they're suffering. Maybe there's a hurt in their heart. Maybe they're on their island to Patmos right now. And I know it's hard. I know what Patmos feels like. Would you minister to them? Maybe they're feeling they're on an island all by himself. No one understands them.

Pastor Ray (00:52:11) - No one knows the pain that they're going through. No one knows the loneliness that they have. And there's probably a truth there who can completely. With the great I am the becoming one. Meet my brother, my sister on their Patmos. Lord, I pray for them. And it's well for all of us. A fresh revelation. Sometimes it only comes through a time on Patmos. Show them who you are. Show them what you think of them. Show them the pricelessness they are. The agape. The object of your divine. Unconditional sacrificial love and that you would wrap them and hold them in their time of Patmos. And, Lord, I thank you for this word as it just keeps continuing richer and richer, greater and greater. Bless it to our body. And Lord, would you be blessed by this worship as we lift it to you? So thankful that you came and thankful that you became and are the becoming. And I pray this in your name. Amen.