

Birthmarks of the Begotten

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Bible Text: 1 John 5:1-5
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Let's turn to 1 John 5. 1 John 5. We've been looking at 1 John on Sunday morning. I just thought I'd jump in our Sunday nights rather, I thought I'd jump in there for this Sunday morning because we've completed 1 Timothy and I'll probably go into 2 Timothy but usually I take time between books of the Bible to touch on some things that maybe I sense need to be touched on, but here we have in 1 John 5, a, an interesting text of Scripture.

Now as we go through John, we understand afresh that John has over and over again emphasized a couple of things. He keeps pointing out the false, uh, he calls those who are of falsehood most of which profess to be Christians but were not, he calls them of the antichrist or the antichrist spirit and he wants to point out the difference, and then as he's pointing out the true, he brings one hallmark characteristic out over and over and over again and that's this unique special love that the true body of Christ has one for another, not necessarily professing Christendom, matter of fact, absolutely not professing Christendom, that involves so very many who don't know Christ at all, but those who truly are God's. One hallmark characteristic is the special, unique, abiding love there is one for another in a true church, or you could say in a biblically spiritually healthy church.

Let me ask you a question. Now don't raise your hand, don't say it out loud, okay? Do you have a birthmark? Do you have a birthmark? I have one on the top of my foot. Uh, you probably heard like I did growing up that everybody has one. Um, I remember as a child in grade school, as children we'd talk about everybody's got a birthmark, where's your birthmark. That could be a little dangerous in certain settings, I supposed, but, um, probably the phrase "everybody has a birthmark" came from a loving mom who had a son or daughter who had a birthmark maybe that wasn't the most attractive or in the best place and they'd say, "Well, look baby, everybody has one." And probably most everybody does. Birthmarks really mark you as one of a kind. It is true nobody has the exact same birthmark. Birthmarks also identify you. If you were a court somewhere, God forbid that happened in some kind of setting and you needed to be identified, that's one of the ways they could say, "We know this is So-and-so because he has this unique birthmark on his leg, his hand," wherever it is. So they, they identify you and they mark you out. You're unique. You're one of a kind.

Well, let's take that to a spiritual application. As a child of God, one who is saved, we have distinguishing birthmarks. We've been marked by the powerful changing work of the Spirit of God and it's, these birthmarks are not necessarily on the outside though they're manifested through to the outside, but this is a birthmark on the tablet of the heart. It's an internal change, an internal mark. Our uniqueness as the children of God is founded upon the truth that we see in 1 John 5, that is, that we are born of God. First we were born of men into this world, but then when you become a Christian, the only way you can become a Christian is to be born of God and you have now that spiritual birthmark on your life.

One way to say it is we are the begotten of God. I, I did some study on the word "born of God" or "begotten of God" and I found out these terms are somewhat interchangeable. They mean basically the same thing. For example, the King James version in the same verse translates the same Greek word one time "born" and one time "begotten," and so through time the English word has been interchangeable as such. But I thought, I found something interesting looking at Jesus who's called the only begotten of the Father and then all of us who are Christians who are called the begotten of God. I want to talk about that for just a moment.

First of all, in John 1:14, now we haven't gotten to our text yet so you just look at the screen. We'll show you what you need to see, alright? In John 1:14, Jesus is "the only begotten from the Father." Now let's all remember this morning that Scripture bears out unequivocally that God the Father and God the Son had an unoriginate relationship, an unreligion. I didn't know that word until I found it this week. In other words, there was not a time when Jesus, God the Son, and God the Father did not exist. It's all, they've always, it's always been there. There was never a time when God the Father created God the Son or begot him in that sense of the word.

Now Jesus' begetting is not an event of time but a fact irrespective of time. It's always been this way. Christ did not become the Son but necessarily and eternally is the Son of God. He never came into being, he's always been God, God the Son. Now certainly he put on incarnate flesh at one point and was manifested among men and perhaps in some context the word "begotten" includes that aspect, that he came forth in human form, but he essentially has always existed as co-equal to God the Father but he's been God the Son.

So what John is saying in John 1:14 where he says Jesus is "the only begotten of the Father" is that he is the sole representative of the nature and character of the one who sent him. Only Jesus is begotten in this way. Only Jesus is the sole representative or the true representative of the nature and character of God the Father. So what John was saying when he wrote the Gospel, we're in his epistle over here now, 1 John, but when John wrote the Gospel and he made that statement, he's "the only begotten of the Father," what he wants you to do is he wants you to understand the glory, the magnitude, the marvel of the one that they saw, and the one that they heard, and the one that they touched with their hands.

He's the only begotten of the Father so he stands apart in the sense of his begetting. It's unique, one of a kind, but now the Bible in numerous places says we are born of God, or that we are begotten of God, and a different word is used than what we saw in John 1:14 but it has a similar idea. In other words, there has been born in us the nature and character of God though we're never the Son of God like Jesus, of course. Even God himself now lives in us in the person of the Holy Spirit. The Son Jesus connects to the Father as his begotten and then we are born of God to become the children of God but, of course, through the merits and work of Jesus Christ. In simplest terms, we are God's offspring now. We're of his family. One scholar pointed it out this way as looking at Jesus being the only begotten of the Father but also us being begotten of God, he said it this way: where Christ is the only begotten Son by generation, we are God's begotten sons by Christ through regeneration. When, when, when, when Jesus is considered the Son of God, the begotten of God, you have like producing like, God the Son, God the Father, equal, like, perfect always, forever eternal, eternity past, eternity future, but with us you have something very very different. In our regeneration to become born of God or the children of God, something profoundly new happened, something infinitely better was made of us who were deplorably, uh, wretchedly defiled by corruption and sin and then we were made to be different by the power of God working outside of ourselves. In effect as the Bible teaches so clearly, we were spiritually dead and life was imparted to us, thus the, uh, beautiful picture of the phrase "born of God," new life comes.

Now let's go to our text this morning and I want to call this "The Birthmarks of the Begotten." That was all sort of background so you can set that aside, now let's talk about the birthmarks of those who are God's begotten. If you're one of those that keep notes and remember when I did this exposition many many years ago I used this title, but much much much has changed in the sermon so you're going to have to take notes again, alright? 1 John 5:1-5,

1 Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him. 2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments. 3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome. 4 For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world--our faith. 5 Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

So I want to talk about those who are begotten of God in four different ways, four aspects of the birthmark, if you will, of those who are God's children, those who are born of God.

I. Everyone who is begotten of God believes that Jesus is the Christ. Everyone begotten of God believes that Jesus is the Christ. Of course, the word "Christ" as used in verse 6 simply says whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. Uh, Christ means the Messiah, the anointed one, the one promised in the Old Testament, the one who's come as the only Savior of men. Now scholars point out here, A. T. Robertson, the esteemed Baptist Greek scholar points out that the word "believes" here is a special

construction and it means far far more than any type of intellectual assent. It means far more than any kind of just, "Oh, I accept that historically that Christ was the Messiah, He was the, uh, uh, promised one of the Old Testament prophets." It means here something weightier than that. It, it has strong force. It means a full surrender to Jesus Christ, not someone you're tagging on to your busy life as if I've got these pie, you know, I'm, my life is like a pie chart and one chart is over here salvation and I've tagged Jesus on. That's not what it, the scholars say this means. It means that he becomes Lord of the whole pie. He didn't just become Lord of the whole pie, he eats the whole pie. He owns the whole pie of my life. He's Lord of all and he's the one I look to as my Savior, a hardy heart devotion and trust and reliance on Jesus Christ.

Now I want to remind you in biblical truth there's just no exception here. Begetting comes before believing. Begetting, you have to be born before you can believe, and no wonder the, the New Testament writers were inspired to use this kind of illustration, these kind of metaphors, because everyone knows you can never believe physically unless you've been born physically. Your physical mind can't comprehend and grasp something unless you've been made alive and have a physical mind. Birth had to come first and so it is in the spiritual realm.

Just a couple of verses to remind us again. John 1:12-13, "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name." Well, pastor, right there it is. If you believe, then you're God's child. Absolutely true, but then he, he modifies and amplifies in verse 13, "who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh," that's your nature capacity to respond and do, "nor to the will of man, but of God." You were born of God and that's where John's getting to here that he's saying, "Church, you've gotta understand something, there's a precious wondrous specialness to what you have individually but especially what you have collectively because you are the collectivity, you are the body, the organism, the local church that is made up of those who are acted upon by God. You're the born of God. That makes you very different." And you have these birthmarks, you have this kind of belief, this faith in Jesus Christ that is not just tagging Jesus onto your old Greek or Roman philosophies of life which would be typical in this day. You didn't just tag Jesus onto your old Judaism and modify it somewhat and say, "Well, now we've got it all. We've got the law of God and we've got Jesus, we've got the whole package." No, that's not what you do. You don't just bring Jesus into our modern lives today and tag him onto your busy life. He comes in with a hardy heartfelt devotion, "He's my Lord and He's my Savior." That's a birthmark of the begotten.

Now lest some of you, many of you struggle with box-checking, "I've gotta do this, this, this, this, this, this, check these boxes off and then maybe I'm okay." This isn't about box-checking. You'll never believe on him as you ought to have believed on him until you're glorified by him in heaven but there is the reality of a change in your heart of hearts whereby there is an esteem for him, an embracing of him, an adoring of him, a love for him that's different now than it was before, and every time your pastor preaches of him, it's stirred afresh. Every time your pastor preaches of him, it grows anew and

you're reminded afresh, "Yes! Yes! He is my hope. He is my treasure. He is my king. He is my Lord."

That's a birthmark of the begotten. It comes from the work of the Spirit, of course, and he, and the Spirit of God enables you to believe on Christ in that saving way. John 3:3, "unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." You can't see what you even need until the new birth happens. 1 Peter 1:23 talks about us being born of imperishable seed. We're born of that which is outside of us. Everything that you can do, everything that you possess that you might can perform is of natural and corruptible seed. Your mind that you might say you believe with is a, is a finite and corrupted organ that's gonna lay in a tomb or in a, in a grave someday. Everything we have is temporal and corrupted but there's this thing called the new birth and it's performed by the God who is not corruptible, he's incorruptible, by the God who cannot perish, by the God who does not change, and when you're born by him it lasts for time and for eternity.

Before, before we were born of woman. That's one of the phrases the Bible uses. Secondly, before we were born under the law. Thirdly, before we were born according to the flesh. But now, go ahead and get the third one, now, go ahead and put it up there, now we're born of God. Notice the difference there. Notice the difference. Now again, John's writing to local New Testament churches. He wants them to grasp the wonder of this, the glory of this, the uniqueness of this, and part of his reasoning is there's a lot of impostors who have come in, there's a lot of un, un, uh, false teaching that has crept in and the true ones need to know who each other are.

You know what John was involved in? He was involved in a – are you ready – a true church ministry. Novel idea. You know, I've been criticized for calling our conference "The True Church Conference," to which I reply, "Yes, but what kind are you trying to have? A kind of true church conference? A sorta true church conference? A mostly true church conference? A somewhat true church conference? A false church conference?" That's what some of them should be called. No, we haven't arrived but we're striving toward being a true church which is what John is writing this for, which, in fact, is what the entire New Testament is focused on because that's God's key and primary work in the world is building his church out of local New Testament churches until one day at the end of time he'll collect us all together as one glorious church.

Alright, one mark, birthmark of the begotten is that they believe on Jesus as the Christ. Secondly, everyone' who's begotten of God shows his love for the Father by loving the Father's children. Shows his love for the Father by loving his Father's children. Now, now back where I come from in the sophisticated and cultural elite region of Lawrence County, Tennessee – that's a joke, you can laugh, alright? The phrase was common in my town, "Well, if he's So-and-so's son, then he's good for me. Or, that's good enough for me." Your father's reputation in the community meant something about the children. What John is gonna say here, when you love the Father, you also love the Father's children. Now where's John coming from? What's the context? The flow of the book is false teachers, those of the antichrist spirit, those who are divisive and trying to split off their own, their own little philosophy of church life and divide the church, they don't love

the church. The reason they don't love the church is they never really loved the Father. They're trying to use religion for themselves and not build Christ's true church.

Galatians 6:10 is a verse we use a lot around here, "So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith." You have a special responsibility to, you're to have a special devotion to and certainly a special love for those brothers and sisters who are in your local church. Why? Because you love their Father. You know him now. You've been born of God and you're learning to know this wonderful, glorious, holy, heavenly Father and so naturally you're attracted to his children who are beginning more and more to look like him and that's the track we're all on.

So many times in, in this day like in our day, there were those who'd come into the church and teach false doctrine, those who would abandon the church and neglect her needs, those who would claim to be Christians but say, "Now we've got a unique twist on the truth so we can still indulge in our sexual immoralities," that was prominent in this day. They were called proud and haughty in spirit and in many other ways showed disdain for God's true local churches and John had to deal with a lot of that, and yet so many of these people would proclaim that they're God's children too. Well, Paul, John wants to say here, "Well look, do you have these birthmarks? Do you show your love of the Father by your love for His children?"

John basically says it can't be so. He says, "You know what?" verse 5, whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God and whoever loves the Father loves the child born of him. He's saying, "Children, do you not understand that one simple way you can know the false from the true is a lasting enduring love for true brothers and sisters in Christ." That's a birthmark of the truly begotten ones.

Couple of thoughts that the Bible teaches and that we've experienced certainly and, by the way, it's not just us. Every church I know of that is striving to be true to God will experience various aspects of these two things. 1. They'll experience those who will forsake the assembly, those who will just go away and go their own way, and, um, the reason is they're not spiritual men or women, they don't connect to a spiritual body. They're carnal, they're fleshly and they want a good cultural, southern, evangelical experience that accommodates their flesh. So they forsake the assembly of a true church. Secondly, they cause factions. They cause little groups to start sort of against the church and against the elders because they found a better way. Now this is seen throughout the New Testament and one of the, one of the things that shows you the miraculous authenticity of the Bible is, is it's true today exactly as it was 2,000 years ago. That's why the Bible warns in Titus 3:10, "Reject a factious man after a first and second warning." Don't let that stuff get going in your congregation. Stop it when it starts going. In Romans 16:17, "Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them." Don't go with that group. They're obviously loving themselves.

You know, the book of Proverbs says, "He who separates himself seeks his own desire." Very simple. Very pointed but very true. They're not about loving the brethren because they love the Father of the brethren, they're about themselves and starting their own thing. In other words, they do anything but deny themselves in order to love and help the church in the, its pursuit of serving God. If they loved the Father, John is saying, they will love the brethren. That's another birthmark of the begotten, they have a heartfelt, weighty faith in Jesus Christ, a true life-changing faith experience in Jesus Christ.

They show their love for the Father, secondly, by loving the Father. Now the third part of the birthmark, everyone who is begotten of God has joy in obeying God. Look at verses 2 and 3, "By this we know that we love the children of God," now if you follow that back, verse 1, those who love the children of God are those born of God. If you're born of God, you love the Father, you love the children of God, and if you love the children of God, you will also, last part of verse 2, observe his commandments. "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome." Now listen, you can't love God but say the book that reveals God's character is a problem for you. Are you hearing me? You can't say, "Well, I love God but the book that teaches me His morals and the absolutes He expects humankind to function by, well, I, I'm just gonna push that aside because that's not convenient." No, then you don't love the one who wrote the book. That's why he says those commandments are not burdensome because I love the guy who gave them. That's not the right way to say that. I love the God who gave them, I should say. Because, so therefore they're not this burden for me.

You know, it's interesting that everything in nature obeys God but man. Everything does. Psalm 148:8, "Fire and hail, snow and vapors; Stormy wind, fulfilling His word." Everything in nature. The birds. The squirrels. The deer. The whales in the ocean. Did, they all obey God. Every one but man. Remember Jonah? Jonah, the reluctant prophet to Nineveh? Now the front story is that Jonah just didn't want them ungodly Assyrians to repent and believe and be spared, but the real backstory is Jonah knew this: that if God was gonna judge Nineveh who had none of the light of God's truth, they didn't have the Bible, they didn't have the law of Moses, but God's still gonna destroy them for their sin even though they didn't have the law written or the written law, they had it written in their hearts but they didn't have the Canon of Scripture that the Jews had, so Jonah said, "If God's gonna destroy them with such little light, how severe will the judgment be on us, Israel, because we're in rebellion and we have the light?" So Jonah was disobedient but notice the wind obeyed God in the book of Jonah. The waves obeyed God in the book of Jonah. The great fish obeyed God both to swallow him down and to spit him back up. Even the vine and the worm obeyed God.

But once you're a begotten one, then the word of God, God's law, is not a burden, it becomes a joy. You begin to read it – now listen to me now – not as a slave – listen to me, don't, don't stop listening, don't, don't stop – you labor now not as a slave worried that he might not achieve his master's approval, you labor now as a son who's grafted in by the Father and is a permanent member of the household. That makes it all different. This is your loving Father's word to you. It's precious. If you had a father that you loved very very dearly, he was just all the world to you and he went away some way to the war

or whatever, communication was sparse, I know that wouldn't be true today but in days gone by it was true, and finally after months you received a letter, you would treasure that letter because this is from your father you love so dearly. That's what the Bible is – listen – to those who are begotten of God. It's a strange foreign book to those who are not but once you're begotten of God, it becomes special to you and precious to you. Why? Romans 8:15, we've "not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but the spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, 'Abba! Father!'" Like the Psalmist said in Psalm 119:97, "O how I love Your law!" Psalm 119:162, "I rejoice in the law." Psalm 119:16, "I delight in the law." Psalm 119:103, "It's honey to my taste." Psalm 119:54 and 172, "The word of God is my song."

Our love that we have growing in our hearts, just pause for a moment. Child of grace, let me just pause for a moment here. Take your mind back to eternity past and there was God loving God the Father and he looked down through time that he had not created yet but he's gonna create it. He looked down through time and of all the people that would live all through the ages of time, he set his heart on you and said, "I love them and I'm gonna love them with a special love that will take the death of the coequal God, God the Son in their place on a cross." Brothers and sisters, if you're begotten of God and you begin to learn the glorious truths of sovereign grace, you cannot help but love God more and more and more. Just can't help it and so you love his word. They're not burdensome to you. They start becoming more of a joy to you. Love for our Father makes the load light. Jacob worked for seven years for, for Rachel to win her hand in marriage and Genesis 29:20 tells us they seemed unto him but a few days for he loved her. Love makes the difference.

It's very common in my life today to be in my study like it was yesterday, preparing a sermon and to hear the door open and to hear little feet. Little feet are different than big feet. Little feet get my attention and I've got a special call I put out, "Hey." That's my call and all of a sudden the feet pick up and I hear giggles and they bust down the hallway, they turn around the corner and they run to their Deedee. They heard my voice and they responded with joy. Every time the begotten of God open this book, they hear his voice. They hear his voice and something in them responds with joy. That's why we say here at Grace Life that the begotten of God are drawn to true churches because they want to hear the whole counsel of God, they want to hear all their Father's truth for them.

And John said, that's, that's a hallmark aspect of the birthmark of the begotten, that you're one that's on the journey of learning to joy in and appreciate and desire, matter of fact, you get to where, "I've got to have the word of God. It's my Father's word." So John perhaps would say time-out right here and say, "Now brothers and sisters in the churches, you've dealt with a lot of stuff, there have been impostors, there have been false teachers, there's been factions and divisions, there have been those who have forsook the assembly because they never were really of us," is what John says, he said, "But look at those who are around you, do you not see the birthmarks of truly the begotten of God in your fellowship?"

One more aspect. IV. The begotten of God knows the victory in overcoming the world. In other words, Christianity did not graft into their worldly life to keep them out of hell. No, Christianity became real to them and they began the pilgrimage of disliking this world because they begin to more and more like God and the world he would create and will create.

Look at verse 4, "For whoever is born of God overcomes the world," literally that's the present tense, uh, active there that, that, that means it's a continual thing you're doing now, you have a continual struggle with worldliness but you're continually wanting to overcome it, now the last part of verse 4, "and this is the victory that has overcome," that's aorist tense, it means it's finished, you have overcome it and there's consequences now that remain and he says it's our faith that does this. So we are overcoming the world because we are now the begotten of God and we see the world, now, now let's think about it for a moment, the world's priorities, the world's perspectives, the world's values. I just saw this briefly the other day that 10 years ago we didn't even have the term transgendered in our language, generally speaking. Ten years ago. Ten years ago. Now it's being just crammed and beat upon us that we're some sort of vile person if we don't embrace the latest perverse thing that comes out of the depraved hearts of humanity, and there's a part of us that says, "We don't love this world. That's not who we are." And by the way, any culture that decides it's no longer based on the objective moral absolutes of this book or the Judeo-Christian tradition is a, is a culture that will find no end to the multiplying effects of depravity and vileness and sickness and perversity and immoralities and that's what we're seeing. But we say to ourselves, "That's not us. That grieves me and that troubles me not just from the perspective of don't harm my children, that's important, but from the perspective of that dishonors my God and I love Him and I love His truth." So I'm present active in verse 4, the first part. I'm striving against that to not let myself be molded into this world's form, but also I know there's some aspects of victory that's already settled and set for me and I'm just waiting for all the results to unfold. He says both of those in verse 4.

Now look at verse 5, "Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?" Now he says in verse 4 that it's our faith that brings us this victory in overcoming the world. Uh, a couple of verses here. John 16:33, "These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world." So it is in Christ, through Christ that we overcome this present world system and its values and its ungodliness and its ultimate consequence that it will endure, it will be subject to. And then back at, uh, 1 John 4:4. 1 John 4:4, "You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because," of what? "Greater is He," Jesus, "who is in you than he who is in the world."

Go back up in verse 4, he says the key to this is our faith, it ties into belief, he uses "belief" twice in this passage, that hardy heartfelt devotion to Jesus now as my Lord and as my Savior. That is the victory. That is the victory. Our faith in Jesus, that is our faith in what he did for us and what he's now doing for us and what he will do to us. Let me say that again. We have faith in Jesus because of what he did do for us dying on the cross, buried, raised again, and what he's now doing in us keeps drawing us back to himself,

drawing us away from worldliness, all of this is a part of our overcoming the world, and then what he will do to us.

Three thoughts about our victory. We have victory over the penalty of worldly, worldliness in Christ. We have victory over the power of worldliness with Christ in us. And finally, we will have victory over the presence of worldliness in the age to come. That's how it happens, it's through Christ. I'm in Christ therefore I will not be – listen – I am no longer, I'm one of the begotten of God so I am no longer condemned with this world, hallelujah, and I am no longer controlled by this world.

I, I, I just get, I get humorous, it's humorous to me and I get angry at the same time when I hear people say, "Well, that's so 1990s. Don't you know this is a new age? This is new, this is the new way it is." I'll tell you what it is, it's not new it's old ungodliness. The new morality looks like the old immorality to me. You go back to the old Greek and Roman culture, we, they had to invent new words to describe all the sexual perversions they came up with. Being reckless and wild and following all of your fallen lusts is not new, it's old. It's old and God judged it before and he will judge it again so thank God in Christ we've overcome the condemnation that's gonna come to the world. In Christ Jesus we've overcome having to go along with the flow and being controlled by the world. And thank God in Christ Jesus we have overcome being stated to perish with this world. And by the way, God is not gonna clean up this old world when he returns, he's gonna banish it. He's gonna destroy it and build a new heavens and a new earth and some of our brothers and sisters today in churches who are getting out of balance in this so-called woke movement, in this so-called social justice movement need to remind themselves that God's not ultimately gonna clean this place up, why do you think you're going to? Hello? If Satan can get you chasing social causes until they're fixed, you'll never ever get back to the Gospel again and that's what Satan wants. If God's not gonna fix it, how you gonna fix it? Be balanced. We should be against injustices, amen? We should be against evil in the world. I abhor the evil of abortion and human trafficking and all the like. We should stand against it. We should vote to be against it, etc. etc. But if you, if you throw yourself in those causes until the world becomes righteous, well, it's not gonna happen and, see, that's part of overcoming the world where you don't get sucked into even the well-meaning, virtue-signaling, elitist philosophies of how you can be a true, caring, loving, serving Christian in this world. It's a lie. It's to get you off-track. It's to get you out of balance. It's to get you using your energies somewhere else than the Gospel and building true churches.

The last birthmark of the begotten is we are those who have overcome the world. It doesn't mean we're perfect but it means we know that in Christ we've overcome the penalty the world's gonna get. We are now overcoming the power of the world to press us into its mold and embrace its philosophies and its ungodliness and one day we will overcome ultimately even the presence of this fallen world and its sinful evil system. He said that's a birthmark of the begotten.

Now John's writing to people where, again, it was very common for people to claim to have come to know Christ but still hang onto – listen to me – willful open immoralities

and sinfulness in their lives and John's saying, "Nope. Brothers and sisters can struggle and they may fall but they don't openly embrace and walk in those lifestyles not after they become begotten of God."

I did have some verses from Romans 7 but I'll not do those but let me just close by asking you this simple statement: how's your birthmark? No. No. No. No. No. I don't wanna know some external box-checking stuff. I don't, I don't, I, I do care about how you live but that's not the point. I want to know from your heart how's your birthmark? Are you the begotten of God? Has he changed you by his Gospel? Do you belong to him? As I preach these things do you see the clear seed of the truth at least in your soul? "I, pastor, am one of the begotten of God." Do you bear the mark of being God's begotten one? By the way, being his is all that matters for time and for eternity. It's all that matters. All that matters.