



"God is Love"

Show Notes & Transcripts

Podcast General Description:

Follow Him: A *Come, Follow Me* Podcast with Hank Smith & John Bytheway

Do you ever feel that preparing for your weekly *Come, Follow Me* lesson falls short? Join hosts Hank Smith and John Bytheway as they interview experts to make your study for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' *Come, Follow Me* course not only enjoyable but original and educational. If you are looking for resources to make your study fresh, faithful, and fun--no matter your age--then join us every Wednesday.

Podcast Episode Descriptions:

Part 1:

How does a testimony of God's love help during faith journeys? Dr. Justin Dyer and Sister Aislin Dyer examine how we can face today's adversities with love, connection, and enthusiasm.

Part 2:

Join Dr. Justin Dyer and Sister Aislin Dyer as they delve into the profound themes of God's love, the journey towards emulating our Heavenly Parents, and the transformative impact of Jesus Christ in our lives.

Timecodes:

Part 1

- 00:00 Part 1–Dr. Justin Dyer and Sister Aislin Dyer
- 02:18 Background to Dr. Justin Dyer and Sister Aislin Dyer
- 04:42 Background to 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, and Jude
- 07:48 Recurring themes
- 08:19 Being discerning
- 10:54 Making connections
- 12:07 Jesus had a physical body
- 14:26 Servants of Jesus
- 17:15 Jesus’s goal for us
- 19:10 Sister Dyer shares a personal experience with fellowship
- 21:49 Hank shares a story about a Home Teacher/Ministering Brother
- 26:39 Loneliness epidemic
- 31:43 Moroni addresses loneliness
- 34:53 Church as a potluck dinner
- 37:05 Dr. Dyer shares a personal story about an answer to prayer
- 37:48 Jesus as Lord of Light
- 44:39 John shares a story about his missionary son in Iceland
- 45:51 Love vs fear
- 48:03 Sister Dyer shares a personal story about the power of music
- 51:43 “Perfect love casteth out all fear”
- 55:04 The reality of sin
- 57:10 The advantages of a spiritual life
- 59:49 Avoiding shame through the Savior
- 1:03:26 Connection vs anger
- 1:08:18 Avoiding the natural man
- 1:10: 52 End of Part 1–Dr. Justin and Sister Aislin Dyer

Part 2

- 00:00 Part II–Dr. Justin and Sister Aislin Dyer
- 00:07 Show instead of tell when loving others
- 02:14 Anointing and abiding
- 06:26 Stewardship, goals, and patience
- 09:34 Jesus as Advocate
- 11:34 Hank tells a personal story about not judging our past
- 14:10 God is love

- 17:20 Jesus loves perfectly
- 21:45 God loves his children
- 23:53 Becoming like our Heavenly Parents
- 29:33 Commandments help us experience God's love
- 31:36 The many definitions of love
- 33:06 Special witnesses of Jesus Christ
- 37:08 Prioritizing our testimony
- 39:02 Jude's example of people on a faith journey
- 44:47 Being in alignment with the Holy Ghost
- 48:20 Responsiveness
- 53:49 Takeaways from this week's lesson
- 57:54 End of Part II– Dr. Dr. Justin and Sister Aislin Dyer

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Biographical Information:



Justin Dyer is a Professor of Religious Education at Brigham Young University. He received his Ph.D. in human and community development from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and was a postdoctoral fellow at Auburn University. He teaches classes on religion and family as well as graduate statistics. He has conducted research on incarcerated fathers and their families and he currently researches how religion, family, and mental health influence each other. He has published over 60 academic studies. His research has won several awards including BYU's Young Scholar Award. He holds the college of Religious Education's Moral Education Professorship and is a Fellow with the Wheatley Institute at BYU.

Aislin Dyer graduated from BYU with a degree in English. She has taught a Women in the Scriptures institute class, and loves to study literature, history, and theater. She is currently studying dramaturgy at BYU, and loves to serve as the "drama mama" at the local high school.

Aislin works as a storyteller at the Springville public library. She loves to sing, especially with the Primary children at church and in the Nebo Holiday Chorus and Orchestra's production of The Messiah every Christmas.

Justin and Aislin are the parents of 6 bookish, musical children.

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Hank Smith:	00:00:03	Hello my friends. Welcome to another episode of followHIM. My name's Hank Smith. I'm your host. I'm here with my glorious co-host, John Bytheway. Hi, John. Welcome to another episode.
John Bytheway:	00:00:13	Never had that adjective before. Thank you.
Hank Smith:	00:00:16	You are a glorious co-host. I don't know what a glorious co-host would look like, but if there is one, it would be you. John, we're going to be in 1st, 2nd, and 3rd John today. I bet these are some books that you love. We're also going to take a look at the Epistle of Jude. The title of the lesson, John, is God is Love. What are you excited for?
John Bytheway:	00:00:36	That's what I remember about John. There's a lot of stuff about love and light and little children, and I remember that in the Gospel of John, he gives us that great, "By this shall all men know, you're my disciples if you have love." And then he talks more about love here. I'm excited just to look at can we learn some more about God's love for us and how that works with our own effort to try to become more like God and keep the commandments and everything. How do those all work together? That's what I'm looking forward to.
Hank Smith:	00:01:06	Yeah, I remember being in high school, getting into the scriptures and I really, really was drawn to, 1st John. Did a lot of marking I remember in 1st John, I thought it was like a good little quote book. John, we are joined by a wonderful couple today. This isn't something we've done very often in Follow Him, maybe one other time. We're here with Dr. Justin Dyer and his amazing wife, Aislin Dyer. Dyers, what are we looking forward to today in 1st, 2nd, and 3rd John and Jude?

Aislin Dyer:	00:01:36	I am really excited to talk about what God's love looks like in our life and how it can absolutely transform our experience both here in our mortal probation and through eternity.
Hank Smith:	00:01:46	Beautiful.
Dr. Justin Dyer:	00:01:47	And as I was looking through this, I love why he's writing about love. He's writing about love to answer a question. There's something going on, it's a really troubling thing and he's going to answer this question with love and he's going to answer it with testimony. I'm looking forward to that.
Hank Smith:	00:02:06	It seems like the Beatles were right. All you need is love. John, the Dyers are new to our podcast, not new to us. We've been friends for a while, but new to our listeners. Can you introduce him?
John Bytheway:	00:02:18	Justin Dyer is a Professor of Religious Education at Brigham Young University. He receives his Ph.D. in human and community development from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and was a postdoctoral fellow at Auburn University. He teaches classes on religion and family as well as graduate statistics. I'm laughing because I took a statistics class. Ouch.
Dr. Justin Dyer:	00:02:46	I teach both religion and statistics classes, the graduate statistics, and I think people pray more in the statistics classes than we do in the religion classes. They're trying to access the power of God like nobody else in that class.
Hank Smith:	00:02:58	That's true.
John Bytheway:	00:02:58	He's conducted research on incarcerated fathers and their families and he currently researches how religion, family, and mental health influence each other. In fact, he has a why religion presentation on mental health.
	00:03:12	Aislin Powell Dyer graduated from BYU with a degree in English. She has taught a Women in the Scriptures institute class, loves to study literature, history and theater. She is currently studying dramaturgy at BYU and loves to serve as the drama mama, it was just fun to say

that, at the local high school. Aislin works as a storyteller at the Springville Public Library. She loves to sing, especially with primary children at church, and in the Nebo Holiday Chorus & Orchestra's production of the Messiah every Christmas. And Justin and Aislin are the parents of six musical children. We're really glad to have you. This is going to be fun.

Aislin Dyer:	00:03:52	Thank you so much for having us.
Dr. Justin Dyer:	00:03:53	Maybe we should mention early in our marriage we almost argued or fought about nothing except for when we were reading the scriptures.
Aislin Dyer:	00:04:02	Our scripture study, that's when the fights happened.
Dr. Justin Dyer:	00:04:06	For whatever reason, she would bring up a question, I'd be like, "Oh, well, obviously the answer is," this or that or the other and she's like-
Aislin Dyer:	00:04:13	You have the answer, do you?
Dr. Justin Dyer:	00:04:14	Yeah.
Aislin Dyer:	00:04:15	This was going to be a discussion. Yeah. We had the hardest time getting over that. That's when all the negative feelings would happen, so if you need to pull out the fire extinguisher today, if things get heated, we have progressed though, we've mostly progressed beyond that. That's what 20 years will do for you.
Hank Smith:	00:04:34	We've got you two sitting close side by side, so we may need to get a referee.
Aislin Dyer:	00:04:42	Might throw an elbow.
Hank Smith:	00:04:42	Yeah, between you two. This is going to be fantastic. Justin, Aislin, let me read a little bit from the Come, Follow Me manual and then we'll turn it over to you and see where you want to go. The opening paragraph says:
	00:04:52	"When John and Jude wrote their epistles, corrupt doctrine had already started leading many Saints into apostasy. False teachers were questioning whether Jesus

had actually appeared "in the flesh". What could a Church leader do in such a situation? The Apostle John responded by sharing his personal witness of the Savior: "This is the testimony which we give of that which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our own eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life." And then John taught about love: God's love for us and the love we should have for Him and all His children. After all, John was a witness of that, too. He had personally experienced the Savior's love, and he wanted the Saints to feel that same love. John's testimony and teachings on love are just as needed today. When faith in Jesus Christ is questioned and false teachings abound, reading John's epistles can help us face today's adversities with courage, for "there is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear."

00:05:52 What a great opener. All right, Aislin, Justin, where do we want to go from here? What do we need to do in order to get the most out of these chapters?

Aislin Dyer: 00:06:01 Well, let's talk just a little bit about these teeny tiny little epistles. They're so easy to skip over. We tend to not think of them often, but they are filled with so many beautiful things. We're not 100% sure exactly who wrote these because there wasn't a name signed to them. 1st, 2nd, and 3rd John, they have a lot of language in common with the Gospel of John. They refer to Jesus as the Word, focusing on love and light. Whether it was John himself or whether it was a group of people who were closely associated with him and were taught by him and picked up the way he taught the gospel, whichever it is, we call these the Johannine epistles because that means related to John.

00:06:39 Then 1st John is a sermon that is kind of meant to be circulated around. I like to think of it like a copy of the Liahona, that it's filled with advice and teachings from Church leaders and they could share that with groups wherever they were. 2nd John seems to be like a cover letter to a specific congregation that you could put with a larger sermon and maybe has a little more specific things that they're talking about. And then 3rd John seems to be a letter to a specific person named Gaius. We might think of it like here is a copy of a letter from Church

headquarters. It is sent to, say, a ward and there's a letter saying, "Hey, in your ward specifically, please take these teachings to heart." And then maybe there's a separate little note to the bishop specifically talking about these things.

00:07:23 Jude is attributed to one of Jesus's brothers. It seems like James, the brother of Jesus was the bishop of Jerusalem and after he died, it may be that Jude kind of stepped into that role, but we don't know a lot about him, but we know that this is a pastoral letter, him writing to people he cares about.

Hank Smith: 00:07:39 Fantastic. They're small and simple, these epistles, but they can bring about great things. John, I just quoted the Book of Mormon there. I don't know if you noticed.

John Bytheway: 00:07:48 That was really good.

Aislin Dyer: 00:07:51 And these letters, they're going to have a lot of recurring themes. They're kind of like a piece of music, like a symphony where we're going to have a lot of the same topics circling back around like little melodies that we go, "Oh, yeah, that's familiar." And then they'll elaborate on it in a different way. Today we're going to kind of jump around a lot among them because they're all going to talk about love, they're all going to talk about sin and the need we have for a Savior, so we'll kind of bounce around a lot.

Hank Smith: 00:08:14 Kind of a cyclical message between love and light and truth.

Dr. Justin Dyer: 00:08:19 Let's start here at the beginning of John 1 and the background here is really important. Why is he writing this particular letter to all of the churches in this area? In 1 John 2:26, he says, 'These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you or that are deceiving you.' It's interesting, in 2:19, he says, "They went out from among us." So what you have is you have these Johannine churches that are connected closely with it appears the Apostle John, and there's people within those congregations that are leaving and trying to deceive them. In 3rd John, we get the name of one of these individuals

and Aislin always has to pronounce this one for me. How do we pronounce that?

Aislin Dyer: 00:09:10 I say it Diotrephes.

Dr. Justin Dyer: 00:09:12 Diotrephes. That sounds Greek to me. Diotrephes, who he seems to be rejecting John and the other Church leaders. In there, it says in 3rd John, "Diotrephes, who likes to put himself first, does not acknowledge our authority." So, if I come, I will bring up what he is doing, talking wicked nonsense against us.

Aislin Dyer: 00:09:35 I love that phrase. They're talking wicked nonsense.

Hank Smith: 00:09:38 Wicked nonsense. I'm going to use that with my kids the next time-

Aislin Dyer: 00:09:42 Sometimes my 8-year-old does that. She talks wicked nonsense against me.

Hank Smith: 00:09:45 Wicked nonsense against me.

Dr. Justin Dyer: 00:09:47 So we have these individuals that seem to be trying to take the Church in a different direction and in fact one biblical commentary says that the Johannine epistles, quote, "describe the fracturing of the Johannine community itself." John's going to talk a lot here about fellowship and about love and how do we connect these two? You're going to see the word fellowship come up again and again and of course me as a Tolkien fan, I have to think of Fellowship of the Rings. The last chapter in the book, the Fellowship of the Rings, is called the Breaking of the Fellowship. It seems maybe that's what's happening here. We're breaking the fellowship.

00:10:26 We have John here really trying to emphasize how do we connect and in some ways this gives me a lot of hope because you could imagine people at the time, wow, this Christianity thing is clearly not going to get off the ground. They're fracturing, the fellowship is broken, but the work of the Lord will get done and throughout the history of Christianity, in the beginning of the restored gospel, you had some fracturing that was happening and yet the work of the Lord just continues on.

	00:10:54	I was thinking back, I've been a bishop a little over four years now, just a few months after I was called as bishop, we had 2020. There was a lot of fracturing going on in societies. Just the other day I happened to look at an email that I'd sent to the ward and it was when we were just starting to get back and do Church again and it was like, okay, this third of the ward is going to come on this Sunday, the next third of the ward is going to come on this Sunday, the next third on that Sunday. We're going to stay distanced. You're going to sanitize your hands when you come in. We're going to tape off some benches. We're not going to sing, disinfect afterwards, all these things. There was a lot of stress put on our community with that.
	00:11:35	Shout out to the Mapleton 26th Ward. They did so good during this, but you still work with some fracturing and some difficulties. We had epistles from the first presidency about what we needed to do and sometimes it was really hard for people. I love how what he's trying to do is he's trying to say, "Hey, let's connect here and let's get some fellowship going on."
Hank Smith:	00:12:02	So it seems the problems of today are not new. They've been around for a while.
Aislin Dyer:	00:12:07	Yep.
Dr. Justin Dyer:	00:12:07	John wasn't dealing with a pandemic, but it seems he was dealing with some cultural forces at the time and cultural beliefs that were taking people away. Docetism, I think that's how you say it, was one of those things. This group really didn't have a very high opinion of the material world and our physical bodies, so they thought, "Well, there's no way the son of God would've come into a physical body. That's just impossible." They saw, well, Christ and Jesus was really just kind of a reflection and he didn't really come in the flesh. He couldn't have really died on the cross. That wouldn't have really happened. It would just appeared to have happened. And another thing is they kind of had a different view of salvation. Salvation was more, okay, well, I got to get out of the flesh and that's really what it was about. It wasn't really about sin. You can imagine the Apostle John saying, "Oh my goodness, these

people don't believe that Christ came in the flesh and they don't believe in sin and the need of a Messiah."

- Hank Smith: 00:13:07 These are vital pieces of the doctrine of the Church.
- Dr. Justin Dyer: 00:13:11 Exactly. I love 1st John chapter 1. So with these beliefs, what does John very first start out with? And, Hank, you kind of went over it initially. He says, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and our hands have handled, the word of life, for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father was manifested unto us." So right off the bat to combat these things that are going around, John is saying, "Look, I have seen, handled, I know He really did come in the flesh." And what an amazing thing to have these special witnesses that can testify. We're not maybe just dealing with this, we have our own things, but we still have our special witnesses today that can tell us what we need to know and combat what's kind of going on in the world.
- Hank Smith: 00:14:14 As we drift around this way and that way, someone says, "Wait, this is where we need to be. I was there, I witnessed this." I like that, an anchor keeping us there.
- Dr. Justin Dyer: 00:14:26 There's something that President Ballard said in his talk about staying in the boat, if you remember that. He said, "We cannot separate Christ from His servants. Without His first apostles, we would not have an eyewitness account of many of His teachings, His ministry, His suffering on the Garden of Gethsemane and His death on the cross. We needed them then, we need them now."
- John Bytheway: 00:14:48 This is really helpful to understand this idea that came also from Greek philosophy, this idea that matter is coarse and unrefined and also why would you want to be resurrected? Why would you want a body? Because having a spirit is more transcendent. It's better. That's one of the things I noticed reading John how many times. No, you have to confess that He came in the flesh so He really did have a body. Without the resurrection, what have we got? For him and for all of us could see why that's important to John and maybe that's why it's important for Satan to fight

against it, that maybe He really didn't have a body. Maybe God doesn't really have a body sort of a thing and maybe the body is something to have disdain for.

- Aislin Dyer:
- 00:15:33 I love this idea that we have special witnesses and that this is a critical way that the Lord organizes His people. We see through all history He sends a messenger who has received something from Him that he can then share to others.
- 00:15:46 As I have studied these epistles, I had a really special experience reading them alongside of the Gospel of John chapter 17, the Lord's great Intercessory Prayer. And that's an idea for some of our listeners that could be a really good experience to go through that chapter and go through these little epistles. There is an extraordinary amount of parallels. It's very close the ideas that are there and if we look at that Intercessory Prayer as the desire of our Savior's heart, that that's what He wants. It's really powerful. Just to do a few verses from John chapter 17.
- 00:16:22 "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I sent them also into the world. And neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they may all be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them."
- 00:17:15 I've pulled a few verses there, but I feel like that's Christ's goal for us, that we understand who He is and why He came and the love of God and He gives this message to His special witnesses and the ripples just keep moving outward and we share them with one another and He prayed for us because we are part of that group who are receiving these words from His witnesses and what are we

going to do with this? He prays that this will unify us. I see these very much as being the goals of these epistles that we're reading now, that the author of this, he wants the same thing that Christ prayed for in that prayer.

- Hank Smith: 00:17:52 This is a fantastic visual for me. So we've got these churches that John is speaking to and kind of some wandering going on, some drifting, "Hey, come over here. Listen to me. No, come over here. Listen to me." And all of a sudden you have John declaring from the very first moment, "Come listen to me, let's get back centered. I was there, I saw Him." And almost you can feel hopefully these churches turning and going, "Oh, yeah." And that's maybe the role of a prophet. We wander a little bit, we go and listen to this group, we listen to that group and here the prophet says, "Okay, come back, come back to center. Let's come back to what we know."
- Aislin Dyer: 00:18:26 Let's read 1 John chapter 1:3. "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." What does fellowship mean to you? What do you think it looks like?
- John Bytheway: 00:18:46 It feels like brotherhood, sisterhood. It feels like friendship. It feels like we're all in this together. Justin mentioned COVID and I just remember the feeling when we started to come back again to the chapel and how good that felt just to see everybody and to hug everybody and say, "How you been? I haven't seen you." That was a feeling of fellowship perhaps.
- Aislin Dyer: 00:19:10 I really like the phrase that crops up in a few places in the scriptures in Moses 7 and in Doctrine and Covenants 45, that God's people are of one heart and one mind. That's what we're going for the feeling. And I love how in every time that phrase comes up, heart comes before everything else. It's there of one heart and one mind. We disagree about a lot of things. Maybe we can find that place of unity in our hearts. That's probably the first thing. If we can agree about how we want one another to feel, if they feel loved, if they feel included, that we want them to feel close to God and that their questions and their problems are things that matter to us and we're in this together. And

if we can find a way to unify with our hearts, I feel like the rest we will figure out with time and with the Lord working on us, but getting our hearts right.

00:20:05 I have an experience where I felt so fellowshiped. The Sunday right after I graduated high school, I was trying to decide where I wanted to go, if I wanted to stay attending Young Women's until I left to college or if I wanted to go to Relief Society. And that felt kind of weird and scary. And the great thing is, is there's not a right or wrong answer. Young women can choose what they want to do shortly after they've graduated. And I was kind of feeling out the waters and I poked my head into the Relief Society room and kind of looked around. Two seconds after I poked my head in, Sister Stevenson saw me and Sister Stevenson is one of those fairy godmothers in my life. She just noticed me. She would say hi in the halls and she kept track of what I was doing in my life and she talked to me like a person. She didn't just kind of let her eyes skate over me.

00:20:54 She saw me and her hand shot up and she waved it and she said, "Aislin, Aislin, you come sit by me." And I didn't feel like I had a choice at that point. So I came down and I sat next to Sister Stevenson and she squeezed my arm and she said, "I am so glad you are in Relief Society with me." And I have got to tell you from that moment I knew I belonged in the Relief Society. No matter where else I have served in the Church since then, no matter how big or how small the Relief Societies I've been a part of since, I'm a member of the Relief Society, of this amazing global organization of women. And Sister Stevenson was glad I was there. She communicated how God felt, that He was glad that I was there and I have thought since then, don't we all need that? Don't we all deserve to have an experience where we say, "You are here. We are so glad you're here. You come sit by me."

Hank Smith: 00:21:49 Aislin, I love that story. It's so small. It's not something grand with a lot of fanfare, but that moment can really impact someone's life. I'm thinking of a home teacher I had when I was 14. His name was Ray Padraistic. I didn't love it when the home teachers came over, I'll be honest. As a 14-year-old, my parents would say, "Okay, come on, sit down. The home teachers are here." And I thought,

"Oh, they stay for so long." I sat down and he could tell, I think I was just drifting, just kind of staring out the window. I still remember this. He said, "Have you ever heard of Frank Sinatra?" And I said, "Oh, yeah, yeah, I've heard of Frank Sinatra." He said, "I was friends with Frank Sinatra." And I said, "No, you were not." And he said, "No, I was friends with him. I was a doorman in Las Vegas."

00:22:38 He said, "I was friends with him, with Sammy Davis Jr., with Dean Martin as this doorman in Las Vegas." And it piqued my interest. I said, "Are you serious?" I said, "What did they say to you?" "They're like, "Oh, hey, Ray. And we would talk all the time." And he had me. I don't know, he was interested in me, he was interested in me being interested. I liked it when the home teachers came over. It reminds me of Sister Stevenson who just said, "Come here. I am so glad you're here. I am interested in you."

Dr. Justin Dyer: 00:23:06 He shared part of himself with you, something that was meaningful to him. And I think that is such an important part of fellowship is that we understand one another. You can't really be in fellowship with somebody that you don't know and don't understand. And when we get to know each other, oh, that makes all the difference in the world. I mean I think that's one reason why Christ can love us perfectly because He knows us perfectly. The better we know ourselves and each other, this is life eternal that they might know thee. So knowing God is that fellowship and that love that just emerges from that.

Aislin Dyer: 00:23:40 I think it's really wonderful that the Church is not just telling us everybody stay in your own bedrooms and study the gospel and get your personal revelation there and just live your own life and now let's come together. Now let's share what we've learned. That's the glory of the diversity of God's creation is that we all experience this a little bit differently and there's tremendous richness when we bring it together and we share it. I think that's part of our consecration is willing to share ourselves with other people.

Hank Smith: 00:24:11 That's fantastic. John, did you have anyone fellowship you in that way?

John Bytheway:	00:24:16	Yeah, I knew Frank Sinatra too.
Hank Smith:	00:24:20	Back when we were kids.
John Bytheway:	00:24:21	<p>Yeah, he told me he left his heart in San Francisco and I said, "Well, I don't think that's physically possible." And then he taught me what a metaphor was. I love the story, but the idea of the heart being mentioned first, oh my goodness, that's in my notes. And just this idea, Aislin, thank you, that we can disagree about a lot of things in our gospel doctrine class, in our Relief Society and in elders quorum, but we can still be of one heart. That is a really interesting thought and our hearts focused on the Savior, on loving each other in the midst of our different experiences. I really like that idea. And I thought of Zion too. One heart, one mind. And maybe we can even disagree in Zion, but we can be of one heart. I don't think unity means sameness. Have you heard that phrase, harmony is being different together? The idea of being of one heart and how that's listed first. Okay, my mind's going to be racing on that. You'll have to stop me from time to time because I'm going to be thinking about that for a while.</p>
Dr. Justin Dyer:	00:25:26	<p>John, you mentioned about the one in Christ. Going back to 1 John 1:3, he's testifying of these things, "We have seen, we've heard, declare unto you that ye may have fellowship with us." Isn't that an interesting idea that he's declaring these things so that they can have fellowship together? They might be different in so many other ways, but, oh, coming together in the Lord Jesus Christ, that's where we can really find that fellowship, that connection is in Him.</p>
Aislin Dyer:	00:25:57	<p>Isn't it interesting that the Church gives one fourth of all of their potential preaching time with everybody together to fast and testimony meeting where people get to come up and share what they have seen and heard and experienced and testify of the Savior and the experiences that they've had? What a tremendous thing that our church is organized such that they say this is important, this is valuable, that the primary child can get up and say what they have to say and the teenager can say what is dear to their heart and let's make a space for sharing what we</p>

feel, what we know, and we're all stronger when we do that.

Hank Smith: 00:26:39 I love what we're talking about here, all of you, because loneliness today is an epidemic. The fellowship, the sociality, the friendship that the Church can bring, can, I think, literally save lives. You have a group that you belong, that you're involved in something bigger than yourself. I think all of us could sit here for a moment and just think of the friends we have made from being part of this Church and that right there, just that, I mean there's so much more that the Church provides and offers, but just that right there is worth the price of admission. The beautiful people that I've come in contact with, I could just start listing off people who have changed the direction of my life and you think of those across the earth. I think that in the UK there's now a minister of loneliness in the government because it's such an epidemic. Justin, is this something you've looked into at all?

Dr. Justin Dyer: 00:27:38 You know what? There's actually quite a bit of research that's been done on loneliness, sense of belonging. There's a researcher at BYU that did a really fantastic study and turns out that feeling lonely is as bad for your health as smoking a pack of cigarettes a day. I mean, it's actually physically really bad for you to be disconnected with other individuals. My research on religion and mental health, and this is the general research on religion and mental health, religious people are in general on average, less depressed, less anxious, fewer thoughts of suicide, lower suicide rates for religious people, and this has been something that's widely acknowledged within the research literature and one of the reasons is because you have that sense of connection, that sense of belonging within religious organization. And we give the kids emblems of belonging and you don't have to do anything for those emblems of belonging. You get the necklace, you get the ring. You have these emblems saying you belong here. You have the Sister Stevenson that's grabbing you and saying, "No, you belong here." President Nelson is grabbing each one of us saying, "You belong here."

00:28:52 Let me just mention that one of the things that I have researched is suicide. This is such a sensitive topic. Those

of us whose lives have been impacted by the suicide of a loved one, the feelings are just so overwhelming and they can be very complicated and we can think about what we should have done, what could have been done better. When we are working with this topic, we just need to know that there are so many things that go into a person being suicidal or deciding to end their life and there's no one factor. There's nothing that one person did. There's so many things that go into that that we just need to make sure we don't oversimplify it and that we don't do the woulda, coulda, shoulda sort of thing with suicide. But just realize, and I think the Church has done a masterful job of this recently. If you go to the Church's website or your Gospel Library app in the Life Help section, there's a topic of suicide and you have Elder Renlund who does a fantastic job of talking about it. There's some really good materials there.

00:30:04 So for anybody who is suffering from those kinds of thoughts, reach out. If we know anybody who has those thoughts, reach out to somebody who you can get help from. Again, the Church does a really wonderful job with that and is so understanding of individuals who have these kinds of thoughts and what a challenge that is. The highest risk for suicide are actually men in their 40s to 60s. That's the highest risk for suicide. Your elder's quorum is actually the most at risk by far from dying by suicide. We don't do a very good job as middle-aged men of connecting with each other. We sometimes don't find friendships with each other. Obviously this is something for the whole ward to focus on, but, boy, those elders quorum presidencies have a wonderful opportunity to create that fellowship.

00:31:09 At my ward, we're going to watch the football game all together as an elders quorum here in a week. It's those moments where, can we create that, it matters so very much to our mental health. In fact, those feelings of disconnection rank really high in terms of the kind of psychic pain that we can experience. Some of the most prominent theories and research on suicide, the beginning point, the point where the suicide ideation begins is what we refer to as thwarted belongingness. I'm trying to belong and I can't. I'm trying to be a part of a group and I just can't be part of that group.

	00:31:54	The twin thing that goes along with that that can lead to that then is perceived burdensomeness, and we'll talk a little bit about shame later, but just this idea that I can't connect with anybody and I'm just a burden to other people and those are the two twin things that really begin thoughts of suicide and form the basis for that. So anything that we can do to help connect with other individuals, to see them, to make sure that they know you're not a burden being here. We love you and you can contribute no matter who you are. Elder Christofferson once said, "No matter who you are, all of us can contribute to the unfolding of the Kingdom of God in your age."
Hank Smith:	00:32:43	Talk about a guy who maybe experienced loneliness, Moroni might be in that category. John, you'll know this better than me. Moroni chapter 6, he talks about the Church and that their names are taken that they might be remembered and nourished, and they did meet together often and did speak to one another concerning the welfare of their souls. That's almost how are you? How's your soul? How are you doing? It seemed when I was a kid, I don't know, maybe I just experienced St. George in the '80s, it was just a ward family. Everything we did was about each other. Maybe I just had a special childhood. Maybe it was just all of us who got to grow up in the '80s, right?
Dr. Justin Dyer:	00:33:28	I'm with you there, Hank.
John Bytheway:	00:33:30	I'm fascinated by this too. And, Justin, I was wondering if the research shows that is technology contributing to loneliness because you can feel connected, we even call it that, but can that contribute to I'm so into my device that I'm lonelier? Is that possible?
Dr. Justin Dyer:	00:33:48	Absolutely. I don't think there's much of a question that technology has been part of creating these lonely spaces. Kids nowadays, they go out with friends less, they leave the house less, they socialize less than they did in previous generations, and there really is something about being physically with other people. Our bodies, our minds are born to bond with other individuals. They're not set up to bond with cellphones and the technology. Now, I love technology, we're using it here, but if we are doing that at

the expense of actual personal sitting down, holding somebody, we're missing something that is so deeply necessary for us as human beings, as children of God that we will starve ourselves of bonding and I think loneliness is that starvation for the actual connection with other people and being physically present with somebody makes a huge difference.

- Aislin Dyer: 00:34:53 It's interesting how it takes all of us pitching in to make that. Sometimes it can be a little bit easy for us to say, "Well, when I went to Church, I didn't get anything out of it. Nobody was watching out for me and I'm willing to come and send my kids to the activities that feel relevant to their interests or whatever, but I'm not going to worry about everything." And of course, we can't all do everything, but I love that metaphor of the Church should be a potluck, not just a buffet.
- 00:35:19 We don't have a youth program if nobody's willing to show up and be there for the youth, even though sometimes that takes a lot of time. We don't have a good Sunday School discussion if nobody's willing to be the teacher and take the lead. And we all, of course, we want to get things out of this, and that means we all need to give what we have and we're going to give different things. My definition of adulthood that I tell my children is that you contribute more than you consume. I said it's not just when you get married or when you have kids because who knows what life plans will be like, but when you're ready to say, "I'm here and I'm building," and we all need to consume something, we all need things and that's fine, but you're also looking around and saying, "How can I give in my own way?"
- Hank Smith: 00:36:00 Yeah. It feels just as good to give as it does to receive, to give that fellowship, to know the names of the people in the benches around you and to call them by name and to shake their hand and to say, "How are you?" That can really be life changing. Thanks for that. That really got to my heart there. John, you look like you have something to say.
- John Bytheway: 00:36:20 Yeah, I was thinking about when Alma the Elder led those who believed Abinadi out to the waters of Mormon, he

gave what Elder Holland called the most complete list of what the newly baptized commit to do and be when he said, "Are you willing to come into the fold of God and be called His people" and then notice how much is more about contributing than consuming. "To mourn with those that mourn." Every week, we can do that. Comfort those who stand in need of comfort. So much of the baptismal covenant is not just about you. Part of it is, but it's about now you're part of a community and how we're going to take care of each other. So that resonated with me. I wrote that down. I contribute more than I consume. I'm going to stick that on our fridge, see if it works around here.

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| Dr. Justin Dyer: | 00:37:05 | The other day as a bishop, I was consumed with a lot of different administrative sorts of things and a lot of things just pile up. I was praying about, "Heavenly Father, how can I lift this burden here from me?" I thought of this elderly woman in our ward who's suffering from arthritis and all kinds of things, a lot of pain, and I went over and visited her and I left and I just felt so good. You cannot contribute more than the Lord will bless you. You contribute that and the Lord just gives. And getting past all the administrative stuff just to sit with somebody who appreciated a visit is soul healing for me. It was a really beautiful moment. |
| Hank Smith: | 00:37:48 | Yeah. I've never thought about the fact that John may have learned this from the Lord himself, the fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. I'm wondering if John, maybe I'm going too far here, but John is remembering the fellowship he had with the Lord and still has. |
| Aislin Dyer: | 00:38:06 | I love that. Let's read verse 5 in 1st John chapter 1. "This then is the message which we have heard of Him and declare unto you that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all." I'd just love to hear what pops into your head with that idea of God being light. That's a very, very common metaphor that we hear in the scriptures for God. |
| Hank Smith: | 00:38:30 | And this does sound like the Gospel of John. He hits that, I think it's the fifth verse. I could go look it up, but I think right when he said, "Look, in the beginning was the word |

and the word was with God and the light came into the world and the darkness comprehended it not." It sounds like John is making the same connection he made in his gospel, this is the light.

- John Bytheway: 00:38:51 The first thing I thought of was I drew some musical notes in the side of the verse. There is in his side, no darkness at all. You remember that?
- Hank Smith: 00:39:01 Yeah. Your mom must've been in the Tabernacle Choir.
- Aislin Dyer: 00:39:03 The Lord is my light.
- John Bytheway: 00:39:04 And so I thought of that and then I thought of what's become one of my favorite. It's always dangerous to say my very favorite, but it's really close and that list can change daily, but section 50 verse, is it 23, Hank, "That which is of God is light; and he or she that continueth in God, receiveth more light; and that light groweth brighter and brighter until the perfect day." I just love that idea of continuing in God and I think it comes up in these epistles too of continuing in God and don't discontinue God. If you're looking for more light, you don't discontinue the source of all light. So, you continue in God. If you have questions, great, own them and continue in God because that's where the light is. That's what I thought of.
- Aislin Dyer: 00:39:54 I love that. I think a lot about the verse in Isaiah that says, "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light, that they were in the shadow of death and the light came upon them." And I think it's one of the biggest metaphors of contrast that we get in the scriptures. That's something that everybody's going to understand, the difference of what you're able to do and how you might feel and what you're capable of when you're in the darkness, what you can understand about the world around you, and then when those lights come on, when that sun rises, that's when we do things. That's when we get out there and experience the world and learn. God is light. That's something that permeates everybody's experience. If God permeated our lives the way light permeates mine, if I was connecting with God every time I flipped on a light switch, that kind of frequency, that idea

that He's with me, the sun all day long is shining and He's with me.

00:40:44 I love what Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf said in 2017 in his talk, Bearers of the Heavenly Light. He said, "Every time you turn your hearts to God in humble prayer, you experience His light. Every time you seek His word and will in the scriptures, the light grows in brightness. Every time you notice someone in need and sacrifice your own comfort to reach out in love, the light expands and swells. Every time you reject temptation and choose purity, every time you seek or extend forgiveness, every time you courageously testify of truth, the light chases away darkness and attracts others who are also seeking light and truth. Christ's light brings hope, happiness and healing of any spiritual wound or ailment. Those who experience this refining influence become instruments in the hands of the light of the world to give light to others."

00:41:36 I love his examples of when we can feel and experience that light, and I think we've talked a lot about that, if we're having a feeling of fellowship, God's light is with us.

Hank Smith: 00:41:45 Yeah, you can feel it. You can see it in our faces. Maybe I should look at this closer. Justin and Aislin, you have six children. I've noticed that when it's dark outside or even dark in the house, they have a tendency to not go to those places. Something that is totally fine in the light, they'll play in the backyard, they'll go in the basement as long as it's light, but the moment something is dark, they have a tendency. I say, "Hey, can you run down to your room and get the..." "No. Will you come with me?" "Why?" There's something about the light that is inviting, but, man, in the dark...

00:42:19 I remember when I used to walk home, you guys are bringing back all sorts of memories for me with all this fellowship. I remember walking home to my childhood home and during the day that walk home was just fine. It was just a simple walk home, but, man, at night when it was dark, it was eerie that walk home. I always kept looking behind me and then eventually I just started running, I think, to get home. I think it's the perfect metaphor. God is light, it's inviting, it's comfortable, it's

safe. When I see something where God is probably not present or He's not there, I hesitate. I don't want to go there. It makes me anxious, it makes me nervous. Do your kids do that?

- Aislin Dyer: 00:42:58 Actually, our youngest, Thomas, he went through a period where anytime he'd wake up in the morning, he would go through and he would turn on every light in the house.
- Hank Smith: 00:43:05 Every light, yeah.
- Aislin Dyer: 00:43:06 Because he was awake, if he needed to go downstairs and get a new box of cereal or something, he would go downstairs and not only turn on the lights that helped him make his path to the storage room, but every single light and six hours later I'd end up going downstairs and be like, all the lights, all the time.
- Hank Smith: 00:43:22 Yeah, all the lights were on.
- Aislin Dyer: 00:43:22 This is why our electric bill is what it is. But I love that you spoke to that, his need to be able to see and pursue what's around him and feel comfortable and how important that is.
- Dr. Justin Dyer: 00:43:32 There are so many decisions we have to make in our lives and, oh my goodness, how often do we feel in the dark about those. Flipping on that light or having the light of faith, just having that faith, having that light can keep us from that paralysis that sometimes we experience when we're trying to make a decision, but if we have that faith, you know what? I'm going to follow the light of the world. Maybe I don't know everything, but I do know this: if I follow the light of the world, it's going to be okay.
- Hank Smith: 00:44:01 We're just like those kids. We're trying to turn lights on all over. I feel in the dark, I go to the temple, I'm trying to turn the lights on. I want to see, I want to feel safe.
- Aislin Dyer: 00:44:09 And God doesn't begrudge the electric bill.
- Hank Smith: 00:44:11 Yeah, he's like, "Why are these lights on again?"
- Aislin Dyer: 00:44:14 He's like, "Please, please, will you turn on the light?" Yes.

John Bytheway:	00:44:19	My son Andrew went to the MTC to go to Iceland. His MTC companion went home after only a few days. He was alone in the MTC. He learned Icelandic. When he got to Iceland, the sun came up at 11:00 AM and set at three or four.
Hank Smith:	00:44:39	Oh, goodness.
John Bytheway:	00:44:39	It was cold and dark and windy. I'm so proud of him because he... And then COVID hit and he was inside, and maybe, Justin, you know about this, but some kind of a happy light or something. The missionaries have a light in their apartments to give them a certain amount of light physiologically each day to keep them sane. So light is a fascinating topic to me, and when I think of the mist of darkness in Lehi's Dream, one of the things it did was it isolated people on the path.
Hank Smith:	00:45:17	Wow. That's good, John.
John Bytheway:	00:45:17	We talked about belonging and loneliness because now you couldn't see that there were others in front of you that were trying and others behind you that were trying. The decision to go on had to become an individual decision, but I wonder if they couldn't see, but they could hear the great and spacious and, wow, what a circumstance. I'm alone. I'm hearing all that, but I've got the iron rod. I'm going to press forward, and I wonder if that mist of darkness being that metaphor kind of goes along with what we're talking about. What do you guys think?
Dr. Justin Dyer:	00:45:51	That makes me think of the verse a little later on, "Perfect love casteth out fear." Because I think when we get in those dark places, it is scary. We have the mist of darkness. We have people yelling at us. I've got this iron rod. Now I can't see the tree anymore and it's scary and what do I do? All of a sudden, some of the trust we had before when we could see the tree begins to dissolve and perhaps part of that verse there about perfect love casting out fear, we can say, "I'm not quite sure, but I know God loves me."

- 00:46:24 Like Nephi said, "I know God loves me and I know this is His word and that's all the light I have right now. It feels pretty dim, but it's the light that I have. I'm going to stick with it." And eventually you stay on that path and the mist does dispel and the light does come. There are those moments where we are in the dark, where we're not quite sure, and it might be day after day, week after week, sometimes year after year, but the Lord promises us, and I know that if we stay moving forward, that light will shine again and we will feel that and we will be out of the fear that we're experiencing.
- Aislin Dyer: 00:47:09 That verse is 1st John chapter 4, verse 18 and 19. He says, "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love him, because he first loved us."
- 00:47:27 Elder Uchtdorf once taught that sometimes that fear might be because of us. What if we are causing fear for somebody else? This was in 2017 in his talk, Perfect Love. He said, "Maybe we, through our actions, through unkindness, through bullying, through us having a lack of fellowship, a lack of light in our life, we might be a cause for somebody else's fear." And if we can be transformed with God's light and God's love, as a parent, this is really profound to me. How can I remove fear from my relationships? It's love that's going to push that out.
- 00:48:03 I had an experience about 10, 15 years ago. I was in a place spiritually where I had a lot of really big thorny questions and they'd been things that I'd wondered about my whole life, but for some reason at that space in time, those questions got bigger and wordier and spikier until they were really pressing out anything else that I could think about or see or experience. At that point, the term faith crisis wasn't as much in vogue. You didn't really hear that term very often. I personally am glad because when I hear the word crisis, I think everything's in crisis, everything's bad, everything's broken, and that was not my case. I had wonderful experiences in my family, in a ward family, in church callings, in scriptures and with the prophet. I mean, I had so many good things, but I also had these questions that just really, it got to the point where I struggled to have peace.

00:49:01 I was very concerned and a lot of them focused around what my place was in eternity and with God's plan and what was this going to look like. I was really in a place where I was suffering, where I was hurting a lot and Justin sure tried to be a good listener, but he really wasn't sure how to help and it was me. Then I received an invitation to serve as the primary music leader and I was excited for the calling because I loved working with kids and I loved music and it sounded really fun. I had no idea what kind of impact that was going to have on me.

00:49:37 Over the course of the first few weeks and months as I served in that space, I began to have profoundly revelatory experiences where I would be standing at the front of the room and leading the kids in a song and I would be filled. I felt like a vessel that was overflowing with God's love and God's light. It's almost like I was getting a download from heaven. I would see in the middle of dancing around and leading a song and whatever it was, it's like I would see these faces and I would see each one of those children and I became hyper aware of, oh, they're having a rough day today, or it's kind of tough for those two to sit next to each other or, wow, that kid is really connecting in a way that they don't usually.

00:50:23 And it extended to the teachers noticing that that's a teacher who's feeling this, and I was so filled with God's light and God's love and it was happening over and over and over again until I realized that light and that love was pressing back on the difficulty and the pain that my questions brought me. I knew from my experience, it almost makes me think of Nephi's language where he talks about, "To the consuming of His flesh." I was filled with this sense of love and light and I thought, if God feels that way about these precious children, I'm one of his children and I'm included in that and the peace that that brought me, the way it dispelled my fears and my concerns was nothing short of miraculous, and that is a space where I continue to feel those feelings and feel my testimony get deeper and stronger and it has transformed my life.

Dr. Justin Dyer: 00:51:22 Something that we should have put on her bio is that she is the best primary music leader in the Church. She's had that calling for 10 years at different times.

Hank Smith:	00:51:34	Wow.
Aislin Dyer:	00:51:36	I just did my 11th program. Yep.
Hank Smith:	00:51:37	Oh, wow.
Aislin Dyer:	00:51:39	It is legitimately the best calling in the Church.
Dr. Justin Dyer:	00:51:43	Any other thoughts on perfect love casteth out fear?
Hank Smith:	00:51:46	These two are tied together in 1st John, aren't they? The idea of fellowship and light because he goes on in chapter 2 to say, "He that saith he is in the light but hates his brother", doesn't fellowship, "is really in the dark. He that loveth his brother abides in the light." It seems that John might be connecting light with love and fellowship and fear and hate with the darkness. Chapter 2, verse 11, "He that hateth his brother is in darkness and walketh in darkness and knoweth not whither he goeth because the darkness has blinded his eyes." So do you see that connection being made here, love and light and darkness, fear and hate, all kind of tied together?
Aislin Dyer:	00:52:32	I love how our prophet, the last number of years has been inviting us to examine ourselves for things that could be based in hatred, whether or not we're aware of them. He's invited us to look at what are our biases? Is it racism, is it these other things? Where do we struggle to have love? He's invited us to heal the conflict in our lives, to be peacemakers. As we talk about God being love, if we're not being loving, we're not in alignment with Him, as we try to become like Him, that means just increasing our capacity and our ability to feel and share and experience love.
Hank Smith:	00:53:09	And we can be blinded to the fact that we are in the dark and in hatred. So what does John say here? The darkness has blinded his eyes. I might assume, oh, no, I'm doing fine. I'm in the light. I'm doing great. And it's like, no, you need to do that introspection that President Nelson is talking about. Is there things in your heart that are of darkness?

Dr. Justin Dyer:	00:53:30	I think about the times when I've had difficult feelings towards somebody. Maybe somebody has done me wrong. It can become just so all-consuming. You're in bed asleep and at 2:00 AM this little lawyer in your brain wakes up and opens his briefcase and starts to litigate how right you are and how wrong the other person is. We just spin on it and we just keep going over and over it. I can say that just feels like darkness.
	00:53:59	It feels kind of good to think about, in fact, they've done studies where they look at a person's brain when they're thinking about getting even with somebody. I'm going to get back at that person. Pleasure centers light up. It's like you're eating chocolate, but, oh, is it so destructive to our souls? It wears away at our physical system. It just does. It just wears us down and we can become sick because of it, because they're hating on people and it just blinds you to the beauty of life, to the beauty of that person, to the fact that they're a child of God. You just can't see clearly. Hatred does a real number on us in terms of being able to see reality clearly.
Hank Smith:	00:54:41	Yeah, it seems like that's what happened to this one man that you talked about in 3rd John. What did you say his name was?
Aislin Dyer:	00:54:47	Diotrephes.
Hank Smith:	00:54:48	Diotrephes, who loves to be first, blinded by pride and he does not like what John is teaching. You might say to him, "You're not seeing the truth and the light that's being offered to you. Pride has blinded you."
Dr. Justin Dyer:	00:55:04	One thing I think that's tied to all of this, and it's really interesting, again, the people at the time were saying, "Well, there's no real sin." And here in 1 John chapter 1:8 he says, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." And then in verse 10, "If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is in us."
	00:55:33	It is so critical that we recognize when we make mistakes. From a mental health perspective, one of the worst things we could possibly do as a society is believe that all choices

and all beliefs are equal to each other, that in reality there's nothing bad. Recognizing that there are some things that are much better than others is a very mentally healthy thing for us to do. And we all have those moments when we're doing something and we don't want to be told that we're doing it wrong. The other day I was trying to fix our shower and Aislin had to come in three times and say, "I don't think you're doing that right," because yanking on something trying to get it off.

Aislin Dyer: 00:56:15 I'm like, "You're going to make it worse."

Dr. Justin Dyer: 00:56:19 I know I'm not Mr. Fix It, but I'm trying to be. And finally I'm like, "Okay, yeah, I'm probably doing this wrong." And so I call my neighbor Jared and he has all the tools and he gets in and he gets it off just fine. I have to swallow my pride in that instance and recognize, yeah, I was kind of breaking it and we maybe kind of had to fix it a little bit after I was through, but it is so good when we recognize that we do something wrong. If we never recognize when we do something wrong, then we really can't progress at all. I think it's so important that we realize how vital the gospel patterns are. Those are the right choices. Even though they might be difficult, even though we might have to swallow our pride, and even though they can be really strenuous, boy, those are the right choices.

00:57:10 I've been crunching numbers on mental health for a long time, literally run thousands of statistical analyses on mental health and I can tell you that God's patterns lead to a significant advantage in life. Sometimes when we sin, I think Satan kind of has maybe two things. It's like a balance beam. Satan is trying to push us off one side or the other. Pushing us off on one side he says to us, "That really wasn't sin. No, that really was okay." If we say we have no sin, we just deceive ourselves. Maybe we even get a little angry at a commandment that we broke. We say, "Well, no, that's not really sin." And we kind of go down that road.

Aislin Dyer: 00:57:55 That's interesting that we can deceive ourselves about that. I think all human beings are a little bit prone to that. As I was studying verse 8, I was thinking about that. Why do we deceive ourselves? Sometimes it's we're

rationalizing because maybe repentance feels uncomfortable or scary and we'd like to avoid it. We'd like to not need that. Maybe we are afraid of change that would need to happen. Maybe we are afraid of losing face or losing status in admitting we did something wrong. I know I've been in a situation where I have been fearful when I knew that I needed to confess something, that that person was going to get mad at me, that it would damage a relationship. Again, that fear. Fear can be one of those things that leads us to deceive ourselves.

00:58:38 I remember when I was in high school, there was a guy I really liked and he liked me too, and I was too young to be dating according to the standards my parents had encouraged me to keep. And they said, "Just be friends. Let's not be dating." And I told myself, well, we're not dating. He's my best friend. We're not dating. I'm too young. We're just best friends. And now when I look back, I go, oh, yeah, we were dating. My kids laugh at me because I'll kind of tell them, "Look, if it looks like a cat and if it sounds like a cat and if it acts like a cat, it's probably a cat." But sometimes we tell ourselves, "No, that's a turtle." I think we're really prone to that. But again, if we have the love of God in our life, it can push out our fear of repentance. If we know He loves us, maybe we don't have to be so afraid and so avoidant and so prone to deceiving ourselves.

Dr. Justin Dyer: 00:59:31 Huge win for the devil is to get us to believe that sin is not sin. On the other side that he might push us off is when he wants us to fall into the despair and self-hatred. He doesn't say, "Oh, it's not sin," but he says, "Oh, it's so bad and you are so bad. You are so wrong."

Hank Smith: 00:59:49 "You're broken."

Dr. Justin Dyer: 00:59:50 Yeah, you're broken. And that then gets into the shame area of things where it's not that thing I did was bad, but you are broken, you are evil, and that just makes it so you are disconnected from other individuals. As leaders and as parents, we do have to walk the straight and narrow as well, and we have to tell people the whole truth. It's so critical we tell them the whole truth. The whole truth is, number one, yeah, that's something wrong. Number two,

you are loved infinitely. We have to tell those twin truths, that love and laws, it was brought up earlier that we have both of those. We have to tell the whole truth to people. It's not kind to hide it from somebody.

01:00:33 I was talking with somebody the other day, a really nice guy. He's got teenage kids and I was mentioning about how the mental health of Latter-day Saints is, we have our mental health issues certainly, but on average better than most, about how gospel patterns really feed into that good mental health. And he brought up shame and, well, so important to realize, but then mentioned that one of his teenagers had started drinking. In an effort to not shame, the dad said, "Well, just be safe. Number one, drinking is illegal. You can get into a lot of trouble just on that score. And, number two, drinking is also associated with poor mental health."

01:01:18 Now, I don't know the full story and the full relationship, so I don't want to say too much there, but there is this reticence today to say that certain things are actually wrong. We need to make sure that we are not shaming the person by telling the whole truth that it is wrong and God does love you infinitely and all things can be made right through the Atonement of Jesus Christ. But, again, as a society, one of the worst things we could be doing is to not tell people when things are good or bad because then you're really in the dark, you're really in the darkness not knowing which way to go. We have to be able to do that, and I just tell Church leaders, I say, "You teaching right and wrong to your youth, you're literally saving lives. You're literally saving lives." Obviously let's stay away from the shame. That's something we have to do. We also cannot hide from our youth and adults that there really are some things that are wrong and we need to avoid those.

Hank Smith: 01:02:29 Can you imagine trying to help someone get somewhere and which way's north? Well, whichever way you choose is north, whatever north feels good for you. Well, how am I going to get anywhere? How am I going to get anywhere if you're not telling me where the lines are, where the fences are, where I can go, where's dangerous, where's not dangerous?

John Bytheway:	01:02:48	Justin, I think it might be helpful to define that. I remember, I think President Packer gave a talk about guilt and compared it to the warning light in a car that says you're low in motor oil, you need to get this fixed, and it's a really good thing. When you're talking about shame as a bad thing, what can our listeners know that that's not appropriate? Shaming somebody, what does that mean?
Dr. Justin Dyer:	01:03:11	That's a great question. When we shame somebody, we indicate to them that how could you have done such a thing?
John Bytheway:	01:03:22	Is it like you said, "You're bad. Not what you did is bad, but you are bad?" Is that-
Dr. Justin Dyer:	01:03:26	Yeah, it is. It's saying to the person that you are bad and indicating to them that you are the problem and not what's happened is the problem, but you are the problem. Let's say a kid comes home after their curfew. The parent says, "You are so irresponsible," versus, "Hey, we've talked about this. You know that we have these rules and we've talked about the consequences, and so we're going to follow through with the consequences." By the way, there is no law written in heaven that when a kid comes home after curfew that you have to immediately be angry with them and talk about that first.
Hank Smith:	01:04:07	There's no irrevocable law that that has to be the first thing.
Aislin Dyer:	01:04:11	Right.
Dr. Justin Dyer:	01:04:12	Right. I would begin with, "How was your evening? How did everything go?" And talk to them and connect with them and then, all right, with that built and so they know that you love them, now let's talk about, "Hey, you were late. What happened?" And my guess is that if you ask them how the night went, they'll probably start by talking about why they were late. But then you can get into, "All right, a rule has been broken. We know the consequences." And hopefully we have talked about the consequences and then we can enact those consequences. Sometimes parents use the consequences of anger. If you do something wrong, your consequence is for me to get

really angry at you and for me to try and heap upon you the fire of the eternal pit so that you just feel small and bad.

Hank Smith: 01:05:05 In my parenting head, that makes me think, oh, that'll stop them from doing that next time. There's something logical about that, I'm wrong, but I can see me as a parent going, oh, if I bring this painful experience on them, the next time they'll go, "Well, I don't want to have that painful experience." But you're right, I'm actually doing more damage, aren't I, Justin, at that point?

Dr. Justin Dyer: 01:05:25 It's good if we can explain to our kids, "This was really hurtful to me when you said this. This really created some difficult feelings in me or I felt angry." So expressing those things is not a bad thing, but when we use anger as the whip and we say, "I'm going to whip you into shape by just bringing all brimstone down on your head," that really can make the individual feel very small or it can make them feel defiant one way or the other, versus, "Hey, we've set up these rules. You came in late, you know that you're not going to be able to go out for another two weeks." Okay, moving on.

01:06:05 Now, not all kids react like that, and I totally get that being a parent, I understand that. Sometimes we think that if we just verbally flagellate the other person enough, then that'll keep them from doing it again, and quite frankly, we also think that doing that to ourselves will correct us. I don't know if you've ever done this, but you do something wrong and then you say, "I'm so stupid. I'm such an idiot. I'm so dumb." We call ourselves all the most horrible names in the book for about five to 10 minutes, and we think, okay, now that I've called myself all these mean names, I have somehow atoned for my sins, or I've somehow now indicated to myself, I've given myself enough pain that I won't do it again. When in reality we've just lied to ourselves. We've just said how bad and evil we are and how stupid.

01:06:53 Well, guess what? That stupid, evil, bad person that we've just told ourselves are, well, we're probably just going to do the same thing again versus saying to ourselves, I know I did something wrong, and I know I used my agency to do

something wrong. And we didn't excuse it. A real apology looks not like, "Oh, I'm sorry I snapped at you, but I was really tired." A better apology is "I snapped at you because I used my agency in a bad way." We're not shoving it off to anything else. We're owning that, no, I did this. This was me, but I can fix it and I can move forward, and I'm a child of God, and I have somebody that has infinite power and has infinite love that can help me through this. We can hold our heads high as children of God and walk forward.

01:07:40 And guess what? When we realize we hurt somebody, that will bring about the remorse of conscience. I think that's such a critical thing. In fact, it's a very mentally unhealthy thing when we hurt somebody that we don't feel a little bit of remorse or empathy. We should feel that, that's good, but we don't cross over into the shame area where we feel like we are horrible people. The thing was horrible. We should acknowledge it, face it straightforward, and then say, all right, I'm going to fix this. I'm going to do something that's going to improve this situation, and I can connect with people, especially with God that can help me do that.

Hank Smith: 01:08:18 Justin, I find it ironic that oftentimes I'm upset with my children for giving in to the natural man, so I'm going to show them how upset I am by giving in to the natural man.

Aislin Dyer: 01:08:29 That is so on point.

Hank Smith: 01:08:30 How dare you give in to the natural man that way? Let me now lay into you with what the natural man wants me to do. It satisfies the natural man to say, "You are so selfish," versus, "Let's talk about this. That was not a very effective decision." One is being self-restrained, and the other is, let me heap coals upon your head and make you feel small and awful.

Dr. Justin Dyer: 01:08:56 Along with this, 1 John 3:9, it says, "Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin." It's like, oh-

Hank Smith: 01:09:05 Oh, great.

Dr. Justin Dyer: 01:09:06 I guess I'm not born of God, but the JST-

John Bytheway:	01:09:10	Thankfully.
Dr. Justin Dyer:	01:09:11	... helps us out a lot by saying, "Doth not continue in sin for the spirit of God remaineth within him, and he cannot continue to sin because he is born of God, having received that Holy Spirit, a promise." So you don't continue in the sin. When I see, going back to as bishop, somebody coming in and saying, "I messed up." I'm like, "You are born of God." I'm like, "This is so wonderful. You have been born of God. This is holy because you don't want to continue in sin." People that don't want to continue in sin, that's being born of God. It's not very useful for John to say, "Oh, yeah, those that sin and those that don't sin," because we're talking about Jesus and the rest of everybody else, but he's talking here about those that continue in sin and those that don't or don't want to continue in sin or working not to, that's born of God right there.
Hank Smith:	01:10:02	So the guilt that I feel might tell me who I really am that, hey, I am a divine being. I'm a good person. I feel guilty because that thing happened. I like that. Guilt is a sign of a person who was born of God.
John Bytheway:	01:10:16	You might remember Brad Wilcox's talk about the young man struggling with a problem, and he said, "I can't go to Church because I'm such a hypocrite." His leader said, "Well, you're a hypocrite if you try to deny it or say it didn't happen, or don't confront it or say that the Church shouldn't have such high standards, but here you are confessing it and trying to deal with it." That says something about what you just said, Justin, this is who you are, look at what you're doing.
	01:10:49	Please join us for part two of this podcast.



- Aislin Dyer: 00:07 Let's go to 1 John chapter two, verses 15 through 17 are such a good guideline. This is this light that we get from God. Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world passeth away and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God, abideth forever. It is so easy for us to follow our appetites, whether it's the appetites of our body or our ego. There's a saying, "Don't tell me what you love. Show me where you put your time and your energy and resources and I will be able to tell you what you love."
- 00:52 And sometimes I think the things that we say are our priorities, if we actually were to say, "Well, okay, how much do you actually give to those things?" Maybe it wouldn't look true. We can get really distracted by things that if you've ever heard the term urgent versus important. There are things that feel urgent that we have to do, but maybe they're not actually important and this is tricky. It doesn't mean that we say, "Let's burn it all down. Let's quit all our jobs. Let's never do anything that's going to pass away again." Of course, it's not that. When I think about housework, sometimes it's nice to think these dishes are going to pass away one day.
- Hank Smith: 01:29 Yeah, eventually.
- Aislin Dyer: 01:30 You know that laundry, it will not be resurrected. I don't know, sometimes that's a nice thought to think it will pass away, but there can be eternal principles behind the things that we do, even in a temporal space that we can say, well, the service we're giving in our families, a family culture of shared work and unified effort, a space we create where we can fellowship others, the self-discipline we cultivate

when we're good stewards of what we have. Those principles are very eternal and they can fulfill eternal purposes. So that's why I love that President Nelson in General Conference just invited us to think celestial, what do you really want and how does everything you're doing help or not help you along the path to that goal?

02:14 It's interesting for us to figure out how do we then discern these things? How do we figure out what is an earthly appetite and what's an eternal something? So verse 20 is really interesting. It says, but ye have an unction from the holy one and you know all things. I'm sure both of you used the word unction like five times before breakfast, right? Yeah. Like top 10 most common words. An unction is an ointment. The Greek word is charisma, and that's where we get the term chrism. If you're not familiar with that, in many, many civilizations when somebody is crowned the king or the queen, they are anointed with a chrism, a special ointment, and a holy oil.

02:57 So when Charles, the 3rd was crowned recently, that's the most recent earthly monarch that was established, the Archbishop of Canterbury anointed him with a chrism, with an oil. The idea behind that was that now Charles is something more. Before, he was not king. Now, he's king. He's more than that regular person. However wealthy and privileged he may have been, he's something different now.

Hank Smith: 03:22 This anointing has changed something.

Aislin Dyer: 03:25 Exactly, and we get an unction from the holy one. And through that unction, that anointing, we have the ability to know all things. So if we move on to verse 25, it says, and this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life. Then in verse 27 and 28 it says, but the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you and ye need not that any man teach you, but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things and is truth and is no lie. And even as it have taught you, ye shall abide in him. Now little children abide in him that when he shall appear, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before him at his coming.

- 04:08 That language just hollers covenant to me. That if we abide in him, we might also say, take his name upon us. If we are with him and we are disciples and we're following him and doing what we can, what does he promise us? Eternal life. And he gives us gifts to help us with that, to teach us and to guide us. I mean, that's our baptismal covenant in a nutshell. We're going to follow him and take his name upon us. He's going to give us something. He's going to give us the gift of the Holy Ghost and we can learn all things. It can testify of all truth. One of the things we're blessed with in the temple, we are symbolically anointed in the temple while we participate there, and that is one of my favorite things to go and do in the temple is the Initiatory, because it feels like just this outpouring of love and confidence and gifts. We get the gift of discernment. The Holy Ghost can help us know what's right and wrong, how to make our choices, how to figure out what's important versus urgent.
- 05:07 And I truly believe that we can receive capacity through God's grace, through the gift of his spirit, because of our anointing through our covenants that we can be enlarged and enabled to do whatever God asks of us.
- Hank Smith: 05:21 Aislin, I love what you've said here. Help me understand when you talk about the temple anointing and how powerful I feel, how my enthusiasm for being a saint, it's just at its peak and then I come back into parenting and to dealing with life and people. And I don't want to listen to the message of 1 John and just feel lousy about myself. I don't want to have any listeners at home thinking, "Well now I've just learned what a terrible parent I am. I've also learned that I'm not really in the light because I'm stumbling with a relationship." How do we overcome that feeling of, "Okay, here's the ideal, here's what we're after. And here's where we are and it's okay that those are two different things and we can stretch a little bit." I just can think of a listener at home who's thinking, "Man, if I would've known these things when I was parenting." It almost can be shame that comes on a parent thinking, "I'm so lousy, I wish I would've known."
- Aislin Dyer: 06:26 I relate to that. Maybe my kids would disagree, but I think my biggest flaw as a parent is I'm somebody with a big

temper that's a part of my natural man that I have struggled with my entire life and we all know it. What is extraordinary though, that's something that I have grappled with and I have known that that was a part of me that was potentially dangerous to the people I love most. I have done the self-flagellation. I have done the, "I'm so terrible, why do I do this? That'll stop me." No, it just gets me in a darker and darker place. What's fascinating though, when the children and youth program was first introduced and they started encouraging us to scaffold our people in our stewardship to make goals, I realized that if I wanted to encourage my kids to make goals and make themselves available so that we could support them, that I should probably model that.

07:17 So I made some goals of my own and I put them up in a public space in our home and that took some vulnerability for me to do that. But one of the things I put on there was, I need to learn about anger. And I did the baby step, right? I said, "I need to learn about this." And what was fascinating was by me being open with the fact that I had a goal, I was actively working on something. It's amazing how it made me more thoughtful and more aware. It gave me that half a second to actually make a choice and not just react with my instinctive natural man. But I had one instance where I had a child say, "Mom, remember your goal." I just had to eat that one.

Hank Smith: 08:01 Oh man.

Aislin Dyer: 08:03 What was fascinating is I did learn more about it. I've always tried to be careful about apologizing to my kids, that's actually really important to me. I have watched in our family as I apologized and as I sought to grow and to change. I have watched my children be more gentle with one another. I have watched them become more ready and willing to seek forgiveness. And looking back, it was a majorly gradual process and I have not fully arrived. We are not deceiving ourselves about that. I still have issues, but I see progress. I can actually see progress in myself where I go, "You know what? I don't get mad as often as I used to or I don't snap as quick." I cannot even express the relief I feel that it was possible to make progress. Did I really believe that I could make progress?

08:52 Maybe sometimes I didn't. Maybe I thought, "This is just me. This is who I am and this is what we all get here in this fallen world. It's going to take the Resurrection to fix this." But I do see progress and that is something where I see the Atonement of Jesus Christ working in my life. This is that process of becoming that we love to talk about. And it is slow, it is a wrestling match sometimes, but we have a fellowship to help one another within our families, within our other church communities. And as we are vulnerable with one another, we give each other permission to also work and struggle and hold each other's hands and bear one another's burdens as we do so.

Dr. Justin Dyer: 09:34 We need to make sure we're not shaming ourselves for shaming others. There's a really vicious cycle that can come up. I love in 1 John one, he does talk about the reality of sin, but he also talks about the reality of salvation. Just what Aislin was saying there. 1 John one verse nine, if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. And then jumping over to chapter two, there verses one and two, my little children, these things I write unto you that ye sin not and if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father Jesus Christ, the righteous, and I love that. He's like, "I'm going to write these things to you so you don't sin, but that's probably going to happen." We have an advocate with the Father and he is in verse two there, the propitiation or sacrifice for our sins and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

10:36 This isn't one of those localized gods that some of the people were thinking of at the time. This is a God of the whole world. He is faithful. I love that pairing with John and it's kind of like every other verse, like verse eight in verse one is about sin. Verse nine is about forgiveness. Verse 10 is about don't sin. Verse one in the next chapter is, if you do sin, we have Jesus. And verse two, he is the sacrifice for our sins and of the whole world. He's pairing these oh so tightly, he's binding them together. And again, we have to teach the whole truth, which is both of these, and I just think John's doing such a masterful job here of wrapping these two ideas together.

Hank Smith:	11:24	It's like the Fall and the Atonement. The Fall and the Atonement over and over. The Fall is important.
Aislin Dyer:	11:31	Yep. Tell the whole story, not just half of it.
Hank Smith:	11:34	What we're talking about here reminds me of an experience I had years ago. Sarah and I were walking out of the Jordan River temple and we're just walking back to our car. She asked me just an odd question. She said, "Do you think that Adam and Eve felt a little dumb when they found out that they were naked?" And I said, "What?" And I was so confused. And she said, "Well, think about it. If you didn't know you were naked and then you found out later. 'Oh, by the way, that whole time you were naked.' Don't you feel like you'd just look back and go, 'Oh my goodness. I can't believe I did that. I can't believe that.'" I kind of laughed and I said, "Where are you going with this?" And she said, "I learned something today. It's not fair to judge yesterday's mistakes with today's knowledge."
	12:35	When we learn something new or we get a new truth from the scriptures, I think it's dangerous for them to say, "Let's look back and see what would've been different had I known that thing before. What relationship could have been saved? What child could have been helped? That can be a dangerous, hurtful place to go where if we learn something new, let's look forward to what's possible, what we can do now." Because I worry about the moms and dads listening who are now maybe grandma and grandpa and who are thinking, "Oh, I could have been a better parent. I should have been a better parent. Why didn't I know this before?" And I'm sure both of you have felt that way. I've felt that way. I feel bad for our oldest child. She has often said about our youngest child, our two youngest are twins, and she'd say "They have a completely different life than I did. How come you're so nice and so sweet now?" And I said, "Yeah, I'm so sorry you were kind of a little experiment. We learned a lot."
Aislin Dyer:	13:32	You can't keep up the same level of intensity. You learn what's actually important.
Hank Smith:	13:36	We've learned a lot since you were young.

Dr. Justin Dyer:	13:39	Whenever I meet a student and I find out that they were in a class that I taught for the first time, I tell him, "I think you can go get your money back for that one." Because I've learned a lot. I don't think our oldest daughter can go get her money back for the... But of course the Savior is the Savior. Jesus is the one that saves, we don't do that. And he's really good at that. He's really good at saving, that was his job. We do the very best we can. We get wrapped up in the love of God and we move forward.
Aislin Dyer:	14:10	I think we need to talk about the central point of all of these topics that we've talked about, that God is love. That everything that we've been talking about is rooted in God's love for us, what he wants for us, and when we don't fully understand that love or when we need more of it in our lives. In 1 John chapter four verses seven through 10, it says, beloved, let us love one another for love is of God and everyone that loveth is born of God and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God. For God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us because that God sent his only begotten son into the world that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.
	15:03	The thing that Elder Jeffrey R. Holland said that the first great commandment of all eternity is to love God with all of our heart, might, mind, and strength. That's the first great commandment. But the first great truth of all eternity is that God loves us with all of his heart, might, mind, and strength. That love is the foundation stone of eternity and it should be the foundation stone of our daily life. So as we have been talking about fellowship and about the reality of sin and the gift of a Savior, if we look at it with the assumption that God is loving us, it is really going to change how we see things. The big questions that I've struggled with in my life when they are seen through the lens of God's love, I don't understand everything, but I have a trust that is going to say, "You know what? It's going to work out."
	15:54	I remember when we had been married for about 10 years, I looked at Justin one day and I said, "I don't get as mad at you anymore as I used to." And we laughed about

that, but I realized when you do something or say something that feels insensitive, my first reaction is not to say, "How dare he be so mean to me? Or he's being a jerk or whatever." Now my first assumption is, "Well, he must be really distracted or he's probably pretty stressed right now, or maybe he's hangry." And I realized I now have a benign assumption of where he's coming from, that if something happens, he's not trying to hurt me. I know that because I know him. I've had enough history of our relationship where I know he's not trying to be mean. He loves me. If something happens that feels bumpy or difficult, okay, what's the situation that's making it that way? But it's not that our relationship is so bad.

16:50 And of course we have fallen relationships, and we've all got a lot of relationship work to do. But when I think about our heavenly parents, when I think about our Savior Jesus Christ, if there is something out there that is really hard or they've asked me to do something difficult, if I look at it through the lens of, "Well, they love me. So either they're going to help me with this or this is going to help me grow." It's kind of the spoonful of sugar helping the medicine go down, but it's the real medicine. Is it's God's love.

17:20 I love what Elder Robert M. Daynes said in just this last general conference October of 2023. He said, "Jesus announced at the outset that he had come to heal the broken-hearted to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind. It wasn't just a to-do list or good PR, it is the shape of his love. And our covenants and commandments are not rules to earn his love, he already loves you perfectly, but our challenge is to understand and shape our life to that love." And I love that idea of he loves us, so how do we shape our lives to his love?

Dr. Justin Dyer: 18:01 I love that. It makes me think, "Okay, I'm probably in some ways in my life constricting God's love from getting to me. How do I remove the weeds and everything so that God's love can more purely come into me?" And it seems like that's what the commandments really are deep down is, "Hey, this is a way that you can experience God's love."

John Bytheway:	18:24	I think sometimes if we're in error, we're looking at God like a university professor. Let's throw us all under the bus here.
	18:34	Who takes delight in making the class hard and flunking people instead of a God who wants to bless us, who loves us, who wants to save us, and even sends an advocate, I am your advocate. I love that verse incidentally, if any man, if any woman, if any teenager sin, we have an advocate. So when we use the wrong kind of paradigm of "You did that wrong, I'm going to flunk you." Instead of someone who's on our side that we can get into trouble. And everything John is telling us is what you were saying, Aislin, this is a God who loves us. What's that song? Be still thy soul. The Lord is on thy side and we have sung that 100 times and sometimes we still don't. "Oh really? You mean he loves me? He wants me to succeed?" Yeah. He's not that professor that you had that takes pride in how many can't make it through my classes because they're so hard. That's not him. But I like that message that you just articulated.
Hank Smith:	19:39	Aislin, I think this is absolutely critical. John, you might remember this way back in our Doctrine & Covenants year, we had Dr. Kate Holbrook talking to us about plural marriage. Kate incidentally has since passed away. She taught something so crucial as she started her lesson. She said, "The only way you can approach this topic is through God's love. You have to put that lens on that God loves us and that the Savior loves us and wants the best for us." Scott Woodward, our friend up at BYU Idaho who uses the term, "When you read scripture, you read church history, you read anything, you either come at it with a hermeneutic of trust or a hermeneutic of suspicion." And that changes the way you read something. It changes the way you view something, and I think what you're asking us to do here is to have a hermeneutic of trust when it comes to anything that God is teaching us or telling us, that it's coming from a basis that he loves us and wants to help us.
	20:42	John, I think that's what you're saying as well, is that, "I've been hurt by a university professor or something or a teacher who really didn't have my best interest in mind. I should have been suspicious. If I'd been more suspicious, I

wouldn't have gotten hurt." But with the Lord, Aislin, are you saying I can come at this with full trust? That whatever he teaches me is in my best interest?

- Aislin Dyer: 21:03 Exactly. I think that love is one of the foundational elements of the character of God and the nature of God. It is how and why he does everything. This is my work and my glory. This is what I do, because I love them. I'm going to help these children to become the greatest that they can be. Sometimes we don't feel very loved and that's a real experience in this fallen world, but it just reminds me about what President Nelson is teaching us about covenant that he says, "Our covenants help us feel God's love and they put us into a position and a pattern of living where that love is less restricted." As you put it, Justin.
- John Bytheway: 21:45 Well, Justin, you mentioned a verse of scripture that when we are just so confused and can't figure out anything, we can go back to the angel asking Nephi, "Knowest thou the condescension of God", and you mentioned that. His answer, "Well, I know he loves his children, but I don't know the meaning of all things." And that is such a good starting point. I've never met Herman Newdik. I didn't have a class with Herman Newdik.
- Hank Smith: 22:14 You can thank Scott Woodward for that one.
- John Bytheway: 22:16 Of a way of looking at things. If we start with that, we know God loves us and then what's that one in second Nephi 26, "he doeth not anything, save it be for the benefit of the world."
- Hank Smith: 22:27 The benefit.
- John Bytheway: 22:28 Taking it from that angle. That's a great insight, Hank. Kate Holbrook talked about that topic. Well start here and that helps everything else.
- Dr. Justin Dyer: 22:39 Going back to the idea of just knowing who God is. When we're in fellowship with God, we know who he is, we know his character and so much just flows from that.
- Hank Smith: 22:50 As Aislin said, it doesn't make it easy, but it does mitigate some of the difficulty of and the confusion.

Aislin Dyer:	22:57	And that love can help squeeze out our fears that are going to get in our way.
John Bytheway:	23:02	I have a daughter who when she was three years old, had an unusual fascination with the dishwasher and whenever the lid was open it was free dishes and she'd grab them and start running around the house. Now, if I love my daughter and she picks up a knife and starts running around with it, if I love her, what's my job?
Hank Smith:	23:26	Stop. Teach.
John Bytheway:	23:28	A God who loves me is going to tell me when I'm messing up. I appreciate that. God gives us a conscience, a light of Christ because he loves us so that I know I probably shouldn't do that again. I don't want it to sound like he loves us so much that he doesn't care what we do. Actually he cares what we do because he loves us so much.
Dr. Justin Dyer:	23:53	Something about our understanding of the premortal life is so important here to understand that this is what we wanted. I mean, we were in the premortal life. We saw our heavenly parents and we're like, "You are literally the two most awesome people in the universe and we want to be like you. Please, can we be like you?" And they said, "Absolutely. Here's the plan. You're going to go down there." Sometimes we're in the middle of things. We lose the perspective that this is really what we wanted and they're just helping us to accomplish what we said that we wanted in the first place. For some of my university students, they decided, "Yes, I want that diploma." And they get in, they're like, "Well, I didn't know I was going to have to do all this work." And this assignment or that assignment, and then you get in the weeds and they can forget that, "Well, this is what I wanted. This is what I chose."
	24:50	Sometimes we need that reminder as university students, as children of God, this really is what we wanted that we asked for. All our heavenly parents are trying to do is give us exactly what we, I'm sure, begged for and rejoiced for. At the thought that we could have all of this. I think that knowledge of the premortal life really helps at least me, open my eyes to say, "Oh, I wanted this." Their whole job,

you think about really kind nice parents, okay, let's help you get there. All of their love is going towards helping us to achieve what we told them we wanted.

Hank Smith: 25:26

Yeah, that's fantastic.

John Bytheway: 25:29

There's a phrase I heard, I can't remember who said it, that God is more interested in our growth than he is in our comfort. What would it be if your life were always comfortable? You might not grow very much. You're in a tough calling right now, Justin. I'll bet there's a lot of growth there and a lot of feeling God's love for people there. I love what Brad Wilcox said once, "a God who is asking nothing of us is making nothing of us." So a God who loves us is going to ask things of us as well, and maybe he's more interested in our growth. And sometimes we don't see that in the middle of something, but we see it afterwards and we could say, "I'm glad that God helped me through that thing."

Dr. Justin Dyer: 26:14

We've been talking about God's love for us and the question is how do we love God? 1 John five, two through three, it seems like John's trying to help us know how do we love him? He says, by this, we know that we love the children of God when we love God and keep His commandments for this is the love of God that we keep his commandments, and his commandments are not grievous. And then if you go to 2 John 1:6, he says, and this is love that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment that as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it. And this goes right back to when Christ said, "If you love me, keep my commandments." How is it that we love God and what is it that we do? Well, he's giving it to us right here. We love God by keeping his commandments.

27:13

And I love how he says, "Guess what? These aren't grievous." Now I will not say that they're always the most comfortable and they can be very difficult and sometimes just absolutely heart-wrenching for us. But he says, "My yoke is easy and my burden is light." Picking up Christ's burden. That's the footnote to the word grievous there. Really, when we follow the Savior, that is the light burden. We all have to carry some kind of burden in our lives.

Every choice comes with some kind of burden and you're saying, "You know what? If you pick up the commandments that's loving God, you are experiencing the light burden." And I really love that we're defining love as an action, like something that we do. Hank, I've listened to some of the things that you've talked about running marathons.

28:05 When you say you run marathons, I don't think about you sitting on your couch having thoughts about marathons, good or bad. I imagine you actually out there running the marathon, and that's the same with our love for God, loving God isn't just sitting on our couch having nice thoughts about God. It's "Oh, I'm loving him by doing. I'm loving him by keeping his commandments." And that's really where we see a lot of the definition of God's love. In 1 John 4:9, it says, in this was manifest the love of God towards us because that God sent his only begotten son into the world, that we might be alive through him and herein his love. Not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins.

28:56 So it wasn't that God just sits somewhere in heaven and feels really nice feelings about us that wouldn't do us much good. It's that he's doing that. He's acting for us. When Aislin and I were married, there's a phrase that I'll never forget because Aislin's grandma cross stitched it and put it on our wall. "You cannot love without giving."

John Bytheway: 29:20 "You cannot love without giving," sounds like from my notes here I've taken today. That you contribute more than you consume. It sounds like the same thing. See how much I'm learning today? This is awesome.

Hank Smith: 29:33 Justin, I love that you said commandments are a way to experience God's love. It's a completely different paradigm to, "Oh, commandments are difficult."

Aislin Dyer: 29:44 If we look at it through God's love though, isn't it beautiful to say, "God wants me to be safe, so God's asked me to do this. God wants me to have good relationships. God wants me to avoid the pain that's not absolutely necessary. That's the why behind it. Wow, that sure helps."

Hank Smith:	30:02	Yeah. I remember being young and thinking the first commandment is thou shalt not have fun because everything that seemed fun was out of the limit. I don't remember when that changed, but it was a profound moment for me going, "Wait, the Lord has given me these... John, they're not fences, they're guardrails."
John Bytheway:	30:19	Yeah.
Hank Smith:	30:19	Didn't you give that talk years ago?
John Bytheway:	30:21	No, I didn't. But Boyd K. Packer did. I used it as a book title. President Packer said, "How unfortunate is the youth who feels like the standards and commandments are a fence around love that says keep out." He said, "Actually, they are the guardrails on the highway to love and happiness with guideposts along the way." That's a hermeneutic right there. But a different way of looking at it is that these commandments will keep you safe. As you said, Aislin.
Hank Smith:	30:56	Now, Elder Christofferson 2021, "his commandments are not grievous, just the opposite. They mark the path of healing, happiness, peace, and joy. Our father and our Redeemer have blessed us with commandments. And in obeying their commandments, we feel their perfect love more fully and more profoundly." An American pastor, I wish I could remember his name, said, "Real Christians do not carry their religion. Their religion carries them. It is not weight, it is wings." The commandments are wings. They're not weights, they're wings, they can take you places. Help you see and feel God's love.
Dr. Justin Dyer:	31:36	Maybe just a quick thing. When we're looking at love, there's all kinds of definitions. There's the story of a young man who has caught some fish and he's there by the river and he's cooking the fish and eating the fish, and an older man comes by and says, "Young man, why are you eating that fish?" And the man says, "Because I love fish." And the old man says, "Oh, you love the fish? That's why you took it out of the water and killed it and cooked it. Don't tell me you love the fish, you love yourself and because the fish tastes good to you, you took out of the water and killed it and cooked it." So we have this word love that means all kinds of things. And when we really show our

love for God, is when we do those kinds of things that are more uncomfortable for us.

32:20 Think about what the Lord said, the Lord gave his only begotten son. It's sacrifice. Our level of love for God can really be determined by the level that we're willing to sacrifice, that Abrahamic sacrifice. There's these moments you see in the scriptures and you see them reflected in our own lives where we say, "Me following the commandments there. Me following what God wanted me to do. That truly helped me to dig down and see, and develop the love for God in that really meaningful way." That sacrifice being that revelation to us and to God that this is how much we truly love God.

Hank Smith: 33:06 Justin, Aislin, this has been fantastic. What else do we need to see in these three epistles and Jude?

Dr. Justin Dyer: 33:13 One of the things that comes up is, all right, we have these people who are leaving the church, well, what do we do about that? How do we connect with them and how do we think about that? I think it's interesting the language, it's language we really don't use anymore. John first tries to identify, "Okay, what is it that they're teaching that's wrong and that's important to realize?" In 1 John 2: 22, it says he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ, he is antichrist and denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the son the same hath not the Father, but he that acknowledges the son hath the father also. This term antichrist comes up several times and it's not really one that we use very much. We don't refer to my neighbor Bob, you know, the antichrist? I mean, it's just not the language that we should be using here.

33:59 What do we do with this? I love in 1 John chapter four, where if we have these teachings, what do we do with the teachings? And we're not quite sure. And he says to try the spirits. I thought that's really interesting. He says, there's some false prophets out there. Try the spirits and see if they're in alignment. And John's day it was about Jesus coming in the flesh and suffering for their sins. For us today, I think one of the most useful things we can do to try the spirits is look at the documents, the Living Christ, the Family: a Proclamation to the World and the

Restoration document. And those documents are just so wonderful to help us to say, "Okay, I'm hearing these things from people. Maybe they've left the church. What's true? What's not true?" Taking those documents to try that really, really is helpful.

Aislin Dyer: 34:46

Those are from our special witnesses. That they have a unified voice in those things where they've said, "This is where we're all solid." And man, we already talked about how important it's for us to have their witness.

Dr. Justin Dyer: 34:56

And with that, then, okay, so how do we work with individuals? Well, I love President Nelson's talk, peacemakers needed. In there, he talks so much about how there's all these different voices and sometimes they're pretty harsh and we shouldn't be contributing to that. How can we continue to make sure that we're loving? And that's what this is all about. And John's central message is to love. How can we make sure that we're still loving individuals while recognizing we don't agree on certain things, but it's so important for us to remember that a person is so much more than certain beliefs that they may have. If we have our maybe dear friend who's left the church, sometimes it's all that we can see, but you know what? We still enjoyed going fishing with them or we still enjoyed doing... Let's just build our relationships in all these other ways and not let this thing come between us, but just still continue to love and appreciate.

35:55

Now, I will say sometimes we do need to probably be careful about a lot of negativity about the gospel we take into our lives. I had a friend who, he had adult children. One of his adult children had left the church and every time this adult child came over, the child would just rip on the church, couldn't say anything good about the church. And one day my friend said to his son, he said, "I know that if you went into a Buddhist's home, that you would not criticize the Buddhist's beliefs the whole time. When you come in my home, I would really appreciate it if you wouldn't tear down my faith." My friend said it was from that moment that their relationship got better. Where he was able to say, "You know what? Let's maybe put some boundaries here. I love you. You're so wonderful. Thank

you, but maybe there's certain topics here that we're not perhaps ready to discuss."

36:53 And that way the love and the relationship can grow in so many other really important ways that we're not just stuck on this, which is very important. But boy, loving and growing our relationship in so many other ways is just so critical.

Aislin Dyer: 37:08 President Nelson taught us to prioritize our testimony, put in the work for your own testimony. Sometimes I'll tell my kids when they're on each other, I'd be like, "You just need to be the boss of you right now." And sometimes we just need to be the boss of us. Sometimes that's where we need to put our energy. In the book of Jude, they have some really interesting insights about how we recognize that in this life, we are often living alongside people who may or may not be unified with us in every single thing. Unity is the long-term celestial goal and it's a bumpy path and we're working on it. But in our discipleship, when we don't feel unified, he says in verse three of Jude, you should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints. And when I hear the word contend, sometimes I think have a fight for. But the more I've pondered this verse, that idea of earnestly contend, I need to make sure that I'm doing my work and I'm putting in my effort.

38:05 President Nelson, he said this in a social media post last August. "I plead with you to take charge of your testimony of Jesus Christ, work for it, own it, care for it, nurture it so that it will grow. And he cautions us also to be careful about what you're putting in. Don't only be feeding it junk. Make sure you give God a chance. Give him a fair amount of your time." And then he says, "Watch for miracles to happen. If we don't work for that testimony and if our testimony is not rooted in our relationship with God. We've been talking about God is love, God is light. If we are not connected to him, then it's going to be really hard and all of our other appetites that we discussed, those can gain the upper hand." So Jude gives us a list of examples of people who separated themselves is the phrase he uses, that they separated themselves from the covenant path because they were unwilling to follow the pattern that

God had given them because it conflicted with other things they wanted.

39:02 And I want to make note and realize that if people choose to step away from the church, there's a lot of different reasons for that. And I am not judging all those reasons. Sometimes it happens because you have a disagreement with doctrine. Sometimes it happens because there have been painful relationships or things that have happened. We are imperfect people all in the same place. I'm not trying to say, "Oh, they just didn't want it hard enough." I'm not saying that. In the Book of Jude, he gives us a list of examples of people and where they got off. He talks about the Israelites after leaving Egypt. That was not like this point A to point B kind of thing. They struggled with leaving things behind and things that maybe felt more comfortable. And this new normal was sometimes not what they wanted.

39:46 He talks about the fallen angels. We know that a third of the host of heaven became convinced that Heavenly Father's plan was too risky or wasn't worth the difficulty. We don't know all of their reasons, but some did not choose this. The residents of Sodom and Gomorrah prioritize their physical lust over the safety and dignity of other human beings. Verse nine is really interesting because it refers to something that I don't know if you've ever heard of this. I had never heard of this. It's this little snippet of a story that kind of just floats by you and you go, "Wait, what?" The Bible scholar NT Wright says what this is from is the testament of Moses. Is a largely lost work. It only exists in fragmentary Latin now, but apparently Jude would've been very familiar with this story and he expected his readers to be. In the testimony of Moses, there's an episode where Michael, the archangel and Satan get into an argument about what gets to happen to Moses' body when he's done with his life.

40:43 And that is totally added to my reading list for after this life. There's so many stories that I want to learn more about. But what's interesting about this is Michael appeals to God to make the decision essentially. And Satan, as per his very typical MO, is not thrilled with recognizing the authority of God in decision making. It's just another

example of that who's in alignment with God and seeking his guidance. They talk about Balaam. The prophet with the talking donkey is wanting to find a loophole to get around what he knew what he was supposed to do, but how could he satisfy what he wanted to? We have verse 11, it talks about Cora, it's spelled Core in the King James version.

41:26 This is an interesting story from number 16, where Cora was the ringleader of rebellion against Moses. And basically they came to Moses, Cora said, "Ye take too much upon you. Seeing all that the congregation are holy, every one of them. And the Lord is among them. Wherefore then lift ye up yourself above the congregation of the Lord." He didn't like the pattern of authority that God had established. He does not want to get told what to do. He's chafing against that. And then we have the example of Cain who's kind of this ultimate example of siding with Satan versus the Lord. And there's a lot of reasons why people choose to leave. We've talked about reflecting on ourselves and making sure we're not deceiving ourselves. This list is kind of a suggestion to say, where are you in alignment? What's hard for you? Where does your natural man get in the way?

42:14 When we have a loved one who chooses to step away from the church, we can have a lot of really big feelings about that. Sometimes it can feel insulting or hurtful, so we might feel like lashing out. We might be angry, we might be offended. We can have grief because maybe we're losing what we thought something would look like in our families or our community and we should grieve I think when we lose someone. We want everybody, and if people choose to step away, we're losing out on what they could bring in that particular sphere. Now hopefully though, with the love of Christ, we're able to move through those feelings and still maintain the relationship. When I was in high school, I had a good friend who was investigating the church and wanted to learn and we would read the Book of Mormon together.

43:04 I was able to be with her while the missionaries taught her, and it was a really special experience for me sharing something that I loved with my friend. She was not able to

get baptized until she was 18 and her 18th birthday came and she was so excited, I mean, to me it seemed to be. And she was baptized. At that time, we would wait a week before a new convert was confirmed. And the next Sunday, she didn't show up to be confirmed and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost and she never came back. I was so sad because my understanding had been that she loved this and was excited and I was giving her this very precious gift, something that was so important to me. And then the fact that she just didn't follow through and just kind of disappeared. I kind of felt like something very important to me had just been treated not very important.

43:55 It kind of felt like, that was personally a hard thing for me. But through the love of Christ, we can maintain relationships. We can find ways. Like Justin said, a person is a lot more than whether or not they have a membership in the church.

44:11 In Jude, he talks about what we do. He says, beloved in verse 20, building up yourself on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost. Keep yourself in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. You've got to have your foundation. That makes me think about Helaman 5:12, remember that it's upon the rock of our Redeemer that we're built. Then whatever else happens, we're solid. And then when we have that solid footing in verse 22 of Jude, he says, then of some we have compassion and that will make a difference.

44:47 We're going to be able to feel this out. And then in verse 23 he says, and then we might be in a position to save with fear and pull them out of the fire. We need to just be ready for those opportunities when they come. And if we don't have a relationship, we might not be close enough to be there to snatch someone out of the fire or to be any sort of positive, compassionate influence in our loved ones. And I really feel like these things can be super complicated and it's the Holy Ghost. It's that light of God through our anointing that we can rely on to guide us through what can be really complicated things and the Lord knows how to do it because every single one of us does things that take us out of alignment with God. We all

at times separate ourselves from him and he loves us through it. And so he will help us do the same thing.

Hank Smith: 45:36 Wonderful. Thank you, both of you, for talking about this. It's interesting that it was happening during the time of John, isn't it? You would think, "Oh, people leaving the faith is something in the last 20 years that we've experienced." When really it's been something that's been around the entire time. Even if you look at the history of the Latter-day Church with Kirtland apostasy, this has been around for a long time. I want to share an experience like you said, Aislin, these are complex. You can't generalize someone. "Oh, they're going to step away from the church." Here's why, because every situation is different. I have a close friend who very good latter-day saint, wonderful family, and she for multiple reasons decided that they were going to step away for a while and maybe go join a different congregation, a different church.

46:26 As we were talking, something fascinating happened. Again, I'm not quite sure what should happen, but this didn't seem the right thing. She said the ward family that they had been a part of for so long kind of disappeared really quickly. She said, "It got very awkward with me and these are friends I've had for 15 years. These are my friends we've gone to dinner with and these are friends that we've helped each other raise our kids together, soccer games, and neighborhood parties and everything. And all of a sudden it went quiet." She said, "All I really got was some cookies on my doorstep and texts to say the opening prayer in Sacrament meeting." And it just went so silent and you could tell it just broke her heart because she was struggling with her faith. She really was in faith crisis mode. And I don't think there's anyone who could have stepped in and saved the day. That's not what I don't think she was expecting nor anybody else. But the radio silence was just devastating to her.

47:31 And Justin, it's like you said, we can create some limits and say, "Well, I know that you feel differently about the church now than I do. Let's create some limits, but let's maintain our friendship. Let's continue in what we've always had." She said, "We're not completely different people now. We're not all of a sudden strangers, we're still

the same people because I'm so far removed from the situation. It was easy for me to say, 'Well, they shouldn't have done this. They should have done this. They shouldn't have done that.' But it helps me understand when people around me decide to step away, that I don't want to be just silent about it." So maybe Justin and Aislin, what you're saying is let love guide you. There's not exactly the right way to do this, but step forward in love with faith that the Lord can work this out.

- Dr. Justin Dyer: 48:20 Hank, you'd asked earlier from research, what does love look like? When we're talking about research and parenting and what's best for kids, a few things come to mind. One is what's called responsiveness. And that simply means that the parent is dialed into that particular child and to what they need. And what it is that that child needs to progress. So often we get in a hurry and we just kind of have knee-jerk reactions and don't really sit down and say, "What is it that that child needs? What is it that they're thinking about? What is it that they're feeling and how do we respond? Responsiveness to what they need?" And I think in the example of your friend there, the question we should ask ourselves is, "What is it that they need? What is it that they need to feel loved, and connected?" And really trying to understand those individuals.
- 49:22 Brigham Young said that we should study our children's temperaments and parent them accordingly. He had a lot of children to study, so I don't know. But this idea that we actually look at each child, we treat them as an individual and we give them exactly what they need. And I really do think that's what the Lord gives to us. He's not parenting en masse. It's the one by one. It's the give the attention that that particular child needs, understanding who they are. And unfortunately it's kind of a moving target. It's a moving target for a couple.
- 50:00 We were married pretty young, and in the last 20 years, we've changed, we've grown up a lot. What is needed at one time is probably not what's needed at another time. And for our kids, it's the exact same thing. It's always constantly figuring out what is it that this person needs? I can't think of hardly anything but better in terms of a definition of love than, "Who is this person? What's going

on with them in their life? Let me understand them and then let me give them what it is that they need right now."

Hank Smith: 50:32

Do my best to assess, really listen, assess and then move forward with something. Parenting is so much trial and error, isn't it?

Aislin Dyer: 50:43

Isn't it amazing that we believe in a plan that is us learning through trial and error? As much as we learned as a child, our parents were having trials and errors and sometimes we were the trials and sometimes we made the errors. And sometimes they were a trial to us. I've been thinking, there is a beach in Northern California called Glass Beach and it used to be a landfill and it was full of broken bottles and it was a garbage dump and it was horrible. And then over time, if you think of the waves just pulling that material in and out, rolling it back and forth, it is an entire beach made of pebbles of different colored glass and there is not a sharp side among them. They are beautiful and they glow and it is an amazing thing to go to that beach and just walk on all of these beautiful green and blue and brown and clear pebble and to realize that what used to be garbage, dangerous garbage, is now beautiful and smoothed.

51:52

And I love the fact that the love of God can be that water for us in our relationships. We are sharp-edged, broken individuals. And I don't mean unredeemably shameful broken. I mean we are inherently fallen. That's part of our experience here. But we do have this think celestial long-term perspective available to us if we choose to lay hold of that, that the love of God is just going to rub us back and forth. That happens so much in our families and our ward communities in these places of by trial and error fellowship. Through the light of God, we better learn how to do these things and all these rough edges are going to get worn off and we will be transformed. In 1 John chapter three verse two, it says, beloved, now we are the sons of God. And I love that now because to me it indicates that maybe not before, we've been reborn. We didn't use to have that same status with him, but now we're children of his salvation. Now we are the sons and daughters of God.

	52:59	And it does not yet appear what we shall be. We're not quite there yet. We don't know exactly what it's going to look like or what it's going to take, but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him or we shall see him as he is. We will know him. We will then each be the epitome of a special witness of Christ and we will be able to see and recognize him. I don't think we have the capacity to appreciate everything the Savior is to us. I don't think our brains can hold it, but we will recognize everything that has happened and we will be big enough to hold that love, and that gratitude, and that knowledge that has come. We will have become as he is.
Hank Smith:	53:49	Absolutely wonderful. Man, so good. Justin, Aislin, we have been just so blessed by your time and your insights today. Let's say I'm a listener at home. What do you hope changes for me? What do you hope I get out of this as I'm walking away going, "That was good." What should be the sticking points that I keep in my mind?
Dr. Justin Dyer:	54:09	For me, having been able to delve into this, I realized, boy, John had some problems in his day. They were really thorny, difficult issues. And his answer, God his love. God loves you. There is a reality of sin, but there's a reality of salvation. Jesus is real, he came in the flesh. Just this message that these thorny issues we will experience in our lives. Probably what we need to be thinking is how does God feel about me? How can I experience more of God's love for myself? And then how can I experience that for other individuals? Almost any problem that you face, those questions are going to help to guide you through that.
Aislin Dyer:	54:58	And I just have that sense of this is a long game that we are playing. President Nelson has just invited us to think, "Where are we going? What's the goal? What was in Jesus' intercessory prayer that we may be one with them." Across time, across generations and experiences, he didn't say "Only the rich people." He didn't say, "Only the people who live over here." His goal was that everyone that was willing to be united to him would be and would be empowered and protected and guided. And through God's light and through God's love, we can have the trust. We have Christ's prayers for us that one day we can be united

with them and be like them. And that's what's going to grease all of the tough, rough stuff that are inevitably part of a fallen world. And I have a testimony that that is true, that his light and his love make all the difference.

Hank Smith:	55:53	Fantastic. John, what a great day.
John Bytheway:	55:59	Yeah, absolutely. I've got lots of notes and I've got work to do. I've got a checklist. Apologize to my kids tonight.
Hank Smith:	56:08	To contribute more than you consume.
John Bytheway:	56:10	Than I consume. That's the sign for the fridge. That's some really great and beautiful teachings. And looking at Jude that way, as why people even, what do we do? Wow. That's brilliant. Thank you for that.
Hank Smith:	56:22	Wonderful. Thank you both for being here.
Aislin Dyer:	56:24	Thank you so much for inviting us.
Dr. Justin Dyer:	56:25	It's wonderful.
Aislin Dyer:	56:26	It's been a pleasure, a joy.
Hank Smith:	56:28	Been a lot of fun. I feel like something settling in my soul. Be still and know that I am God. I can know that I've had a great time with you because I feel more love and I feel more light. As we walk away from our discussion, if we feel more love and light, I think we've been in the right place at the right time.
Aislin Dyer:	56:48	Yeah.
Dr. Justin Dyer:	56:48	We feel the same.
Aislin Dyer:	56:49	About that. Yes.
Hank Smith:	56:51	We want to thank Dr. Justin and Sister Aislin Dyer for being with us today. We want to thank our executive producer Shannon Sorensen. We want to thank our sponsors, David and Verla Sorensen, and we always, every episode we remember our founder, Steve Sorensen.

57:06 We hope you'll join us next week. We're going to talk more about the New Testament on followHIM.

57:11 Today's transcripts, show notes, and additional references are available on our website. Followhim.co. That's followhim.co. You can watch the podcast on YouTube with additional videos on our Facebook and Instagram accounts. All of this is absolutely free and we'd love for you to share it with your family and friends. We'd like to reach more of those who are searching for help with their Come, Follow Me study. If you could subscribe to rate, review, and comment on the podcast, that will make us easier to find. Of course, none of this could happen without our incredible production crew. David Perry, Lisa Spice, Jamie Neilson, Will Stoughton, Krystal Roberts, Ariel Cuadra, and Annabelle Sorenson.

President Russell M. Nelson: 57:50 Whatever questions or problems you have, the answer is always found in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. Turn to him. Follow him.

WHAT DOES "ABIDETH IN THE LIGHT" MEAN?



- Hank Smith: 00:02 Hello my friends. Welcome to followHIM Favorites. My name's Hank Smith. I'm here with the wonderful John Bytheway. John, we're going to do what we usually do at followHIM Favorites. We're going to take on a single question from this week's lesson. We're in first, second, and third John this week, John. John frequently talks about abiding in the Lord. This is 1 John chapter two, verse six. He that saith he abideth in him should walk the way he walks. Verse 10, he that loveth his brother abideth in the light. Abide isn't a word we use much anymore, John, so what do you think of them when you hear the word abide in the Lord?
- John Bytheway: 00:41 It's a great word, and I remember studying the Christmas story in Luke years ago. There were in the same country shepherds abiding in their field, keeping watch over their flock by night. We've all heard that. I looked it up on dictionary.com. It has such a great list. To stay, to remain, to endure, to persist, be where you're supposed to be, doing what you're supposed to be doing kind of a word. There's blessings from abiding. In fact, in the Christmas story, the wise men had a hint of what was coming. Joseph knew. Mary knew. Obviously Jesus knew. Who didn't know? The shepherds. And how did they get to find out? Because they were abiding. They were where they were supposed to be and the angels knew right where to find them. We want to be abiders and be where we're supposed to be, doing what we're supposed to be doing.
- Hank Smith: 01:27 I love that. In Spanish, abide, I believe is permaneced, something like that. Permaneced, but you can hear the word permanent in there, right?
- John Bytheway: 01:38 Permaneced.

Hank Smith:	01:39	The idea of abiding in the Lord should be that I'm here permanently. I'm here forever. I am in. Both feet are in.
John Bytheway:	01:49	Both feet in. Yeah.
Hank Smith:	01:49	I'm all in when it comes to Jesus. I think the word abide implies that, that you're not just halfway in. You're not here for a little while. You're here forever.
John Bytheway:	01:59	Here for the long haul. Boy, the way that 1 John chapter two ends in verse 28 is so nice, and now little children abide in him that when he shall appear, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before him at his coming. What a nice verse that is. I marked that one when we went through it.
Hank Smith:	02:22	Yeah. How often people are looking for confidence. I need a little self-confidence and need self-esteem. I think that verse is great. Abide in him. We can have confidence.
John Bytheway:	02:34	When he comes, we can stand before him and we can be confident and not be ashamed before him because we were where we were supposed to be doing what we're supposed to be doing. And I hope we out there get to meet our fellow abiders all the time, right?
Hank Smith:	02:47	Yeah. This is 1 John chapter three. If we abide in him, when he shall appear, we shall be like him. Isn't that fantastic? That's the promise. We hope you'll join us on our full podcast. It's called followHIM. You can get it wherever you get your podcasts. We're actually with a couple this week, Dr. Justin Dyer and his wife, Aislin Dyer, something we rarely do. So come join us over on our full podcast and then join us right here next week for another followHIM Favorites.