

EVIDENCE OF KNOWING GOD – Pt. 2

1 John 2:7-11

INTRODUCTION

1. “How can I know I am a Christian?” Maybe you personally have entertained similar questions.
2. The other side of the coin is how do I discern when others claim to know God, but the conduct of their life is confusing?

MESSAGE THEME: *Living with discernment and certainty regarding authentic salvation in Jesus Christ.*

REVIEW

1. *Fellowship* is a fundamental concept to understanding the relationship with God according to **verse 1:3**.
 - Fellowship is like a branch connected to a vine.
 - It lives in the nutrition and essence of the vine by virtue of being connected as a branch.
2. **With that foundation, John begins to address the error or heretical teaching of the formative doctrine of Gnosticism.**
 - The dualist philosophy and false teaching separated the material from the non-material or spiritual.
 - The spirit was good; the material was evil.
 - Life was lived independently from God, His truth, and His ways.
3. This resulted in a **defective view of Jesus** (He could not be divine while being human) and a **defective view of sin** (what they did physically had no relationship to their spiritual or non-material being).
4. Such a defective belief system allowed one to live a life of sin while simultaneously claiming to have intimate knowledge of God.
5. **Verse 1:5** opens with a declaration: this is the message we have heard from Jesus Christ, God who took on human flesh.
 - GOD IS LIGHT, AND THERE IS NO DARKNESS IN HIM.
6. John then proceeds to argue that if a person says he or she has *fellowship with God* (shares God’s life like a branch shares the life of a vine) and yet walks (orders, conditions, and lives his or her life), in the darkness, that person lies.
7. If a person truly *walks* (orders, conditions, and lives his or her life) in the light:
 - one’s sin is continuously cleansed by Jesus’ death & resurrection, **vs. 7**
 - such a person is a confessor of his or her sin and sins, and the result again is that Jesus’ blood forgives and cleanses from all unrighteousness, **vs. 9**
 - and that those who are in the light are not to sin, but when they do, Jesus Christ, the righteous one, is their *advocate*, for He paid sin’s penalty to satisfy God’s justice for sin, **vs. 2:1-2**.
8. John continues his argument on how we can know that we have fellowship with God, *know Him, or are in light*.
 - **John provides evidence for us to test ourselves and discern in others whether their lives are *in the light, know God, or have fellowship with Him.***

9. John addresses those who genuinely know God yet need assurance because they have been made anxious by the false teachers in the churches. **1 John 5:13**
- And he wants to equip them to discern whether others have a true or false. faith.

EVIDENCE OF BEING IN FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD

Walking in Obedience to God Evidence vs. 3-6 (**Scott last week.**)

Walking in Love Evidence vs. 7-11

1 John 2:7–11 (ESV) Beloved, I am writing you no new commandment, but an old commandment that you had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word that you have heard. 8 At the same time, it is a new commandment that I am writing to you, which is true in him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining. 9 Whoever says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in darkness. 10 Whoever loves his brother abides in the light, and in him there is no cause for stumbling. 11 But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

“Beloved”

- This is personal in nature.
- John truly loves the recipients of his letter.
- He is saying *dearly loved ones*.

An Old Commandment vs. 7

1 John 2:7 (ESV) Beloved, I am writing you no new commandment, but an old commandment that you had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word that you have heard.

- John has been talking about obeying God’s commands. Now, he is specifically referring to one of them.
- Verse 7-8 does not indicate the specific command, but verses 9-11 certainly do. *It is loving one another.*
- Fundamental to walking as Jesus walked is *loving others*.
 - John says this commandment is not new in reference to the fundamental responsibility. (**Robertson p. 211**)
 - It is a message *they have heard from the beginning*. Since the outset of their Christian life.

1 John 3:11 *For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another;*

- This teaching of practical Christian living in loving one another was part of their instruction from the day they became followers of Jesus Christ. (**Stott p. 97**)
 - To love is an old command. In **Matthew 22:34-40**, Jesus was asked by the

religious rulers, *What is the greatest commandment?* His answer was *to love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind. The second is like it in that you are to love your neighbor as yourself.*

- The command “to love others has been around as long as humanity knows God and has a relationship with Him.
 - In fact, Jesus said the foundation for the teaching of the Law and the prophets was founded upon these two commands.

A New Commandment vs. 8a

1 John 2:8 (ESV) At the same time, it is a new commandment that I am writing to you, which is true in him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining.

1. It is New in Its Standard.

- The Christian was to love others no longer as we love ourselves **but now as Christ has loved us**.

John 13:34 “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another.

- **How did Christ love us?** Selflessly, before we loved Him, while we were yet sinners, and when we had nothing to give Him.

2. It Was New in Its Extent.

- Jesus told the story of the *Good Samaritan* in **Luke 10:30-37**, based on love your neighbor as yourself command.
- He declared that the neighbor we are to demonstrate love toward includes people we may not know, those different than us, yet who cross our path.
- The new “love command” is regardless of one’s race, rank, or friendship level.
- This was counter-cultural.

The New Commandment Demonstrated vs.8b

. . . which is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away, and the true light is already shining.

- The God-life that evidences itself in love, and therefore the command to love, was in Jesus. *He loved the sinner, the rejected, the disenfranchised.*

Romans 5:8 (ESV) *but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

- This command to love was modeled in Jesus and is now active in the believing community. **(Thompson p 58)**

ILLUST.:

- The Early Church cared for each other in Acts 4 when they sold lands and possessions to give to those in need due to persecution.

- The offering given by Gentile Christians for the Church in Jerusalem due to a famine.
 - This darkness is passing away. As the light is already shining, it was evidenced by those who were truly *abiding in God, keeping His commands, and loving one another.*

Walking in the Light Evidence vs. 9-11

- Now John is saying that if you are in the light, you will love brothers and sisters who also are in the light.
- Prior to salvation, it is likely that they despised the Christian, the Church.
- *To live in the light is to walk in love; to walk in love is to live in the light. (Stott p 99)*
- *To know God is to obey God; to obey God is to love others. (Burge p. 101)*

The Truth Stated vs. 9

1 John 2:9 (ESV) *Whoever says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in darkness.*

- Those who claim to have been enlightened, have had special, intimate, and exclusive knowledge of God, and hate a fellow Christian, are not in the light.

The Truth Elaborated vs. 10-11

a. *The one who loves lives in the light. . .*

1 John 2:10(ESV) Whoever loves his brother abides in the light, and in him there is no cause for stumbling.

- To love another is to live selflessly. This God-life love (Gk. Wd. *agape*) is a love that lives for the benefit of another.
- This love is not based on emotion or sentiment but is an act of one's will based on the principle of truth, God's character, and God's ways.
- **What does it look like to live out God's love?**

1 Corinthians 13:4–7 (ESV) *Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant 5 or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; 6 it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. 7 Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.*

b. Satan's Deception Regarding Love

- God-love is not based on sentiment and emotion.
- **Satan's first tactic is to redefine love**, then make the redefinition the foundation upon which he deceives, even the Christian.
- Satan's deception is that Jesus calls us to have empathy, compassion, and an open heart for all human beings, no matter what they stand for or how they

live.

- Satan's lie – Jesus was all about love, not rules, regulations, and judgment.
- We should love all people by supporting them, even if their desires and lives are ungodly, unrighteous, evil, and an affront to God.
- To support or sympathize with anyone in any ideology or lifestyle of sin is not loving them.
 - Whether it is someone in adultery, abortion rights, or in the current LGBTQA+ pursuit, same-sex marriage, etc.
- Again, true, biblical love is not to be divorced from or pitted against the righteousness of God's Law.
 - God-love is governed by God's righteousness, commands, and law.
 - To love accordingly in today's culture, you will be labeled as a hater.
 - To speak God's truth and stand up for what is wrong before God is called "hate speech" in today's culture.
- **Watching sinners live in rebellion to God without setting forth God's standard is, in fact, unloving.**
 - People's failure toward God will only lead to ruin, destruction, and ultimately judgment!
- **Don't be confused; live with God's certainty and discernment in this world!**

c. There is no cause for stumbling in him.

1 John 2:10(ESV) Whoever loves his brother abides in the light, and in him there is no cause for stumbling.

- This phrase literally says "*stumbling is not in him/it.*"
- "Stumbling" is the Gk. Wd. *skandalon*, which means "a trap or an object that makes one trip." (**Vines s.v. stumbling**)
- It is used as that which causes offense, division or hinders one's faith. (**Colin Brown v.2 p. 708**)
- The one who abides in the light lives in self-sacrificial love, an "other world love" that gives itself for the well-being of others.
- They would be concerned about not living in a way that would cause others to stumble in their faith or Christian walk.
 - Satan places plants within the Church to cause stumbling and offense toward God and the Church.

d. Understanding Hatred

1 John 2:11 (ESV) But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

- Hatred is not *active* animosity but an absence of God's love for the Church and those who comprise the Church. (**Bruce p. 56**)
- *Hatred is not an emotion of anger, resentment, or detestation; it is an absence of love, an absence of living for the well-being of others.*
- In John's setting, the heretical splinter group did not have an interest in the well-being of the Christian community.
- Not only were they living out their fleshly desires that resulted in sinful behavior, but they also had no love for those in fellowship with God.
- Instead of an affinity, love, and concern for the Church, for the ekklesia, those who are in genuine fellowship with God, they have an indifference, disregard, and aversion for the Church and the Christian.

APPLICATION

- What John is saying is counter-cultural to our society and often the Church.
 1. *Our world is based on self-determined choices, not obedience to God.*
- *Our world views love as a self-directed feeling and desire versus being principled in God's character and truth.*
- Both are wrong and contrary to what John is saying.

The Evidence of Your Pursuit to Live in Obedience to God

The Significance Regarding Obedience to God.

- Do you have a pursuit to conform your life to the commands and will of God?
- John says it is evidence that you know God.
- The converse is true. If you do not desire to live to obey God, you cannot be confident that you know God.
- Jesus warns to be careful of religious works that are absent from a life of obedience.

Matthew 7:21-23 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven.22 "Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?'23 "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.'"

QUOTE- John MacArthur: *"The gospel in vogue today holds forth a false hope It promises them they can have eternal life yet continue to live in rebellion against God. Indeed, it encourages people to claim Jesus as Savior yet defer until later the commitment to obey Him as Lord."* (**Gospel according to Jesus p 16**)

The Evidence of Your Pursuit to Love God's People with God's Love

- Do you live with a biblical love for the Christian community and those in God's fellowship?
- Do you live with an *intentionality* for the well-being of others who are in Christ?
- Does loving God's Church and individuals in the Church drive the decision-making process in how you live your life?

the epistle of
1 JOHN



LIVING IN DISCERNMENT AND CERTAINTY IN AN UNCERTAIN WORLD

1

1 JOHN

MESSAGE THEME – *Living with discernment and certainty regarding authentic salvation in Jesus Christ.*

2

REVIEW

FELLOWSHIP

1 JOHN



3

FELLOWSHIP

1 JOHN



4

REVIEW

1 JOHN

On the theological concept of *fellowship*, John addresses the error, or heretical teaching of the formative doctrine of gnosticism.

- The dualist philosophy and false teaching separated the material from the non-material, or spiritual.
- Spirit was good, material was evil.
- Life was lived independent from God, His truth, and His ways.

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EVIDENCE OF BEING IN FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD

1 JOHN

Walking in Obedience to God Evidence vss. 3-6 (Scott last week)

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EVIDENCE OF BEING IN FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD **1 JOHN**
 Walking in Love Evidence vs. 7-11
Beloved



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EVIDENCE OF BEING IN FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD **1 JOHN**
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A New Commandment vs. 8a

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A New Commandment vs. 8a

1. It is New in Its *Standard*

2. It Was New in Its *Extent*.

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The New Commandment Demonstrated vs. 8b

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Walking in the Light Evidence vs. 9-11

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1 JOHN

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1 JOHN

The Evidence of Your Pursuit to Live in Obedience to God
The Evidence of Your Pursuit to Love God's People with God's Love

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