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Class Notes

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## **Genuine Christians Obey and Love**

### **1 John 2:1-14**

#### **I. Main Questions:**

1. How does this section help us to evaluate the genuineness of our salvation? What is the significance of John dealing so often with people who “say” that they are Christians but who really are not... who make claims that their lifestyle and true convictions do not bear out?
2. How does it encourage you to know that, if we do sin, Christ is our propitiation (sacrifice that removes God’s wrath)?
3. Why is obedience to God’s commands so vital to the Christian life?
4. Why is love for other Christians also so vital?
5. What insights does this section give about the different stages of Christian development?

#### **II. Verse by Verse Questions:**

##### verses 1-2: *Jesus Our Propitiation*

1. What connection do you see between the end of chapter 1 (especially verses 8-10) and these two verses at the beginning of chapter 2?
2. Why is it so vital that Christians are set against sin, all sin, wherever it is found in their lives?
3. How is the possibility of Christians sinning addressed in these verses?
4. What provision do verses 1-2 make for the sins of Christians?
5. Verse 1 calls Jesus our advocate (Gk. *parakletos*, one called alongside to help, especially in a court trial). Verse 2 says he is the propitiation for our sins (Gk. *hilasmos*, one who removes the wrath of God by the payment of a sacrifice). How do these titles for Jesus give you assurance of final salvation? How do they give you a picture of Jesus as our Great High Priest (see Hebrews 4:15, 7:26).
6. John says that Jesus is the propitiation not only for our sins, but also for the sins of the whole world. How do we understand this without slipping into universalism, or even Arminianism? Note: John Owen says *hilasmos* (propitiation) is “that whereby the law is covered, God appeased and reconciled, sin expiated, and the sinner pardoned.” Furthermore, Owen says the phrase “whole world” refers to people “living throughout the whole world, in all parts and regions thereof, as opposed to the inhabitants of any one nation, place or country.” Also, if in some sense Christ is a propitiation for every single human being on earth, even those who ultimately end up in hell, it seems impossible that these verses could in any sense be a comfort to sinning Christians, as John clearly intends them to be.
7. How does it encourage you whenever you sin to know that Jesus’ blood so completely atones for you as to be an infinite ocean of grace that swallows up all our sins, and not only our sins but those of believers all over the world and in every era of history?

8. How does this truth about Jesus as our Great High Priest—our Advocate and our Propitiation—not become a license for sin?

verses 3-8: *Genuine Christians Obey God's Commands*

9. What does verse 3 teach you about Christian assurance?
10. How is our assurance tied to our obedience to God's commands?
11. What commands do you think John has in mind?
12. How is this not teaching legalism?
13. How is verse 4 a strong wake-up call for the self-deceived nominal "Christian"?
14. John says a lifestyle of consistent obedience to the commands of God results in God's love being "made complete in us." What does that mean to you?
15. What does it mean to "walk as Jesus did"?
16. How is Jesus our pattern for a daily life of obedience to God's commands? [See John 8:29]

***John 8:29 "The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him."***

17. Why do you think John says this command is not a new one, but one they have had from the beginning?
18. Yet then John says it IS a new command. In what sense are both true... not a new command but also a new command? How is Jesus' incarnation and the way he lived out the ancient law of God in a perfect and new way the answer to both?
19. What does John mean in verse 8 that the darkness is passing away and the true light is shining?

verses 9-11: *Genuine Christians Love Other Christians*

20. What false claims does John expose in this section?
21. What is the significance of someone claiming to be a Christian but actually hating another (or many other) Christians?
22. What does "hate" mean in verse 9?
23. What does it mean that someone who truly hates other Christians is "still in the darkness"?
24. John says a lot about the light vs. darkness in this section. What do these verses teach you about that? What is the nature of the blindness in verse 11?
25. What does John mean by things within us that cause us to stumble (in reference to loving other people)?
26. Why is it often so difficult for Christians to love other Christians? What is the remedy to the hate that John is addressing here?

verses 12-14: *Different Stages of Christians*

27. How do these verses describe different stages of Christian development?
28. What are the different groups he addresses here? What names does he give them?
29. What are the advantages "fathers" bring to the Christian church? What advantages do "young men" bring? How is a combination of "fathers" and "young men" vital for the spread of the gospel to the ends of the earth?
30. What is the first thing John says in this section... to the "dear children"? Why does John say he is writing to them? How does his writing help the dear children whose sins are forgiven?
31. Why does he say he writes to the fathers? Why to the young men? (13)
32. What does it mean to overcome the Evil One?

33. Of all the things John ascribes to the various groups in the church, how many are true of all genuine Christians, regardless of their level of spiritual maturity?
34. How does this section celebrate the benefits of an age-integrated local church?

### **III. Summary:**

John continues in his writing to Christians to urge them to a life of holy obedience to God's commands as especially displayed in their love for one another.