

## COMMANDMENTS FOR FELLOWSHIP\* | 1 John 2:3-11 | Pastor Mark Bofill | Nov. 11/13/2022

I. Test of Knowing Him (3-4) | II. Proof of Knowing Him (5-6) | Commandment for Knowing Him (7-8) | Claim of Knowing Him (9-11)

**INTRO:** In our study of 1st John, we have learned that we can have Joyful Fellowship with the Godhead and His family (1 John 1:1-4), but that true fellowship is contingent upon: Walking in the light (1:5-7), Confessing our sins (1:8-11), and Depending upon our "advocate" and "propitiation", Jesus Christ the Righteous (2:1-2). He now turns to the *\*[Title]*, addressing the question: **"How one can know that one knows God?" (Expound)**

**I. THE TEST OF KNOWING HIM (3-4):** *Now by this we know that we know Him if we keep His commandments. <sup>4</sup>He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.* How can you be assured that you know God?

**A. Certainty of Knowing Him (3) – Is it possible?** Yes, John tells us that it is found by Keeping His Commandments. *But first...*

**1. Who is the "HIM" of this passage, God or Jesus?** The Father or the Son? – Context reveals that It is the Son, Jesus Christ, our Advocate (2:1-2). He is the basis for the fellowship offered.

**2. Emphasis on "KNOW" –** As frequently used by John (5 x's in this section), the word "know" {*ginosko*} denotes a knowledge that comes by experience, by sharing experiences in life together. It implies that "fellowship" has taken place. (*We have experienced some personal exchange together*)

- Both uses are in the "present tense," but the *first* one refers to continual action, indicating that true believers have reached a condition of knowing God. *The second* application is "perfect tense," which conveys a lasting knowledge. John uses "We know," to indicate absolute, direct awareness of a fact!

- **P/A** – There is a vast difference between knowing about a person and knowing that person! You may know a lot about God, but if you have not entered into a personal relationship with Him through faith in Jesus Christ, **you do not know God personally!** – (John 17:3) *"And this is eternal life, that they may know {ginosko} You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent."*

**3. It's Conditional "IF" –** Once again John inserts a very important "*if!*" A clear marker by which one can discern whether or not they are genuinely saved. **When eternal life is questioned no one should be "Iffy" about their decision!**

**4. It Involves "KEEPING" –** Mentioned (3 x's in this section), (Gr. *tereo*: from *teros* = a guard or warden) means to attend carefully to or to watch over; to hold fast! **Tereo** speaks of guarding something which is in one's possession. – In this case, [His] "**COMMANDMENTS**" (Gr. *entole*) – **Entole** refers to some type of demand or requirement. A general injunction, charge, precept of moral and religious nature. (*Precepts which Honor our Lord Jesus and benefit mankind*)

- Fellowship with Jesus is dependent upon **Keeping Jesus' Commandments** aka Word or Teachings. **\*Read (John 14:21-23; 15:10) – His commandments are internalized by keeping!**

- **"Obedience to God's Word is proof of our love to Him. There are three motives for obedience: We can obey because we have to, because we need to, or because we want to!"** – Wiersbe

*John now exposes those who...*

**B. Claim of Knowing Him (4) – "I Know Him"** The motive as to why anyone would make such a claim is not given. But what's apparently clear is, **WHOEVER** makes this claim and **FAILS** at keeping JESUS' commandments, is **regarded a "LIAR!"** {Gr. *pseustēs*}: *Liar, a falsifier or faithless man.*

1. **This false claim is much like the one mentioned in (cf. 1:6),** re: the one who claims to have fellowship with the Father, ***while walking in darkness!*** In that verse it mentions **NOT practicing truth**. Here in (2:4), it blatantly reveals that the ***“Truth is NOT in him!”***

2. **Know that such a false claim will condemn a person to eternal hellfire! – (Rev 21:7-8) *He who overcomes Shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.*** <sup>8</sup> ***But the cowardly unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and ALL LIARS shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.*** (Expound)

*“Now, it will never save a soul to know [only] **about** Christ. The only saving knowledge...is to know him, his very self, and to trust him, the living Savior, who is now at the right hand of God.”* (Spurgeon)

**CLOSING THOUGHT:** The **TEST** that John prescribes here is that of **self-examination!** P/A - Q: **Is my understanding of Jesus just a CLAIM? Or am I absolutely CERTAIN about what I Know? – Knowing what you Know, involves Keeping what you Know!** (A loving obedience is a natural result of fellowship with God)

John now expounds on...

**II. THE PROOF OF KNOWING HIM (5-6):** ***Involves Walking – But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him.*** <sup>6</sup> ***He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked. Here, John expounds on another benefit in fellowship. A sanctifying work which provides...***

**A. Compensation for Keeping His Commandments (5) – What is it? LOVE...GOD’S LOVE! GOD’S Amazing and Unconditional Love!** It is {Gr. **agape**} That which is selfless, sacrificial, and supernatural. Spirit wrought love that characterizes the essence of God (1 John 4:8), ***“God is Love!”***

1. **The “Love of God”** is the **Motiving Power** behind the work that He works in the lives of His obedient ones. – (Phil 1:6) ***He who began a good work in you will be faithful to complete it.***

2. **The “Goal of the Work”** is the **Perfection of Love** in the lives of His obedient ones. – The word **PERFECTED** implies reaching maturity or to be brought to the intended goal. **God’s love achieves its purpose when we KEEP His word.** – It all starts with our hearts, when we let God use His love to change us. All sin, all selfishness, all guilt, and all self-hatred are **eradicated by Him**. – (Illstr. Like looking through a glass house...**He see it all!** – *We don’t try to hide it from Him anymore!*)

- **He then influences our thinking!** (*He whispers to us in Love!*) – He alters the way we perceive People and Things. – **He gives us the ability to love completely and utterly, just as He does!**
- **Our opinions change...** Judgment and Revenge are replaced with **Compassion and Forgiveness!** (*An amazing work!*) – *He knows that when our attitudes and thoughts change*, so do our behaviors. – **We come to hate sin** and the **things practiced in darkness** because we desire to be in the Light as He is!
- **Perfect love IS NOT a one-sided love.** ***It has to be mutual for it to be perfected.*** Then and only then is it true, that **we are in Him and He is in us.**

**B. Commitment when Knowing Him (6) – (1 John 3:24) *Now he who keeps His Commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.*** **READ (tt. Gal 5:22)** – The thought is brought around to a full circle. When we are abiding in Jesus, we will walk just as He walked. The claim of abiding in Jesus, ***imposes the “Ought” of obedience!***

**CLOSING THOUGHT: The Proof of Knowing Him involves WALKING!** – Here's how you know that you know God: It manifests in the way that you live; it manifests in your obedience.” – I like what JB Phillips comments on this passage *"It is only when we obey God's laws that we can be quite sure that we really know Him."*

After Knowing that we have fellowship with Jesus, John concentrates NOW on the...

**III. THE COMMANDMENT FOR KNOWING HIM (7-8):** *Seemingly mystic, he writes: Brethren, I write no new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you have had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which you heard from the beginning. <sup>8</sup> Again, a new commandment I write to you, which thing is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away, and the true light is already shining.*

The **COMMANDMENT** John wrote about was both **OLD**; having been proclaimed to the brethren during their entire Christian lives, and yet **NEW**; in the sense that it was called the new commandment by Jesus in **(John 13:34 - NLT)**. – *So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other.*

**A. The Old Remembered (7)** – It was from the Beginning, it is identified as the Word (1:1,7).

- John mentioned it as if to say **Don't Forget** what you've learned from the beginning.

**B. The New Proclaimed (8)** – It was True in Him (8b). Jesus demonstrated a kind of love that was **"uniquely new."** – D. Guzik provides the following insight on this truth: *"The **CROSS points in four directions... to show that the love of Jesus is: Wide enough to include every human being. – Long enough to last through all eternity. – Deep enough to reach the most guilty sinner. – High enough to take us to heaven.**" (Jesus showed us a "new love" which the world had never really seen before!)*

- John confirms that this same love was IN those who walk as He walked (8c).
- **P/A** – This commandment to Love as He loved **is to manifest within our lives!**
- **Darkness and Light Contrast** – The demonstration of True Love was necessary because darkness has affected the entire world by Adam's Transgression. But from John's point of view, he reveals that the darkness WAS ALREADY disappearing... Why? Because the True Light is already shining. *Jesus IS the Light of the world.* **READ (John 1:4-9; Isa 9:2; Matt 4:13-17)**

**CLOSING THOUGHT: The Commandment for Knowing Him then, Involves Contemplation. Do We Have This Love?** Remember that **Love is the unique characteristic** that sets us apart from the world **(John 13:34)**.

*"YOU are the light of the world... **Let YOUR light so shine before men, that they may see... and glorify your Father in heaven.**" (Matt 5:14-16)*

John concentrates NOW on the...

**IV. THE CLAIM OF KNOWING HIM (9-11):** This test challenges if we are truly walking in Love. – He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now. <sup>10</sup> He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him. <sup>11</sup> But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes. **This Test Involves Brotherly Love!** – I've heard it said, that, *"Following Jesus would be easy if it weren't for all the Christians."* (Let's face it folks there are a lot of carnal Christians out there...Who make false claims!)

**A. He Who Says (9)** – The structure of this verse is very similar to John's earlier statement in (v.4). i.e., "The one who says, *"I have come to know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.*" (1 John 2:4). – This person **claims** to be in fellowship with Jesus (*in the Light*), but **harbors hatred within** his heart towards other believers. **He's even worse off than the Liar!** Why? **Because he is in darkness and doesn't even know it!** (*Even until now! E.g., Judas*)

**B. He Who Loves (10)** – Ahh... John returns to his point, *"but He who Loves!"* in particular, **His brother {adelphos}**, is the one who attains a right relationship as prescribed. – **The truth that we are to love one another is so important that it is repeated 12 times in the NT and 5 times in First John.**

*Here are just a few for emphasis...*

- (Rom 13:8) *Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law.*
- (1 Thess 4:9) *Now regarding brotherly love, you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another;*
- (1 Pet 1:22 NIV) *Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for each other, love one another deeply, from the heart.*
- (1 John 4:7) *Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.*
- (1 John 4:12) *No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us.*
  - When we constantly walk in this manner, John says that *we Abide in the Light!* (*Sweet spot!*)
  - When we walk this way, we won't stumble others, causing them to hate us. (*Perfect witness*)

**C. He Who Hates (11)** – John adds another important fact those who walk in darkness...It is the effect of Not Keeping the Commandment of Love! **"He does NOT KNOW where he is going!"**

- **Hatred has Blinded him!** - If you hate your brother, if you hate others, if you hate those in the kingdom, if you hate anyone, essentially, if you don't see people the way God sees them, then He's not in control of your heart. Hatred can stem from darkness.

**FINAL THOUGHT:** Are you a lover or a hater? – A one-line summary statement for this passage can read: **HE WHO KNOWS VS. HE WHO KNOWS HIM NOT!** Ask yourselves today...**Do You Really Know Him?** – (1Thess 4:1-2) *Finally then, brethren, we urge and exhort in the Lord Jesus that you should abound more and more, just as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God; 2 for you know what commandments we gave you through the Lord Jesus.* – (Rev 22:14) *Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city.*

**CLOSING PRAYER:** I pray that **individually**, we take these commandments to heart and not stumble in any application; but rather keep them so that we abound in Light and Love and Fellowship w/God. **Congregationally**, I pray that CC Venice is known as a Spirit-filled Church, who Loves God, Loves People and Makes Disciples.