

1 John 2:3-11

Announcements

- **Final series message** tonight @ 6:00pm - on the **Advance of AI**
- **Last Sunday here!** - **No ministry events** at either campus this week...
- **All Church Move - 7:00am**. Rain/shine. Lunch provided. No littles. **Trucks/trailers**, load, unload
- **May 3rd = new address!** (**image**) (hopefully **updated on maps** (may not be))
 - **Note mailing address** - for any who have **checks mailed/auto mailed (right away)**
 - **Dedication service** - Exciting! **Celebration** (treats!) - shorter service time, fellowship
 - **Give grace** as we settle in the new building (**checkins, tech, sound panels, design, MUD, traffic**) - **rooms may switch...** (**metal water bottles = no go!**) **Parking (image)**
 - (**image**) (**still much to do**) **Have a heart to give? New Facility Project Fund**
 - **Come to your normal service time**, if could come at **8:00am = helpful!** **Tight seating!**
- **Pray, Give Thanks: Grace Fellowship, City Church, and what's ahead for us...**

Please open to **1 John Chapter 2** (need a Bible?)

- **Last time:** The **Word of Life manifested & beheld**... **Doctrine of Sin**, confession, propitiation.
- **This time:** **Assurance** of your faith... (**how can you tell...?**)

Message Title: Proof is in the Pudding

- **17th Century Proverb**... **Not pudding as we know it...** (**savory (not sweet) meat dish**)
- Full = "**The proof of the pudding is in the eating!**" **Quality is determined by the testing.**
- **Claims are cheap!** (**identify?**) **The title is a joke**, but seriously, **here's two spoons...**
- **The First Test: Obedience** (vv. 3-6) (**morally**)
- **The Second Test: Love** (vv. 7-11) (**socially**)

Reminder on **Gnosticism**. **Big thinking, low living**. **Talk big spiritually**, but **living like heathens**...

PRAY

The First Test: Obedience (verses 3-6)

V. 3 - **By this we know that we know Him**

- **Know that we know** = This is the **language of assurance!** **Don't we all want this!?**
- **Know that we have come to know (Ginosko)** = "**learn to know, come to know, understand, perceive, become acquainted with**" - **Present & perfect** tense. **Looking back/pressing forward...**
- **Relational, experiential!** Knowing **about** a famous person (**even making judgments on what I hear "about" them**) vs. **actually** knowing them. **Is the modern church the same with Jesus?**
- **John** wants you to **not just know about Jesus**, but to **really know him**. **Know that you know!**
- **You could say that's even the main theme of this letter...**
- **1 John 5:13, ESV** - "**I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life.**" - **Best thing ever, man!**
- **Phil. 3:8, NASB** - "**I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ.**"

- Michael Faraday, the '**father of electricity**,' said... "**Speculations? I know nothing of speculations. I am resting on certainties. I know that my Redeemer lives, and because He lives, I shall live also**" (Michael Faraday, 1791-1867)
- **By this - by what...?**

Now, our first spoon... Test...

V. 3 - If we **keep His commandments**.

- This is in the **present tense** which means an **ongoing lifestyle...**
- **Keep (Tereo)** = "to attend to carefully, guard, take care of, observe"
- The picture = difference between **a young baby sitter on a device** and **a secret service agent**.
 - One is **attentively watching every angle**, the **other doesn't seem to care...**
- **And further**, if we are to **keep His commandments**, which ones? **All 613** in the OT?
- Good news, **Jesus summed it up** nicely for us... (synonymous with "**His Word**" in **verse 5**)
- **Matthew 22:35-40** - "A lawyer asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, 'Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?' Jesus said to him, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' **On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.**" (OT **tablets summed up!**)

Verse 4 expounds and helps clarify for us **what this looks like...**

V. 4 - He who says, "I know Him" and **does not keep His commandments**

- **He who says** - (**present tense** lifestyle) **Saying vs doing** - **John says** - **talk is cheap!**
- **Don't just say** you're a christian, **live like one, man!**
- I want to **pause and be clear** on something. We're dealing with **Direction, not Perfection**.
- **No Christian** has **followed God's commandments perfectly** (**if say "no sin" = deceived (v. 8)**)
 - "...he does not mean that those who wholly satisfy the Law keep His commandments (no such instance can be found in the world), but those who strive, according to the capacity of human infirmity, to form their life in obedience to God" (John Calvin on 1 John 2:3)
 - A **compass needle** may wobble, but **consistently points due north!**

But a compass **with no needle...**

V. 4 - **Is a liar**, and the truth is not in him.

- **This person is a fraud**. **Claiming** to be a follower of Christ, but **no change in their lives...**
- Like a **false profile online** **presenting yourself one way**, when **you're really not that way**.
- **John doesn't mince words**. **Pastoral hiring committee** on his "**tone.**" **Not politically correct**.
- Again, John is **not addressing** those who have **tried but fallen short** (**that's all of us**). He's addressing the **gnostic fraud**, who **claim spiritual pinnacle** with **no change in their lives**.
 - **Modern woke church** is a perfect example: **pride flags**, **embracing/encouraging sin**.
 - **Some celebrity "Christians"** - by name, but certainly not by lifestyle...

Now John states the opposite truth, **positively...** **But** = a term of contrast...

V. 5 - But whoever **keeps His word** truly the love of God is **perfected in him**.

- To be **purposefully redundant**, it's in the **present tense** - dealing with **an active way of living...**
- And, **though we fall short**, the **person who knows Christ gets this**. We seek to obey His Word... not because we **have to**; because we **want to!** (**do you desire to? I hope so...**)
 - **John 14:15, NET** - "If you love me, you will obey my commandments." **And if so...**

- **Perfected (teleioo)** = "to accomplish, complete, mature, finish, bring to an end" = **bear fruit!**
- **That's maturity!** As you **grow in sanctification of the Spirit**, this **becomes real (conviction)**
- **"The Christian no longer loves sin... Sin is dejected in the Christian's heart, though it is not ejected. Sin may enter the heart, and fight for dominion, but it cannot sit upon the throne."** (Spurgeon) - the question is not "do I fail" but "do I aim to follow"?

...good ole faithful Johnny helps us out even further by **giving us an example to follow...**

V. 5 - **By this** we know that we are **in Him...**

- **Another test of assurance** to know that we are **In Him**, is **By this... By what?**

V. 6 - He who **says he abides** in Him ought himself also to **walk just as He walked**.

- Well, **this is very simple**. If you **"say"** you **abide in Jesus**, **then live like it! Show me!**
- **Put your money where your mouth is** (that's what **"walking"** is) = **followers of the way!**
- **Christ is our model**. Study his **attitude, actions, and approach**.
 - **Ought to** (opheilō) = **that which is due...** At the end of the day, **I'm just the messenger:**
- **Luke 6:46-47** - "Why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and **not do** the things which I say? **Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like...**"
 - **Rock/sand... wise/foolish... the difference? ...not just the hearing but the DOING!**
- A **Christian t-shirt** isn't enough, a **bumper sticker** on your car isn't enough... **bracelet, tattoo...**
 - **"An unchanged life is the sign of an uncleansed heart."** (Charles Spurgeon)
 - It's **impossible to know Christ and not be changed**.
 - **Think back:** **has there been any change in your life** since confessing Christ?
- **"The point here is that the one who knows God will increasingly lead a righteous life, for God is righteous. It does not mean that he will be sinless; John has already shown that anyone who claims this is lying. It simply means that he will be moving in a direction marked out by the righteousness of God. If he does not do this, if he is not increasingly dissatisfied with and distressed by sin, he is not God's child."** (Boice)

One major clarifier here before we move on to our second test of assurance...

- **John is not**, and **I am not**, talking about **a works-BASED salvation**. (Eph 2 = not of works)
- **John is saying**, and **I am re-iterating**, **a works-EVIDENCED salvation**. (Jam. 2 = by my works)
 - The fruit doesn't **make** the tree alive, the fruit **reveals** the tree is in fact alive.
- **Is there any fruit?** Even **if you care at all or have concerns**, that's **fruit & revealing in itself**.

Beloved church, there is **another spoon being handed to us...** another test of assurance...

The Second Test: Love (verses 7-11)

First test = how you **walk...**

Second test = how you **treat people...**

V. 7 - **Brethren**

- **Agapetos** = **beloved** -
 - From the **Father to the Son** (Baptism/Transfiguration) - **Relational familial language!**
 - A **message for the church** for sure...

John next, on the surface, might seem a little bi-polar...

Vv. 7-8 - I write **no new commandment to you**, but an old commandment [**the word** which you have heard from the beginning]... Again, **a new commandment I write** to you...

- Which is it dude? An **old** or a **new** commandment? I picture **John chuckling**, and saying **yes!**
- **No new commandment** is **emphasized (fronted)** - **combating Gnosticism** (something new)
- This is the **same message** you've **heard since the beginning**... (not even a N.T. invention)
- **(The Shema!) Deuteronomy 6:5** - "Love the LORD your God with all your heart..."
- **Leviticus 19:18** - "You shall love your neighbor as yourself..."
 - **Sound familiar? This is an old message** for sure... But **Jesus made it fresh** for us.
- **Again (palin)** = "anew, again, moreover, on the other hand, **renewal or repetition** of an action"
 - "**Neos**" (not used here) - **new in time (young/old)**. "**Kainos**" = **quality (used here!)**
 - Like a **time tested good old recipe** in the **hands of a master chef Brings out the flavor!**
- **Jesus does this for us**... and the **real meaning is clarified** in a particular verse...
- **John 13:34-35** - "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; **as I have loved you**, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have **love for one another.**" - Jesus says we are to **love in the same way He loved us. How so?**
 - **Emphasis** - not just **love when easy**, but **self sacrificing agape** (extra mile/turn cheek)
 - **Extent** - Even **our enemy. irrespective of rank, gender or nationality** - **Good Samaritan!**
 - Jesus **loved them till the end**... **All different kinds:** Mary Magdalene, Pharisees (Nicodemus), Fisherman (John), Zealots, tax collectors (Levi, Zacchaeus), impulsive Peter, doubting Thomas, even betraying Judas. Prayed for his enemies (Father, forgive them) - **New in kind!**

V. 8 - Which thing is **true in Him and in you**

- **True of Jesus and is true of His followers.** OR at least **should be true** of his followers!
- **Romans 5:8** - "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that **while we were still sinners**, Christ died for us..."
- Now, **likewise**, we **deny ourselves and pick up our crosses daily** and **sacrificially serve the undeserving people of this world**...

Why?

V. 8 - Because the **darkness is passing away**, and the **true light is already shining**.

- **Present tense** - It's **not just going to happen**, **it is already happening!** John says, **join in on it!**
 - **Christ has already come** into the world...
 - **His light did invade** the darkness...
 - And it is **still invading the darkness**...
 - **Through His people**, the church...
 - **The darkness of this world has an expiration date**... Don't perish along with it...
 - "**If we walk in the light as He is in the light...**" (**1 John 1:7**) (**last week!**)

As if John hasn't been clear enough, he presses on with **more nuances to these tests**...

V. 9 - He who says he is in the light, **and hates his brother**, is in darkness until now.

- **He who says** (vs **does**), but **now directly internally** to the **church** (i.e. - **his brother**)
- You **can't claim love and light**, while **present tense hating the church**, or **people within it**.
- **The syntax here** is important for "**hates his brother**" (**settled/ongoing disposition of hate**)

- John is **not talking about a brief moment** of **disagreement or frustration** with a **fellow believer**, that's **normal and happens all the time** (irritability, dislike, or even offense)
- But the person who **claims to love Jesus**, yet has **settled, ongoing hate in his heart for the brethren** needs to really **pay attention to what John is saying here...** (this should not be so)
- The **Gnostics were clearly doing this**. **Claiming spiritual enlightenment**, while **treating beloved brethren like dirt**. John is telling them, "**you can say you're walking in the light, but you're actually living in darkness**" - **But what about you and I? Ask God: Is there a name?**
 - **Matthew 5:23-24, NIV** - "...if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. **First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.**"
 - **Don't "act" all spiritual, "be" spiritual...**

V. 10 - He who **loves his brother abides** in the light and there is **no cause for stumbling** in him.

- The one who **continues to show agape love**, is the one **who remains/abides in the light**.
 - **Not a fleeting emotion**, but **an ongoing action!**
 - **Active Agapao** ...keeps **us & them from stumbling...** (don't leave this unchecked)

Stupid panda ring! - got me three times now... currently under the sofa... lurking... Not good...

V. 11 - But he who hates his brother is **in darkness and walks in darkness**

- Agape love for your church community is **not optional, it's diagnostic**.
- If you have **hate (detest)** - **even cold indifference** could be categorized as such...
- **John reiterates** the **words of our Lord Christ** from **the Sermon on the Mount...**
- **1 John 3:15, CSB** - "**Everyone who hates his brother or sister is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life residing in him.**" - will explain more when we get there...
 - **But let that sit...** This is a **REPEATED THEME** in **1 John...**
- You **might really dislike someone for a moment**... but you cannot live **in** a place of settled, ongoing hatred...

If you do... according to the Epistle of John...

V. 11 - (he/she/you) **does not know where he is going** because the **darkness has blinded his eyes**.

- **Unchecked hatred** leads to **spiritual blindness and a hard heart**.
 - **Heb 12:15, NLT** - "Look after each other so that none of you fails to receive the grace of God. **Watch out that no poisonous root of bitterness grows up to trouble you, corrupting many...**"
- **Do you see what unchecked hatred** can do in a church... in a person...?
- **Our immediate verse** says this type of person has **his eyes blinded** and **doesn't know where he's going...** (eyes have **adjusted to the darkness**, not good...)
- **This is a statement of love, friends!** God cares about you... **He does not want you blinded or stumbling around...** **Hate** turns into a **grudge**, turns into a **root**, turns into **blindness** (your misinterpreting, misrepresenting, misremembering, and misunderstanding everything...)
- **The Apostle John Himself** learned this **hard lesson** at one point in his life...
- **Luke 9:54-56** - "When His disciples James and John saw [that the Samaritans did not receive Jesus], they said, 'Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them...?' **But He turned and rebuked them...**"
 - **You do not know what manner of spirit you are of (NKJV)**
 - **Hear the heart of our Lord.**

Closing:

Well, **that's a tough message**. *We've all fallen short...*

- But **the bar is still set for us**. *Not to earn salvation* but to *reveal if it's really in us*.
- *The person who truly knows Christ* will seek to **obey Christ and live out His love**.
- *The one walking in darkness* will **act all spiritual** but *pride will prevent him from hearing...*

*Titus 3:3-8, CSB - "For we too were once foolish, disobedient, deceived, enslaved by various passions and pleasures, living in malice and envy, **hateful, detesting one another**. But when the kindness of God our Savior and his love for mankind appeared, he saved us—not by works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy—through the washing of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit. He poured out his Spirit on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior... so that those who have believed God might **be careful to devote themselves to good works**" - **obedience/love***

Good news is, **Christ met all these requirements** on our behalf. *Fulfilled the law and loved to the end.*

- *We just need to aim, **by the power of His spirit**, to live as He did..*
- **Time of Response? Altar Call?**

PRAY

DR Luncheon & Homeschool Fair today!