



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

1 JOHN 1:1-2:11- THAT YOU MAY KNOW THE TRUTH!

COLORADO MAY 8, 2018

Dan File, P.O. Box 1088, Lake City, CO 81235-1088/303-345-8830 / filefamily@centurytel.net

John is the last surviving disciple and apostle of Jesus Christ. He writes some 60 years after Jesus Christ had risen from the dead and then ascended into heaven. Paul had long since been executed in the city of Rome for his faith in Christ. All the Apostles were martyred because they were compelled to share the only salvation message for the world...even though it would cost them their lives. John writes to leave the next generation with the truth of the only lifesaving gospel of Jesus Christ.

This last living Apostle was serving in the capital city of Ephesus in Asia Minor which is modern day Turkey. It formed a land bridge between Europe and Asia. Through this land bridge flowed migrations of people, armies for invasions, philosophies and new ideas. This capital city of Ephesus was home to the worship of many gods. In fact, the temple built for the god Artemis in Ephesus was considered one of the 7 wonders of the world. And in the midst of all this paganism, was the Christian church, shining as a light of truth in the darkness of false philosophies and ideologies, sin and immorality. The church of Jesus Christ was constantly threatened by the many philosophies of that day with false teachers and their religions.¹ This pressure and influence took its toll on the Asian churches as noted in Revelation 2-3. Though much older, John's age did not temper his fiery zeal for Jesus Christ or the truth. He saw the dangers for believers under his care and he picks up his pen and defends the faith. He was a light in a very dark place writing to warn and refute the false, and encourage and reassure believers of the truth and their faith.²

I. JOHN...THE DISCIPLE AND APOSTLE OF JESUS CHRIST!

John and his older brother James were the sons of Zebedee a prosperous fishermen on the Sea of Galilee. They lived to fish, but that would soon change. When Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee preaching the gospel of God, (Mark 1:14-20) He saw two brothers fishing, James and John. He called them and immediately they left their boat and their father to follow Jesus for the rest of their lives. (Matthew 4:18-22) John's character was transformed by Jesus as a fisherman to a fisher of men and became an eyewitness to Christ's death and resurrection. As the church was established, John remained in Jerusalem becoming, along with Peter and James, one of three pillars of the church. (Galatians 2:9) John would eventually go to Ephesus in Asia Minor (modern day Turkey) where Paul had spent three years establishing churches in this capital city and surrounding region. John took up his pen in the latter part of the century, around 80-90 AD, writing his eyewitness account in the Gospel of John as an older man. Following his Gospel account, John would write the Epistles of 1-3 John around 90-95 AD. Though old, he was a fiery proclaimer of Jesus Christ

yet with a sincere love for believers. Because of his preaching and teaching, around 95 AD, John was exiled to the Island of Patmos under the cruel reign of Domitian. John would have been maybe 90-95 years of age at this time. There the Lord Jesus gave him the book of Revelation. This portion of Scripture would encourage a very discouraged apostle and a disheartened, compromising church; offering hope for the future return of Christ. Before John died, he was able to return to Ephesus. He remained as the last disciple and apostle of Jesus Christ standing, living to almost 100 AD. This is the writer of the Gospel of John, 1-3 John and Revelation!

II. 1 JOHN...THAT YOU MAY KNOW- PURPOSE!

John spent three years with the other eleven disciples under the teaching of Jesus, preparing them for a life of ministry. John wrote about this time in his Gospel as an eyewitness giving testimony to the truths about Jesus Christ as the Son of God Who came in the flesh, died on the cross bearing the penalty of sin and satisfying the wrath of God, rose from the dead victorious over sin and death, ascended into heaven where He sits at the right hand of God the Father. He writes to believers with tenderness, love and affirmation, yet you hear the rumble of thunder in the background as he writes about deceivers and those against Christ.

III. 1 JOHN...FUNDAMENTALS OF THE FAITH TO KNOW!

"What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we beheld and our hands handled, concerning the Word of Life (2) and the life was manifested, and we have seen and bear witness and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us..." 1 John 1:1-2

A. JESUS CHRIST THE INCARNATE SON OF GOD- 1 JOHN 1:1

1 John is a message written about eternal life; the very life of God revealed in Jesus and shared by all who put their trust in Him. This eternal life is secured in God through Jesus Christ His Son.³ These words from John give us the starting point of revelation; the disclosure of God in Christ. Though many were denying that Jesus Christ came in the flesh, John gives his eyewitness testimony to the fact that Jesus is God Incarnate.

It is this most awkward truth of all; Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man in one Person, that John pulls together as essential for the gospel because only with this doctrine does what happened on the cross make sense. Who Christ is and what Christ did are bound together. If you try to parse away

BIBLE STUDIES

LEGISLATORS, GOVERNOR & SPOUSES: TUESDAY AT 7:15AM, CAPITOL BASEMENT, ROOM 0109

STAFF, LOBBYISTS, JOURNALISTS & SERGEANTS: TUESDAYS AT NOON, [SSB 1525 SHERMAN, RM #603- ACROSS COLFAX FROM CAPITOL](#)

Colorado

“What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we beheld and our hands handled, concerning the Word of Life (2) and the life was manifested, and we have seen and bear witness and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, that you also may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things we write, so that our joy may be made complete.” 1 John 1:1-4

Who Jesus is, you may have a neater philosophy that’s easier to believe, but you will misunderstand Christ and forfeit the gospel. And if you don’t understand Who Jesus is, then John says you are not a Christian. You must know that in His love for us God Himself took on flesh, lived a perfect life, died the death sinners deserve, and then arose in victory over sin and death. Do you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, fully God and fully Man? The most important question you could ever ask and answer is, who Jesus is! ⁴

B. 1 JOHN 1:1 - “HEARD, SEEN, BEHELD, HANDLED”

John heard the Lord speak and teach, personally and these words were still ringing in John’s ears. What he heard had a transforming impact on his life. John had seen Christ visibly and not only him but all the disciples. John saw and observed Jesus, a real man for three years with his own eyes. John is restating and affirming that this was not a casual glance at Christ, but rather a long, searching gaze. He was Lord, God, Messiah, Savior in the flesh with supernatural powers over demons, disease, nature and death.⁵ John emphasizes the material manifestation of Jesus to men’s ears, eyes and hands. John’s Epistle reminds us that faith in Jesus is **NOT** a matter of credulity, mysticism or superstition. The Apostles were men of reason.⁶ Jesus was a true flesh and bone body as witnessed by the Apostles; both before Christ’s death on the cross, witnessing His death, and after His resurrection. They heard Jesus Christ, they visibly saw and touched Jesus in the flesh before and after He rose from the dead. The Christian faith is founded upon evidence! Every verb John used makes one point, the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is not a speculation, an idea or an opinion. *It is a fact!*

The Incarnation of the Son of God lies at the very heart of our Christian faith. In no other way could God justly deal with the sin that set us under His just judgement and provides us with the righteousness that would fit us for fellowship with Him. As 2 Corinthians 5:19 tells us that it was in Christ, the God-Man, was reconciling the world to Himself. This is the uniqueness of Christ that the world stumbles over. The gospel of Jesus is not one of a number of options for men and women to consider...it is the one and only way for sinners to be reconciled to God and rescued from the coming wrath.⁷

C. 1 JOHN 1:2- CHRIST: CHRITISIANITY’S CORNERSTONE!

The privilege John had as one of the disciples who saw Christ, God Incarnate born in the flesh, was to testify, bear witness as an eye witness of the truth. And then it was his responsibility

to “proclaim” this gift of eternal life (Matthew 28:18-20, John 20:30-31, 2 Corinthians 5:14-15) to all those who had never seen Jesus, now writing some 60 years later after Jesus Christ had come in the flesh to die for our sins.⁸ What was the theme of their authoritative proclamation? The theme of “eternal life”, the life of God revealed in Jesus Christ and shared by all who put their trust in Him.⁹ In Jesus Christ we are brought face to face with the true and living God, that eternal life has been manifest, revealed in the Incarnate Son of God. This is the cornerstone of the Christian faith.

D. 1 JOHN 1:3- FELLOWSHIP... A SHARED LIFE!

John declares the truth about Jesus Christ with the purpose of having “fellowship”. God’s purpose in rescuing sinners is not only to save them from hell, but giving them fellowship.

“fellowship” Greek “**koinonia**” authentic participation in a shared life.

We are saved to belong! This “fellowship” comes only by believing God Himself took on flesh in His Son Jesus Christ, lived a perfect life, died the death sinners deserve, and then arose in victory over sin and death. Do you believe in Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord? Has God done this redeeming work in the depth of your soul? Not have you walked an aisle, raised a hand, signed a card, parroted a prayer, joined a church, or been wet in a baptism. None of that will bring you into a saving relationship with Christ. Turn your heart to the Lord Jesus Christ Who God sent, born of a virgin, lived a sinless and perfect life, Who went to Calvary’s cross and bore in His body all the sins of all those who would believe in Him, taken down from that cross, was buried and raised that third day, came walking out of that tomb a risen and victorious Savior with the keys of Hades and the grace in His hand. He has ascended to the right hand of God the Father where all authority in heaven and earth have been given unto Him, and whosoever shall call upon His name, will be saved. Humble yourself and repent of your sins and turn to Jesus Christ Who is the friend of sinners. Run to Christ! He says that those who come to Him, He will in no way cast out!

F. 1 JOHN 1:4- REAL JOY!

John wrote regarding error of course because there was a crisis of the truth. But his goal was to also write about the joy that the truth brings. John remember the words of his Lord from John 15:11, “*These things I have spoken to, that My joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.*” Jesus spoke those words in the upper room just before going to the cross. How could that be

Colorado

“What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we beheld and our hands handled, concerning the Word of Life (2) and the life was manifested, and we have seen and bear witness and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, that you also may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things we write, so that our joy may be made complete.” 1 John 1:1-4

joy in any way? Yet Jesus taught John that His real goal was not just the truth, but the joy that the truth produces. The absolute and certain truth brings full and complete joy even in the midst of suffering, persecution, and deception. And real joy is found only in a genuine relationship with Jesus Christ.

“joy” Greek “chara” means a calm delight, gladness. Matthew Henry says it is a settling conviction that God sovereignly controls the events of life for the believers’ good and God’s glory and is available to all who obey Him.

Joy is not a feeling or emotion that comes and goes. Adversity and troubles in life give us no reason to be happy. But joy is a fruit that is present in our lives because its’ source is found in Christ alone. You will never know joy until you know Christ. So John begins with Christ. It is through Him we have access to God and fellowship with the Father.

D. 1 JOHN 1:5- “GOD IS LIGHT”!

“And this is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.” 1John 1:5

So after giving truth about Christ, John proceeds to the truth in the nature of God the Father.¹⁰ In 1 John 1:5, we have one of the most comprehensive statements about God. The God of the gospel brings us to know the God Who is light and *“in Him there is no darkness at all.”* There were those who believed and taught that God and sin could exist equally and sin was okay.¹¹ We fall short of God’s holiness as believers. We must have a desire for righteousness instead of a disregard for it. Since God is light, and holy, is your passion in this life to please Him with a desire for purity? Stott writes that the effect of light is not just to make men see, but enable them to walk. Right conduct, not just clear vision is John’s point. We are not just to know the truth but we must live it. God and sin are mutually exclusive. (Habakkuk 1:13, Isaiah 6:1-5, Revelation 21:27) We cannot treat God lightly, nor sin. Rather we need to make every effort to strive for holiness, which without no one will see the Lord. (Hebrews 12:14).¹² John continues with three false claims regarding sin and righteousness.

E. 1 JOHN 1:6-7- FALSE CLAIM #1- RIGHTEOUSNESS!

“And this is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; but if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.” 1John 1:5-7

Righteousness is the first test of genuine faith in Christ and still the test of the truth and reality of our Christian profession. God and sin are mutually exclusive. God is light, and those who truly know God will walk in the light. (1 John 1:7) Thus, John exposes this first contradiction expressed by those who claim to know Christ but the habit of their life reveals a different reality. Ever since the fall of man, we have tried to minimize the reality of sin. We redefine sin; we messed up, we failed but we really do not hit the nail on the head. The church no longer likes to talk about sin for fear of offending and there is the popular idea that all people are good.

Scripture teaches the opposite, that all are sinful at the very core. That is what drove Christ to the cross. Sin may be culturally accepted but it is never acceptable in God’s sight. You cannot sidestep your responsibility for sin or the consequences. Those who walk in the light will find the *“blood of Christ”*, the Divine remedy, available for cleansing and forgiveness for any sin. Such forgiveness is provided only by the sacrifice of Christ.

The first false claim John makes is the assertion that we can have fellowship with God, while at the same walk habitually in darkness. Thus, righteousness is the first test of genuine faith in Christ and still the test of the truth and reality of our Christian profession.

F. 1 JOHN 1:8-9- FALSE CLAIM #2- NOT RESPONSIBLE!

“If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1John 1:8-9

John declares that sin is caused by the human will and it involves man in guilt. It is inherent in our nature and therefore undeniable. The second claim made is more astonishing than the first because it is a failure to acknowledge human, personal sinfulness. This is the second hindrance to true fellowship with God, denying any responsibility for sin and thus deceiving ourselves.¹³ Misconceptions about true salvation comes as people want fellowship with God on easy terms. John denounces sin and offers the Divine remedy through the cleansing and forgiveness made possible through the death of Christ. The only way to have fellowship with God is not to deny sin, but confess sin.¹⁴ The true Christian will admit their sin, that is agree with God that our sin is wicked and wrong. And such confession isn’t a general acknowledgment of sin, rather we must honestly confront and honestly confess the sins we are guilty of without defending ourselves or excusing

Colorado

“What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we beheld and our hands handled, concerning the Word of Life (2) and the life was manifested, and we have seen and bear witness and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, that you also may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things we write, so that our joy may be made complete.” 1 John 1:1-4

our own sinful deeds. And we must remember it's not confession which earns a right standing before God or satisfies His just judgment against sinners. Only the perfect, substitutionary death of Christ can satisfy God. Only the righteous life of Christ credited to our account could make us acceptable to God. (2 Cor. 5:21)¹⁵

God's favorable response to our sin is assured by His nature—because He is faithful and righteous! God is “*faithful*” to forgive because He has promised to do so. And He is “*just*” or “*righteous*” to do so because His Son died for our sins. Yes, God must punish sin to the utmost. And He has dealt with sin through His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. In Christ, God has executed His judgment on our sin. It is because God acted justly in punishing His own beloved Son for us that He can justly forgive our sins. The cross is the only moral ground on which God can forgive sin for there the blood of Jesus was shed that He might be the payment of our sins.¹⁶ Since Christ has fully atoned for our sins, God is bound by His love and righteousness to forgive our sin. (Romans 3:25-26) When we confess our sins to God, He acts to forgive our sins so they no longer stand between God and us. “*As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.*” (Psalm 103:10-12) And our sins not only make us guilty, but also make us unclean. To “*cleanse*” means to cleanse us from the pollution of our sin and continues to cleanse us from future sins. Sin produces a defilement that only God can remove.

G. 1 JOHN 1:10- FALSE CLAIM #3- DENIAL!

“If we say we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.” 1John 1:10

The final false claim John puts forth is failing to see the depth of our depravity. There are those who deny the certainty of sin, but this next false claim says that they have never sinned. This is the most serious claim of all. To say that we have not sinned is more than just deception. Rather it is to actually accuse God of lying because God has declared in legal terms that “*all have sinned*” (Romans 3:23). So who is right? Is the one who denies the reality of sin in general and in him specifically? On the other hand, is God right Who declares that all have sinned? Maybe Romans 3:4 says it best, “*Rather let God be found true, though every man a liar.*” It is one thing to show we are liars. But it is a much more serious action to make a liar out of God. It is a direct attack on His character. John asserts here emphatically that we are not merely charging God with telling lies, but declare in character that God is a liar and false in His

very nature. John makes it clear that God has not found a lodging in this one's life by saying “*and His word is not in us.*” And unlike the previous claims, (1 John 1:7, 1:9) John now offers no corrective or remedy. The only hope for this one in John's text is to denounce the claim and accept the message presented in 1 John 2:1-2.

“*God is light*” is the message of 1 John 1:5-10. If we are to walk in the light as we are called to do, our first step is to recognize the darkness within our hearts. A proper assessment of self and sin in which we say neither “*we have no sin*” nor “*we have not sinned*” but rather “*we have sin*” and we “*still sin*”- should lead to a life of consistent, contrite confessions whereby the Father's forgiveness is given and our fellowship with God and others, through the blood of Christ, is renewed.¹⁷

H. JESUS CHRIST OUR ADVOCATE! - 1 JOHN 2:1

“My little children, I am writing these things to you that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;” 1 John 2:1

How does Christ, without fail, win the acquittal for all who put their faith in Him? He intercedes with the Father on the basis of His own substitution for sinners by His sacrificial death on the cross, which fully paid sins' penalty for all who put their trust in Him for salvation, meeting the demands of God's justice. Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord has become our Advocate Who gains our acquittal.¹⁸ (2 Corinthians 5:21) Christ is God's gracious and loving provision for us when we sin. Christ is our heavenly Advocate, the One Who pleads our cause with the Father.

“**Advocate**” Greek “**paraclete**” defines one who stands near to render help and plead one's cause, counsel for the defense, anyone summoned for the assistance of another.

And as our defense counsel, Christ is uniquely qualified to stand in God's presence to represent us...because He is “*Jesus the righteous*”. Jesus testifies before the throne of God in favor of us, against our sin and its due punishment. We are assigned the greatest defense lawyer in the universe Who every time pleads our case. Surprisingly He does **not** maintain His clients' innocence! Christ is a most unusual Defense Attorney, our Advocate, for He acknowledges the guilt of His clients. He has never lost a case and never will. He acts as the Advocate for all those who believe savingly in Him. In Romans 8:33, the Apostle Paul uses the language of a courtroom and asks, “*Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; who*

Colorado

“What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we beheld and our hands handled, concerning the Word of Life (2) and the life was manifested, and we have seen and bear witness and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, that you also may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things we write, so that our joy may be made complete.” 1 John 1:1-4

is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.” He is our generous champion of our otherwise lost cause.¹⁹

Our defender, Christ, understands our weaknesses. (Hebrews 4:14-15) He accepts as clients only those who have confessed their guilt and desperate need for Christ as Savior and Lord. And He has become every believer’s Advocate. He gains our acquittal as our great High Priest before the Father! (Hebrew 7:25-28) Christ pleads our cause and secures our pardon. What a gracious and loving provision for us by God.

I. JESUS CHRIST OUR PROPITIATION! - 1 JOHN 2:2

“and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world.” 1John 2:2

Jesus Christ is our Advocate, but John wants us to understand there is another requirement for our salvation to be complete. There can be no forgiveness of our sin without a propitiation, an appeasement of God’s wrath.

“propitiation” Greek **“hilasmos”** a noun that means satisfaction, used as appeasement of any angry deity by offerings to turn away wrath.

Propitiation is an appeasement of the wrath of God by the love of God through the gift of God, His Son Jesus Christ.²⁰ By Jesus Christ’s sinless life and sacrificial death on the cross, He satisfied the demands of God’s justice, thus appeasing and satisfying His holy wrath against sinners who believe in Him.

The Old Testament has a term used for *“propitiation”* and that is *“mercy seat”* used in the sacrificial system found in Exodus 25:10-22. (Leviticus 16:15) The mercy seat was located on top of the Ark of Covenant and was the cover or lid. God’s divine Shekinah glory cloud was above the Ark and in the Ark lay the tablets of stone with the Law written by God on them. The priest would sprinkle the mercy seat with blood from their sacrifices and it was the place where atonement for sin was secured. The sprinkled blood stood between and before God (the Shekinah glory cloud) and His broken law (the stone tablets). Now the sacrificial blood of animals were never enough to satisfy God, (Hebrews 7:26-28, 9:6-15, 10:1-18) but looked forward and pictured the future sacrifice of Christ Who would fully satisfy God the Father’s wrath. (Hebrews 9:23-28, Isaiah 53:6, 10) If the Old Testament sacrifices and the whole sacrificial system had appeased God’s wrath once and for all, the Jews would not have continued endlessly to bring burnt offerings, sin offerings and trespass offerings over these many

centuries.²¹ But it is Jesus Christ Who fulfilled the sacrificial system of the Law. Jesus Christ is the mercy seat.

Christ is the only propitiation for sin. There is none other. God’s wrath is averted entirely through the free gift of His Son Jesus Christ. Later John would write in 1 John 4:10, *“In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”* And there was never any reluctance, but only love on God the Father’s part and the Son’s part, on our behalf!²²

J. ARE YOU A CHRISTIAN? TEST ONE: OBEDIENCE!

1 JOHN 2:3-6

(3) “And by this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments. (4)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; (5)but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him: (6)the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.” 1 John 2:3-6

John wrote this Epistle so we can know whether we are a Christian. He offers three tests of true salvation beginning first with obedience, which reveals visible and objective evidence of true belief.²³ In 1 John 2:3-6, John introduces two types of men. One claims to know God, but does not keep God’s commandment. John calls this one a liar. The second man who obeys God also says that he knows God.

“keeps” Greek **“tereo”** observant, watchful obedience continually.

The gospel doesn’t set us free from God’s commandments, rather the gospel enables us by the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit to keep them.²⁴ A righteous life is proof of a divine and supernatural working in our life if we obey Him. It is not natural for us to want to obey God. The practical evidence of authentic faith is a lifestyle of obedience shaped by God’s commandments. John himself would write later in this Epistle in 1 John 5:3, *“By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments. For this is the love of God that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.”* If obedience does not follow faith, it is a dead and useless faith. That faith saves no one. And John says further, *“the truth is not in him.”* This is the sad reality of the one who says they believe but does not obey God. Obedience to God is the first test of real and genuine faith in Jesus Christ. Examine your life openly and honestly. Is your life characterized by a

Colorado

“What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we beheld and our hands handled, concerning the Word of Life (2) and the life was manifested, and we have seen and bear witness and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, that you also may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things we write, so that our joy may be made complete.” 1 John 1:1-4

desire to obey and please God? The hallmark of Christ’s earthly life was glad submission and obedience to His Father. (John 6:38) We must keep God’s Word and we must “walk in the same manner as He walked.” If we claim to abide in Christ, we will walk in the same way as Christ.

K. ARE YOU A CHRISTIAN? TEST TWO: LOVE! 1 JOHN 2:7-11

(7) “Beloved, I am not writing a new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you have had from the beginning; the old commandment is the word which you have heard. (8) On the other hand, I am writing a new commandment to you, which is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away, and the true light is already shining. (9) “The one who says he is in the light and yet hates his brother is in the darkness until now. (10) The one who loves his brother abides in the light and there is no cause for stumbling in him. (11) But the one who 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.”
1 John 2:7-11

In 1 John 2:7-11, John applies the test of love to those who claim to be Christians. The presence of Biblical love is a sure indicator of transformation. True believers demonstrate a love for God, a love for fellow believers and reached out in love to those lost in sin’s darkness.²⁵ This love was the distinguishing mark between what was real and genuine, and the false and fake. John writes about the talker verses the walker; the hater verses the one who loves.

“hates” Greek “*mison*” present tense participle, reveals a settled and ongoing attitude and action of disgust, dislike, abhorrence, revulsions, hate.

It is this hatred that shows they are still in the darkness as John says, “*is in the darkness until now*”, having never experienced the true transformation, which takes us out of the kingdom of darkness into the realm of light. (Colossians 1:13) Would they have hated everyone? No, but they probably did not appreciate the Apostle John for calling them out. And they probably had no regard for those who truly followed John, real believers. The opposite of one who hates his brother is the one who

loves him. Note there is no neutral ground between these two.

“loves” Greek “*agapao*” present participle, unconditional, sacrificial purposeful love that seeks to promote the highest good for the one loved.

Loving is the habit of the believer’s life. This love may even be at the expense of self. It is not occasional or sporadic, rather a continual, habitual practice of life. This is not natural for anyone and reveals the regenerating work of God in one’s life. The result of truly loving God is that His love is poured out in our hearts through the indwelling Holy Spirit. (Romans 5:5)

Evidence of God’s love in the believer reveals they are transformed and that this one “*abides in the light*”. This one does not claim to be in the light, his actions show that he is in the light. He is a true Christian, demonstrated by genuine love.

So John describes those who claim to be in the light and yet hate their brother; as being in darkness, walking in darkness, don’t know where they are going, and finally as blind. John says, “*because the darkness has blinded his eyes*”. Surely, nothing is so blind as hatred. It conceals from us our faults and virtues of others. It keeps us ignorant of our moral peril and indifferent to the consequences of our deeds.

Love is a valid test for genuine obedience. This kind of love provides a distinct contrast to those who are without love, in the darkness and blind. There are fish living in the perpetual darkness of Echo River in the depths of Mammoth Cave in Kentucky. They have eye sockets but no developed eyes. The darkness has effectively blinded their eyes. Persistence in hatred and sin inevitably lead to moral and spiritual blindness.²⁶

The darkness actively blinds eyes, twisting and distorting what is true and false, right and wrong. The absence of brotherly love gives telling evidence of an unsaved life. When we handle something, our fingerprints mark it. When God savingly touches a life, He leaves His fingerprints all over it. Are His fingerprints on your life?²⁷

¹ MacArthur, John, *MacArthur Commentary Series on 1-3 John*. Moody Press: Chicago, IL, 2007. Pg.1-2.
² MacArthur, John, *MacArthur Commentary Series on 1-3 John*. Moody Press: Chicago, IL, 2007. Pg.9.
³ Erdman, Charles R., *The General Epistles: An Exposition*. The Westminster Press: Philadelphia, PA, 1919. Pg. 114.
⁴ Dever, Mark, *The Message of the New Testament: Promises Kept*. Crossway: Wheaton, IL, 2005. Pg.477.
⁵ MacArthur, John, *MacArthur Commentary Series on 1-3 John*. Moody Press: Chicago, IL, 2007. Pg.17.
⁶ Erdman, Charles R., *The General Epistles: An Exposition*. The Westminster Press: Philadelphia, PA, 1919. Pg. 115.
⁷ Hamilton, Ian, *Let’s Study the Letters of John*. The Banner of Truth Trust: Edinburgh, UK, 2008. Pg.2.
⁸ MacArthur, John, *MacArthur Commentary Series on 1-3 John*. Moody Press: Chicago, IL, 2007. Pg.18.
⁹ Erdman, Charles R., *The General Epistles: An Exposition*. The Westminster Press: Philadelphia, PA, 1919. Pg. 114.
¹⁰ MacArthur, John, *MacArthur Commentary Series on 1-3 John*. Moody Press: Chicago, IL, 2007. Pg.22.
¹¹ Hamilton, Ian, *Let’s Study the Letters of John*. The Banner of Truth Trust: Edinburgh, UK, 2008. Pg.6-7.
¹² Stott, John R., *The Epistles of John*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company: Grand Rapids, MI, 1964, Pg.72.
¹³ Erdman, Charles R., *The General Epistles: An Exposition*. The Westminster Press: Philadelphia, PA, 1919. Pg. 118.
¹⁴ Stott, John R., *The Epistles of John*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company: Grand Rapids, MI, 1964, Pg.72-74.

¹⁵ MacArthur, John, *MacArthur Commentary Series on 1-3 John*. Moody Press: Chicago, IL, 2007. Pg. 34-35.
¹⁶ Hamilton, Ian, *Let’s Study the Letters of John*. The Banner of Truth Trust: Edinburgh, UK, 2008. Pg. 9.
¹⁷ O’Donnell, Douglas Sean, *Reformed Expository Commentary: 1-3 John*. P&R Publishing Company: Phillipsburg, NJ, 2015. Pg. 23, 30.
¹⁸ MacArthur, John, *MacArthur Commentary Series on 1-3 John*. Moody Press: Chicago, IL, 2007. Pg. 43-46.
¹⁹ Hamilton, Ian, *Let’s Study the Letters of John*. The Banner of Truth Trust: Edinburgh, UK, 2008. Pg. 10.
²⁰ Stott, John R., *The Epistles of John*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company: Grand Rapids, MI, 1964, Pg. 88.
²¹ MacArthur, John, *MacArthur Commentary Series on 1-3 John*. Moody Press: Chicago, IL, 2007. Pg. 47.
²² Stott, John R., *The Epistles of John*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company: Grand Rapids, MI, 1964, Pg. 89.
²³ MacArthur, John, *MacArthur Commentary Series on 1-3 John*. Moody Press: Chicago, IL, 2007. Pg. 52-55.
²⁴ Hamilton, Ian, *Let’s Study the Letters of John*. The Banner of Truth Trust: Edinburgh, UK, 2008. Pg. 13.
²⁵ MacArthur, John, *MacArthur Commentary Series on 1-3 John*. Moody Press: Chicago, IL, 2007. Pg. 67.
²⁶ MacArthur, John, *MacArthur Commentary Series on 1-3 John*. Moody Press: Chicago, IL, 2007. Pg. 68.
²⁷ Hamilton, Ian, *Let’s Study the Letters of John*. The Banner of Truth Trust: Edinburgh, UK, 2008. Pg.17.