

The Epistles of John

Week 25: 1 John 2:3-6

Knowing him is not knowing facts about him, nor simply being able to recognize him operating in circumstances or in other people; it is knowing him personally for oneself.

1 John 2:3-6

1 John 2:3-6 (HCSB)

3 This is how we are sure that we have come to know Him: by keeping His commands.

4 The one who says, "I have come to know Him," yet doesn't keep His commands, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

5 But whoever keeps His word, truly in him the love of God is perfected. This is how we know we are in Him:

6 The one who says he remains in Him should walk just as He walked.

1 John 2:3-6

One of the most often questions asked by believers, is: “How can I **know/be sure** that I am (a child of God/saved/elect)?”

The initial phrase, “now by this,” or “this is how”, is transitional in the Greek text and thus indicates that John is addressing a different or new issue. John “now” describes how the readers of this epistle can know that they know the God who is light.

The Greek word translated by the English words “to know” is the same word used for a husband to know his wife intimately.

1 John 2:3-6

Knowing him is not knowing facts about him, nor simply being able to recognize him operating in circumstances or in other people; it is knowing him personally for oneself.

For the author of 1 John knowing God involves fellowship with him (1:4), walking in his light (1:7), and being 'in him' (2:5-6)

John cannot be saying that perfect obedience to God's commandments is necessary before we can say that we know him; otherwise, he would be contradicting his own teaching that none of us can say that we are without sin. The question is whether I am trying (and to some extent succeeding) to keep God's commandments.

1 John 2:3-6

What does “keeping his commands mean”?

It is clear that John is arguing for an imitation of Christ as a sign of faithfulness and the foundation for Christian confidence.

Simply *saying* one abides in him is insufficient.

The genuine evidence of one’s abiding is to walk just as he walked.

1 John 2:3-6

“Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me” (John 14:21).

“If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. He who does not love me will not obey my teaching” (John 14:23–24)

Both the basis for knowing God and the continuing evidence of knowing God grow out of and find concrete expression in the midst of human events.

Solid evidence of one’s knowledge of the divine is not found in one’s grasp of abstract theology or philosophy, but rather in daily obedience to Christ’s commandments.

1 John 2:3-6

Mark 12:28–31 (HCSB)

28 One of the scribes approached. When he heard them debating and saw that Jesus answered them well, he asked Him, “Which command is the most important of all?”

29 “This is the most important,” Jesus answered: Listen, Israel! The Lord our God, the Lord is One.

30 Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.

31 “The second is: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other command greater than these.”

1 John 2:3-6

What does it mean in verse 5: “the love of God is perfected”? Do we become perfect and without sin?

A better way to translate *teleioō* (perfect) is to use a word that tries to communicate its underlying sense of “fullness.” The NIV did this when the committee agreed on “God’s love is truly made complete.” Better still is Eugene Peterson’s phrase in *The Message*: God’s mature love.

God’s love has grown in us, we have become more mature and complete in his love.

1 John 2:3-6

We must bear in mind two things:

- Perfection is not incompatible with further progress and development
- John's statement here must be placed (paradoxically) alongside his earlier assertion that it is wrong for us to say "we are without sin."

What he puts before us here is a divine promise rather than a statement that we might proudly make on our own behalf.

Application for This Week

God wants us to know that we know that we are his children

The genuine evidence of one's abiding is our walk.

Perfection is not never sinning, but a growing in God's love and an improvement and maturing in our walking like Jesus walked.

Homework

My blog with past lessons is:

www.UnapologeticallyJohn.com

Thank you for coming!

See you back next week