

## Bibles???

**Before we begin – I want all the moms to please stand**

### **The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority**

Turn your bibles with me to 1 John 2

We are continuing our verse-by-verse study through this short but very personal, powerful and practical letter that the Apostle John – in his late age – has written to you and me.

And it was written to remind us of the reality of who God is, the reality of who Jesus is and the reality of what it means to be a Christian.

As we have seen so far over the last few weeks –

John makes it very clear that there is more to being a Christian than just mere profession.

Just because we attend a certain church or because we may own a bible or listen to Christian music – that doesn't make us a Christian.

And so John in his letter – has given us these tests, where we can examine ourselves and affirm whether or not we truly understand the reality of what it means to be a Christian.

Do we have fellowship with God?

Do we enjoy fellowship with one another?

Do we love one another?

Are we obedient to His word?

Do we have a love for the world?

Do we know the truth (we looked at that one last week)

All these tests that we have looked at up to this point, have centered around “fellowship”

Fellowship with Him – which leads to fellowship among the brethren.

So in our text this morning – John is going to provide another test for us regarding fellowship and then as we start chapter three, he is going to transition into the evidence of whether or not we truly love the Lord.

Let's pray...

Before we look into the text –

I want to do a quick recap

I think it is very important for us to understand the differences between relationship and fellowship

Our faith in Jesus Christ has brought us into a new relationship with God as our Heavenly Father.

Our relationship to God is based on His work, not ours;

Our relationship to God is based on His faithfulness, not our own.

So, our relationship with God does not change; we are His children and He is our Father.

Our relationship doesn't change

But our fellowship can change – in the same way that fellowship can change between a parent and a child.

You see church,

John wants the believer (the one who has a real relationship with God) to enjoy the benefits of being the children of God, but he knows that these benefits only come through intimate and consistent fellowship with God.

That is going to be the first part that John discusses in our text -

**[1Jo 2:28-29 NKJV] 28 And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.**

I had you make a note of the word abide – and the reason is because I believe that this must have been one of John’s favorite words

In his writings, he uses the Greek word for abide – 66 times

23 times he uses it in this very letter

And the word abide – if you remember when we were studying the upper room discourse – it means to remain / to dwell / to make our home – and in the context here, John is exhorting us to remain in fellowship.

Turn with me to John 15

**[Jhn 15:4-7 NKJV] 4 “Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. 5 “I am the vine, you [are] the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. 6 “If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw [them] into the fire, and they are burned. 7 “If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.**

You see church,

John knew that what made a fruitful and abundant life possible is abiding in Christ / remaining in intimate fellowship with Him.

So he says, little children (that is you and me) abide in Him / remain in fellowship with Him.

Abiding – according to Jesus

Is the believer living in His presence and Jesus living in the believer's presence.

Go back to vs 24 –

**[1Jo 2:24 NKJV] 24 Therefore let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father.**

And I told you that John was referring to the gospel / truth

If we abide in the truth – we abide in the Father and the Son

So abiding in Jesus includes

Fellowship with God

Fellowship with one another

Believing the truth

Righteousness or walking in the truth

Loving one another in Christ

The problem that we face in our culture today is that we think all of these things are optional.

And the reason that we think they are optional is because we mistakenly think that abiding in Christ is all about feelings.

So someone will say – I feel distant from God – I feel joyless

Question – “Do you think it is because God has neglected them or because they have neglected the Lord?”

If God is distant from them – who moved?

Is there fellowship, love, walking in the truth

If not – then repentance is needed.

I also had you make a note of “when He appears”

It speaks of Jesus Second Coming

Those who abide in Christ – those who walk with Jesus and have intimate fellowship with Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit –

And John says that one day we will see Jesus face to face

And we will either experience joy or we will experience terror

Joy – to the person who anticipates it

Terror to the person who was said in his or her mind – “it is not going to happen anytime soon”

When Christ comes, all we who are saved will be gathered before Him

As stewards who have been given life and resources we will come before Him to give account for how we have lived and what we have done with our time, talent, and treasure.

God is going to judge everything we (believer) has done for Him – our intentions ( 1 Cor 3)

if our aim has been the glory of God, then it will come through the fire like gold, silver and precious jewels

if our motivation was personal glory or if we squandered our time, talent, and treasure on selfish things, then like wood, hay and stubble, it will be burnt up and we'll stand empty handed.

Those individuals will still be saved - but they will realize with shame that they squandered the grace and blessing of God.

You see,

The key to living a fruitful life, one that produces spiritual gold, silver, and precious gems, is to abide in Christ.

To remain in intimate fellowship with Him

And so –

John says that when we abide in Christ, we have confidence, knowing that when He appears, we'll be found in the right place, doing the right thing!

Think of it – when Christ comes again, there will be Christians, many of them, who will realize that though they have relationship with God, they are not in fellowship with Him.

they are His children - but only distant

and the things they have been investing in and living for are in the end, shameful!

John doesn't want us to be ashamed when the Lord comes; he wants us to be confident!

Church,

We can live today in such a way that if Jesus were to come tomorrow, we'd have every

confidence that He'd say, "Well done My good & faithful servant!"

All Christians are accepted (Ephesians 1 promises us that)

But not all Christians are acceptable



The Christian who fails to walk in love

The Christian who fails to walk in obedience

The Christian who fails to walk in the truth

The Christian who fails to not grow

The Christian who sustains unrepented disobedience – lovelessness and lies

They are going to lose their reward.

**29 If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him.**

I had you make a note of the word “if”

And the reason is that in the Greek the word can be used in a conditional clause – like an if-then statement

But it can also be properly translated into the word – since.

Since you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him.

To the person who abides in Him / who has intimate fellowship with God – do they know that God is righteous?

Yes

I want us to grasp John's logic here.

Question?

Is God good? Yes

Is God righteous? Yes

Since God is righteous, all that God does is righteous? Yes or No, Yes

Therefore, whoever is born of Him – is righteous.

We are righteous before God because we have been born again by the power of the Holy Spirit and because of the sacrifice of Jesus

And we are righteous before the world, when we act in the power of the Spirit,

When we reflect the character of Christ

In other words, when we begin to act like Jesus

John has written about light and darkness and about love and hatred and about truth and lies

And now, John sums up all of Christian living in the single phrase –

Since you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him.

Not simply those who profess that they are Christians.

And therefore righteousness promotes confidence that we will not be ashamed when He appears and we also get to live our life in joy.

**[1Jo 3:1-3 NKJV] 1 Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.**

In our study this past Wednesday – I asked the question “How do we know that God loves us?”

Is it simply something that we believe intellectually?

Is it something we feel?

No

**[Rom 5:8 NKJV] 8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.**

God’s love for us is not a matter of speculation.

We don’t have to ask the question – does God love me?

God’s love for us is not a matter of wishful thinking.

It is not a matter of us wanting it to be desperately true.

God has already demonstrated His love to us.

And so John wants us to understand how much God loves us and who we are in Him and also the privilege of God's love.

Behold – pay close attention – gaze steadfastly on – see!!!

John wants to be sure we're aware of just how awesome and amazing God's love is.

It is not a love that can be duplicated

It is a kind of love that is not natural – it is supernatural.

It is foreign to us

And this supernatural love begins – not when we are cooperating and friendly with God

This amazing love began while we were still hostile and rebellious to God

And God is not stingy with this love

John wants us to know what God's love has done and the difference it has made.

And it centers on God's love for us.

And the result of God's love is that is that we should be called the Children of God.

That means we are members of God's family

We are Children of God – right now!

It isn't something we look forward to

It is something we have already experienced

The world cannot comprehend this love.

The world cannot understand what it means to be Children of God

Only a person who is truly born again can begin to fully appreciate the impact of the phrase, Children of God.

I want us to think about this

We don't pick our parents

And we don't pick our children – unless we adopt.

Yet, God chose us

He picked us

God loves us

He takes the initiative to save us

And then adopt us and lavish His love in the most undeserving manner

And when we examine our sin and our rebellion, in light of God's love – it's supposed to blow our minds.

We respond to His love!!!



CALVARY  
Santa Cruz

Now, I want to provide a little cultural background of adoption during this time.

Only wealthy Roman citizens would adopt children

And the only reason they would adopt is if they didn't have any heirs

Passing on the family name, heritage, and estate was crucial.

And therefore, they wouldn't adopt a baby – they would adopt a young man – they wanted someone with character

And once the young man was adopted, he would be given a new set of clothes and a new name

From that moment on, that young man was no longer considered adopted – He WAS in fact, the same as a biological child.

His identity changed completely as he became a son of a new father.

That's the idea behind what John writes here.

Christian – realize what Love God's placed on you.

You've been given a new identity as God's daughter or son.

The big difference between God's & Roman adoption is that God didn't choose us because of our great character!

He picked us by Grace – when we totally DIDN'T deserve it.

He picked us because by grace He saw what we WOULD become BY His adoption.

What John wants us to know is how God's giving us this new identity sets us apart from the world we're called OUT of.

Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.

By the way – we see the same thing in the Old Testament when God

**[Deu 7:7-8a NKJV] 7 "The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples; 8 "but because the LORD loves you,**

God's love is limitless and powerful and personal and it is directed to you and to me.

And the reason that we have a hard time grasping God's love– is because we feel we need to earn God love.

But for the believer, we don't earn God's love – we simply accept it.

We can't persuade God to love us – because we can't persuade Him to do something He already does.

**2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.**

Notice – this is in present tense

Beloved, now we are Children of God!

Not when Jesus comes for us

Not sometime in the distant future

Even though we already are in fact the children of God, we're not in a final state.

That awaits our arrival in glory in heaven where we'll see Jesus face to face.

So in order to know what hasn't been revealed – we need to understand what has been revealed.

God's revelation in His Word – has been revealed – that is why we are here. We are being instructed by it.

We are Children of God – that has been revealed to us as well

We have experienced His kindness and blessing in the Lord Jesus Christ

But according to John – there's more

In the future, we are going to share in Christ's glory

We are going to be given resurrected bodies

We are going to rule with Him

We are going to spend eternity with Jesus

God's love and commitment doesn't end when we become Christians



It doesn't even end at Jesus' second coming

But it continues into an eternity forever and ever

All true believers will see Him

All true believers will be like Him

**[Phi 3:20-21 NKJV] 20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.**

Here is what John is saying

God has an unfailing, eternal purpose for you and me

He will make us like Jesus

And He will never give up on us

And when God makes up His mind to do something – He is going to do it.

**[Rom 8:29-30 NKJV] 29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined [to be] conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.**

Every morning – we can wake up, we can ask God, “Ok God, what do You have for me today”

And the response will be the same everyday

“I am going to make you a little more like Jesus”

God’s eternal unfailing mission – is to mold us and to shape us, to conform us into His Son

**3 And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.**

Think about what John has told us here in ch 3

We are His Children

He has demonstrated how much He loves us

He continues to do a work in us and one day, we will share in Jesus’ glory

Everything that John told us in verse 1,2

Our response is verse 3

Our response is holiness

Is our response to walk in holiness so we can get into heaven? No

Is our response to walk in holiness so we can be children of God? No

In order to see Him? No

In order to be like Him? No

So that we won't be ashamed.

This process of purification begins when we come to a relationship with the Lord

**[2Co 7:1 NKJV] 1 Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.**

He plays a part in the purification and so do we

And that is how we respond to His love

Amen

Let's pray...



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S a n t a C r u z

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

God is not dependent on our love

But when we are born again, when we experience God's love, it is going to be impossible to hide our love for Him.

[Num 6:24-26 NLT] 24 '

May the LORD bless you and protect you.

May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you.

May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.'

