

INTRODUCTION

Earlier in this letter, 1 John 2:18, the apostle John was teaching us about the many antichrists that are in the world in this last hour, or last time.

John has been teaching us not to be seduced, deceived, lead astray, by the many antichrists who would like us to accept them as our teachers. He has helped us understand what really we know: People who profess Jesus, but do not hold to the truth about Him as delivered from the beginning by His apostles, are liars, whose doctrine we are not to accept. Instead, we are to keep in ourselves the sound doctrine of Jesus Christ that we received in the bible from our Lord's apostles, so that just as that truth abides in us, we also shall abide in Him, so that we may look forward with confidence to His coming again.

But of course true Christianity is not a matter of sound doctrine only. There is also the matter of holiness of living. Mixing lies in with truth is not the devil's only trick. He also knows how to prompt deceivers to put forth doctrine that is entirely sound, all the while living in sin. This kind of deceit our Lord's apostle John must also instruct us about, warning us against deception by the sound in doctrine but unrighteous in life. That section started 1 John 2:29. We have been working through that for the past few weeks.

Hopefully what I just said is becoming familiar to you. It is my hope and aim to have us not only familiar with or exposed to this doctrine, but really to understand and master it.

In 1 John, we're enjoying his method of teaching us, which the Holy Spirit caused to be perfect in the writing of the bible. John says that we know something, then states it, and, sure enough, it is something that we disciples of Jesus Christ already know. Then John points out to us that since we know *that*, we are able, by sound reasoning, to deduce something else that we can know.

Last time:

What we already know about the Lord Jesus and sin

- He was manifested to take away our sins; and
- in Him there is no sin

Helps us to know something about those who say they are His disciples

- whoever abides in Him (that is, whoever truly is His disciple) does not sin (that is, does not continue in a lifestyle of sin)

This time:

What we already know about the Lord Jesus and sin

-He was manifested to take away our sins; and

-in Him there is no sin

Helps us to know something about those who say they are His disciples

Jesus Christ was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin. So, whoever says he is a disciple of Christ, but sins, or keeps on sinning, has neither seen Him nor known [G1097 *ginosko*] Him, and so is not truly His disciple.

TEXT

1 John 3:5-6

BODY

Jesus Christ was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin. So, whoever says he is a disciple of Christ, but sins, or keeps on sinning, has neither seen Him nor known [G1097 *ginosko*] Him, and so is not truly His disciple.

- I. What We Already Know About the Lord Jesus and Sin
 - A. Jesus Christ was manifested, He appeared, to take away our sins
 - B. In Jesus Christ there is no sin

- II. What Else We Can Know Based on That: Whoever Sins Has Neither Seen Him Nor Known Him
 - A. There are those who say they are Christians, but continue in their sins - “whoever sins”
 1. This discussion is of those who:
 - a) 1 John 1:6 say they have fellowship with Him
 - b) 1 John 2:4 say they know Him
 - c) 1 John 2:6 say they abide in Him
 - d) 1 John 2:9 say they are in the light
 - e) to summarize, they profess to be Christians, to be the disciples of Jesus Christ
 2. Furthermore, beginning 1 John 2:29 and continuing through the end of chapter 3, the apostle is not even talking about those who profess to be Christians, but do not believe the truth about Christ, but instead believe lies. In this section, the apostle is teaching us about how to evaluate the genuineness of those who profess to believe the truth about the Lord Jesus Christ.

- B. Those who say they are Christians, but continue in their sins, should not be thought of as Christians
1. have not seen Jesus Christ
 - a) see this reiterated: 3 John 1:11 Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. He who does good is of God, but he who does evil has not seen God.
 - b) see why he has not seen Jesus Christ: 1 John 2:9-11 He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now. (10) He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him. (11) 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.
 - c) see in another sense why they have not seen Jesus Christ: John 12:37-40 But although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him, (38) that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke: "LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT? AND TO WHOM HAS THE ARM OF THE LORD BEEN REVEALED?" (39) Therefore they could not believe, because Isaiah said again: (40) "HE HAS BLINDED THEIR EYES AND HARDENED THEIR HEARTS, LEST THEY SHOULD SEE WITH THEIR EYES, LEST THEY SHOULD UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEARTS AND TURN, SO THAT I SHOULD HEAL THEM."
 2. have not known [G1097 *ginosko*] Jesus Christ
 - a) this has been put to us already, earlier in this letter
 - b) 1 John 2:3-4 Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. (4) He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.
 - c) in the New Covenant, all know the Lord: Hebrews 8:10-12 FOR THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS THE LORD: I WILL PUT MY LAWS IN THEIR MIND AND WRITE THEM ON THEIR HEARTS; AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE. (11) NONE OF THEM SHALL TEACH HIS NEIGHBOR, AND NONE HIS BROTHER, SAYING, 'KNOW THE LORD,' FOR ALL SHALL KNOW ME, FROM THE LEAST OF THEM TO THE GREATEST OF THEM. (12) FOR I WILL BE MERCIFUL TO THEIR UNRIGHTEOUSNESS, AND THEIR SINS AND THEIR LAWLESS DEEDS I WILL REMEMBER NO MORE."

III. APPLICATION

- A. Let those who are believers in Jesus Christ give glory to God for His grace
 1. we have seen Jesus Christ!
 - a) I was blind, but now I see
 2. we know Jesus Christ!
 - a) John 6:64-69 But there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him. (65) And He said, "Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father." (66) From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. (67) Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?" (68) But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. (69) Also we have come to believe and **know [G1097 ginosko]** that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."
- B. Let our thoughts about the genuineness of people's faith be based on what the word of God here tells us
 1. we tend to base our thoughts about the genuineness of people's faith on the good religious things people say
 - a) when they give a credible profession of faith
 - b) when they embrace our 1689 Confession
 - c) when they say other things that are good and right and helpful
 - d) when they even preach and teach in ways that are sound and edifying
 2. but we are here taught to base our thoughts on not only what people say, but also what they *do*, how they live
 3. 1689.26.2 All persons throughout the world, professing the faith of the gospel, and obedience unto God by Christ according unto it, not destroying their own profession by any errors everting the foundation, or unholiness of conversation, are and may be called visible saints
 - a) if a person does not even profess the faith of the gospel, he may not be called a saint
 - b) if a person professes that he knows or believes the gospel, but does not profess obedience unto God by Christ according unto it, he may not be called a saint
 - c) if a person does so profess faith in Christ, but then destroys his own profession by foundational errors in doctrine, he may not be called a saint
 - d) if a person does so profess faith in Christ, but then destroys his own profession by unholiness of conversation, he may not be called a saint

CONCLUSION

Jesus Christ was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin. So, whoever says he is a disciple of Christ, but sins, or keeps on sinning, has neither seen Him nor known [G1097 *ginosko*] Him, and so is not truly His disciple.

Therefore let everyone here repent of sins, turning to God; let everyone here truly trust in Jesus Christ, in His death, burial, and resurrection; that all here may have a sure hope in resurrection to eternal life when the Lord comes again at the end of this last time.

6b Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him.

3 John 1:11 Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. He who does good is of God, but he who does evil has not seen God.

1 John 2:9-11 He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now. (10) He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him. (11) 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.

John 12:37-40 But although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him, (38) that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke: "LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT? AND TO WHOM HAS THE ARM OF THE LORD BEEN REVEALED?" (39) Therefore they could not believe, because Isaiah said again: (40) "HE HAS BLINDED THEIR EYES AND HARDENED THEIR HEARTS, LEST THEY SHOULD SEE WITH THEIR EYES, LEST THEY SHOULD UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEARTS AND TURN, SO THAT I SHOULD HEAL THEM."

Acts 26:14-18 And when we all had fallen to the ground, I heard a voice speaking to me and saying in the Hebrew language, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.' (15) So I said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. (16) But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you. (17) I will deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, (18) to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.'

Romans 11:7-10 What then? Israel has not obtained what it seeks; but the elect have obtained it, and the rest were blinded. (8) Just as it is written: "GOD HAS GIVEN THEM A SPIRIT OF STUPOR, EYES THAT THEY SHOULD NOT SEE AND EARS THAT THEY SHOULD NOT HEAR, TO THIS VERY DAY." (9) And David says: "LET THEIR TABLE BECOME A SNARE AND A TRAP, A STUMBLING BLOCK AND A RECOMPENSE TO THEM. (10) LET THEIR EYES BE DARKENED, SO THAT THEY DO NOT SEE, AND BOW DOWN THEIR BACK ALWAYS."

Matthew 15:10-14 When He had called the multitude to Himself, He said to them, "Hear and understand: (11) Not what goes into the mouth defiles a man; but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man." (12) Then His disciples came and said to Him, "Do You know that the

Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?" (13) But He answered and said, "Every plant which My heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. (14) Let them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch."

Matthew 13:10-16 And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?" (11) He answered and said to them, "Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. (12) For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. (13) Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. (14) And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: 'HEARING YOU WILL HEAR AND SHALL NOT UNDERSTAND, AND SEEING YOU WILL SEE AND NOT PERCEIVE; (15) FOR THE HEARTS OF THIS PEOPLE HAVE GROWN DULL. THEIR EARS ARE HARD OF HEARING, AND THEIR EYES THEY HAVE CLOSED, LEST THEY SHOULD SEE WITH THEIR EYES AND HEAR WITH THEIR EARS, LEST THEY SHOULD UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEARTS AND TURN, SO THAT I SHOULD HEAL THEM.' (16) But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear;

Calvin:

faith in Christ and knowledge of him are vainly pretended, except there be newness of life. For Christ is never dormant where he reigns, but the Spirit renders effectual his power.

Poole:

Seeing and knowing intend inward union, acquaintance, and converse; such as abode in him implies:

Gill:

that is, he has never seen Christ with an eye of faith; he has never truly and spiritually seen the glory, beauty, fulness, and suitableness of Christ, his need, and the worth of him; he has never seen him so as to enjoy him, and have communion with him

nor has he ever savingly known him, or been experimentally acquainted with him; for though he may profess to know him in words, he denies him in works

Barnes:

That is, as explained above, habitually, deliberately, characteristically, and finally. - Doddridge. "Who habitually and avowedly sinneth."

Has had no just views of the Saviour, or of the nature of true religion. In other words, cannot be a true Christian.

Bengel:

hath not seen Him in spirit; although perhaps, as to personal appearance, he hath seen Him in the flesh: or even, though he hath seen Him in spirit, at the very moment of sin he becomes such, as though he had never seen Him in any way

nor known Him) in truth; although perhaps he hath formerly known Him personally.

Light and knowledge produce likeness to God

Ellicott:

A real saving sight of Christ is when our mind becomes conscious of the convincing truth, beauty, perfection, love, and power of His existence. The corresponding knowledge is when that sight has become experience, the soul having learnt the effect of His strengthening, purifying grace; having proved the happiness of spiritual intercourse with Him; and having meditated continually on the records of the sayings and doings of His earthly manifestation.

Spurgeon:

That is to say, if sin is the habitual course of our life, we do not truly know the Lord.

RWP:

The habit of sin is proof that one has not the vision or the knowledge (egnōken, perfect active also) of Christ. He means, of course, spiritual vision and spiritual knowledge, not the literal sense

7a Little children, let no one deceive you.

JRY:

If you think someone might be deceiving you, do not just ignore it or think it couldn't be.

What would it be not to follow this instruction, but to let someone deceive you?

This discussion is of those who:

1 John 1:6 say they have fellowship with Him

1 John 2:4 say they know Him

1 John 2:6 say they abide in Him

1 John 2:9 say they are in the light

to summarize, they profess to be Christians

Among those who profess to be Christians, some are the children of God and some are the children of the devil.

Furthermore, beginning 1 John 2:29 and continuing through the end of chapter 3, the apostle is not even talking about those who profess to be Christians, but do not believe the truth about Christ, but instead believe lies. In this section, the apostle is teaching us about how to evaluate the genuineness of those who profess to believe the truth about the Lord Jesus Christ.

Carroll:

The outsider cannot know our inner experiences of faith, hope, love, joy, and peace. He hears our professions, and holds them credible only so far as manifested in the life. Our Lord himself fixed that standard: "A tree is known by its fruits." So, of professed children of God it may be said, "By their fruits shall ye know them." Hence our letter says, "My little children, let no man lead you astray. He that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous; he that doeth sin is of the devil. . . . Whosoever is begotten of God doeth no sin, because his seed abideth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is begotten of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever that doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother."

From these passages it is evident that no man should be fellowshipped as a preacher, or even retained as a church member, who denies the essential deity of Jesus Christ, his incarnation, his vicarious death as a propitiation for sin; nor one whose profession of these doctrines does not bear fruit unto love and holiness.

A mere verbal orthodoxy is hypocrisy, and is more hateful to God and more hurtful to man than avowed infidelity. I am quite sure that a strict application of this test would empty thousands of pulpits, hundreds of professors' chairs in Christian schools, and deplete thousands of church rolls. This emptying and depleting would not be deplorable but helpful. It would amount to a great revival. As they depart from us, we could say with this letter: "They went out from us, but they were not of us, for if they had been of us they would have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they all are not of us."

7b He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous.

8a He who sins is of the devil,

8b for the devil has sinned from the beginning.

8c For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.

9 Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.

10a In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God . . .

Call to Worship: Lamentations 3:22-23

Scripture Reading: Daniel 9:1-19

Sermon: "Whoever Sins" 1 John 3:5-6

Benediction: Lamentations 3:24-25

Prelude: "Sweet Hour of Prayer" and "Jesus Paid It All"

Trinity 118 "O Savior, Blessed Savior"

Trinity 774 Psalm 143

Grace 78 "I Stand Amazed"

Grace 87 "It Is Well with My Soul"