

Thursday, March 21, 2024 • Read 1John 2:3–11

Questions from the Scripture text: What can we know (v3)? How? But what is a man if he says that he knows Him and does not keep His commandments (v4)? And what is not in him (v4)? What is perfected in the one who keeps Christ's Word (v5)? What does he know by this? How does v6a describe one's profession of faith? What does abiding in Christ produce in the life (v6b)? What does the apostle call them in v7? What isn't he writing to them? What is he writing to them? How long have they had it? What does he call the commandment now, in v8? In whom does this command come true? What is passing away? What is the true light already doing? What might one say (v9), even though he does what? What is this one still in? But about whom does v10 speak? Where does he abide? What is not in him? About whom does v11 speak? What is he in? What does he walk in? What doesn't he know? Why not?

What does walking in the light look like? 1John 2:3–11 prepares us for the second serial reading in public worship on the Lord's Day. In these nine verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **walking in the light looks like loving the brethren.**

True and false "knowers" of Christ, v3–4. There is nothing more important than to know Christ. To know Him is eternal life. Without this, we will perish. But there are those who say that they know Him but are liars (v4), because their supposed knowledge of Him is not producing obedience to His commandments. So the apostle is writing that his readers might not sin (cf. v1), so that they might know that they have eternal life and continue believing (cf. 5:13). Dear reader, there is nothing more important for you to know than that you truly know Christ!

Obedience, by grace, is the evidence of knowing Christ, v5–6. It makes the author tremble to realize that he has known of so many churches that downplay obedience to God's commandments. v5 tells us that the love of God finds its perfection (its goal, its end, its fullness) in the keeping of His Word.

This is obedience is how we know that our location is in Christ! Why? Because there is nowhere else that such obedience can come from. There is only One Who has walked in perfect love of God, love of neighbor, and love of believers: Jesus Christ Himself. If we are keeping God's commands out of love, then we know that we are in Jesus Christ (v5). Only abiding in Him can produce this obedience.

And abiding in Christ always produces Christ-likeness (v6)! Christ is not only the giver of the commandment, and the giver of the grace by which we keep it, but He is the perfect example of what commandment-keeping looks like. It is true that the believer is justified only by the commandment-keeping of Christ. But it is also true that the believer is always made into a commandment-keeper who is like unto Christ. This is why God's judgment about believers is always in accord with their works (cf. Rom 2:6; 2Co 5:10; Rev 2:12–13).

Love of the brethren is the highest obedience, v7–11. The apostle now moves on to that commandment which most follows Christ's example and therefore most affirms that the believer is abiding in Christ: love of the brethren. When he says that it is "no new commandment" in v7a, he explains his by saying that it is an old commandment "which you have had from the beginning" (v7b). In other words, the church ("you") is not continually receiving new tests for their faith. It is the same old one that Jesus gave on the night that He was betrayed.

So, v8 is not contradicting v7 but referring to what the Lord Jesus said in Jn 13:34. His forming of the church, and of conscientious union with Him among believers, opened up an entire new aspect of God's law, where the first great commandment (love God) and second great commandment (love men) meet: love one another as those who are in union with Christ, the God-Man! In the following verse (cf. Jn 13:35), Christ said that this is how all would know that they are His disciples. And now, in v7–11, Christ's apostle emphasizes this love for the brethren as how we ourselves will know that we are truly His disciple.

The light that came into the world (cf. Jn 1:9) shines in the darkness (cf. Jn 1:5) so that the darkness is passing away (v8b). He has made the greatest display of love by laying down His life for us (cf. 3:16; Jn 10:11, 15:13). Of all the obedience that Christ rendered to God, this was the highest (cf. Jn 10:17–18). So the one who hates his brother has none of Christ's light in him (v9). And how great is that darkness (v11)! Let no man imagine himself obedient, if he lacks the obedience of loving the brethren.

Following upon this language of light and darkness, v10 adds detail to 1:7. Now we know that "walking in the light" means loving the brethren; because the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses those who love their brothers, they may have confidence that this as-yet imperfect love will one day be perfected.

What brethren do you have the hardest time loving? Why must you? How can you?

Sample prayer: Lord, You have loved us and laid down Your life for us. But we are often in danger of hating a brother. Deliver us, forgive us, and cleanse us! Make Your light to take away our darkness, and grant that, by abiding in You, we would walk as You walked, for we ask it in Your Name, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP197 "Christian Unity" or TPH409 "Blest Be the Tie That Binds"

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

First John chapter 2 verses 3 through 11. These are God's words. Now by this we know that we know him. If we keep his Commandments. He who says, I know him. And does not keep his Commandments as a liar. And the truth is not. In him. But whoever keeps his word truly.

The love of God is perfected in him. By this, we know that we are in him. He who says he abides in him. All himself also to walk. Just as he walked. Brethren. I write no new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you have had from the beginning.

The old commandment is. The word which you heard from the beginning? Again, a new commandment. I write to you which thing is true in him. And in. Because the darkness is passing away and the True Light is already shining He who says he is in the light. And hate his brother.

Is in darkness until now. He who loves his brother abides in light. And there is no cause for stumbling in him. But he who hates his brother brother is in darkness. And walks in darkness and does not know where he is going because Darkness. Has blundered. His eyes. So far the reading of gods inspired and in Aaron tort Now, the Apostles purpose for writing this letter, We have heard stated already in verse 1 of this chapter.

My little children, these things I write to you so that you may not sin. And then again, In verse 13 of chapter 5. These things I have written to you, who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life. And that you may continue.

To believe in the name. Of the son of God. And so the Apostle is writing so that we will be those who can know that we have eternal life by believing in Jesus Christ. The son of God, And one of the things that is necessary for us to know that we have eternal life, Is that we would not make practice of sitting but that we would hate sinning and make it our goal in life.

To kill our sin. Yes, Sophia. What if the light is too bright? the light here is the Lord Jesus. Notice that verse 6 says, He who says he abides in him and then Verse 10 says he who loves his brother abides in the light. And so Jesus is the light that came into the world.

The Gospel of John chapter 1, describes him, this way that he who is the light came into the darkness, he came to, and also that he came to his own and his own did not. Receive him. But also in chapter 1, Described him as being God. And also told us that God is light and in him is no Darkness at all.

So if we say, we have fellowship with him, we must walk in the light as he is in the light. The light is too bright. For you, for me. Because we still have sin in. And the Bible says, That God dwells in unapproachable light. This is why Jesus does not only forgive our sins and make us right with God, which we call justification.

And Jesus does not only make us the children of God which we call adoption, but he makes us to be righteous like he is righteous and to appear as God's children by bearing the family resemblance and becoming blameless and pure and holy like he is the only begotten son.

And so, He also for all those whom in, who have justification in Jesus, they're forgiven and made righteous for all those who have adoption in Jesus. They are made God's children. They are also they also have sanctification from Jesus. He makes us Holier and Holier until one day. He will have produced in every single one.

For whom he died. He will have reduced in them. The Holiness that we need to be able to see the Lord. And since God, dwells in unapproachable light, how holy must we then become By that day, and in that day, That we would be as it were bright enough to see the Lord Jesus.

The way John describes him in Revelation 1. He could not really look at him very well for his face was brighter than the sun. And so that is an interesting question. Now, it connects here Because there are people who have good theology. But they do not have what their theology describes.

Let me change that. They have accurate theology. Your theology isn't actually good. Unless it is that by which, the Lord Jesus has renewed your mind and transformed you, to be conformed to His Image instead of being conformed to the mind of the age. Like we heard about last night in the sermon, in the midweek meeting in Romans 12 verse 1.

There are people who have accurate theology, but they do not have the reality. That their theology describes. Notice what they say in verse 4 or what he. This. Hypothetical individual says, in verse 4, and what he says in verse 6, he says, I know him, Which is to say, he knows.

That salvation comes by knowing the Lord Jesus Christ. And not only knowing the Lord, Jesus Christ believing agreeing with who he is. Although there were demons, who said, I know who you are, only one of Israel. And though, as James said, There are the demons, believe the truth about Jesus and they shudder They're frightened.

The tremble and fear at the truth about Jesus, But this one not only says, I know him verse 4. He also says he abides in him. So this is someone who knows. That trusting in Jesus produces Union with Christ and that it is through being united to Jesus Christ that we are made right with God and forgiven of all our sins But, There is such a thing as somebody.

Who knows that salvation is by believing in Jesus and who knows that that salvation comes even through Union with Christ through faith. But who is not actually saved. Who does not verse 4, keep Jesus's Commandments. Who does not verse six walk? As Jesus walked. And so Jesus who loved the Lord, Our God with all our hearts.

So mind and strength Jesus who loved his neighbor as himself. Jesus in whom we know love chapter 3 and verse 16 by this. We know love because he laid down his life for us. And we also ought. To lay down our lives. The Brethren. And so Jesus is the one who walked in this love towards God and love towards neighbor and love, especially towards the elect.

And that he laid down his life for them. Says what he says. in John chapter 10 that he is the Good Shepherd, who lays down his life for his sheep, and this was of all of his obedience, the crowning obedience that Jesus Christ offered for not only does he say, verse 11 of John 10, I am the Good Shepherd, the Good Shepherd, gives his life for the Sheep.

Like we just heard about by this. We know, love that he laid down his life for us. First John 3 verse 16 but then listen a few verses later in John chapter 10. He says, therefore my father loves me Because I laid down my life. That I may take it again.

No one takes it from me but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again. This Command. I have received from my father, And so Jesus obeyed the Ten Commandments perfectly, didn't he? In our place, praise God.

And he obeyed the first great commandment. And the Second Great Commandment perfectly in our place. Praise God. But Jesus also by his example, by his walking and especially the walking of his dying established for us the third great commandment, or really the one and a half great commandment. As our love for the Brethren, being united to Christ and the elect of God is more directly part of our love for God, even than our love for neighbors who are made in God's image.

For our brothers and sisters in Christ, are not only created into created in God's image, but renewed into God's image, through Union with God, the son, And so Hawking as Jesus walked and walking in love means seeing again, listen to chapter 3 verse 16 by this. We know love because he laid down his life for us.

So we see how Jesus walked and he who says he abides in him. Ought also to walk as he walked first. John 2 verse 6. So he says, and we also ought to lay down our lives. For the Brethren. Chapter 3, verse 16 and then he goes on to describe.

What does laying down your life for the Brethren mean? Verse 17 of chapter 3. Whoever has this world's goods and sees his brother in need and shuts up his heart from him. That doesn't mean he is always at Liberty to give him whatever he needs. There may be someone who has a prior claim like someone in your own household, but who shuts up his heart from him.

So his heart does not open and pouring out and Desiring to do what he can righteously do for his brother. Whoever has the world's goods and sees his brother in need and shuts up his heart from him. How does the love of God abide in him? My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue but indeed.

And in truth, and by this, we know that we are of the truth and so forth. And so it is very important. That we Come to know that we have eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ that we don't just know that eternal life comes by knowing him that we don't just know that eternal life comes by abiding in him but that we actually know him that we actually abide in him.

And if we do that, Jesus produces. His character his life and here, especially his love in. This is vitally important. That we keep God's Commandments. Because obedience to God's Commandments out of love for God. Is. What Jesus produces in. Everyone whom he saves. So don't listen to anybody. Who says that it is not

important to keep the Commandments.

Or to anyone who downplays the importance of the Commandments. It is, of course, very important that, you know, that the only way you are right with God is by Jesus is keeping the Commandments in your place. You're keeping the Commandments can never make you right with God. And it is very important that, you know, that the only way that you That you begin to keep the Commandments is by Jesus's life in you.

The love for God and love for brother and love for neighbor that are in Jesus. Do not come to be in us in any other way. Then by Jesus's life in Us by our abiding in him. So, this is necessary obedience necessarily necessary love but not at all meritorious.

Because hey, Jesus has earned it all outside of us and B, whatever love and obedience. There is in us, Jesus has produced that too. But that's why it works. A help to Assurance of Faith. He says, by this, we know that we know him verse 3, If we keep his Commandments.

How can keeping his Commandments out of love in the heart and especially keeping this commandment in, loving my brethren and laying down my life for them. How does that make me know that I know him? Because there's only one way. That I could come to love my brothers like that.

There's only one way. That I could come to obey God back like that. And that is by knowing Christ and that is by abiding in him. So if we read this passage we say, oh no. I do not obey God's Commandments and I do not love my brother. Indeed, there are brothers and sisters, who go by that name, and the Judgment of Charity that we're supposed to give to all of the members in good standing in the church.

That I find my heart set against. And bittered toward hostile. Tort I might, I might even be rightly described as hating them. What shall I do? Well, the answer isn't just To try harder to love them. We must be humiliated for our remaining sinfulness. But the answer is not in.

It's in Jesus. It's in actually knowing him. Lord, my knowledge of you is small. So small, perhaps even in in each one, each one's case is different, but maybe the case is even my knowledge of you is so small that I don't even know that I know you. My dwelling in you my abiding in, you is so small that I'm not even sure Lord that I actually abide in you we talk about it as a family.

We hear about it as a church. There have been moments that my heart felt warm towards you. But now that I look at this this test by which, I may know that it's supposed to encourage me and say, this is where that obedience came from. This is where that love came from.

I'm not sure there is any obedience or any love. Me, give me to know Jesus. Or address Jesus directly. He's your God. He has a divine nature. Not just a human nature. He can hear you. Give me to know you. Lord Jesus give me to abide in you. Lord Jesus give your life to actually be in me.

Don't let my Doctrine be accurate but empty. Make my Doctrine be good. By giving me the reality that I know must be true. About me, and for me, With you. And this. What Jesus was inviting them into and the night that he was betrayed in John 13 when he said a new commandment.

I give you that you love one another as I have loved you. So shall you love one? Another this by this the world will know that you are my disciples if you have love for one another now he comes by his Spirit carrying along. The Apostle. As right as writing this letter and he says, not just by this, the world will know that you are my disciples.

By this, you will know. That you are my disciple. Because you love the Brethren as I have loved you. As I have left the Brethren. And so this was commandment number one in the church, even from the night. He was betrayed even. So even before he went to the cross and rose again from the dead and started Gathering the church in the 40 days and And inaugurated the age of the church and the day of Pentecost.

That's why verse 7 says, I write you. No, no new commandment, but an old commandment, which you have had from the beginning. Jesus gave this commandment himself in the night that he was betrayed. The word, which he heard from, which they have heard from the beginning. but then he says in verse 8, again, a new commitment.

I write to you. Say well which is it this is a verse say it's not a new commandment. Then verse 8 says it is and you come in it's new because up until Christ came and died on the cross and gathered his church. The Commandment to love one. Another, as he has loved us to lay our lives down for one another, in Practical ways, as he laid down his life for us on the cross.

That was a new commandment at that time, but it has been From the beginning of the church. Now, you know that that commandment is true in him. And verse 8 is saying it's also true. It's also fulfilled. In everyone, whom he actually saves. And by this, Shows that Darkness is on death row.

Darkness is passing away, the True Light is already shining. There is the True Light that is in Jesus that is in glory. That is too bright. Like Sophia was asking about, but there is also true light on Earth. Wherever there are those who are in Jesus and who have love from the Brethren love for the Brethren.

That is. From. Jesus. And so the love of God finds its fulfillment. Its goal. Its end, as verse 5 says, the love of God is perfected in. The one who keeps Jesus's word. You. Loving the Brethren isn't just something that Jesus produces in. It's something that Jesus commands us.

And so he takes that commandment. And he puts it in the category with all the other Commandments so that we might treat the whole law of God. All of the Commandments of Christ as being of the same. Goodness from the same Christ, who has kept it in our place and who produces that obedience in us as this commandment Love one, another.

As he has loved us. Do you see how the love of God must be fulfilled by obedience to his good Commandments? This passage is asking us and pressing us. But if we don't obey his Commandments and especially, if we don't obey this one, Than how great is the darkness in.

There is not light in someone. Who has accurate, theology? About knowing Jesus and abiding in Jesus. But does not. Love the brother. Look at verse 11. And this triple use of the word Darkness. Really is very sobering how this passage concludes For the one who does not find in himself, love of the Brethren.

Does not find. or fines in himself or herself hatred. Of a brother or sister. Because the triple use he concludes the passage by saying Darkness. Darkness. Darkness. If you find this hatred in your heart cry out to Jesus with the light to save you. He who hates his brother is.

Darkness. And walks in. Darkness. Let him flatter himself that he keeps the Ten Commandments. He's a liar. If he doesn't love his brother. Because obedience to the first great commandment and obedience to the Second Great. Commandment comes from the same place and the same life in the same way as obedience to the first and a half great commandment Who says he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks.

Darkness and does not know where he is going because Darkness. Has blinded his eyes. He may have ever so many rules. He may even be right accurate. About many of them. Maybe all of them probably not. But still, he himself is in darkness. And so may our Lord Jesus Christ.

Who is The God, Who is light and in whom, there is no Darkness at all. Give us. To know that Fellowship that we have in him. By producing his light in us, making us to walk in light obeying, all of his Commandments and especially this one that he gives as a particular test.

That we would love our brothers. And lay down our lives for them. In practical ways. Like, he is going to go on to Define. And chapter three and verse 16 through 18. Amen, let's pray.

Lord gracious. God, we pray that you would help us now, For none of us. Are light as we ought to be, and we look to you. Into your spirit. To increase our love for you and our love for our brother and our love for our neighbor. To apply the Life of Christ to us to grow.

By the grace of Christ, as we abide in him to grow us. By the knowledge of Christ, as we know him. This will make us to grow by the grace and the knowledge. Of the Lord Jesus Christ. And Grant to us to see. Albeit imperfect in this life yet.

Genuine Love for you that produces obedience to your Commandments in. Since by this. We know that, we know you. We know that we know Christ. For we know the true love for you. True obedience to you. Cannot come in any other way. And so Grant to us, Lord Assurance of our faith.

In Jesus Christ, and of our belonging to him and being in him. By giving us to love you. And to keep your Commandments, we ask in Jesus name. Amen.