**The Certainty of Obedience and Love**

**Theological Test – The Certainty of the True Christ - 1:1-4**

**Moral Test – The Certainty of Sin and Confession 1:5-2:2**

**Obedience and …**

**Relational Test - Love**

*“By this we \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_that we have come to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Him, if we \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_His commandments.”*

1 John 2:3

*Keep* means \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_– it is the **behavior** test by which you can know that you are a believer. You will

***want to*** keep His commands. It won’t be something you see as being legalistically applied to your life.

Instead, you see God’s commands as having been divinely written upon your heart and you long to obey His

commands.

The moral test can be divided into thirds:

* The 1st third of the moral test is acknowledging we are sinners. Admitting sin and recognizing sin is definitely a mark of someone who is born again. “*If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us.” 1 John 1:8*

* The 2nd third of the moral test is confession and repentance of our sin. Confessing and repenting of sin the moment of God’s divine regeneration of our soul is the response of someone born from above. It is why Jesus came – *“I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.” Luke 5:32 “Unless you repent, you will all likewise perish” Luke 13:5* God the Judge provides us with this judicial forgiveness – meaning our sins will never be counted against us as Jesus, our Advocate, declares us to the Judge as having had our sins acquitted by His own blood. “*For God Himself is Judge,” Psalm 50:6.* But it also means that as we walk with Him, we fully recognize our need for parental or relational forgiveness as we confess our sins to our Abba Father regularly.
* The 3rd third of the moral test is obedience. This is how we know we are really walking in the light (God is Light) and how we know we are truly having fellowship with Him.

*“By this we know”* – not “we hope” or “we think” or “we wish” – but we know!

**There’s the theme of the entire Epistle.**

John wrote 40x the word or a form of the word \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in this one letter because it was the purpose of him

picking up his pen. The theme of the entire epistle is so we live with the assurance of really knowing the Lord-

really having eternal life. We want to know if we’re really *knowing* the Lord. Here’s how.

“By this we *know* we’ve come to *know* Him \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_we keep His commandments.

This is the moral test that points to outer behavior that is visible to the watching and uncertain world.

It’s theme was not to raise doubt of salvation, but to provide \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_of assurance. Because once a

believer lives with the joy of assurance, the will of God is carried out through them. That is the MAIN

thing…that God’s will is done! Right?

Isn’t this what we see in Christ’s last words in prayer 3x to His Abba Father while in the Garden of Gethsemane right before His arrest?

*“My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it,****Your******will******be done****.” Matthew 26:42*

And when He taught His disciples how to pray, He said,

“***Your****kingdom come.****Your******will******be******done****on earth as it is in heaven.” Matthew 6:10*

And as He spoke to the crowd, He said,

*“For whoever****does the will of My Father in heaven****, that person is My brother and sister and mother.” Matthew 12:50*

And when He predicts His own departure to His disciples He said,

*“When you lift up the Son of Man, th****e****n you will know that I am He, and that* ***I do nothing on My own****,” … “****I always do the things that are pleasing to Him****.” John 8:28,29*

Obedience to the Father, when it is the progression (not the perfection) but the continual direction of our life,

we will be fulfilling the will of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Not *our* own will. Not the will of the world. We will be

fulfilling the will of God as we walk by the Spirit obediently.

*“But I say,****walk by******the******Spirit****, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.” Galatians 5:16*

We are pleasing Him and we are sharing in the fellowship of His family of *keepers* of His commands. What a

bond! THAT is what unity means in Scripture. Unified by the *longing to* and the *behavior of* obedience to His

Word and to His Will.

And John wanted the churches of Asia Minor to know that there is no unity among keepers of God’s

commands and false teachers. There is no unity among the sayers and the doers. The professors and the

possessors. Trying to achieve that kind of unity is like trying to make a salad with fresh and fake veggies.

Mixing petroleum and pure water. Combining lemonade with lighter fluid. They don’t mix! And mixing the

two in attempt to make something wholesome is to lie. It’s dangerous!

John wanted the true believers to experience what Jesus was teaching and demonstrating to him and his fellow

apostles … that obeying the Father was where true unity in the family would be found.

“The one who \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. We \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ by this that He abides inus, by the Spirit whom He has given us.” 1 John 3:24

“These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ that you have \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.” 1 John 5:13

***1 John 2:4-11***

***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;*

**Says** - there it is again. The key word John keeps using to describe the deceived. The false Christians. He talks religiously, but he does not keep (does not cherish, adore, embrace, long for, treasure, do) His commandments…His Word.

**Is a liar** – They may not realize their own deception, but they are not speaking the truth about their own spiritual condition. They are lying when they say they are a Christian, but there is *no desire for* or *no pattern of* obedience to His Word.

**The truth is not in him** – God is Truth – *“Because he who is blessed in the earth will be blessed by the****God of truth****;” Isaiah 65:16 -* Christ is Truth – *“Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and* ***the truth****, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me,” John 14:6* – Holy Spirit is Truth – *“…It is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth,” 1 John 5:6b*

… and this verse clearly says neither are in that person.

***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.*

* **Keeps His word** - They aren’t going in one ear and out the other. They have gripped your heart. They are the steering wheel of your life. They are now the GPS in your spiritual life. “Keep” means you hang on to His Word and that you observe His Word by attitude, motive, and conduct.
* **The love of God has truly been perfected** *–* Nothing expresses our love for God more than obeying His commands. Nothing. Jesus Himself said*, “If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.” John 14:15.* When we keep His commandments, God’s love is perfected (matured) in us and it will show in our walk; we will “*walk in the same manner as He walked*.” Walk is a metaphor for how we live our life. Christ lived His life in obedience to His Father.

***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.*

* **Beloved** – John used the most tender term of endearment because he loved as Christ loved.
* **Old commandment** – the same message you heard when you first entered through the narrow gate

***8****[*[*a*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+John+2%3A3-&version=NASB1995#fen-NASB1995-30559a)*]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.*

* **A new commandment** – it’s new in its depth and new in its quality.
* **Which is true in Him** - true in Christ AND it is true in you….John wants them to know that not only is what he is going to say true concerning CHIRST, but “Beloved,” it is true concerning you…it is true in you, too.
* **The darkness is passing away** – **the true Light is already shining.** This darkness is referring to this present evil age of sin. With its greed, envy, hatred, jealousy, lusts of the flesh, materialistic mindset, worldliness. The light is Jesus Christ Himself, the true light, is already shining – it’s shining in and through true believers.

But how? How is the true Light 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 2:9-11*

* **Hates his brother** – rejects, gossips, slanders, accuses, bullies, lies about, ignores, avoids, … another professing Christian. A family member …
* **Is in the darkness until now** – not walking in fellowship with God. Not in the Light. Truth is not abiding in them. They are not abiding in the Light of God, of Christ. Not saved. In darkness means not in the Light.

Look at the next words…

* **The one who loves his brother abides in the Light and there is no cause for stumbling in him** – loving your fellow brother and sister in Christ demonstrates and provides assurance of salvation because it is obedience to the commands of God. His witness is glorifying God.
* **The one who hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness** – hate equates to darkness. John is saying if you hate your fellow brother and sister in Christ, there is NO Light in you. You are in utter darkness and not only that, your lifestyle is one of utter darkness. *Walks in* means, your lifestyle is secretive, dark, sinful, out of fellowship with God, and without Truth. These are strong strong words!

**Love is a commandment.**

*“For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another;” 1 John 3:11*

 *“This is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as He commanded us,” 1 John 3:23*

*“Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God,” 1 John 4:7*

 *“Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another,” 1 John 4:11*

 *“No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us,” 1 John 4:12*

When John said, “Which is true in Him and in you”….He wanted them to understand that loving this way IS possible because it is in you to do so. The Spirit enables us to love – to forgive – to let go of grudges – to bury all bitterness.

**Obedience and love**

Moral tests in being certain of truly being born again.

Both are the outward marks [fruit] that Jesus said would distinguish His true disciples

from those who are not His disciples.

*“He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not****obey****the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.” John 3:36*

*“By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have****love****for one another.” John 13:35*