

Knowing that we know Christ

The Apostle John was the youngest of the twelve disciples. It is commonly believed he was in his late teens when he and his elder brother James began to follow Jesus. He outlived all the other disciples by at least twenty five years. In his old age, John wrote his epistle known as "1st John" to set forth for all time the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Eight times in this epistle he uses the word "hereby" in phrases like "hereby we know," "hereby know we," and "hereby perceive we." These were tests which John gave for us who live two thousand years later to know the difference between the truth and the lie, the light and the darkness, and the children of God and the children of the wicked one. I will examine these individually.

1. "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." I John 2:3-4

According to the prophet Jeremiah and the book of Hebrews, the commandments of God are written in the heart of the children of God. Jeremiah 31:31 Hebrews 10:16

2. "But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." I John 2:5-6

"Keepeth His word" refers to the admonition of Jesus to "Love your enemies." Matthew 5:44

3. "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" I John 3:16-17

We who are blessed with this world's goods are not to waste them on our pleasures, but to give them to a brother in need.

4. "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him. For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God." I John 3:18-21

Love is more than saying "I love you." Love must be shown by our actions.

5. "And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the

Spirit which he hath given us." I John 3:23-24

Jesus commanded us to "Love one another, as I have loved you" John 15:12. Such love is not possible without Christ abiding in us, and us abiding in Christ.

6. "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world." I John 4:1-3

Every person is a manifestation of the Spirit that dwells in them, whether it be "Christ," or "antichrist." The true and the false are known by the "confession," or manifestation, of the spirit which is in them.

7. "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error." I John 4:4-6

Even the new born babies in Christ have overcome sin, Satan, and the world. God is their father, and Jesus is their Savior. They have "overcome him (antichrist) by the blood of the Lamb." Revelation 12:11

8. "No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit." I John 4:12-13

Those who trust in Christ are "sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise." Ephesians 1:13

9. "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments." I John 5:2

If we "love God," we also "love the children of God."


10. "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not." I John 5:18

John confirms what he has previously written; "And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.

Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him." I John 3:5-6

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