



1 John, Lesson#6

1 John 3:1-8, “See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. ² Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. ³ All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure. ⁴ Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness. ⁵ But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin. ⁶ No one who lives in him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him. ⁷ Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. The one who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous. ⁸ The one who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil’s work.”

This passage is directed against the Gnostic false teachers.

They justified sin...

They said...and were telling the people in the Church:

- *That the body was evil and that, therefore, there was no harm in satisfying its lusts to the full, because what happened to it was of no importance.*
- *Truly spiritual people were protected to such an extent by the Spirit that they could sin to their hearts’ content and come to no harm.*
- *There was an obligation on true Gnostics both to scale the heights and to plumb the depths so that they might be truly said to know all things.*

John’s reaction to the Gnostics Philosophy.

- **John begins by insisting that no one is above the moral law.**
- **Certain basic truths about sin. John tells us:**

✓ **What Sin Is.**

Sin is to obey oneself rather than to obey God.

✓ **What Sin Does.**

It undoes the work of Christ. Christ is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world (John 1:29). To sin is to bring back what he came into the world to abolish.

✓ **Why Sin Is hurtful, deceiving, and tragic.**

Comes from the failure to abide in Christ. As long as we remember the continual presence of Jesus, we will not sin; it is when we forget that presence that we sin. Remember, when we forget the continual presence of Jesus, Satan and his cohorts come in to take Jesus’ place.

✓ **Where Sin Comes From.**

It comes from the devil (Satan); and the devil is the one who sins, as it were, on principle. We sin for the pleasure that we think it will bring to us; the devil sins as a matter of principle. In the world there is a power hostile to God, and to sin is to obey that power instead of God.

✓ **How Sin Is Conquered.**

It is conquered because Jesus Christ destroyed the works of the devil.

He has broken the power of evil, and by His help that same victory can be ours.

1 John 3:9, “No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God’s seed remains in them; they cannot go on sinning, because they have been born of God. ¹⁰ This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not God’s child, nor is anyone who does not love their brother and sister.”

Take at face value, this means that it is impossible for anyone who is born of God to sin.

John has already said, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” 1 John 1:8

“If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him (God) a liar...and he urges us to confess our sins (1 John 1:10).

Not contradicting...He is thinking about the present age and the age to come.

John depicts four (4) stages.

- (1) The ideal is that, in the new age, sin is gone forever.*
- (2) Christians must try to make that true and, with the help of Christ, struggle to avoid individual acts of sin.*
- (3) All Christians have lapses...and, when we do sin, we must humbly confess them to God, who will always forgive the penitent heart.*
- (4) Christians cannot be deliberate and consistent sinners; Christians cannot live a life in which sin dominates their actions.*

John is demanding a life which is always on the watch against sin, a life in which sin is not the normal accepted way but the abnormal moment of defeat. Remember, we are more than conquerors in Christ. Live like it!

“Life reveals the children of God!”...B.F. Westcott

What do you think this means?

We can tell what a tree is by its fruit...and similarly we can tell what a man or woman is by that person’s conduct.

1 John 3:10-18, “This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not God’s child, nor is anyone who does not love their brother and sister. ¹¹ For this is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another. ¹² Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own actions were evil and his brother’s

were righteous. ¹³ Do not be surprised, my brothers and sisters, if the world hates you. ¹⁴ We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love each other. Anyone who does not love remains in death. ¹⁵ Anyone who hates a brother or sister is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life residing in him. ¹⁶ This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. ¹⁷ If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? ¹⁸ Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth."

John tries to make it very simple...he says... "Anyone who does not desire to do what is right is by that fact shown not to be of God."

Righteousness is the key.

We can't obtain righteousness by our acts...we can prove that we have the righteousness of Christ by trying and seeking to live like Him.

John says to be righteous is to love our neighbors...

Why did John feel that this was such a critical point in defining Christianity?

- It is a duty which has been impressed upon Christians from the first moment that they entered the Church. The Christian ethic can be summed up in one word....LOVE!
- The fact that people love one another is the final proof that they have passed from death to life.
- Not to love is to become a murderer. Jesus said that anger, bitterness, and contempt were sins just as serious (Matthew 5:21-22)...hatred in the heart is as if there is murder in the heart.
- The Christian life is the imitation of Christ. He forgave those who crucified Him. "Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus." Philippians 2:5
- John insists that we will have plenty of opportunities to prove our love for Christ...be helping and loving someone else...even if they don't love us.

And...Remember:

- ✓ Righteousness always provokes hostility in the minds of those whose actions are evil.
- ✓ Wherever Christians are, even though they say nothing, they act as the conscience of society; and for that very reason, the world will often hate them.

1 John 3:19-24, "This is how we know that we belong to the truth and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence: ²⁰ If our hearts condemn us, we know that God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. ²¹ Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God ²² and receive from him anything we ask, because we keep his commands and do what pleases him. ²³ And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us. ²⁴ The one who keeps God's commands lives in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us."

There is only one test....to know in whom you believe....and to know that you are “really” a Christian!

John’s test...simple and far-reaching. It is love.

Now....just because you love other people does not mean that you are Christian....but...it is the final, clinching test question!

Romans 10:9, “For if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord...and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved.”

Now...do you love your fellow man? Do you try to keep God’s commandments?

Then....be calm, be at peace, be assured that you will see God.

Our hearts might condemn us...but God is greater than our hearts and knows all things.

What two things set us apart?

1. Believing in the name of God’s Son...Jesus the Christ!

2. Loving one another...as He gave us this commandment.

Does anything hinder you...this day....in you loving your brothers and sisters in Christ?

It is simple to know in whom we have believed....Heart Knowledge!

How Do We Know We Are God’s Children?

1 John 3:24b – 4:1, “This is how we know that He (Jesus) abides in us, by the Spirit which He gave to us. Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see if their source is God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.”

Note: Spirit and spirit(s)....

Difference is that the Christian has the Holy Spirit...not some, just any spirit working in us!

Early Church had manifestation of the Spirit....Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

There are different thoughts on this!

Most modern churches do not know what the manifestation of the Spirit means...because they are afraid of it.

Questions: When did the church lose it...and when did the gifts of the spirit diminish...and where does it say in the Word that the gift of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit was extinguished...or inappropriate for the Church?

Why would we listen to man....and not listen to the Spirit?

Many are guilty of grieving the Holy Spirit....

Are we guilty of grieving the Holy Spirit?