

1 John 2 – Hindrances to Fellowship with God

In Chapter 1, John talked about our fellowship with God, made possible by the passion of Jesus Christ.

Read 1 John 2

Vs 1 What is John calling his readers? Little children. This is a common Greek term teachers called their disciples. He is clearly addressing those who are still learning. We learned in 1 John 8-9 that, although saved, we still can sin and when we ask God to forgive us, He does and we are cleaned from all unrighteousness. Having said that, what is John now saying? He is writing to encourage us not to sin, but when we do, we are assured our advocate (*one who pleads another's cause before a Judge, an intercessor*) Jesus (qualified for this duty because He is righteous) will present us to God the Father. Heb 7:25 A human defense lawyer argues for the innocence of his client. But our Advocate, Jesus Christ, admits our guilt – and then enters His plea on our behalf, as the one who has made an atoning sacrifice for our sinful guilt.

It is as if we stand as the accused in the heavenly court, before our righteous Judge, God the Father. Our Advocate stands up to answer the charges: "He is completely guilty your honor. In fact, he has even done worse than what he is accused of, and now makes full and complete confession before You." The gavel slams, and the Judge asks, "What should his sentence be?" Our Advocate answers, "His sentence shall be death; he deserves the full wrath of this righteous court." All along, our accuser Satan, is having great fun at all this. We are guilty! We admit our guilt! We see our punishment! But then, our Advocate asks to approach the bench. As he draws close to the Judge, he simply says: "Dad, this one belongs to Me. I paid his price. I took the wrath and punishment from this court that he deserves." The gavel sounds again, and the Judge cries out, "Guilty as charged! Penalty satisfied!" Our accuser starts going crazy. "Aren't you even going to put him on probation?" "No!" the Judge shouts. "The penalty has been completely paid by My Son. There is nothing to put him on probation for." Then the Judge turns to our Advocate, and says, "Son, you said this one belongs to You. I release him into Your care. Case closed!"

Vs 2 What does John now say Jesus is? Jesus is the propitiation (*furnishes a reason for not executing a punishment justly due for wrong-doing*) for our sin. Who did He do this great thing for? Christians and the whole world.

Vs 3 Are we changing topics? If not, how does this verse connect to verses 1 & 2? The topic is sin and the forgiveness we receive by the finished work of Jesus. If we confess to know Jesus, we'll keep His commandments. If we keep His commandments, we won't sin. When we sin, we still keep the commandment to confess our sin and restore our fellowship with God.

Vs 4 Can you truly know Jesus and not keep His commandments? No! To truly know Him is to know His commandments and obey them on a consistent basis. What do you say of a man who confesses to be a Christian yet lives in known sin? He is a liar. Does he have the truth in him? No! He may know the truth but he does not live it. The evidence of someone knowing God, and having fellowship with Him, is that he does keep His commandments. A simple, loving obedience is a natural result of fellowship with God. Disobedience, therefore, destroys fellowship.

Vs 5 This verse is the converse of verse 4. What great news does it contain? If you keep His Word (obey His commandments), the love (*agape, unconditional love*) of God is perfected (*add what is yet wanting in order to render a thing full*) in you. Do you see how keeping God's Word makes His love complete in you? John 14:21 How do you do this? By faith! Heb 11:6 John makes a link between our obedience and our love for God. A perfected (the idea is mature) love for God will show itself in obedience, and the presence of this obedience and love gives us assurance that we are in Jesus (by this we know we are in Him). When one becomes a Christian, there is a change in his relationship with sin. Sin is not eliminated in the believer until he comes to glory, but his relationship to sin is changed when he truly become a Christian. He no longer wants, brags about, fondly remembers, enjoys or is comfortable with it.

Vs 6 How will this obedience to Christ Jesus' commandments look? You will walk like Jesus walked. 1 Pet 2:21 The thought is brought around to a full circle. When we are abiding in Jesus, we will walk just as He walked – live lives of obedience and love. When we want to walk just as He walked, we need to begin by abiding in Him. John 15:4-11 We are called to imitate His every-day walk with God the Father. The spiritual power evident in the life of Jesus flowed from a faithful, regular, disciplined life of fellowship and obedience. The point here is that the one who knows God will increasingly lead a righteous life, for God is righteous. It does not mean that he will be sinless; John has already shown that anyone who claims this is lying. It simply means that he will be moving in a direction marked out by the

righteousness of God. If he does not do this, if he is not increasingly dissatisfied with and distressed by sin, he is not God's child. How did Jesus walk? John 5:19,7:16,8:28,14:10, Luke 2:49

Vs 7 John says he is not writing about a new commandment. What is the old commandment? To love God and man. Matt 22:37-40 The commandment John wrote of was at the same time both old (in the sense that it was preached to the brethren their whole Christian lives) and new (in the sense that it was called the new commandment by Jesus in John 13:34).

Vs 8 As stated above, the new commandment is to love as Jesus showed us. What is true in Jesus and a believer? Agape (God's kind of unconditional love)! Rom 5:5. 1 John 4:19 What is this darkness that is passing away? Since God is light (1 John 1:5, John 1:9) darkness is man's bent toward sin.

Vs 9 If you say you are in the light yet hate a fellow believer, what does it really say about you? You are a liar. There is no room for hate of a believer in a fellow believer. Just as our relationship to sin and our obedience is a measure of our fellowship with God, so also is our love for God's people. If we say that we are in the light yet hate our brother, then our claim to fellowship with the God who is light is hollow.

Vs 10 What happens to a believer who loves other believers? He will abide in the light. When you are in a dark room, it is easy to stumble. When you are in a lit room, there is no stumbling. If we can't love each other, then we have no way to claim a real love for God. Our relationship with God can be measured by our love for other Christians. John 13:35, 1 John 3:14

Vs 11 What happens to a believer who hates other believers? He walks in darkness, blind and lost. John 12:35

Vs 12 – 14 John shifts gears from correction to encouragement. Who is being addressed? Notice the repeat pattern; little children, fathers, young men. The passage addresses the church in three overlapping categories, representing spiritual maturity.

Vs 15 John already addressed who we should love (God and other believers). Who/what is he telling us NOT to love? The world or worldly thing. Rom 12:2, Jam 4:4 What happens if you do? You don't have the love of the Father in you. Why is this? You serve the ones you love and you can't serve two masters. Matt 6:24

Vs 16 What are the three things in the world that are not of the Father? The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Notice these are the same three areas Eve was tempted Gen 3:6.

Vs 17 Why should we not love worldly stuff and instead love God? The world is passing away (with the lust!). When you obey God by loving Him, you will have eternal life. 1 Cor 7:31, 2 Cor 4:18

Vs 18 – 23 How do we know this is the last hour? Anti-Christ's have come. Matt 24:24 Where did they come from? They came from groups of "believers"! How can we know the truth? The anointing we have from God. 2 Cor 1:21 John 16:13 We can know all things because we have the mind of the real Christ (the anointed One). 1 Cor 2:16 What did John expect his readers to know? The truth and not a lie. What truth? Who the real Christ is. If you deny Jesus, Who are you also denying? The Father (God). If you acknowledge Jesus as the Christ, Who do you also have (know)? The Father. John 14:16,15:23, 16:13, 1 John 4:15

Vs 24 – 27 That is therefore there for? Because you know the truth of Who Jesus is. This is what they heard from the beginning (from the first time they heard the Gospel). What promise does abiding assure you of? Eternal life! Folks were trying to deceive the Church. John is assuring them of the power of the truth they learned. When you abide in Christ, you will know the truth. John 8:32

Vs 28 – 29 What does abiding in Him cause us to do? We'll be confident (*boldness, all out-spokenness, by implication, assurance*) and not ashamed at the return of Christ. How do you know you are born of God? You practice the righteous of God; that is, do, think, say right things.