

[Sunday, April 24, 2016] 1John Series, 1John chapter 2, verses 3-6 – Craig Thurman

Beginning in this chapter, we read in the inspired Word of God, *'My little children these things write I unto you, that ye sin not.'* In the subjunctive mood, this means that we should not sin. In light of this, and given the propensity in us to sin with which we are afflicted, not to excuse sin, but in the event that we might commit sins Jesus Christ is our advocate before the Father. His advocacy for us is explained further: *[H]e is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world*

We spent some time on the biblical concept of propitiation, trying to define it. Notably, propitiation is also translated *reconciliation* and *atonement*. Then, we considered the goats which were for a sin offering and a scape goat.

We could have considered the two birds offered for the cleansing of the leper or the cleansing of a house (Lev.14.1-7; 14.48-53). We could have considered the sacrifice of the red heifer and the purification for sin. (Nu.19.1-19) Each of these agrees with the two-fold work of propitiation.

There are not two propitiations. Propitiation denotes *one whole work of Christ* which resolves two issues concerning sin: punishment and pollution; guilt and filth.

Now, because those addressed by this epistle are assumed to be in a N.T. church relationship (2.19.20, *of us; an unction* [an anointing]) and the context concerns *fellowship ... with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ* and their having a *full joy* (1.4, 7) it is my opinion that it is the pollution and filth contracted for sins to which John's use of the word propitiation refers. That is his major focus. Perhaps by way of example I can show you what I mean.

If I had left this congregation for some time and need to address you the context of the letter would undoubtedly contain two points. First, it is assumed that my audience had all passed from death unto life; so in the main my instructions would pertain to your present lives. However, because there might be someone who has not understood until lately the true faith of Christ it would always be appropriate to include an evangelical note concerning the death, burial,

resurrection, and coming again, of our Lord Jesus Christ. That is how I read the letter of First John. That is how I perceive John's use of the term propitiation.

There are two viable interpretations of the text: *And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world* either means that,

- Christ is **the only means** for propitiation to God; there is no other;
- Christ propitiated only for the sins of the whole **elect** world; not only for the elect of Israel;

As we begin to move into the second chapter of the book of First John there is a Greek prepositional phrase that is worth noting. That phrase is ἐν τούτῳ. It is found 14 times in this epistle. (2.3, 4, 5 [twice]; 3.10, 3.16, 19, 24; 4.2, 9, 10, 13, 17; 5.2) The number 14 is the number for salvation. Also, it is translated five different ways: *hereby, in him, in this, herein, and by this*. The number five is the number for *grace*. These phrases are a confirmation to the true children of God that they are His, and He is theirs. These phrases are assurance phrases. Every child of God longs for evidence that they really know God, and for evidence that God has eternal interest in them. Look at these for a moment. The following phrases are grouped as they first begin to appear in the epistle:

Hereby (7)

Hereby (by keeping his commandments) we *do* know that we know him (2.3)

Hereby (by keeping his word) we know that we are in him (2.5)

Hereby (because he laid down his life for us) we perceive (know) the love of God (3.16)

Hereby (loving in deed and in truth) we know that we are of the truth (3.19)

Hereby (he that keeps his commandments) we know that he abides in us (3.24)

Hereby (by the confession that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh) [he] knows the spirit of God (4.2)

Hereby (because he hath given us of his Spirit) we know that we dwell in him (4.13)

In Him (2)

In him (whoever says I know him and keeps not his commandments) is not the truth (2.4)

In Him (that keeps his word) the love of God is truly perfected (2.5)

In this (way) (2)

In this (whoever does not do righteousness or love his brother) is manifest the children of God and the children of the devil (3.10)

In this (that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him) was manifest the love of God toward us (4.9)

Herein (2)

Herein (that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins) is love (4.10)

Herein (because as he is, so are we in this world) our love is made perfect (4.17)

By this (1)

By this (when we love God, and keep his commandments) we know that we love the children of God

In our text today (2.3-6), which follows the fact of propitiation, begins the proofs that we are or are not the children of God. Being Christ is our advocate with the Father, and the propitiation for our sins against God, we can know that we know Him (2.3), we can know when someone is not being truthful about their current relationship with Christ (2.5), we can know those in whom the love of God is being perfected (2.5), and we can know that we are in him (2.5). These four things are said to be accomplished by keeping his commandments and by keeping His Word. Christ has not only given us commandments, but He has given us His Word to instruct us in our daily lives as well. He has laid out in His Word a pattern of life to which our lives may be conformed.

1John Series

The word *know* is found 14 times in this chapter. Fourteen is the number for salvation, as we have already shown above with the Greek phrase ἐν τούτῳ. We can and ought to know that we are the Lord's people.

In the book of 1John the English word *know* is found: nine times in 1Jn.3; seven times in 1Jn.4; eight times in 1Jn.5. A total of 38 times. 38 divided by two = 19 the number for faith. The very thing that John would have us to know is that there is more to faith than just the experience of conversion to Christ at the gospel, but that faith should produce a life after God day after day after day.

Καὶ ἐν τούτῳ γινώσκομεν ὅτι ἐγνώκαμεν αὐτὸν
3 ¶ And hereby we **do** know that we know him,
we know
present **perfect**

do know, γινώσκομεν, 1ppl., pres., ind., act. of γινώσκω, I know; *we know*; in the KJV, *do know* (1), *know* (9); 8 times this 1ppl., pres., ind., act. verb, γινώσκομεν, is used in this epistle. (cf. 2.3, 5, 18; 3.19, 24; 4.6, 13; 5.2); **evidently the adding of 'do' brings forth the present tense of the verb and serves to distinguish between the perfect tense which succeeds it.**

we know, ἐγνώκαμεν, 1ppl., **perf.** ind., act. of γινώσκω, I know;

A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament, p.200, 'The perfect is the tense of complete action. Its basal significance is the progress of an act of state to a point of culmination and the existence of its finished results.

...

In the indicative the perfect signifies action as complete from the point of view of present time.'

ἐὰν τὰς ἐντολάς αὐτοῦ τηρῶμεν
if we keep his commandments.
the commandments of his we would keep.
present subjunctive

ἐὰν, *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, p.245, 'This is a combination of εἰ plus ἄν. ... It introduces **a hypothetical condition.**'

we keep, τηρῶμεν, 1ppl., pres., subj., act. of τηρέω, to keep; in the KJV τηρῶμεν, is found only in this epistle of 1John, *keep* (3 times; 1Jn 5.2, 3).

Hereby (by keeping his commandments) we do know that we know him. It is somewhat difficult to say to whom the personal pronoun *him* refers. For the moment my opinion is that it refers back to our Advocate, Jesus Christ the righteous who is with the Father. (2.1)

Brethren, it might be true that we know him, or rather are known of God,

Ga 4:9 But now, after that ye have known God (γινόντες, part., aor.), or rather are known of God (γνωσθέντες, part., aor., pass.), how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?

Gal.4.11 I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.

but it might also be true that we are not living in a way so that we *do know* (so that we are becoming more and more acquainted) that we know him. As contradictory as this might sound, we can know Him and not know him; we might have believed in Him and yet not believe Him.

An unchangeable faith or knowledge:

Joh 5:24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

The children of God do not vacillate between having eternal life and then not having it. Eternal life is the the endless, unconditional life of Christ imparted to all of the elect in regeneration.

3 Examples of a changeable faith or knowledge in those who had believed and knew Christ:

*1. Joh 20:25 The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he (Thomas, one of the apostles; one of the elect of God) said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, **I will not believe.***

Now Thomas had believed in Christ to the saving of the soul (He.10.39), but his faith was certainly tested and vacillated between great confidence and no confidence.

*Joh 11:16 Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellowdisciples, **Let us also go, that we may die with him.***

In his faith he went from faithful, to faithlessness, to faithful. But we do not deny the fact that through it all he had believed in Christ. By the time that the Lord Jesus has finished His word with Thomas he will confess *My Lord and my God*. What was the problem with Thomas? He didn't believe what Jesus had said in His Word concerning the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. His faith, and you must have faith before this can be done, his faith was based upon the ever-changing circumstances instead of upon the Christ Himself and His Word. And that is the *common* experience of the children of God. But we are being moved to grow so that we will have a faith in Him that transcends all opposing circumstances. Again we read of a faltering faith,

*2. Mt.17.19 Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out?
20 And Jesus said unto them, Because of **your unbelief** (Whose unbelief? It is that of the apostles.): for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.*

A grain of faith upon an omnipotent, loving, sovereign God is all there needs to be.

*3. Mr 16:14 Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them **with their unbelief and hardness of heart**, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.*

We can know the truth and yet be disobedient to it. As children of God, we all know this. Obedience to the Word of God, the doctrine of Christ is certain proof of our true knowledge of Him. The reason that we come into doubts about whether we really know Christ can almost always be pinned down to disobedience to the Word of God. Every one of us are subject to this kind of doubt. The Lord has this built-in safety net to prod us on to faithfulness. We find no comfort in self-justification. We find no comfort in lying to ourselves. We are compelled to look truth square in the eye and confess our sins and seek restoration, and repent of our waywardness. Then we set out to obey the commandments of Christ. John says that we *do* know that we know Him when we keep His commandments. We must know Him in order to prove that we know Him. We must know Christ as our Sin-bearer before we can think to entertain a daily walk with Him. The proof of the reality of our faith comes through a daily walk with Him.

3 Καὶ ἐν τούτῳ γινώσκομεν ὅτι ἐγνώκαμεν αὐτὸν, ἐὰν τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ τηρῶμεν

Verse 4 breaks down like this: the one *saying*, but *not keeping*, is a liar ...

4 He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments,
He that is saying, and is not keeping his commandments
perfect part., pres

that saith, λέγων, nom., sing., masc., part., pres., act. of λέγω, to say;
that is saying.

I know, ἔγνωκα, 1ps., perf., ind., act. of γινώσκω, I know; only found
in one other place (Jn.5.42).

Joh 5:42 But I know ἔγνωκα you, that ye have not the love of God in you.

A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament, p.200, 'The perfect is the tense of complete action. Its basal significance is the progress of an act of state to a point of culmination and the existence of its finished results.

...

In the indicative the perfect signifies action as complete from the point of view of present time.'

keepeth, τηρῶν, nom., sing., masc., part., pres., act. of τηρέω, I keep; is keeping; KJV, keepeth, that keepeth.

*Joh 14:21 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth τηρῶν them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, **and will manifest myself to him.***

ἔστι	ἔστιν
<i>is</i>	<i>a liar, and the truth is not in him.</i>
present	present

is, ἔστιν, 3ps., pres., ind. of εἰμί, I am.

We have an objective standard by which the people of God can judge whether others are in the truth. The Christian who lives *in disobedience*, no matter what he says to the contrary, is a liar, the truth is not in him to say that he knows Christ. The words, *I know him* are in the perfect tense. He has made a profession of Christ and is living in the present results of that knowledge while living in sin. But that is not true. The truth is, the present result of our faith in Christ should result in lives who will continue to live for Christ. This one is truly misinformed and has no such confidence, not such that is produced of the Holy Spirit of God. He is not being truthful. The one that makes such a claim usually does so to entice you to join with him in his sin. The truth is that we can by the Word of God peel back the façade of

1John Series

the words and conclude that if this one truly knows Christ he is a deceived and miserable specimen of a true faith in Christ.

This verb ἔσται, translated *is*, will occur **74 times** in the epistle of 1John. John is a present tense speaker. He takes us from the initial experience of grace to the continuing experience of grace. Grace must increase; grace must grow in us. Any Christian who lives less than this is living a lie. That should not be construed to mean that we never believed, or that we never knew Him. But it does mean that as children of God we are not living as He would have us to live. Do our lives witness the truth of grace in us? If not, why not? Are we saying one thing and doing another? We know better and can do differently. Do we need help? We all do.

*He.4.16 Let us therefore (because he was touched with the feeling of our infirmities) come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may **obtain mercy, and find grace** to help in time of need.*

In him (whoever says I know him and keeps not his commandments) is not the truth.

4 ὁ λέγων, ἔγνωκα αὐτόν, καὶ τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ μὴ τηρῶν, ψεύστης ἐστίν, καὶ ἐν τούτῳ ἡ ἀλήθεια οὐκ ἔστιν

Verse 5: **But the one who keeps his word is made perfect in the love of God, and by this we know we are in Him.**

5 *But whoso keepeth his word,*
would keep
pres. subj.

keepeth, τηρῆ, 3ps., pres., subj., act. of τηρέω, to keep;

By context I believe this refers to the words of our Lord Jesus Christ or the doctrine of Christ, (He.6.1; 2Jn.9, doctrine of Christ), but it can refer to the Old Testament Scriptures too. The Words of our Lord Jesus Christ undoubtedly had begun to be collected and passed on to the saints. But it is those words which were confirmed by the apostles which the saints begin to receive as authoritative records of accurate saying and teaching of

Christ. So, there is a verifiable record of Christ's words, and it is these that are to be observed, kept, guarded, preserved in their substance and in our lives.

The greatest honor that anyone could pay to another is to give his life for another. The greatest honor children can give to their parents is to have regard for their place as parents, care for them and to *live* respectfully. A soldier's greatest honor is to serve his country. The Christian's greatest honor is to live for Christ. The greatest honor that we can give to the Lord is to live for Him. It is a dishonor to do less.

Joh 5:23 That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

Joh 12:26 If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.

in him verily *is the love of God perfected:*
truly *or, the love of God is made perfect*
perf. pass.

perfected, τετελείωται, 3ps., perf., ind., pass. of τελειόω, to perfect; found only in this book of 1John (2.5, *is ... perfected*; 4.17, 18, ***is ... made perfect***);

τετελείωται

*1Jo 4:17 Herein (by dwelling, v.16) is our love **made perfect** τετελείωται, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.*

*18 There is no fear in love; but perfect (τελεία, nom. s. fem., adj., as in mature, a seasoned, an experienced) love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth **is not made perfect** τετελείωται in love.*

Only by continuance in Christ is the love of God made perfect. There are, brethren, no shortcuts. For it to be otherwise would be like when we were children wishing we could just grow up and get our driver's license, or grow up to move out of our parents' house, or grow up and get married, grow up and get a job. But before these came the necessary development in mental, physical, and technical things then we are prepared for the greater things. All of that adds up to experience. Christians do not just know Christ and that is it. We have a path which includes our present infirmities or weaknesses, we have faults, and we must receive chastening. All of this the Lord works so that we become *more and more*, little by little, like Christ through the application of His Word. The greater the test the greater the growth, but all children should grow.

Same verb as above, but in the 1st ps, perf. ind. pass.: τετελείωμαι:
*Php 3:12 Not as though I had already attained, either **were** already **perfect** (or, either are already made perfect): but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.*

Paul never said that he had arrived to the full potential of the knowledge of Christ. He pressed forward as a finite creature to conform his life to the infinite God. As long as we are in this present body of flesh and blood we will never be perfectly perfected (we can never come to the place where we need no perfecting), but we can be and should be, and will be *perfected* in the love of God if we will abide in Him.

We must ask ourselves the question, Is the love of God being perfected in me? How do I perceive the love of God?

1Jo 3:16 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.

1Jo 4:9 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

I see the way our Lord dealt with the saints. He not only died for them, He lived for them. In the Word of God is the record of the life of our Lord Jesus Christ as He ministered to the disciples, to his neighbors, and to his enemies. He was patient with the dullness, unbelief, and outright rebellion of the disciples. He was constantly misunderstood. His enemies relentlessly badgered Him for it. He never mistreated a single soul. No enemy received better treatment than at the hands of Jesus.

How is He with His own? Patient, loving, gentle, kind, longsuffering, willing to forgive, granting grace, and forgiving again, and again, and again. *...longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. (2Pe.3.9)* Not one of the elect shall be lost. All shall be saved. But we should be perfected in the love of God. Clearly, we cannot perfect what we do not possess. This assumes that we have the love of God before it can be perfected in us.

In Him (that keeps his word) the love of God is truly perfected

ἐν τούτῳ			ἐσμεν	
hereby	know we	that we	are	in him.
by [being perfected]	or, we know		presently	
	present		present	

know, γινώσκομεν, 1ppl., pres., ind., act. of γινώσκω, I know; *we know*; in the KJV, *do know (1), know (9)*; 8 times this 1ppl., pres., ind., act. verb, γινώσκομεν, is used in this epistle. (cf. 2.3, 5, 18; 3.19, 24; 4.6, 13; 5.2)

we are, ἐσμεν, 1ppl., pres., ind. of εἰμί, I am;

Hereby (by keeping his word) we know that we are in him

The fact that we **can be perfected** in the love of God is of grace. It is proof that we know Him when we are perfected in His love. By being perfected in the love of God we receive the assurance of our *stand* in Him.

1Jo 5:20 And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding (an ability to be able to think this through), that we may know (γινώσκωμεν, 1ppl, pres. subj. act) him that is true, and **we are in him** that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

1Jo 2:24 Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. (Restating that fact ...) If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, **and in the Father**.

5 ὃς δ' ἂν τηρῇ αὐτοῦ τὸν λόγον, ἀληθῶς ἐν τούτῳ ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ Θεοῦ τετελείωται ἐν τούτῳ γινώσκομεν ὅτι ἐν αὐτῷ ἔσμεν

Verse 6: The one saying that he abides in him has the duty to walk even as Christ walked.

	μένειν	ὀφείλει	
6 He that saith	he abideth in him	ought	himself also so to walk,
He that is saying		is debtor	
part. pres.		has a duty, a present obligation (for the love of Christ to us)	
	pres., infin	present	pres., infin.

abideth, μένειν, pres., infin. of μένω; μένω, in the KJV is translated, tarry, continue, dwell, abide, remain; the pres. infin, μένειν, is found in these five places: 1Jn.2.6, abideth; Heb.7.24, continueth; Acts 28.16, to dwell; Jo.21.22, 23, tarry;

ought, ὀφείλει, 3ps, pres., ind. of ὀφείλω, to owe, ought, should, to need; is found 11 times in the KJV and is translated *debtor*; *guilty*; *ought*; *need*; *should*; *oweth*;

so, οὕτω, in this way, manner or under such circumstances. (Harold Moulton's Greek Lexicon)

walked, περιπατεῖν, pres. infin. of περιπατέω, to walk; περιπατεῖν, is found **9 times** in the N.T., *to go*, *to walk*, *walked*, *walk*.

1Th 4:1 Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought (δεῖ, must) **to walk** περιπατεῖν and to please God, so ye would abound more and more.

Robertson's Word Pictures, vol. 6, p.211, 'Himself also to walk (kai autos peripatein). Present active infinitive after *opheilei* (ought), "**Himself also to keep on walking,**" a continuous performance, not a spasmodic spurt.' (bolding added)

even as he walked.

aor. ind.

to walk, περιεπάτησεν, 3ps., aor., ind. of περιπατέω, to walk; found only in this other place:

Mt 14:29 And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked περιεπάτησεν on the water, to go to Jesus.

So, historically we know that Peter *walked* on water, and our Lord Jesus Christ *walked* among us, and we are *to walk* as He walked.

Robertson's Word Pictures, vol. 6, p.211, 'Even as he walked (*kathos ekeinos periepatesen*). Constatative aorist active indicative **summing up the life of Christ on earth** with the emphatic use of the demonstrative *ekeinos* in reference to Christ as in 3:3, 5, 6, 16; 4:17 and John 7:11; 9:12, 28; 19:21. (bolding added)

ὁ ὁ λέγων ἐν αὐτῷ μένειν, ὀφείλει, καθὼς ἐκεῖνος περιεπάτησεν, καὶ αὐτὸς οὕτως περιπατεῖν

As children of God we have believed to the saving of soul. We have great need of knowing Christ more and that only comes through obedience to the Word of God, keeping His commandments. There are no shortcuts. There is a certain course that we are to go with Christ. Each of us may have

1John Series

very different experiences through the course of our lives, but we all come to know Christ more through them. We will not all know Christ to the same extent. That is the work of God, but we should all be growing in that knowledge. Do we have the assurance that we are His? The main reason that we do not is almost always because of sin. If that is the case go to Him and confess to Him and receive forgiveness and cleansing. Then let's proceed to the laver and examine our lives in light of the Word of God and discern what we need to do to keep from sin and be conformed more and more into the image of Jesus Christ our Lord. There's not a preacher, teacher or member above this need. We all need to apply to God continually so that we might know Him more.