

Sure in our salvation and happy in our Savior!

Lesson for Sunday, February 23, 2025

TEXT: 1 John 2:3-11

INTRODUCTION:

- ⇒ Start with a quick review of the memory verse for chapter 2 – verse 15.
- ⇒ Is it possible to know God and to live like the Devil? Is it possible to truly know God and have no life change?
- ⇒ Adrian Rodgers answer these questions like this: “Study the Bible to know about God. Obey the Bible to really know God.” John would agree!
- ⇒ In his epistle, John gives us a threefold test that he returns to again and again:
 - First, do I believe the right things about Jesus? This is the theological test.
 - Second, do I obey the commands of God? This is the moral test.
 - Third, do I love others? This is the ethical test.
- ⇒ John addressed the theological test in 1:5-2:2 (last week’s lesson). Now he will address the moral test in 2:3-6 and the ethical test in 2:7-11.
- ⇒ John’s goal? That we would be sure in our salvation and happy in our Savior!

BIBLE STUDY:

1. The Moral Test: Do we obey? (vs. 3-6)
 - a. The essence of the Christian life is obedience. Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote, “Only he who believes is obedient; only he who is obedient believes.”
 - b. Knowing God and loving God are intimately wed ideas in 1 John, and both ideas lead to obedience.
 - c. For John – and it should be the same for us – there is a massive difference between merely saying and actually doing.
 - d. Vs. 3-4: You will know that you know Him.
 - i. If you want to know day by day that you know Jesus, that you are saved, it is simple: look to His perfect advocacy and atoning work on your behalf (2:1-2) and keep His commands.
 - ii. The word “keep” conveys the idea of guarding. We should guard God’s commands as a precious treasure.
 - iii. John’s point: Obedience is an important avenue of assurance.
 - iv. To obey Christ is not a burden. It is a blessing. It is my natural response to what He has done for me.
 - e. Vs. 5: You will love Him perfectly.
 - i. Keeping the commands of God is not a condition for knowing God, but it is a clear sign and indication that we do know God.
 - ii. This verse is set in contrast to verse 4, and it advances the argument John is making.
 - iii. As we consistently obey God, carefully guarding His Word, our love for God grows and is brought to maturity and completion.
 - iv. The more I know Him the more I love Him, and more I love Him the more I know Him.
 - f. Vs. 6: You will know that I am abiding in Christ.
 - i. Here John speaks of our abiding (or remaining) in Him
 - ii. Abiding in Christ is the natural outgrowth of knowing Him. The idea is. One of continuing in Jesus.
 - iii. John says we have both a statement to prove and a Savior to imitate. To truly remain in Christ means I will live (walk) like Christ.
 - iv. This is repeated often in the NT: John 15:4-5; 1 Cor. 11:1; Eph. 5:1; 1 Peter 2:21.

- v. Like Father, like Son. Like Savior, like Saint. Christ's life becomes my life, my example, my goal and my pattern.
- 2. The Ethical Test: Do we love others? (vs. 7-11)
 - a. John is simplifying the Christian life: To know Jesus, obey God and love others.
 - i. In vs. 5 it was our love for God that concerned the apostle. Now in 7-11 he addresses our love for others.
 - ii. In these verses he will narrow his focus to one command: the command to love.
 - b. Vs. 7: God's love has been with us since conversion.
 - i. It seems John assumes his readers are familiar with his gospel, and specifically with John 13:34-35 (read).
 - ii. John says that the command to love one another is not new; rather, it is old. It is something we have had from the beginning of our Christian experience.
 - c. Vs. 8: God's love is seen most truly in Jesus and His followers.
 - i. This old, old command goes all the way back to Moses (Lev. 19:18), but it took on a new character with the coming of Jesus. This is his point.
 - ii. The newness is threefold: (1) It is new and true in Jesus; (2) is it true and new in us; (3) it is true and new in us because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining (1 Jn. 1:5, 9).
 - iii. Love is not new. It is as old as God (1 Jn. 4:8) and rooted in the law. Yet it is new to us in conversion and new in its depth in Jesus.
 - d. Vs. 9-11: God's love exposes the darkness of hatred.
 - i. Vs. 9 essentially says, "If you say you are experiencing the life of God, yet continually hate your brother, you are still in darkness and belong to the Devil."
 - ii. Vs. 10 provides the contrast: "If you are consistently loving your brother, you are living in the light and that is evidence that you have the life of God in you."
 - iii. Vs. 11 returns to the darkness: "If you continually hate your brother, four things are true for you:"
 - 1. You are in darkness (spiritual death).
 - 2. You walk (live) in darkness.
 - 3. You do not know where you are going.
 - 4. You are blind.

DISCUSSION:

- ⇒ How would you explain to a friend that obedience, as the Bible describes it, is not an oppressive idea?
- ⇒ What is the relationship between obedience and assurance for the Christian?
- ⇒ Conclude by reading the first verse and chorus of the hymn, "Trust and Obey." John would have liked that hymn! To trust God, you must first know God. And to know God is to obey Him. When we obey Him, we experience a happiness that can only be found in Jesus!