



## **Sermon: 1 John 2:3-11**

Walking as Jesus Walked

## How do you know?



- Your eyes and ears can be tricked.
- People's opinions differ.
- We feel differently about things from one time to another.
- John says we know God if we keep His commands!
- Implications for epistemology:
  1. The ultimate source of knowledge is a personal God who is authoritative (commanding), communicative (word heard), and exemplary (as He walked).
  2. God's message revealed in "written" words and commands is the only way to know truth and to know God.
  3. You can know whether or not you know God and are in Him if you are obeying God's commands and imitating Jesus lifestyle revealed in God's word.

- Your eyes and ears can be tricked. (diffusion of light through water makes bar bend)
- People's opinions differ. ("Hosanna" on Monday, "Crucify" on Friday)
- We feel differently about things from one time to another. (A headache or stomach ache can turn a fun party into I just wanna go home now.)
- How can you know if you know God? Can you SEE Him? Can you VOTE on Him? Can you rely on FEELINGS about Him?
- "The opposite to the vain assertions of false claimants to the Christian name ("I know God") is not given in a counter-assertion, but in action ("keeps"). This phrase "keeps His word" expresses not only fulfillment of specific instruction, but also heedful regard to the whole revelation made by Christ as an active and living power" (Westcott 48)

### IMPLICATIONS FOR EPISTEMOLOGY:

The ultimate source of knowledge is a personal God who is authoritative (commanding), communicative (word heard), and exemplary (as He walked).

God's message revealed in "written" words and commands is the only way to know truth and to know God.

You can know whether or not you know God and are in Him if you are obeying God's commands and imitating Jesus lifestyle revealed in God's word.

# 1 John 2:3-11



Greek	NAW
3 και ἐν τούτῳ γινώσκομεν ὅτι ἐγνώκαμεν αὐτόν, ἐὰν τὰς ἐντολάς αὐτοῦ τηροῦμεν <sup>11</sup> .	2:3 and by means of this we know that we have come to know Him: if we are keeping [NIV: obey] His commands.
4 ὁ λέγων [οτι <sup>C,Byz</sup> ], ἐγνώκα αὐτόν, καὶ τὰς ἐντολάς αὐτοῦ μὴ τηρῶν, ψευστὴς ἐστὶ, καὶ ἐν τούτῳ ἡ ἀληθεῖα οὐκ ἐστίν·	2:4 The one who says, "I have been knowing Him," while not keeping [NIV do[ing]] His commandments, he is a liar, and there isn't any truth in this! [KJV, NAS, NIV, ESV: The truth is not in him]
5 ὃς δ' ἂν τηρῇ αὐτοῦ τὸν λόγον, ἀληθὺς ἐν τούτῳ ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ Θεοῦ τετελειώται. ἐν τούτῳ γινώσκομεν ὅτι ἐν αὐτῷ ἔσμεν.	2:5 But whoever is keeping [NIV: obeys] His word, truly in this man the love of God has been perfected [NIV:made complete]; by this we know that we are in Him.
6 ὁ λέγων ἐν αὐτῷ μένειν ὀφείλει, καθὼς ἐκεῖνος περιεπάτησε, καὶ αὐτὸς [οὕτως <sup>A,B,33,vg,CLCyp</sup> ] περιπατεῖν.	2:6 [As for] the one claiming to be remaining [KJV,NAS,ESV:says he abides, NIV:claims to live] in Him, he ought also to [NIV: must] be walking in that same way [NAS:manner, NIV, ESV:as] in which He walked.
7 Ἀγαπητοὶ <sup>cf adēphoi in TR &amp; Byz</sup> , οὐκ ἐντολὴν καινὴν γράφω ὑμῖν, ἀλλ' ἐντολὴν παλαιάν, ἣν εἴχετε ἀπ' ἀρχῆς· ἡ ἐντολὴ ἡ παλαιὰ ἐστίν ὁ λόγος ὃν ἠκούσατε [ἀπ' ἀρχῆς <sup>TR,Byz,ε,Α,Β,С,Ρ,Ψ,late,sys,coj</sup> ].	2:7 Loved ones [KJV:Bretheren, NIV:dear friends], no new commandment am I writing to you, but [this is] an old commandment which you have had from [NIV:since]the beginning. (The old commandment is the word [NIV:message] which you have [already] heard [KJV:+from the beginning].)
8 πάλιν ἐντολὴν καινὴν γράφω ὑμῖν, ὃ ἐστὶν ἀληθὲς ἐν αὐτῷ· καὶ ἐν ὑμῖν <sup>cf A&amp;several minuscules&amp;μιν</sup> , ὅτι ἡ σκοτία παραγεται καὶ τὸ φῶς τοῦ ἀληθινοῦ ἤδη φαίνει.	2:8 [NAS:On the other hand, NIV: Yet, ESV: At the same time] Then again, I am writing a new commandment to you, which is true [NIV: its truth is seen] in Him and in you, for the darkness is leading itself away [KJV: past, NAS, NIV, ESV: passing] and the true light is already [KJV: now] shining.
9 ὁ λέγων ἐν τῷ φωτὶ εἶναι, καὶ τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ μισῶν, ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ ἐστίν ἕως ἄρτι.	2:9 The one claiming to be in the light while hating his brother is in the darkness until now [NIV, ESV: still].
10 ὁ ἀγαπῶν τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν τῷ φωτὶ μένει, καὶ σκάνδαλον ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἐστίν·	2:10 The one who loves his brother remains [KJV, NAS, ESV: abides, NIV: lives] in the light and a trap [occasion/cause/to make stumble] does not exist in him.
11 ὁ δὲ μισῶν τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ ἐστὶ καὶ ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ περιπατεῖ, καὶ οὐκ οἶδε ποῦ ὑπάγει, ὅτι ἡ σκοτία ἐτύφλωσε τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς αὐτοῦ.	2:11 But the one who hates his brother is in the darkness and is walking in the darkness, and does not know where he is heading [going], because the darkness blinded his eyes.

<sup>11</sup> *Sinaiticus* is significantly different from the other ancient manuscripts of this passage, although it doesn't go so far as to change the overall message of the book. In v.1, it changing this word to a synonym *φολαξομεν*, in v.4, it replaces "in him" with "of God", and adds other minor words in vs. 8 & 9.

## Synonyms for "The Command"



2:3 And by this we know that we have come to **know Him**: if we **are keeping His commands**.

2:4 The one who says, "I have been knowing Him," while **not keeping His commandments**, he is a **liar**, and there isn't any truth in this!

2:5 But whoever **is keeping His word**, truly in this man the **love of God has been perfected**; by this we know that we are **in Him**.

2:6 [As for] the one claiming to be remaining in Him, he ought also to be **walking in that same way in which He walked**.

2:7 Loved ones, no new **commandment** am I writing to you, but [this is] an **old commandment** which you have had from the beginning.

(The **old commandment** is the word which you have [already] heard.)

2:8 Then again, I am writing a **new commandment** to you, which is true in Him and in you, for the darkness is leading itself away and the true light is already shining.

2:9 The one claiming to be in the light while **hating his brother** is in the **darkness** until now.

2:10 The one who **loves his brother remains in the light ...**

# “The Command”



2:3 “keeping His commands.”

2:4 “keeping His commandments”

2:5 “keeping His word”

2:6 “walking in that same way in which He walked”

2:7 “no new commandment ... old commandment ... old commandment”

2:8 “new commandment”

2:9 “hating his brother”

2:10 “loves his brother”

3:23 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**.

4:21 And this **commandment** we have from Him: that he who loves God *must love his brother* also.

## “The Old/New Command”



### 1 John 2:7 “old commandment” = “word you heard”

Leviticus 19:18 NKJV You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I *am* the LORD.

### 1 John 2:8 “new commandment” = “I am writing... true in Him”

John 13:34 NKJV A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another as I have loved you... (cf. John 15:12-17)

1 John 3:23 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.

1 John 4:21 And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God *must* love his brother also.

Aaron Sironi – Old = love as you love yourself, New = Love as Jesus loved

## What to do with the command:



- τηρή - 2:3 “keeping His commands”  
2:5 “keeping His word”
- γινώσκω - 2:3 “come to know Him”
- μένειν - 2:6 “to remain in Him”
- περιπατεῖν - 2:6 “to walk”
- ἠκούσατε - 2:7 “which you heard”
- ἀγαπῶν - 2:10 “The one who loves his brother”

- The word "keeping" is a "watchful heed to an object which claims, so to speak, a living observance”
- This love is not an emotional feeling, but an obedience to God's command--an important distinction to make nowadays (Clark 63)!
- Notice the contrast between empty words and righteous action: "The one claiming" vs. "The one loving." Do we live by empty words or by righteous action (Dana35) ?
- love is specifically to be directed toward fellow believers,

## Trouble with NOT Loving brothers

1. You don't know God

2. You don't know truth (liar)

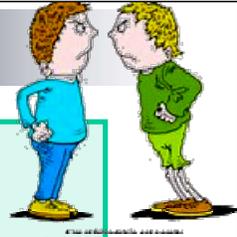
- 2:4 The one who says, "I have been knowing Him," while **not keeping His commandments**, he is a **liar**, and there isn't any truth in this!

3. You are not with/in God; you are in darkness

- 2:9 The one claiming to be in the light while **hating his brother** is in the **darkness** until now.

4. No maturity/completion/perfection, rather scandal and straying.

- 2:11 But the one who **hates his brother** is in the **darkness** and is walking in the **darkness**, and does **not know** where he is **heading**, because the darkness **blinded** his eyes.



Notice the stark contrast between "light" and "dark," "love" and "hate." There is no middle ground.

The one who hates his brother is in the dark, walks in the dark, and is lost and blind. What a terrible plight! The emphasis is not so much on what the hypocrite does to the church, but the damage he does to his own life (Clark 65). My analysis of the word translated "going" in most English translations ("does not know where he is going") leads me to believe that there is a connotation of insidious evil leading him down, as the literal meaning of the word is "leading under." If we are in the darkness, we give reign to the devil who is active in blinding us and leading us to the pit.

## Blessings of Keeping the Command



### 1. You know God

- 2:3 And by this we know that we have come to know Him: if we are keeping His commands.



### 2. You know truth (have light)

- 2:8 Then again, I am writing a new commandment to you, which is true in Him and in you, for the darkness is leading itself away and the true light is already shining.

### 3. You are with/in God

- 2:5 ... by this we know that we are in Him.

### 4. Maturity/completion/perfection

- 2:5 But whoever is keeping His word, truly in this man the love of God has been perfected...
- 2:10 The one who loves his brother remains in the light and a trap does not exist in him.



1. knowledge of God cannot be divorced from fellowship with Him and obedience to Him. John is combating the Gnostic heresy of secret knowledge without obedience by presenting TRUE knowledge.

2. The darkness is the shadows and types of Judaism. If this letter was written in 80A.D., most believers were of Jewish background, but the revelation of Christ and teaching of the Apostles was shedding new light on the meaning of it all (Clark 62).

3. This concept of being "in Him" and "remaining in Him" supports the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints over the "in-again-out-again" theology (Clark 58).

4. love is "perfected/completed" in us when we keep God's word/commands. The verb is in the Passive voice, meaning we don't perfect ourselves, but God perfects us. "Teteleiotai" is also in the Perfect tense, meaning that this perfection is something that happened in the past and has continuing results. Its meanings can be expanded to: "perfect, complete, fulfilled, attained the goal, fully developed, fully executed, reached the end, consummated, or completely organized" (Pershbacher). Westcott adds (50) that this word means continuous growth, vital development and advance to maturity, but not the attaining of a definite end, as there is another word with the latter connotation. What this is describing is the Holy Spirit's work of sanctification.

The word *skandalon* means: "trap-spring, stumbling block, impediment, cause of ruin, cause of sinning, scandal, offense" (Pershbacher). It appears to be a general one for anything that could cause problems, whether for yourself or for others (Westcott 56). The one knowing God, walking in the light, and loving his brother, is not going to get tripped up and he won't mess anybody else up either.

## Nitty-gritty: Loving your brother



- What do I need to change in my life in order to conform to the life/walk of Jesus and His love?

Scenarios: How would Jesus have walked?

- You're sitting on the floor, minding your own business when big brother/sister/co-worker/spouse/roommate walks in, carrying a big box and trips over you.
- You're sitting on the floor, minding your own business, when baby brother walks in and whacks you on the head with a toy.
- You're at a store and you see the coolest video on a screen there, but then your Mom calls you to come here...
- You're at work on the clock while a co-worker is YouTubing on his phone. He says, "Come here, you gotta see this!"
- Momma just made cookies, cooling on the table for dessert. Dinner time is still an hour away and you're hungry.
- Or maybe you are the Momma and you're running late because a kid was sick and a friend needed to talk and hubby walks in saying, "Why isn't dinner ready yet?"
- You were playing rough and knocked a nice picture off the wall and it broke. Or maybe you were moving things at work and accidentally bumped something and broke it. Dad (or the boss) comes in and asks, "Who did it?"
- You're at a friend's house, or at work, and you hear someone say, "Oh God," but they're not praying.
- A neighbor offers you \$25 to babysit their kids on Sunday.
- Out of the corner of your eye, you see baby brother fall down and hurt himself.
- You're walking down the aisle of the store and see your favorite kind of candy.
- You're alone with a boyfriend or a girlfriend, and they lean over to kiss you.
- Someone asks, "Do you go to church?"
- You just settled down for a Quiet Time and your little one toddles up and asks for a sipper cup of milk.