

# Review What We Know

18 August 2019 PM - 1 John 5:18-21 - 1Jn2019 - Scott Childs

**Introduction:** I am presently reading a book about dog training. The author says that the way to teach a dog to come every time you call is to attach the dog to a light 10-metre rope and take it to a park. Let out half of the rope then call the dog back. If it does not come on the first call, jerk the rope. When it comes, reward or praise it, then do it repeatedly. Once it obeys without correction, let the rope out longer and do the same exercise repeatedly. Keep doing this for several days. Once the dog always obeys, remove the rope and use a regular lead but do not hold the lead. Feeling the lead will act as a reminder. Repeat the exercise many more times. Once the dog instinctively obeys, remove the lead. "Repetition is the key to learning."

This is true for us as well as for dogs. Repetition works when studying for a test, memorising Bible verses, teaching children to obey, learning to drive a car and developing good habits.

As John closes this book, he reviews what he taught.

**Transition:** John reminds us of three facts that we know as Christians, which ought to keep us from going astray.

## 1. We know we have a sinless nature that is working to keep pure, v.18

### a. We who are born of God have God's nature.

- 1) Spiritual birth, being born of God, takes place the moment a sinner repents and places his faith in Christ for forgiveness and salvation. We know God's promise found in (2 Corinthians 5:17) "*Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*"
- 2) That new nature within the believer is God's nature. His nature is perfect. It cannot sin.
- 3) As long as we are mortal (living in a body) we still have our old sin nature that loves to sin.
- 4) This presents a struggle between God's indwelling nature and our old sin nature. The Apostle Paul described that struggle in his own heart. (Romans 7:21-23) "*I find then a law, that, when I [my new nature] would do good, evil [my*

- b) Jesus Christ is the genuine Messiah and Saviour of all those who place their trust in Him.
- 2) *We are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ.* We have a personal relationship with that Genuine One. We are in His family. We possess His nature. We are the temple of His Holy Spirit.
- 3) We know that Jesus Christ *is the true God and eternal life.*
  - a) While some try to argue that "the true God and eternal life" refers to the Father, Jesus Christ is the immediate antecedent to the relative "*this*". (Gill)
  - b) JFB commentary states, "*This Jesus Christ (the last-named Person) is the true God' (identifying Him with the Father in being the only true God, Joh 17:3).*"
  - c) Jesus Christ is the genuine God. He is also *Eternal Life* as we learned earlier in 1Jn 1:2; 2:25; 3:15; 5:11; 5:13.

### b. We must be exclusively loyal to this God, v.21

- 1) One last time, John tenderly addresses his readers as "*little children*" and commands them and us to keep ourselves from idols.
- 2) Idols are imitation, fake gods. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit are the genuine, real, sterling, unfeigned God.
- 3) Idols are not just carved or moulded images. The gods of this world include materialism, pleasures, sports and possessions. Anything that robs God of his rightful place in our lives becomes a god.

**Conclusion:** Review the main points. These facts ought to keep us from going astray. The devil wants us to please ourselves. The Lord wants us to abide in Him so that we can have fellowship with him and victory over sin. If you truly know Christ, you can have victory over sin.

If you lack a hunger for the things of God and lack the conviction of the Holy Spirit when you sin, you may not truly be a Christian. That is very serious. Do not ignore it. Repent of your sin and trust Christ tonight.

**Song:** His Way with Thee - 367

*old nature] is present with me. For I [my new nature] delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law [my old nature] in my members, warring against the law of my mind [my new nature], and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."*

### **b. Our new nature keeps itself from sin.**

- 1) God's nature in us hates sin. It fights sin. It works to keep me from sin.
- 2) Again, Paul states in (Romans 6:13) "*Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.*" When we yield to our new nature God will keep us from the wicked one (1Jn 5:18).
- 3) We choose to which nature we will yield. However, our new nature from God always strives to keep us clean. How does God do this? I believe Jesus told us how in his High Priestly prayer. (John 17:15-17) "*I pray **not** that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.*" Reading, meditating on, memorising and obeying the Bible is what gives us victory.

## **2. We know that we are in God's family not the devil's, v.19**

### **a. We are of God**

- 1) To be "*of*" God is to be out from God or to be born of God. It is to be part of God's family.
- 2) We can know we are born of God because of God's promises. (Acts 3:19) "*Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out ...*" (Romans 10:9) "*That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*"
- 3) We can know this because of God's presence. The fact that we have God's new nature within giving us a hunger for the Bible and a desire to please God, and we have the

Holy Spirit of God dwelling within, these assure us that we are part of God's family. **If you do not have a hunger for the things of God and the Holy Spirit's conviction of guilt inside when you sin, perhaps you are NOT born of God.**

### **b. The whole world lies in the wicked one**

- 1) All unbelievers lie as one dead and buried in wickedness (lit. the wicked one).
- 2) As Jesus said, they are still children of the devil. (John 8:44) "*Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.*"
- 3) This applies to the WHOLE world. Every person who has not been truly born into God's family is part of the devil's family. Some unbelievers are nicer than others are, but they are all part of the same unregenerate family.
- 4) They all serve the god of this world.
- 5) As Christians, we must remember as the songwriter put it, "This world is not my home I'm just a passing through. My treasures are laid up somewhere beyond the blue. The angels beckon me from heaven's open door, and I can't feel at home in this world anymore."

## **3. We know Christ enables us to know experientially the true God.**

*We know that the Son of God is come and hath given us an understanding.* Christ, the Messiah, has come to this earth and has enlightened the understanding of those who believe on Him. This is a fact that Christians believe and understand.

### **a. Benefits of that understanding include:**

- 1) *We know experientially Him that is true.* We fellowship with Him. He is our advocate when we sin. We talk with Him. We abide in Him. We love Him. We keep His commandments.
  - a) This word translated "*true*" is used three times in this verse is **not** the word that means the opposite of false. It is a word that means sterling, real, unfeigned, or genuine.