
Church in Campbell Weekly News

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THE SECOND CONDITION FOR MAINTAINING THE DIVINE FELLOWSHIP

Verses 1 and 2 of chapter two are a conclusion to the word in 1:5-10 regarding our confession and God's forgiveness of our sins, which interrupt our fellowship with Him. That is the first condition of, the first requirement for, our enjoyment of the fellowship of the divine life. Verses 3 through 11 deal with the second condition of, the second requirement for, our fellowship with God--the requirement that we keep the Lord's word and love the brothers.

In verse 3 John says, "And in this we know that we have known Him, if we keep His commandments." It is significant that this verse begins with the conjunction "and." This conjunction used at the beginning of the sentence indicates that John is about to speak concerning another condition for maintaining our fellowship.

We have seen that the first condition of the divine fellowship is dealing with sin. If we do not deal with sin, sin will damage our fellowship. Therefore, in order to maintain our fellowship with the Father, we need to confess our sins. Not only is this true doctrinally, but it is also true according to our spiritual experience. From experience we know that in order to maintain our enjoyment of the divine life in fellowship, the first thing we must do is to deal with sin. Hence, dealing with sin is the first condition, the first requirement, of keeping ourselves in the fellowship of the divine life. Now that John is going on to consider the second condition, he begins verse 3 with the conjunction "and." This word points to another condition, another requirement, of maintaining the divine fellowship.

KNOWING GOD EXPERIENTIALLY

In verse 3 John says, "In this we know that we have known Him." The Greek word for know in this verse may also be rendered perceive. Here the meaning is to perceive not doctrinally but experientially, by keeping the Lord's commandments.

A more literal translation of the Greek words rendered "have known Him" would be "have come to know Him." This denotes that we have begun to know Him and still continue knowing Him till the present time. This refers to our experiential knowledge of God in our daily walk related to our intimate fellowship with Him.

Our knowing of the Lord has begun and is continuing. This continuous knowing of the Lord is an experiential knowing. If we know the Lord in this experiential way, surely we shall keep His commandments.

KEEPING HIS COMMANDMENTS

In verse 4 John goes on to say, "He who says, I have known Him, and is not keeping His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in this one." In this verse truth denotes the revealed reality of God as conveyed in the divine word, which reveals that our keeping of the Lord's commandments should follow our knowing of Him. If we say that we have known the Lord, yet we are not keeping His commandments, the truth (reality) is not in us, and we become a liar.

When I was young, I was bothered by the word "commandments" in these verses. I thought that this term always referred to the Ten Commandments of the Mosaic law, and I wondered why John here mentioned this law, telling us that we must keep the Ten Commandments. Actually, the commandments in this verse are commandments in the New Testament, not the commandments of the Mosaic law. These New Testament commandments are the commandments of the Lord Jesus given directly by Him, or the commandments given through the apostles. In the Gospel of John the Lord gave us the definite commandment to love one another: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another" (John 13:34). This commandment to love one another was given by the Lord Jesus Himself. Hence, it is not a commandment of the Old Testament, but a commandment of the New Testament. Other New Testament commandments were given by the Lord Jesus indirectly through His apostles.

If we say that we know the Lord experientially in the New Testament way, then we should keep the New Testament commandments. But if we do not keep these commandments, this is a sign that actually we do not know Him, even though we say that we do. According to John's word in verse 4, if we say that we have known Him, yet do not keep His commandments, we are a liar, and the truth is not in us.

THE LOVE OF GOD PERFECTED IN US

In verse 5 John tells us that in the one who keeps the Lord's word the love of God has been perfected. In this verse the Greek word for love is *agape*. This word denotes the love which is higher and nobler than *phileo* (see notes 71 and 72 in 2 Peter 1). Only this word with its verb forms is used in this Epistle for love. "The love of God" here denotes our love toward God, which is generated by His love within us. The love of God, the word of the Lord, and God Himself are all related to one another. If we keep the Lord's word, God's love has been perfected in us. It is altogether a matter of the divine life, which is God Himself.

God's love is His inward essence, and the Lord's word supplies us with this divine essence with which we love the brothers. Hence, when we keep the divine word, the divine love is perfected through the divine life by which we live.

The word "perfected" is very important. The Greek word for "perfected" is teleioo, meaning to complete, to accomplish, to finish. The love of God itself is perfect and complete in Himself. However, in us it needs to be perfected and completed in its manifestation. The love of God has been manifested to us in God's sending His Son to be both a propitiation and life to us (4:9-10). Yet, if we do not love one another with this love as it was manifested to us, that is, if we do not express it by loving one another with it as God expressed it to us, it is not perfectly and completely manifested. It is perfected and completed in its manifestation when we express it in our living by habitually loving one another with it. Our living in the love of God toward one another is its perfection and completion in its manifestation in us. Thus, others can behold God manifested in His love essence in our living in His love.

John concludes verse 5 by saying, "In this we know that we are in Him." The pronoun "Him" refers to the Lord Jesus Christ. The phrase "in Him" is a strong expression; it stresses that we are one with the Lord. Because we are one with the Lord, who is God, the loving essence of God becomes ours. It is supplied to us by the Lord's word of life for our walk of love so that we may enjoy the fellowship of the divine life and abide in the light (v. 10).

In our reading of verse 5 we may wonder whether the love of God here refers to God's love or to the love with which we love God. The Chinese Version speaks of our loving of God, or of the love with which we love God. But the English expression seems to indicate that John is referring to God's love.

If we consider the Greek text and also take care of the context, we shall realize that this expression in verse 5 denotes our love toward God. However, this love is generated by the love of God, which we enjoy. First we enjoy the love of God; hence, the love of God is our enjoyment. Then the love of God, which is enjoyed by us, produces in us a love with which we love God. This is the love of God becoming our enjoyment and producing within us a love for God. On the one hand, this is the love with which we love God; on the other hand, this love is produced by God's love, which is enjoyed by us.

Actually it is rather difficult to say whose love John is referring to in verse 5. We have seen that this love is God's love enjoyed by us and also that it is the love produced in us with which we love God. Love comes from God to us and becomes our experience and enjoyment. The result is that this love produces a love in us toward

God. Therefore, this love comes from God, it passes through us, and it returns to God. What a wonderful, experiential love this is!

(Excerpt from 1 John Life-studies, msg #15)

Burdens for Church Prayer

- Our target for 2025, # of newly baptized 25 and # of attending prayer meeting 35
- Perfecting young working saints through shepherding
- Saints blending together to build up the Body in love
- Establish a prayer life individually and corporately
- Pursuing truth and growth in life to be in the reality of the kingdom.
- Spreading the kingdom of God by preaching the gospel at WVC campus and community.
- Build up container for receiving our next generation
- Pray for the calling and burdens released during past Nor Cal Labor Day conference.
PSRP, BNPB, small group living.

Announcements

- Life-study of 1 John MSG 15,16
- HWMR: The preparation of the Bride Week 6
- 10/7 (Tue) 7:45pm, Prayer meeting in small groups
- On-line Lessons on small group by br. Minoru 10/11.
- 10/24-26 (Fri-Sun) 2025 Fall YP Conference at FSCC. Registration by 10/12; \$70/person
- 10/31-11/2 (Fri-Sun) 2025 Fall Northern California College Conference at Mission Springs Camps and Conference Center. Registration by 10/5; \$270/person
- Review of Chinese speaking perfecting training messages every Lord's evening 8-9 pm starting from 9/7; zoom ID 852 623 3580 PW 333
- 10/31-12/12 (pause on 11/28) 6th term of the Corporate Pursuit Classes at FSCC
Every Fri 9:30am-12:00pm
\$40/person. Pay to Church in Campbell, Note: FSCC CPC
Registration link:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1na8oTaeY1d3CYBzi8fG0Dhrao8mcr68oij9X5l6tCE/viewform?pli=1&pli=1&edit_requested=true
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