

1ST JOHN 2:3-6

ASSURANCE THAT WE

KNOW HIM LOVE HIM ABIDE IN HIM

³This is how we are sure that we have come to know Him: by keeping His commands. ⁴The one who says, "I have come to know Him," yet doesn't keep His commands, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. ⁵But whoever keeps His word, truly in him the love of God is perfected. This is how we know we are in Him: ⁶The one who says he remains in Him should walk just as He walked.

Verse 3a

Καὶ ἐν τούτῳ γινώσκομεν ὅτι ἐγνώκαμεν αὐτόν
And in this we know that we have known him
(NA27)

This is how we are sure that we have come to know Him (HCSB)

By this we know that we have come to know Him (NASB)

- **γινώσκω** [*ginosko* /ghin·oce·ko/] – Strong's #1097 Apart from its ordinary use (know, understand, comprehend, learn about, perceive, realize, recognize), the word here denotes "to know by experience" as contrasted to οἶδα *oida*, "absolute, immediate knowledge of a fact once for all." It emphasizes the relationship to God and to Jesus as a personal fellowship.
- "We have come to know Him" is a past completed action which continues to have present, ongoing results.
- Progression of Born of, Knowing, Abiding in Him" (John 14 – 15; 1 John 4:7-15).
- There is no knowledge of God apart from Jesus (John 1:1-2, 10, 14, 18).
- The knowledge of God the Father is disclosed through Jesus, his Son. The knowledge of Jesus is disclosed through His word.
- Coming to know Him describes a growing intimacy with Him brought about by having our minds renewed in His word (Rom 12:2; Eph 4:23).

Verse 3b

ἐὰν τὰς ἐντολάς αὐτοῦ τηρῶμεν .
if the commands of him we might keep
(NA27)

By keeping His commands (HCSB)

If we keep His commandments (NASB)

- **τηρέω** [*tereo /tay-reh-o/*] – Strong’s #5083 To guard, hold onto, preserve, here and 1 John 2:5 to persist in obedience, keep, observe, fulfill, pay attention to in continuous action or habit.
- **ἐντολή** [*entole /en-tol-ay/*] – Strong’s #1785 Order, mandate, command
- His Commands - 1 John 3:23 cf. John 13:34; 15:12; Psalm 33:21; Isaiah 50:10; John 1:12; 3:18; 1 John 5:13 Matthew 22:37-40
- Keeping the commandments is “not a condition” of knowing God “but a sign” that one does know God.

Verse 4

ὁ λέγων ὅτι ἔγνωκα αὐτὸν καὶ τὰς ἐντολάς αὐτοῦ μὴ
The one saying (“) I have known him and the commands of him not

τηρῶν, ψεύστης ἐστὶν καὶ ἐν τούτῳ ἡ ἀλήθεια οὐκ ἔστιν·
keeping liar he is and in this the truth not is

(NA27)

The one who says, “I have come to know Him,” yet doesn’t keep His commands, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. (HCSB).

The one who says, “I have come to know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; (NASB)

- μὴ (negation) plus a present active participle of τηρέω indicates a failure to consistently observe God's commands.
- The child of God delights in obedience to the will of God (John 4:34; Psalm 40:8; 112:1; 119:16, 24, 47, 92; Job 23:12; Jeremiah 15:16).
- This willing obedience which comes about as an extension of our love for God is definitive evidence that we are being conformed to the image of Christ.
- We may ask ourselves, "Do I delight in the will of God; do I love His commands?" If I do not, there is no use professing to be a follower of Christ. It is hypocrisy to take the ground of being a disciple while in works denying my profession (James 1:22-25; Luke 6:46-49).

"I wish to devote my mouth and heart to you.... Do not forsake me, for if I ever should be on my own, I would easily wreck it all."— Martin Luther

"I thank Thee that this, which is a necessity of my new life, is also its greatest delight. So, I do at this hour feed on Thee."— Charles Spurgeon

"Herein would I live;— herein would I die;— herein would I dwell in my thoughts and affections, to the withering and consumption of all the painted beauties of this world, unto the crucifying all things here below, until they become unto me a dead and deformed thing, no way meet for affectionate embraces."— John Owen, on beholding the glory of Christ

Verse 5a

ὅς δ' ἂν τηρῇ αὐτοῦ τὸν λόγον, ἀληθῶς ἐν τούτῳ ἢ
 who but - might keep of him the word truly in this the

ἀγάπη τοῦ θεοῦ τετελείωται
 love of the God has been completed

(NA27)

But whoever keeps His word, truly in him the love of God is perfected. (HCSB)

But whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. (NASB)

- When we are intimate fellowship with God (know Him) we will live a life consistently shaped by God's word which abides in us.

- The use of “word” rather than “commands” indicates a broader obedience characterized by going beyond only what is commanded.
- τελειόω [*teleioo /tel·i·o·o/*] v. Strong’s #5048 From #5046 τέλειος [*teleios /tel·i·os/*]- Complete, fulfill, bring to full measure, make perfect, mature) is used here to describe the love in us that comes from a fully developed relationship with God.

Because God the Father and the Son are life and have life (John 5:26), it is eternal life to know God and Jesus Christ (John 17:3)

Knowing God is the supreme and true mode of being. Love is how it is revealed, expressed and applied in and through us. God is love, so that the man who is related to Him is related as one who loves (1 John 4:7-19). Love is thus a criterion of the knowledge of God (cf. 1 John 4:20f.), and also of being a disciple of Jesus (Jn. 13:35).

Verse 5b – 6

ἐν τούτῳ γινώσκομεν ὅτι ἐν αὐτῷ ἐσμεν .
in this we know that in him we are

ὁ λέγων ἐν αὐτῷ μένειν ὀφείλει καθὼς ἐκεῖνος
The one saying in him to stay owes just as that one

περιεπάτησεν καὶ αὐτὸς [οὕτως] περιπατεῖν .
walked around also himself thusly to walk around
(NA27)

This is how we know we are in Him: The one who says he remains in Him should walk just as He walked. (HCSB)

By this we know that we are in Him: the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked. (NASB)

- The statement, “This is how we know we are in him,” is an example of the John’s theology of immanence (the Christian in God/Jesus; God/ Jesus in the Christian; God and Jesus in each other). This concept can be found thirty-five times in the Gospel and the Epistles in formulas like “in Him”) and “to abide or remain in.”

- John’s usage of “in Him” and “abides in Him” is not the same as Paul’s usage of the phrase “in Christ”. Paul reveals positional truth while John describes our fellowship with God and the fruitfulness that results (John 15:1-10).
- ὀφείλω [*opheilo* /of-i-lo/] – Strong’s #3784 (Owe, be indebted, be obligated) is used here in the sense of what “should” be (Rom 15:1, 27; 1 Cor 9:10; 2 Thess 1:3; 2:13; Heb 5:12; 1 John 3:16; 4:11; 3 John 8).
- God wants us to know Him and express His love in our daily walk (cf. Mic. 6:6-8; Col. 3:12,13).
- He walked in obedience to His Father (John 15:10).
- He walked in fellowship with His Father (John 8:29).
- If we don’t walk in fellowship (in the light) we don’t come to know Him (Difference between being acquainted and coming to know) and we can’t abide in Him.
- He accomplishes the fruit-bearing through us as we abide in Him (John 15:4-5).
- The depth of our knowledge determines the degree of fruit-bearing (Matthew 13:18-23).
- Clear away the rocks and thorns and then cultivate the soil for maximum growth potential. Heb 12:1-3 (cf. Hos. 4:11,12; 5:4; Prov. 6:32; 7:7; 9:4,16; 20:1; 23:27-35)
- When this heart attitude of love and obedience characterizes our thinking, we know we are abiding in Christ. Thus, when we abide in Christ keeping His commands is not burdensome (1 John 5:3).

So the apostle adds, “He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked.” I cannot be all that He was; that is impossible, for He was the Holy One of God, and I in myself, although regenerated, am still a poor, failing, sinful man; but I am called upon to walk as He walked, for Christ has left us an example that we should follow His steps, and I am to glorify Him by my pilgrim behavior as I pass through this scene. – Harry Ironside

But the one who boasts should boast in this,
that he understands and knows Me —
that I am Yahweh, showing faithful love,
justice, and righteousness on the earth,
for I delight in these things.
This is the LORD’s declaration. – Jeremiah 9:24