

I John 2:8–18

I John 2:8 Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.

New commandment. Though Scripture previously spoke of love,¹ it was not fully manifested nor could it be truly comprehended until the coming of God's only-begotten Son.² The commandment is new because of the divine love that led Christ to lay down His life for the brethren.³ It was this extension and depth of love, by which One would be willing to die for the sins of others,⁴ that revealed the true es-

sence of love. (John 15:13) *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.* One could perhaps fathom dying for those we have blood relationship with, such as children and other close family members, yet Jesus died for the ungodly;⁵ those who were strangers to God.⁶ Life is the most precious thing a man has. In fact, it is all he really has, and is his most precious possession. To give it up is to give all that one has. This, then, is the manner of love, being willing to lay down our lives for the brethren⁷ (if not to death, then surely in life),⁸ in which those who claim relation-

1 Lev. 19:18 *Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD.*

Lev. 19:34 *But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.*

Deut. 6:5 *And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.*

Deut. 10:19 *Love ye therefore the stranger: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.*

Josh. 22:5 *But take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law, which Moses the servant of the LORD charged you, to love the LORD your God, and to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and to cleave unto him, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul.*

Josh. 23:11 *Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye love the LORD your God.*

2 John 11:5 *Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.*

John 13:1 *Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.*

John 13:23 *Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved.*

John 15:9 *As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.*

John 19:26 *When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son!*

John 20:2 *Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him.*

Eph. 3:18&19 *May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.*

Eph. 5:2 *And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.*

Eph. 5:25 *Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;*

II Tim. 1:1–3 *Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus, to Timothy, my dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day;*

Rev. 1:5 *And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,*

3 I John 3:16 *Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.*

4 Gal. 1:4 *Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:*

I John 2:2 *And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.*

5 Rom. 5:6 *For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.*

6 Eph. 2:12 *That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:*

7 I John 3:16 *Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.*

8 Rom. 13:6 *For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.*

ship with the Son of God are commanded to walk.⁹

(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, I John 2:8) *Which thing is true in him*—In the Lord Jesus. That is, which commandment or law of love was illustrated in him, or was manifested by him in his contact with his disciples. That which was most prominent in him was this very love which he enjoined on all his followers. (END QUOTE)

The darkness is past, and the true light now shineth. This light that now shines is Jesus Christ and the love He manifested in the world. This divine light can still be felt in those who have been given Christ's own nature¹⁰ in the form of the Holy Spirit.¹¹ When a man is baptized into the Son of God and filled with the Spirit, through him Christ's presence remains in the world, continuing to testify for God.

I John 2:9 He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now.

No man who abides in the light, by abiding in Christ and His love, also *hateth his brother*. Hate blinds; it does not enlighten. Ultimately, if religious movement is not motivated by love, a love that manifests itself toward the holy brethren, then that religion is false, and the profession of possessing true faith is counterfeit. A man may claim that he is walking in the light, but that does not mean that he is actually doing so. It is also common for

sinner to outwardly lie about their true relationship with God, professing a relationship with God but not desiring true obedience to His divine law. Men are liars,¹² and nowhere is this visible more than when sinners claim acceptance by God, even though their lives show them to be contrary to divine law. (Rom. 3:4) *God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.* Nowhere is maintaining a false profession of God more tolerated than in God's church. Therefore, sadly, merely claiming that one is a Christian is enough for most people to be accepted as one.

(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, I John 2:9) *And hateth his brother*—The word "brother" seems here to refer to those who professed the same religion. The word is indeed sometimes used in a larger sense, but the reference here appears to be to that which is properly brotherly love among Christians. Compare Lucke, in loc.

Is in darkness even until now—That is, he cannot have true religion unless he has love to the brethren. The command to love one another was one of the most solemn and earnest which Christ ever enjoined, John 15:17;¹³ he made it the special badge of discipleship, or that by which his followers were to be everywhere known, John 13:35;¹⁴ and it is, therefore, impossible to have any true religion without love to those who are sincerely and truly his followers. If a man has not that, he is in deep darkness, whatever else he may

9 I John 2:6 *He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.*

10 Matt. 5:16 *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

11 Rom. 8:9 *But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.*

Gal. 4:6 *And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.*

12 Ps. 12:2 *They speak vanity every one with his neighbour: with flattering lips and with a double heart do they speak.*

Ps. 62:4 *They only consult to cast him down from his excellency: they delight in lies: they bless with their mouth, but they curse inwardly. Selah.*

Ps. 144:8 *Whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood.*

Prov. 30:6 *Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.*

John 8:55 *Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying.*

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.*

I John 2:4 *He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.*

Titus 1:12 *One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, the Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies.*

13 John 15:17 *Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.*

14 John 13:35 *By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*

have, on the whole subject of religion. Compare the notes at 1 Thessalonians 4:9 [*But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.*]. (END QUOTE)

In the true Christian religion, there is no substitute for love. It is heralded as greater even than faith and hope.¹⁵ Love is what God is,¹⁶ and none can claim true relationship with Him who do not possess it. Hence, neither wisdom, nor stature, nor position, nor religious importance can take the place of the only true mark of belonging to Christ.¹⁷ Love led Jesus' ministry on earth, and all who are called to heaven through Him will manifest this same love.¹⁸ Because of their proximity to the Master, those saved by the Son of God will manifest the same love as Him. By love we know that a man has passed from death to life, and if a man does not have divine love in himself, then he certainly remains still in spiritual death. (I John 3:14) *We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.*

I John 2:10 He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.

When a man loves his brother with sincerity and genuineness, then he certainly abides in God's light and is a true child of God. God is love, and there is not anyone who truly abides in His light who does not walk in His love. Since love is

what constitutes God's very own nature, then men are foolish to believe that they have any true connection to Him if they lack the very essence of His own being. If love is absent in a man, then we can be sure that he possesses no true knowledge of God. The foundation, then, of any true knowledge of God must include the possession of love. If a man does not have love, he is not a Christian, and he is still wholly ignorant of God's true nature and character. (I John 4:8) *He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.*

None occasion of stumbling in him. If a man truly loves both God and those born of Him,¹⁹ then little in life will cause him to stumble. Even if they are not motivated by love, then love will still prove to be the stabilizing force that keeps men walking in God's will for their lives. By pursuing love, they avoid sin, and they can do no ill will to their neighbor. Thus, he who truly loves will neither create a stumbling block to himself in his own spiritual walk, nor will he be a stumbling block to other Christians in theirs. (Rom. 13:10) *Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.*

(*Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers, Rom. 13:10 Fulfilling of the law.*—The form of the Greek word implies not only that love helps a man to fulfil the law, but that in the fact of the presence of love in his heart the law is actually fulfilled. (END QUOTE)

So great is the divine commandment to love²⁰ that when men walk in it, prac-

¹⁵ I Cor. 13:13 *And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.*

¹⁶ I John 4:16 *And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.*

¹⁷ I Cor. 13:2 *And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.*

¹⁸ John 13:35 *By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*

¹⁹ I John 4:7 *Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.*

I John 5:1 Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.

²⁰ Matt. 22:36–40 *Master, which is the great commandment in the law?* ³⁷*Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.* ³⁸*This is the first and great commandment.* ³⁹*And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.* ⁴⁰*On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.*

Mark 12:29–31 *And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord.* ³⁰*And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.* ³¹*And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.*

Luke 10:26–28 *He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?* ²⁷*And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy*

tice it daily, and pursue its expansion in their lives, then this fulfills God's will for their life. Love is the fulfillment of divine law. Therefore, if a man truly desires to do God's will in his life, then he should pursue walking in the very nature of God.²¹

If love truly rules a man, forms his character, and is the underlying force behind all his decisions, then he will be filled not with timidity but with boldness when Christ returns to judge the world. (I John 4:17) *Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.*

(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, I John 4:17) *That we may have boldness in the day of judgment*—By the influence of love in delivering us from the fear of the wrath to come, 1 John 4:18.²² The idea is, that he who has true love to God will have nothing to fear in the day of judgment, and may even approach the awful tribunal where he is to receive the sentence which shall determine his everlasting destiny without alarm. (END QUOTE)

*There is no fear in love,*²³ as its divine presence drives out not only the fear of man but all fear of God as well. The greatest shame that men will have at Christ's judgment is if they disobeyed His expressive and very clear commandment to love. Sinners will have to give an account not merely of their sin, when they are in Christ's presence, but also of why no true love was found in them. If love is Christ's greatest commandment, then to possess no true love for God or man, is the greatest sin of all.

I John 2:11 But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.

*mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.*²⁸ And he said unto him, *Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.*
21 Eph. 5:1&2 *Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.*

22 I John 4:18 *There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.*

23 I John 4:18 *There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.*

24 Isa. 5:20 *Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!*

Luke 11:34&35 *The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness.*³⁵ *Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness.*

This truth the apostle states with undeniable clarity. Those who hate possess absolutely no affinity to the light whatsoever, and therefore they have no closeness, resemblance, or association either with God or with Jesus Christ, God's Son. Not only do those who hate the brethren both live and walk in darkness, but also, as a further result of their sin, they have no true compass by which to govern their own lives. (Prov. 4:19) *The way of the wicked is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble.* A wise and truly religious man can sin and see the error of his way, but the wicked have no light to gain such perception. Hate, therefore, so blinds a man's soul that all ability to navigate properly is lost. And even when sin is causing destruction, it can neither be seen nor recognized for the true villain it is. The sinner, then, is blind not only to God and His light, but also equally as blind to any true wisdom for how to live his own life properly.

(Pulpit Commentary, Prov. 4:19) The expression, *they know not at what they stumble*, carries with it the idea that they are so ignorant that they neither know wickedness as wickedness, nor do they apprehend the destruction which it involves. "Sins, however great and detestable they may be, are looked upon as trivial, or as not sins at all, when men get accustomed to them" (St. Augustine, 'Enchiridion,' cap. 80). (END QUOTE)

If evil is perceived as light,²⁴ then darkness will encompass a man's entire soul. (Matt. 6:23) *But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!*

(Vincent's Word Studies, Matt. 6:23) "Seeing falsely is worse than blindness. A man who is too dim-sighted to discern the road from the ditch, may feel which is which; but if

the ditch appears manifestly to him to be the road, and the road to be the ditch, what shall become of him? False seeing is unseeing, on the negative side of blindness” (Ruskin, “Modern Painters”). (END QUOTE)

Who also can really be saved if they view hate as a form of enlightenment? (II Cor. 11:14) *And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.* With all deception, and especially so in the spiritual realm, the illusion is given that one is following the light. Indeed, the men most in the dark often view themselves as the most enlightened men. Many a man also has ignorantly believed he is following God, when in fact it was only Satan’s influence that created such an illusion. For darkness to operate and keep its influence in the world, it must portray itself as light. The more evil something or someone is, then the more they will try and deceive others that they are actually good. To determine a man’s true character, we should examine his fruit²⁵ and not merely the words he speaks.

(*Barnes’ Notes on the Bible*, II Cor. 11:14) *For Satan himself is transformed . . .* —That is, he who is an apostate angel; who is malignant and wicked; who is the prince of evil, assumes the appearance of a holy angel. Paul assumes this as an indisputable and admitted truth, without attempting to prove it, and without referring to any particular instances. Probably he had in his eye cases where Satan put on false and delusive appearances for the purpose of deceiving, or where he assumed the appearance of great sanctity and reverence for the authority of God. Such instances occurred in the temptation of our first parents Genesis 3:1–6,²⁶ and in the temptation of the Saviour, Matthew 4. The phrase “an angel of light,” means a pure and holy angel, light being the emblem of purity and holiness. Such are all the angels that dwell in heaven; and the idea is, that Satan assumes such a form as

to appear to be such an angel. Learn here:

(1) His power. He can assume such an aspect as he pleases. He can dissemble and appear to be eminently pious. He is the prince of duplicity as well as of wickedness; and it is the consummation of bad power for an individual to be able to assume any character which he pleases.

(2) His art. He is long practiced in deceitful arts. For six thousand years he has been practicing the art of delusion. And with him it is perfect.

(3) We are not to suppose that all that appears to be piety is piety. Some of the most plausible appearances of piety are assumed by Satan and his ministers. None ever professed a profounder regard for the authority of God than Satan did when he tempted the Saviour. And if the prince of wickedness can appear to be an angel of light, we are not to be surprised if those who have the blackest hearts appear to be people of most eminent piety.

(4) We should be on our guard. We should not listen to suggestions merely because they appear to come from a pious man, nor because they seem to be prompted by a regard to the will of God. We may be always sure that, if we are to be tempted, it will be by someone having a great appearance of virtue and religion.

(5) We are not to expect that Satan will appear to man to be as bad as he is. He never shows himself openly to be a spirit of pure wickedness; or black and abominable in his character; or full of evil and hateful. He would thus defeat himself. It is for this reason that wicked people do not believe that there is such a being as Satan. Though continually under his influence and “led captive by him at his will,” yet they neither see him nor the chains which lead them, nor are they willing to believe in the existence of the one or the other. (END QUOTE)

Understanding that Satan transforms himself as an angel of light, it is then easy

²⁵ Matt. 7:16 *Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?*

²⁶ Gen. 3:1–6 *Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? ²And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: ³but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. ⁴And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: ⁵for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. ⁶And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.*

to see why those who are led by him think themselves as of the light.²⁷

I John 2:12–14 I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake.

¹³*I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father.*

¹⁴*I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.*

Not only does the Holy Spirit convict believers of personal sin,²⁸ but It also guides them in areas of discernment, by which the true light can be seen, even as false light is exposed. Because the Holy Spirit is Itself light, It can detect and identify when darkness is only parading as light.²⁹ The discerning of spirits is also that spiritual ability and gift of the Spirit that enables those saved by Christ

to detect not only the true workings of the Holy Spirit but also all other deceptive and erring spirits,³⁰ which aim to lead people away from God.³¹ (I John 2:20) *But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.*

(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, I John 2:20) *But ye have an unction from the Holy One*—The apostle in this verse evidently intends to say that he had no apprehension in regard to those to whom he wrote that they would thus apostatize, and bring dishonor on their religion. They had been so anointed by the Holy Spirit that they understood the true nature of religion, and it might be confidently expected that they would persevere. The word “unction” or “anointing” (χρίσμα *chrisma*) means, properly, “something rubbed in or ointed;” oil for anointing, “ointment;” then it means an anointing. The allusion is to the anointing of kings and priests, or their inauguration or coronation, (1 Samuel 10:1; 1 Samuel 16:13; Exodus 28:41; Exodus 40:15; compare the notes at Matthew 1:1);³² and the idea seems to have been that the oil thus used was emblematic of the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit as qualifying them for the discharge of the duties of their office. Christians, in the New Testament, are described as “kings and priests,” Revelation 1:6; Revelation 5:10,³³ and as a “royal priesthood” 1 Peter 2:5, 1 Pe-

27 John 16:2 *They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.*

28 John 16:7&8 *Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. ⁸And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:*

29 Matt. 23:27 *Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.*

John 5:42 *But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you.*

Acts 5:1–6 *But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, ²And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet. ³But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? ⁴Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God. ⁵And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things. ⁶And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him.*

30 I John 4:6 *We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.*

31 I Cor. 12:10 *To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:*

32 I Sam. 10:1 *Then Samuel took a vial of oil, and poured it upon his head, and kissed him, and said, Is it not because the LORD hath anointed thee to be captain over his inheritance?*

I Sam. 16:13 *Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah.*

Exod. 28:41 *And thou shalt put them upon Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him; and shalt anoint them, and consecrate them, and sanctify them, that they may minister unto me in the priest's office.*

Exod. 40:15 *And thou shalt anoint them, as thou didst anoint their father, that they may minister unto me in the priest's office: for their anointing shall surely be an everlasting priesthood throughout their generations.*

Matt. 1:1 *The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.*

33 Rev. 1:6 *And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*

Rev. 5:10 *And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.*

ter 2:9;³⁴ and hence they are represented as “anointed,” or as endowed with those graces of the Spirit, of which anointing was the emblem. The phrase “the Holy One” refers here, doubtless, to the Holy Spirit, that Spirit whose influences are imparted to the people of God, to enlighten, to sanctify, and to comfort them in their trials. The particular reference here is to the influences of that Spirit as giving them clear and just views of the nature of religion, and thus securing them from error and apostasy.

And ye know all things—That is, all things which it is essential that you should know on the subject of religion. See the John 16:13 note; 1 Corinthians 2:15 note.³⁵ The meaning cannot be that they knew all things pertaining to history, to science, to literature, and to the arts; but that, under the influences of the Holy Spirit, they had been made so thoroughly acquainted with the truths and duties of the Christian religion, that they might be regarded as safe from the danger or fatal error. The same may be said of all true Christians now, that they are so taught by the Spirit of God, that they have a practical acquaintance with what religion is, and with what it

requires, and are secure from falling into fatal error. (END QUOTE)

I John 2:15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

Previously, the apostle warned of the danger of hate; now he speaks of the ever-present danger of loving the world and those things in it. He who loves the world cannot truly love God, and he who loves God must forsake any love or affection he might have for the world. Thus he clearly states that love for the world nullifies any true love for the heavenly Father. This world is corrupt; therefore, a love for it indicates that there is no true affection for God’s holiness.³⁶ The flesh craves carnal, earthly, and material things, but the Spirit loves, cherishes, and holds in the highest regard spiritual, heavenly, and eternal things. In this way the children of God³⁷ and the children of this world³⁸ are distinguished, and they can easily be separated

34 I Pet. 2:5 *Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.*

I Pet. 2:9 *Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light;*

35 John 16:13 *Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.*

I Cor. 2:15 *But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.*

36 II Pet. 1:4 *Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*

37 Luke 20:36 *Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.*

John 1:12 *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:*

Rom. 8:16&17 *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: ¹⁷and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.*

Rom. 8:21 *Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.*

Rom. 9:26 *And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God.*

Gal. 3:26 *For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.*

I John 3:1 *Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.*

I John 4:4 *Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.*

38 Matt. 13:38 *The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one;*

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.*

Acts 13:10 *And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?*

Eph. 2:2 *Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:*

I John 3:8 *He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.*

by what nature rules them. Therefore, just as saints love God and will forsake the world for Him, those who love the world will similarly forsake God for the world. It is thus impossible to love the world and at the same time love God, since at their core they are completely in opposition to each other.

(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, I John 2:15) *If any man love the world . . .* —If, in this sense, a person loves the world, it shows that he has no true religion; that is, if characteristically he loves the world as his portion, and lives for that; if it is the ruling principle of his life to gain and enjoy that, it shows that his heart has never been renewed, and that he has no part with the children of God. See the James 4:4 note; Matthew 6:24 note.³⁹ (END QUOTE)

If a man seeks to be a friend of this world, he has positioned himself as God's enemy. To be a friend of the world is to align oneself with it. (Jas. 4:4) *Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.*

(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, Jas. 4:4) *Is enmity with God*—Is in fact hostility against God, since that world is arrayed against him. It neither obeys his laws, submits to his claims, nor seeks to honor him. To love that world is, therefore, to be arrayed against God; and the spirit which would lead us to this is, in fact, a spirit of hostility to God.

Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world—"Whoever" he may be, whether in the church or out of it. The fact of being a member of the church makes no difference in this respect, for it is as easy to be a friend of the world in the church as out of it. The phrase "whosoever will" (βούληθῆ *boulēthē*) implies "purpose, intention, design." It supposes that the heart is set on it; or that there is

a deliberate purpose to seek the friendship of the world. It refers to that strong desire which often exists, even among professing Christians, to secure the friendship of the world; to copy its fashions and vanities; to enjoy its pleasures; and to share its pastimes and its friendships. . . .

Is the enemy of God—This is a most solemn declaration, and one of fearful import in its bearing on many who are members of the church. It settles the point that anyone, no matter what his professions, who is characteristically a friend of the world, cannot be a true Christian.(END QUOTE)

I John 2:16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

Lust of the flesh. The Greek word for *lust* is #1939 *epithumia*. Strong's defines it as "desire, passionate longing, lust."⁴⁰ The unsaved have a great longing to satisfy not God but the fallen nature of self. Since the unsaved are merely in the flesh, and they are nothing more than this, then they shall seek to live their lives solely by their own desires and appetites.

Lust of the eyes. It was the lust of the eyes that led to Eve's sin, when she saw the tree was good for food, pleasant to the eye, and desired to make one wise.⁴¹ Much sin and rebellion begins with the eye, and then it expands itself so that the entire body pursues it. Many a man has looked upon something with lust and then pursued it, which led him totally away from God and God's will for his life.⁴²

Pride of life. There is nothing more dangerous, and able to prevent salvation, than pride. The Lord detests noth-

³⁹ I John 3:10 *In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.*

³⁹ Jas. 4:4 *Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.*

³⁹ Matt. 6:24 *No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.*

⁴⁰ Strong's Concordance

⁴¹ Gen. 3:6 *And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.*

⁴² II Tim. 4:10 *For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.*

ing more than pride.⁴³ It was this that led to Satan's fall,⁴⁴ and countless men have followed him. The one truth regarding the devil is that he is proud.⁴⁵ And the one thing he seeks to promote above all other things is that pride is good and not evil. Pride is also that deadly sin that God seeks to hide from men. If most men get a true taste of it, they will value it so greatly that they will choose it even over God. (Job 33:14–17) *For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man.* Independence and trust in self are evil things, and those led by pride seek nothing more than to be wholly independent of the Lord. At the core of all pride is an inward desire⁴⁶ to be worshiped as God. This is what Satan desired, and so will all those who follow his sinful example.

The nature by which a man is ruled is what ultimately determines both his appetites and passions. Those born of the *flesh*⁴⁷ seek to gain from this lower form of nature satisfaction, reason for living,

and enjoyment of life. Scripture states that to be *carnally-minded is death*; when a man is ruled by the *lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life*, he has no other end than the grave and separation from all things eternal. (Rom. 8:6) *For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.*

(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, Rom. 8:6) *For to be carnally minded*—Margin, "The minding of the flesh." The sense is, that to follow the inclinations of the flesh, or the corrupt propensities of our nature, leads us to condemnation and death. The expression is one of great energy, and shows that it not only leads to death, or leads to misery, but that it is death itself; there is woe and condemnation in the very act and purpose of being supremely devoted to the corrupt passions. Its only tendency is condemnation and despair. (END QUOTE)

It makes no difference what we love in the world, whether it is fame, sport, wealth, leisure, influence, or any other worldly attraction. All that comprises this world does not have its true source in God, nor does it have that which forms God's own holy character.⁴⁸

I John 2:17 And the world passeth away,

⁴³ Prov. 16:5 *Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD: though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished.*

⁴⁴ Ezek. 28:15–18 *Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. ¹⁶By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. ¹⁷Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee. ¹⁸Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee.*

⁴⁵ Isa. 14:12–15 *How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! ¹³For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: ¹⁴I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. ¹⁵Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.*

⁴⁶ Isa. 14:12–15 *How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! ¹³For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: ¹⁴I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. ¹⁵Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.*

⁴⁷ John 3:6 *That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.*

⁴⁸ Lev. 11:45 *For I am the LORD that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.*

Lev. 19:2 *Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, Ye shall be holy: for I the LORD your God am holy.*

Lev. 20:6 *And the soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, and after wizards, to go a whoring after them, I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people.*

I Pet. 1:15–16 *But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; ¹⁶Because it is written, be ye holy; for I am holy.*

and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

What a man does, how he lives, and what he cherishes ultimately determine his destiny. This life, and how men choose to live it, means everything for obtaining the life to come.⁴⁹ It is therefore only to those who *doeth the will of God* that God has promised they shall *abideth for ever*. None shall enter heaven who did not, above all other pursuits and desires, seek to obey the will of God revealed to them. Sin is temporary, and though it sprouts, blooms, and has its day, it quickly fades and passes away. Of this God's Word is certain: the wicked shall perish, and only the righteous will have the hope of living forever.⁵⁰ Obedience to the eternal God⁵¹ has as its reward the same spiritual life as God's. However, merely hearing God's will is vastly inferior to actually doing it. A profession of faith is not enough unless a man submits in obedience to what he has heard. For any to be truly saved by the Lord, God's will must be done, and not merely heard.

James 2:18–26 *Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.*

¹⁹ *Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe,*

and tremble.

²⁰ *But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?*

²¹ *Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?*

²² *Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?*

²³ *And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.*

²⁴ *Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.*

²⁵ *Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?*

²⁶ *For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.*

The most relevant truth today is that faith without works cannot save a man. True faith in God will always result in a man becoming obedient to His will. This is we saw in Abraham,⁵² who is called the father of all who believe,⁵³ and it will be shown in all who truly believe in Jesus Christ today. True faith, therefore, will always produce a desire to do God's will and will not simply be content with merely hearing it.⁵⁴

⁴⁹ Prov. 28:18 *Whoso walketh uprightly shall be saved: but he that is perverse in his ways shall fall at once.*

Matt. 7:21 *Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.*

Matt. 24:13 *But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.*

Mark 16:16 *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*

Acts 2:21 *And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.*

Rom. 10:13 *For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*

⁵⁰ Job 38:13 *That it might take hold of the ends of the earth, that the wicked might be shaken out of it?*

Ps. 1:4 *The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.*

Ps. 37:9&10 *For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth. ¹⁰For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.*

Ps. 37:20 *But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the LORD shall be as the fat of lambs: they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away.*

⁵¹ Heb. 5:9 *And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;*

⁵² Heb. 11:8 *By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.*

⁵³ Rom. 4:16 *Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,*

⁵⁴ Acts 5:32 *And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.*

Acts 6:7 *And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.*

Rom. 6:17 *But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.*

Phil. 2:12 *Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.*

I John 2:18 Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.

The phrase *the last time* makes no determination regarding the length of time that needs to be completed before Christ's appearance.⁵⁵ It is enough to know that both *antichrists* and the *Antichrist* shall come before the Son of God is revealed to the world.⁵⁶

(Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary, I John 2:18) Every man is an antichrist, who denies the Person, or any of the offices of Christ; and in denying the Son, he denies the Father also, and has no part in his favour while he rejects his great salvation. (END QUOTE)

To reject Christ's lordship is by itself a form of the Antichrist. Hence, if a man does not submit to Christ's rule, he rejects His government⁵⁷ and resists His overall authority.⁵⁸ It is God's right to transfer authority to whom He wills, and His will is that His Son shall reign forever.⁵⁹

II Thess. 3:4 And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you.

Heb. 5:9 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;

55 Luke 12:40 Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.

Matt. 24:27 For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

Matt. 24:44 Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.

Matt. 25:13 Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

I Thess. 5:2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

56 I John 2:18 Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.

I John 4:3 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

II John 1:7 For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.

57 Isa. 9:6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

58 Dan. 7:14 And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

Matt. 28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

Phil. 2:10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

Rev. 11:15 And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.

59 Dan. 7:14 And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

I Cor. 15:27 For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him.

Eph. 1:22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,

Col. 1:18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

Heb. 1:8 But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.

Heb. 2:8 Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.

