

The New Knowledge Of The Christian

I John 3:19

by Walton Weaver

INTRODUCTION:

1. We are living in a world of uncertainty. Nothing seems sure anymore. Nations are strong today, defeated tomorrow. Many Christians are confused, frustrated and uncertain about their relationship with God. But the sanctified are fully persuaded that they are God's children and that with God's help they are abiding faithfully in him.

2. The Christian knows who he is, he knows where he stands, and he knows where he is going. There is no uncertainty in the Christian life. John employed the words KNOW, KNOWETH and KNOWN thirty-three times in the five short chapters of the First Epistle of John.

I. JOHN KNEW THAT HE KNEW JESUS CHRIST.

A. I John 2:3, "And hereby *WE DO KNOW THAT WE KNOW HIM*, if we keep his commandments." This was confident knowledge based upon his present walk or manner of life in relation to the Lord.

B. Paul agrees, "for *I KNOW WHOM I HAVE BELIEVED* and. . ." (2 Tim. 1: 12).

C. Acts 9:1-5, Paul was a great enemy of the church. When a light shone around him and he fell to the ground, he heard a "voice saying, 'Saul, Saul, why persecuteth thou me?' " Paul answered, "Who art thou, Lord?" The answer to Saul's question immediately followed, and thus Saul began his long journey of coming to know Jesus in the sense of the verses just quoted.

D. Jesus asked his disciples two important questions, like the question Saul asked.

1. "Whom do men say I the Son of man am?" Their answer? "Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others" Then Jesus asked them,

2. "But, whom say ye that I am?" Peter answered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." What a significant reply!

E. Paul's great ambition from the time of his conversion in Damascus (Acts 9:18;

22:16) was to be found in Christ and to know him at the end of the way (Phil. 3:9ff.), yet he could confidently say, "I know him . . ." How can both be true? We know him, but we can come to know him better each day of our lives.

II. HE KNEW HE HAD A NEW LIFE WITH GOD.

A. I John 3:14, "*We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.*"

1. From death unto LIFE! What a transition! What a transformation!
2. The point of this change is described as a translation in Colossians 1:13-14. When did this change take place?

B. Paul elsewhere says that we become a "new creation" IN CHRIST (2 Cor. 5:17).

1. This change took place at baptism—died to sin by being baptized into death, baptized INTO Christ, buried with him through baptism, raised up into a *new life* (Rom. 6:1-4). This is why Paul says, ". . . old things are passed away; behold, all things become new," in the same verse that says we have become a new creation in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17).
2. We are no longer to be "conformed [made like]" the world," but we are to be transformed [changed]. . . ." (Romans 12:2).

C. It is a different realm, a different world.

"I'm in a new World, old things
have passed away;
Behold all things are new, ever
since that happy day.
He opened up my blinded eyes
and then I had a great surprise;
I'm in a new world, since the Lord
saved me.

D. We can no longer serve two masters (Matt. 6:24) because we are to put off the old man (Eph. 4:22-24).

III. HE KNEW HE HAD THE SPIRIT OF GOD.

A. I John 3:24: "And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us." See also 1 John 4:13.

1. John has affirmed before that we know God and we know that God abides in us (2:13-14). This knowledge is ours because we know that the word of God abides in us and that we have overcome the world (2:14).

2. But in 1 John 3:24 he affirms that we know God abides in us "by the Spirit which he hath given us." The Spirit is the ultimate source of this knowledge because he is the source of the truth in which we abide. The first part of v. 24 says, "and he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him."

B. We do not know that God abides in us except by the fact that we keep his commandments (2:3), and we do not know that the Spirit abides in us apart from our knowing that we are abiding in his word.

IV. HE KNEW THAT GOD ANSWERS PRAYER.

A. I John 5:14, 15: "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us. And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him."

B. I John 3:22: "And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight."

C. Matt. 7:7, 8; Matt. 21:20-22; James 5: 14, 15.

D. When the church prayed, Peter was delivered from prison (Acts 12:5-7).

E. When Paul and Silas prayed, an earthquake shook the foundation of their prison and they became free men (Acts 16:25-40). We do not expect a miracle, but we know that if God can do some things by miracle, he can also do some things without a miracle.

V. HE KNEW CHRISTIANS DO NOT COMMIT SIN CONTINUALLY.

A. I John 5:18: "born of God sinneth not. . . ."

B. Read I John 3:6-10.

C. A child of God does not *practice* sin but lives a righteous life. Jesus told two persons He blessed to "Go and sin no more" (John 5:14; 8:11). They were not to

continue in their sin. This is the import of the perfect tense of 1 John 3:6 and 9. The person who abides in Christ “does not sin”: he does not *continue in* sin, he does not *practice* sin any longer.

D. In other words, 1 John 3:6, 9 do not mean it is impossible for a child of God to sin. John writes and warns the Christians not to commit sin, but he goes on to say, but “*if any man sin*, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” (1 John 2:1). See also his statement in 1 John 1:8-10.

VI. HE KNEW THERE IS A LIFE AFTER THIS ONE.

A. “These things write I unto you ... that ye may know that you have eternal life” (1 John 5: 13). Though there may be some difficulty in knowing exactly how John used the terms “eternal life” here and elsewhere in his writings, he certainly knew there would be life after death.

B. Paul believed in a future life. “We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God . . . ” (2 Cor. 5:1).

C. Abraham “was seeking a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God ” (Heb. 11:10).

D. Job believed this truth. He had lost everything, including 7 sons, three daughters, many servants, 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 she asses and 500 yoke of oxen. He was smitten with sore boils from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet. His wife urged him to curse God and die. His closest friends accused him of sinning against God. And, worst of all, he couldn't find God (Job 23:1, 2). But amidst all this, he cried out, “I know my redeemer liveth, and that . . . ” Job 19:25-27.

E. John saw his “after-this-life” home. See Rev. 21:1-5 and 22:1-5.

VII. HE KNEW CHRIST IS COMING AGAIN.

A. “. . . we know that, when he shall appear. . . ” (1 John 3:2, 3). Other apostles attest to this truth:

B. I Peter 5:4: “When the chief Shepherd shall appear.”

C. James 5:8: “for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.”

D. I Thess. 4:16-18: “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven. . . .”

E. Acts 1:11 “. . . shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.”

F. Jesus said, “. . . I will come again . . .” (John 14:3).

CONCLUSION: Yes, the Christian knows who he is, he knows where he stands and he knows where he is going. He is the only man on earth who is certain about the future.