

Day 233, 1 John 2

by David Servant

David Servant explains the three tests for authentic conversion in 1 John, emphasizing the importance of moral, social, and theological integrity.

Scripture: John 13:35, 1 John 1:9, 1 John 2:1-2, 1 John 2:16-17, 1 John 2:19, 1 John 2:22, 1 John 2:29

Topics: "True Faith", "Righteous Living"

Description

David Servant preaches on the three tests of authentic conversion highlighted by John in his first epistle: moral, social, and theological. True Christians are called to practice righteousness, demonstrate unselfish love for fellow believers, and believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God. Jesus serves as our Advocate before God, offering His sufferings as the ground for our acquittal and being the propitiation for our sins, appeasing God's wrath. John emphasizes the importance of keeping God's commandments, abiding in Jesus, and walking as He walked as evidence of true faith.

Transcript

Throughout his first epistle, John repeatedly returns to three different tests that validate authentic conversion. The first is moral: Are you practicing righteousness and keeping God's commandments? The second is social: Do you demonstrate unselfish love for fellow believers? The third is theological: Do you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God who has come in the flesh? In today's reading we encounter the first two tests.

John indicates that true Christians shouldn't sin and don't practice sin, but sometimes do commit sins. Those sins should be confessed, and when they are, they are forgiven (1:9). We can take heart knowing that we "have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (2:1). As our attorney before God's throne, Jesus never pleads our innocence or presents extenuating circumstances. Rather, He offers His sufferings as the ground for our acquittal. Jesus is "the propitiation for our sins" (2:2). That means He's the One who has appeased God's wrath against us.

Notice also that Jesus is the propitiation, not only for our sins, "but also for those of the whole world" (2:2). The word "our" obviously refers to those to whom John was writing, which, according to him was "you that believe on the name of the Son of God" (5:13). So Jesus not only died for the sins of believers, but "for those of the whole world," which must include unbelievers. John uses the word "world" over 20 times in this short letter, and every time it either refers to everyone in the world or everyone in the kingdom of darkness. Thus 1 John 2:2 is the final nail in the coffin of the Calvinist idea that Jesus died only for the sins

of those allegedly predestined to be saved.

Although John's style sometimes seems confusing, it helps to take note that he often uses synonymous phrases in the same sentences or passages. For example, in 2:3-6, "knowing Jesus," "being in Him," and "abiding in Him" are synonymous. "Keeping His commandments," "keeping His word," and "walking as He walked" are also synonymous. If we know Jesus, are in Him, and abide in Him, it is revealed by the fact that we keep His commandments, keep His word and walk as He walked. That is the moral test, and John repeats it several times in this chapter: "The one who does the will of God lives forever" (2:17) and, "Everyone also who practices righteousness is born of Him" (2:29).

John's first mention of the social test is found in 2:9-11. True Christians, that is, people who are "in the light," love each other, just as Jesus said, "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35). The one who hates his brother is not really a brother and is still in darkness.

Apparently, some among those to whom John wrote had broken fellowship from the body (2:19). John calls them "antichrists" because those who are against the body of Christ are against Christ. They revealed that they were not true believers and were likely guilty of at least some of the doctrinal errors that John addresses, perhaps even denying that Jesus was the Christ (2:22). They were attempting to draw others away to join them in their heresies. But John reminded his readers that they had an inward anointing from the Holy Spirit that would lead them into truth and away from false doctrine.

Lest John's readers think he was doubting the authenticity of their salvation, he wrote to assure them. Although each individual reader fell into one of three different categories of spiritual maturity---children, young men or fathers---their sins had been forgiven, they knew God, and they had overcome Satan through faith in Jesus (2:12-14).

What are "the lust [desire] of the flesh and the lust [desire] of the eyes and the boastful pride of life" (2:16)? Some suggest that they speak of the world's preoccupation with sex, money and power, sometimes more crudely expressed as "girls, gold and glory." According to Paul, however, the desires of the flesh lead to deeds that include not only illicit sex, but idolatry, strife, drunkenness and more (Gal. 5:16-21).

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/david-servant/day-233-1-john-2/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net