

# Knowing Christ Pt 2

by Philip Powell

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*The sermon emphasizes the depth of knowing Christ through obedience, love, and the importance of forgiveness while warning against worldly distractions.*

**Duration:** 51:40

**Topics:** "Spiritual Transformation", "Repentance"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher shares stories of individuals who have experienced a deep and lasting transformation through their surrender to Christ. One example is a man who was once a drunkard but surrendered his life to Christ and remained faithful until the age of 87. The preacher emphasizes that this transformation is not superficial but a result of the love of the Father being deposited in their lives through repentance and turning to God. The sermon also highlights the importance of being cautious about the influence of the world and the company we keep, as well as the significance of having a meek and quiet spirit that is pleasing to God.

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## Transcript

1 John chapter 2. We're looking at this whole theme of knowing Christ. You know, it's easy, isn't it, to say, well, yes, I do know Christ. How do you know Christ? How do you know? You say, I know Christ.

Well, how do you know that you know Christ? You say, well, I know that I know that I know that I know. Yes, well, I know that. But how do you really know that you know Christ? 1 John chapter 2 is devoted to that topic.

John says, these things write I unto you that you may know that you know. And he gives four reasons. I suppose we might reflect on the idea that knowing has a depth with it.

The apostle Paul, as he comes to the end of his life, writing from a prison, says, oh, that I may know him. Strange, isn't it? Here's a man who's been on the way for a long time. He's a new convert, comes along.

You say to him, do you know Christ? He says, yes, I know Christ. Say to Paul, do you know Christ? Oh, that I may know him. This one thing I do.

That I may know him. There's a depth in knowing, isn't it? It's a bit like marriage, I suppose. A young son once said to his father, he said, Dad, is it true that in some parts of Africa a man doesn't know his wife until he marries her? The dad replied, that happens in every country, son.

Now, you can take that one of two ways, I suppose. But the good way to take it is that as we go on, we get to know. It's really, as one man put it, he was asked, do you love your wife? He said, yes.

Yes, I love my wife. He said, I married her because I loved her, but I also married her in order to love her. And that's what happens sometimes with relationships.

We, you know, human relationships, man and wife falling in love and men fall out of love. But marriage is a contract. Marriage is a commitment.

Marriage is a growing to know and a growing to love. The same thing in our relationship with the Lord Jesus. Maybe a little couple of funnies would break the atmosphere a little bit, but they say a woman is incomplete until she is married.

Then she is finished. That's not true, is it? She's complete. She grows.

Little boy asked his father, Daddy, how much does it cost to get married? Father replied, I don't know, son. I'm still paying. And you know, there's some parallels there.

They're funnies, but there's some parallels there with the Christian life. Salvation is free, but how much does it cost? Don't know, I'm still finding out. Costs you everything.

And yet it's a joy. No man, having put his hand to the plough, looking back is fit for the kingdom. Why is that? I tell you why.

That's because He loved us so much that if we pull back, we've shown that we're not worthy of that love. How do we know that we know Christ? Let me just direct you to the central verses of this chapter. 1 John 2, verses 12-14.

I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake. I write unto you, fathers, because you have known Him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because you have overcome the wicked one.

I write unto you, little children, because you have known the Father. I have written unto you, fathers, because you have known Him that is from the beginning. This is not repetitious.

He's making a point here. A very important point which possibly we don't see on the surface. I have written unto you, young men, because you are strong and the Word of God abides in you and you have overcome the wicked one.

Verses 12-14 form the natural division of the chapter. Here John does two things. First of all, he explains what he is about to say and why.

Verses 12 and 13. I am writing unto you. I write unto you.

It's in the present tense. He is saying this is what I'm now going to say to you and this is the reason why I am saying it to you. But then he recaps on what he has already said and why.

Verse 14. I have written unto you. So he's going back to chapter 1 but particularly to the earlier pattern of chapter 2. Now our basic text is 1 John chapter 2 verse 3 and hereby we do know that we know Him.

This is how we know that we know Him. This is how we know that we know Him. Last week we looked at two ways to test whether we know Christ.

The first was, do we keep His commandments? So that is what he says in the earlier part of the chapter. Hereby we do know that we know Him if we keep His commandments. So it's not just a goose bump feeling.

It's not just I know because I've had an experience. We know that we know Him by the fact that we keep His commandments. Now he's not talking about the Decalogue.

He's not talking about the Ten Commandments. He's talking about the commandments of the Gospel. And if you, I don't want to go back over all that stuff again, but it's on tape and so if you want to get the tape and we're hoping soon to have our website up and it will be on the website as well.

Hopefully all of these messages are going to be available that way. So he says that's the first thing. And then the second thing is, do we love our brother, our sister? Verse 9, he that says he is in the light and hates his brother is in darkness until now.

So this is how we know that we know Him. First of all, that we keep His commandments and secondly, that we love our brother and sister. Now going back down to the central passage where the writer is saying, OK, I have written unto you, or I will write unto you now in the present, the first part.

But the latter part, verse 14, I have written unto you, he says, because you have known Him from the beginning. To the fathers, he addresses the fathers in the fellowship, the fathers in the faith and he says, OK, I'm not telling you anything new, really. He says, I'm just appealing to you because you have known Him from the beginning.

But here I'm going to give you these tests and He provides them. I have written unto you, young men, because you are strong and also you have overcome the wicked one. And so, the thing that is passed, he says, he addresses the fathers and he addresses the young men.

And he does the same in verses 12 and 13 in respect of the thing that he is now about to say. And notice how he repeats this very sort of, not condescending, but sort of a compassionate gathering of those children around him, those people that he feels for. He says in the first verse, my little children.

We pointed out to you that it's a bit like the expression that they use in French, mon petit or ma petite or ma chérie, my dear one. And we have the thing in Welsh, boch, Philip boch. And I can't remember, Paul, do they ever use it with regard to females? Boch, you're not sure.

But it means little one, little one. And this is what John is really saying as he writes to the Christians there. He says, my little ones.

This is John the Elder and you can feel his love and his feeling towards these people as he says again here, I write unto you, little children. And what a marvellous thing, verse 12, because your sins are forgiven you for his namesake. I think the greatest thing in all the world is to have a conscience that has been dealt with so that you know your sins are forgiven you.

What a dreadful thing to go through life with a guilty conscience. Somebody who has committed some awful crime, think of the worst, murder. Oh, you might think they're hard and harsh, but in their moment of

quietness and contemplation, how their conscience will trouble them.

The great thing about the Gospel, friends, is that the worst sin in all the world can be forgiven and you can have a conscience void of offence. Hallelujah. And John says here, I'm writing unto you.

What a wonderful thing, because your sins have been forgiven you. Hallelujah. I suppose the thing that comes to my mind anyway, I don't know about yours, when I think about this, is the experiences of the man who wrote Amazing Grace.

He was one of the worst of criminals. He was a slave trader, a hard seaman. And one day God met with him and he wrote out of that wonderful experience and it changed life, Amazing Grace.

How sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me. Your sins are forgiven you. Hallelujah.

Wonderful. Wonderful. And he said, I'm writing unto you, my little ones, my mould poutine, mould maturine, your little ones, Bach, I'm writing to you because your sins have been forgiven you.

And look at the basis of it, for His namesake. Hallelujah. Who stands there between an angry God and a delinquent citizen but my surety, Christ? Hallelujah.

With outstretched hands that all the rot in the world can't get past, to get at me. My sins are forgiven for His namesake. Hallelujah.

And so now I'm writing, and he reaffirms this. I'm going to write this now, fathers. Just get this.

Because you have known Him from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because you have overcome the wicked one. Again, the emphasis of strength upon the wicked one.

And he said, I write unto you, little children, because you have known the Father. Okay, and then he gives three additional tests. I thought there were only two last week, but I've looked at it again and there's three.

Okay, that's the thing about the Word of God. It's limitless. Why people want to preach anything else, I shall never know.

Why they want to preach money or why they want to preach experiences, geography, whatever. The Word of God is eternal and the Word of God is infinite because it comes from God Himself. We never exhaust it.

There's always something new there. Blessed be His wonderful name. And the three big questions that come.

Now out of this second passage, and I thought we'd deal with all three, but as I looked at it, I thought, no, I can't get through that. We're only going to be able to deal with one. So we'll have to have a break because Pastor Morgan's coming next week.

And then the week after that, we have Daniel Scott with us who's going to tell us about his experiences with the Muslims and so on. And then we'll get back to it again for a short period before we go down and do some meetings in Sydney. But the three issues are, do we love the world? The Bible says that this is how we're going to know that we know Christ is that we do not love the world.

Verse 15, it's very, very strong. Love not the world, nor the things that are in the world. And this is a very, very strong statement.

If anyone loves the world, he doesn't love the Father. The love is stronger than that. It isn't just a question that we don't love the Father, but the love of the Father is not in us.

If we love the world. So, this question is addressed in verses 15 to 19. Then the other two questions are, do we have the anointing? What is the anointing? I think there's a lot of confusion about the anointing, particularly in Pentecostal charismatic circles.

But we'll look at that. Verses 20 to 27. And the third thing, are we practicing righteousness? Verses 28 to 29.

And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He shall appear, we may have confidence and not be ashamed. Before Him it is coming. If ye know that He is righteous, ye know that everyone that doeth righteousness is born of Him.

So, we'll look at the first one just together today. Do we love the world? Let me read to you verses 15 to 19. Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.

If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life is not of the Father. It's a bit stronger than saying, not from the Father.

It's talking about the very nature of God here. It's not of the Father, but it's of the world. So, you have these two things that are in contrast, the one to the other.

The love of the world, which has a nature about it, character. And the love of the Father, which has a distinctive nature and character about it. And they are mutually exclusive.

You can't have the one and the other at the same time. The one casts out the other. And the big test is, if you love the world, then the love of the Father is not in you.

That's strong, isn't it? Don't you think so? So, how do you fit? How do we fit? How do I fit? Do I love the world? What is the world? I suppose is the big question. Then, we have to answer. The word is cosmos that is used here.

And it has different ideas. The basic idea is of ornament or harmony or ordered or order. An absent harmonious arrangement or constitutional order or government, something that's organized.

Could be ornament or decoration. Adornment. It's used, for example, in respect of the arrangement of the stars, the heavenly hosts, as the ornament of the heavens.

Peter gives us an insight in 1 Peter 3, verse 3, where he talks about the lady, the woman of the family, of the household. And he talks about her appearance. And you've heard me preach on this before from a different perspective.

And he describes it. He says, who's adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of the plaiting of the hair and of the wearing of gold or of the putting on of apparel. We pointed out that obviously he's not saying that you can't wear gold.

Or he's not saying that you can't plait your hair. Do you think he could be saying that? Well, it doesn't make sense really. I mean, you read it.

Who's adorning, let it not be the outward adorning of the plaiting of the hair. So, all say it, no plaiting of the hair and the wearing of gold. So, all say it, no wearing of the gold.

All right. Or of putting on of apparel. Hey, you've got a problem, haven't you? You certainly have.

Particularly in cold New Zealand, I would think. Right. So, he's obviously not saying that.

What's he doing? He's contrasting the outward and the natural with the inward and the spiritual. He said, where is your emphasis? Now, some religious organisations took it to such a literal extent that they turned their women in their farming community as people that look more like haystacks than attractive. Human beings.

And obviously that's not what it's all about. It's not how doer or dour or miserable or long-faced or ugly or, you know, unattractive you can look. That's not what it's talking about.

It's talking about something that is hidden. Something that is there. What is beauty? Beauty is something more than skin deep.

Beauty is the soul. Beauty is the spirit. And he says, but let it be the hidden man of the heart in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit which is in the sight of God of great price.

Some ladies can make themselves like painted dolls and become a Jezebel and have lost the sweetness of that spirit. I taught my grandson a little song. I wonder, can you remember it, Isaac? What did it say? Dare to be a Daniel? Shout it out, can you? Dare to pass a chemist shop and call your face your own.

You weren't expecting that one, were you? But some faces need a little bit of chemist shop, a treatment. But there's the hidden man of the heart. And you can't measure that.

And when that's really there, then it affects the whole countenance as well. It affects the disposition. It affects the whole personality.

So, this word cosmos has that idea. It also is used in respect to of the universe, the arrangement of stars, the heavenly host, the ornament of heavens. It's used of humanity itself.

John chapter 3 verse 16, For God so loved the world, now that's the world of men and women, that He gave His only begotten Son. But here it's used in the context of evil, in respect of thoughts and passions and desires. But chapter 5 verse 19 of 1 John brings this into focus where it says, And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lies in wickedness.

John is talking about a system. He's talking about something that is out there in which we can be immersed to such an extent that it proves that we don't love God. That the love of God is not in our hearts.

He describes it in verse 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. Notice it. Lust of the flesh.

We preached on this a few Sundays ago, so we won't just repeat that over again. But that thing which draws us to the lower beggarly elements. Galatians chapter 5 talks about sowing to the flesh.

It says, He that sows to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption. Now actually what it's talking about is two things. It's talking about the natural seed being sown in a natural seed bed.

And it will produce a natural harvest. But if you're constantly sowing natural seed into a seed bed that is natural, ultimately you will reap the destruction of your own self. This is the story that Jesus told of the rich farmer.

There was nothing wrong with his riches, but it was the thing that moved him. The thing that controlled him. He had sort of produced so much.

Far more than he needed. And then he started to reflect on what he could do for more. And it's that thing that drives you.

And here he was one night, musing to himself. And he says, I know what I'll do. I've filled all those barns.

I've had such a marvellous crop. Terrific. He said, I'll pull down the barns.

And he began to think about how he could get more and more and more and more. I was talking to a man this week. I don't know him, but he rang me.

He'd come across our website and he was a bit concerned. And he rang me. And one of the first things he said was, I am very, very wealthy.

As if I was going to be impressed. And I said, well, good. Nothing wrong with that.

Nothing wrong with that. But what is it that drives the person? Is it to do God's will? Is it to work for God? Is it to save your soul? And here this man had everything. And he's piling it up.

And he thought he was going to be here forever. And he said, I'll pull down my barns. I will build greater.

And then I'll fill those up and then there'll come a day. No, no, no. There will never come a day when you will sit back and say, I have enough.

Because the thing has now controlled you. And you will always want more. You will never, ever come to that point and say, I can now take my ease.

And apart from that, sir, you're not going to get past this night. Because tonight, your soul will be required of you. Then whose shall those things be which you have accumulated? It's all to do with what motivates us, with what drives us.

I think back over my own life. The conversations I had when I was young with people who wanted to tell me what to do with my life. A bank manager right next door to us.

He said, Philip, when I was 17, 16 or 17 years of age, old, he said, what are you going to be? I said, I believe God's called me to be a preacher. He said, you don't want to do that. There's no money in it.

And those were the days when there wasn't any money in it. Some seem to have made money out of it. And they also will answer one day.

But he said, no, do you want to go into the bank? And I reflected and I thought, I could have, I could have, I know I could have made lots and lots and lots of money. But what's the point of it? At the end of the day, you leave it all behind. The Bible says, having enough, be satisfied.

Now, I'm not saying that God cannot make people wealthy. Please don't get me wrong. I believe He can.

But what is the purpose? What is the drive? What is the intention? What is the end product of it all? Know the story of the man. Trowse was it who played a game of chess with the devil. And eventually, the devil came to get him.

He said, one move, checkmate. I love chess. I play chess.

I know chess. And probably the story isn't quite accurate because things never get quite like this in a chess game. But there was another voice which said, there is one move that you can make.

There is one move. Move towards the king and you'll get out of checkmate. The person who traded with the devil and said, I'll sell my soul for a million dollars, for a million pounds.

The moment came when he had a million and the devil appeared and said, you traded with me. What is it? That motivates us. Do we love the world? The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the things that appeal to us naturally.

Not the love of the eyes, notice. There are some beautiful things about the world and beautiful things about people. It's not, you mustn't get lust mixed up with love.

But the lust of the eyes, the passion, the drive and the pride of life, pomp and ceremony. I mean, I suppose we've had it displayed to us more recently than ever before of modern history in the things that have happened in Rome with the deaths of the Pope and the coronation of the new man and all the pomp and the ceremony. And they still don't know.

They still don't know. Why should they? Why should the Roman Catholic teaching make an exception for Pope John Paul II and say that he goes straight to heaven when in actual fact their teaching says that he's got to spend some time in purgatory? Why can they change it? How can they change the rules? The whole thing is a diabolical deception. And sadly, practically every evangelical church in Australia has gone down that track and have supported Roman Catholicism.

And the devil is laughing all the way to hell because men and women of the Protestant evangelical faith that has stood firm since the 1600s are compromising and following, are too deep now for them to be changed. And he said, I think we've come to the point where we can basically undo all that the Reformation did. Is he right? I tell you, friends, he will be right or wrong depending on how many of us feel strong enough about it to stand up and be counted.

And by God's grace, here's one who will stand. Martin Luther did not nail his 95th thesis to the hall at Wittenberg, the door there, for nothing. Latimer and Ridley, who died at the stake in England, and I have been to the place where they laid down their life and the older man turned to the younger man as they were burning for their faith and said, Master Ridley, play the game, play the man.

We shall, by God's grace tonight, light such a candle in Britain that shall never be put out. And yet the Archbishop of Canterbury says the fire is, and the light is going to be put out. No, no, no, a million times no, it will not, blessed be the name of the Lord, because there are people around who love the Father more than they love the world.

Not only does it say love not the world, but it says love not the things that are in the world, the things that are associated to that system, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life and the lust of the eyes. But he says, if you have the love of the world, it is a proof that the love of the Father is not in you. And what he is

expressing here is the great truth of the expulsive power of a new affection.

You remember Jesus said that if a man has an evil spirit and it is cast out of him, then that evil spirit wanders through wilderness places and he finds seven more evil in himself and he is finding, trying to find a place to reside. And because he can't find a place, he comes back and comes to this person, this person who was delivered of demons and the person opens his life and he becomes seven times worse than he was at the beginning. Somebody said to me this week, he said, you know, your website is stopping some people going to a particular church.

I said, well, thank God. I said, you really mean that? I said, yes, I do. Why? Because, you see, he said, don't you believe people get saved? I said, well, some of them may do, but I said, I doubt very much if many do.

They might make decisions and they are on the hype and all the stuff that's going on. But I said, if they don't hear the gospel of Jesus Christ, that Jesus Christ died for our sins, that he demands that every person should repent of their sins, that they should turn away from their sins. If all they hear there is that they, you know, get joy in coming to Jesus and the hype and the singing and all of that, I said, what is happening is they're being inoculated with a small dose of the real thing that will make them immune to the real thing later on.

That is what is happening. And as Ray Comfort puts it, he says, our churches are getting foiled with people who are not converted, who are not saved. They have been making a decision.

They've been sort of being told to turn onto Jesus. But what is Jesus talking about when he talks about this man who is delivered? He talks about the expulsive power of a new affection. You see, if you've got the love of the Father in there, then the love of the world's never gonna get back in again.

That demon's not gonna get in there again. Romans 5, verse 5 says, as Paul is talking about God and the things of God, he says, and hope makes us not ashamed because the Holy Spirit is given unto us, sheds the love of God abroad in our hearts. This love of God is a deposit by the energy and power of the Holy Spirit.

God, the Holy Spirit, sheds abroad the Father's love in our hearts. If any man have the love of the world, the love of the Father, the nature of the Father, it's not just loving God. It's more than that.

It's the nature of God being put within us. The love of the Father is not in him. This is what the new birth is all about.

This is what conversion is all about. When we are converted, we have a right about turn. God comes into our lives and we change.

A man came into the meeting. They've had to slip out a bit early, but he's 82 years of age. You wouldn't think it looking at him.

But he said to me, I knew your father. In New Zealand, my dad died when he was 89 years of age. Or was it 87? Might have been 87.

He's told me so many times this story that it's almost ingrained into me of how as a young man of 20, 21 in Wales, being known as a bit bigger drunker than anybody else in the village as a young man, and a

person who was a murderer at heart because his father had died when he was young. They had a lovely farm. But his mother married again.

She married a rocker who drank the farm away. And while the boys, they were still young, his older brother, my paternal uncle, I've referred to many, many times, went off to Canada as a lumberjack to find work. While he was over there, he found Christ.

God sent him back to witness to his family. First time he met my dad, dad had a cigarette hanging out of his mouth. And Dave said to him in his gruff way, what are you doing with that in your mouth? He said, I'm trying to get a bit of comfort.

That won't give you comfort. Long and short of it, eventually took him to a little Pentecostal church where my dad got saved that night. He said he could remember the text all through his life.

The text was, he that is holy, let him be holy still. And he that is filthy, let him be filthy still. And my dad, Stan Powell, as he sat in that meeting, said I felt so filthy.

One of the biggest drunkards as a young man in the village. But he surrendered his life to Christ that night. The people, his friends said to him, Stan, we'll give you three months.

We'll give you six months. Some said we'll give you a year. It went on until he was 87 years of age.

And he still hung on to the Lord. Still went into the presence of the Lord rejoicing. We were there, my sister and I. When he went, what had happened? The love of the Father had been deposited in his life because he had repented of his sin.

Because he had turned to God. It wasn't something superficial. It was something deep and real and lasting.

That is the power of the Gospel. The love of the Father is an expulsive power of a new affection. Something has come into our lives.

Verse 16 becomes a summary of the whole thing of the love of the world. It's not just the entertainment of the world, although you've got to be careful about that because the entertainment of the world can very easily take you away if you are not careful. The Bible says, happy is the man who standeth not in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful, but his delight is in the law of the Lord.

And in His law does he meditate. And so, you have to be careful about the company. You have to be careful about the influence.

I'm sure that the church has been wrong in the past of just setting rules. I'm sure of that. But you have to be careful about the association.

But it's something deeper than that. It is the actual heartbeat of the world. It's this lust and pride.

And verse 17 brings the whole thing to a climax when it says, that world that people have a love for is passing away. It's temporal. It will not last.

This is a problem with hands. This is a problem with what they call culture. This is a problem with all of the things of this world.

It's a problem with language. We're talking about it, how that actually the evil of the world so very often dictates the attitude of the church, even with respect to things, symbols and all of that. And I think we have to stand up and say, no, that's not going to influence me.

That's not going to affect me. It's undermined our language. The word gay, for example, at one time was a beautiful descriptive term of a very nice person.

But now it has become a term associated with homosexuality. And, you know, it dictates the very thing, the very use of language. And that's the world system.

That's that thing that drags us down, down, down. And John says, if that thing is in you, then it's no good you saying that you know Christ. You don't.

You don't know Him. You don't know Him as He really is. Because if you knew Him, then the love of the Father would cast out that love of the world.

And the great thing about the love of the Father is that it is eternal. Hallelujah. And the world passes away in the lust thereof.

But he that does the will of God abides forever. Then in verse 18, he comes to deal with the signs of the time. Little children, it is the last time.

Now, he's writing more than 2,000 years ago, or round about 2,000 years ago. Little children, it is the last time. He's writing in his bed.

It is the last time. Are we in the end times world sure? We must be if he was. Is this just a play around with terms? No, no, no.

No, you see, a day is as 1,000 years as God. And 1,000 years as a day. God dwells outside of time.

Just like a flick of the eyelid. Just like a passing of a moment. That's God's measurement of time.

We're in the last. How do we know that we're in the last days? Well, you've heard that in the last days, Antichrist will come, right? Now, John says there's many Antichrists now. So, we know we're in the end times.

And he's giving also a prophetic insight here. How do we know that we're really getting close to the end? It's the multiplication of the Antichrist. See them all around? They've gotten into practically every church.

Now, I know there's going to be an Antichrist that heads up the final thing. But that which is Antichrist, that which is setting down doctrine. Jim, you said something about Trinity Sunday.

I don't keep up with these things too well. I think last Sunday was Pentecost Sunday, wasn't it? And this is what now Trinity Sunday is it? Good, thanks for that. But you see, Trinity, one of the fundamental truths of God and the existence of God.

There's a chap now that has been admitted as one of the great preachers of our time, a man called T.D. Jakes. Went to the church that we used to fellowship in, in Adelaide. And the pastor there introduced him as one of the all-time great preachers of all time.

The man doesn't even believe in the Trinity. But he has a church of 10,000 or something. So what? The devil's got more in his congregation than that.

The Mormons can boast many more than that. Roman Catholics, Peter's hands down. What have numbers counted for? Where's truth done? What about truth? What about truth? The signs of the times.

He says, the signs of the times that you know you're getting near it is the proliferation of the false teachers and the false Christ and the Antichrist. They're everywhere. Benny Hinn this last couple of mornings had on his show Roman Catholic priests.

He was interviewing Roman Catholic priests. And then he said, I'm going to show you now. And I think he did put it on, did he? Scenes, the video scenes from the Vatican.

Because he was over there at the funeral. And he said now that his great mission is to bring unity. Yeah? Tell me about it.

That's the mission of the Antichrist. Now is Benny Hinn the Antichrist? Well, I doubt it, but I tell you what, he has a lot of the qualities of Antichrist. One of the big qualities of Antichrist is to be able to perform signs and wonders.

There's a proliferation of this sort of thing that's going on. And John says, this is how you know it. And then he describes in verse 19 the apostasy.

What is the apostasy? It's people going out. They went out from us. Now we've had people go out from us.

Most of them I don't think have gone away from the Lord. But that's between them and the Lord. But John is talking about they went out from us.

What have they gone out from? Have they gone out from a message which cuts a bit too hard? Have they gone out from something that creates conviction? Well, that certainly I think is the connotation of what he's saying here in John. I'm not saying that with regard to ourselves, but certainly as the day approaches, so the test is going to become greater. They went out from us, but they were not of us.

For if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us. But they went out that they might be made manifest, that they were not all of us. Oh, yes, the early church had their problems as well.

The early church had their people who apostasized, who turned away from the true message of the gospel of our Lord. What is at the heart of it? The love of the world or the love of the Father? How do I know that I know Christ? Lord, I want to keep your commandments. How do I know that I know Christ? Lord, I want to love my brothers and my sisters so that everything I do is motivated by love, not by a desire for revenge or a desire to get my own back, but a desire to love and to win.

How do I know that I know Him? I'm not loving the world. I'm not in love with the world. But if I'm in love with the world, the love of the Father is in me.

Heavenly Father, we pray that You will give us understanding in Your Word. Help us not to be judgmental. Help us not to be harsh.

But help us, Lord, to do what You tell us to do in Your Word, to judge all things and to hold fast to that which is good. Now while every head is bowed and Christians are praying here today, let me ask you, do

you know Christ? How do you know that you know Christ? You say, well, I made this commitment some years ago. Well, that's good.

Yeah, okay. But is that enough? Where do you stand today? Do you love to keep His Word? Do you love your brother and your sister? Do you love the Father? Or do you love the world? If you want to say to me, Pastor Powell, please, pray for me. I want to make a fresh commitment today.

Just stand where you are and we'll pray. I want the love of God to come flooding into my heart and soul and life again in a new dimension that it may be said of me truly. And I know in my own heart, I love God.

And I have that explosive power of a new affection which keeps all those other affections out. Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord.

Praise the Lord. Lord, I pray, read our hearts. I pray, help us, every one of us, to be on the stretch for God, for the glory of Your great and eternal Name.

Now, Lord, I pray that You'll dismiss us with Your blessing. Keep Your hand upon us. Keep us rejoicing in You.

Keep us looking forward to that great day when You will come, when the shadows will flee away and we will be in Your presence forever. Blessed be the Name of the Lord. Thank you.

In Jesus' Name.

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