

NOTES:

THE EPISTLE OF FIRST JOHN

"We Know - - - Do You?"  
1 John 5:18-21

Introduction

1. Christian certitude is something which a dogmatic statement of the world could never rival. It is the assurance of faith!

2. The triple "we know" of these verses shows that John penned these words himself (cf. John 21:24). With these words of confidence, the apostle binds together some of the great truths he has spoken about in the epistle. Here is true Christian knowledge and is opposed to spurious information provided in the world.

3. Circle in your own mind three major subjects which are included in the framework of believing faith. Here they are:-

1. We Know--about SIN. v. 18.

John notes three specific items which are related to the sin problem:-

a. The Believer.

The perfect participle is used to describe the child of God. It expresses a permanent relation begun in the past and continued in the present. Such is the one "born of God."

This person may sin, but his normal condition is one of resistance to sin. It will ever be true: a genuine believer will not make light of known sin and he will never admit it to be invincible. Let's always make certain that we make a difference between exceptional facts of sin and their habitual practice. The present tense of the verb is important here.

b. Jesus Christ.

The aorist participle identifies Christ as the One Who is Begotten of God. This tense points to His timeless relation with the Father and therefore the fact of Christ's deity.

This glorious One Who is God keeps the believer. This is watchful regard for His own, not some kind of safe custody.

c. Satan.

The verb does not mean to "touch" but suggests the thought of "laying hold." So the Evil One may assault, but he can never get a proper hold! Whoever is in Christ IS SAFE!

2. We Know--About the WORLD. v. 19.

One huge truth is taught by this verse. Would to God it burned itself with fullness into every heart. It is this: the severance between the church and the world ought to be conceived as that which exists between God and Satan. Just as surely as believers know their relation to the Lord, so they know their relation to the world!

The Evil One not only has hold of the world but he has it wholly within his embrace! Here is an antithesis which merits the full understanding of every child of God. Whereas we have passed over unto life; the world abides in its ruler, Satan! Now think that through and then pray for a holy understanding of the implications!

3. We Know--About CHRIST. v. 20.

Big issues are at stake concerning the Person

and Work of Christ. These are always the cardinal items in a world opposed to the Lord. Mark these comments:-

a. His incarnation.

Both verbs used highlight the present result and not the past act. Christ has come and is here! Christ has given and the gift is here! What is it?--intellectual power or capacity for receiving knowledge. It is understanding the complex facts of life!

b. His intention.

As the previous point underscores His Person, the present one speaks of His work. How is that work presented? Hear!

The ability to receive knowledge and understand is with a view to the progressive and continuous apprehension of "Him that is true." The knowledge of this true and personal God is the object of His having come into the world. It is observed, however, that this true God embraces and sustains us in His Son, Jesus Christ. A believer is IN God Who is true through being IN Christ Who is God's Son. This God--the Father and the Son--is the true God and life eternal! What a blessed knowledge.

Conclusion

Since our blessed Lord is the One true and only God, it is only natural that John should warn against the vain shadows of this world which would usurp His place. It is a sharp warning which needs to be repeated. It is ever so easy to allow something or someone to replace His high and holy place in our hearts. Is Christ your all just now?