

Knowing the God of Light (1 John 2:3-11)

Water of Life

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REVIEW OF EXPOSITION

Making sense of 1 John 1:1-3

“That which” is neuter. If John wished to refer to Jesus Christ, he would say “He who.”

“We” is distinct from “you.” Note 1:3, “We declare to you.” This is not a subset.

We = the apostles (cf. John 21:24 and 1:14). You = mature church leaders in Ephesus.

¹ **The message of life** was from the beginning,
the message of life we [apostles] have heard,
the message of life we [apostles] have seen with our eyes,
the message of life we [apostles] looked upon, and our [apostles] hands have handled concerning the
message of life— ★

² and the life was manifested, and we [apostles] have seen and declare to you [readers] **the eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us [apostles]**— ★

³ **the message of life** we [apostles] have seen and have heard, we [apostles] declare to you [readers], in order that you [readers] also may have fellowship with us [apostles and with the Father and His Son].

John wrote 1:1-3 [and the book] so readers may fellowship with God and the apostles (1:4)

Issues related to all of 1:5-10 These verses serve as a preventative for sin (per 1 John 2:1a)

Two Theses: God is without taint of sin, but people (even apostles) have the taint of sin

In light of 1:5, the apostles ought to affirm verse 7 (not verse 6) concerning fellowship.

In light of 1:5, the apostles ought to affirm verse 9 (not verses 8 or 10) concerning sin.

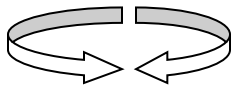
God is without any taint of sin (1:5)

The apostles would lie, if they claimed to have fellowship while walking in darkness (1:6)

The apostles have fellowship with God (and God has fellowship with the apostles) and the cross cleanses the apostles from all sin, if they walk in the light (1:7)

The apostles would deceive selves and would lack truth, if they claimed not to have sin (1:8)

The apostles would make God a liar, if they claimed not to sin (1:10)



I am dealing with verses 9 and 10 in reverse order. Verse 10 reinforces the statement of 1:8. (I want to end with verse 9).

God is faithful and just to forgive and cleanse the apostles from all sin, if the apostles acknowledge their sin (1:9)

Forgiveness is not judicial. It is not the term for the once-for-all dealing with sin. Propitiation (1 John 2:2, in the next paragraph) is the once-for-all dealing with sin.

John wrote 1:5-10 as a preventative measure against sin (2:1a)

The apostles [and believers] have an advocate (Jesus Christ the Righteous) if they sin (2:1b)

Jesus Christ [is an advocate] because He propitiated for the apostles' sins [and believers' sins] as well as for the sins of the whole world (2:2) (Cf. John 1::29; 3:18; 5:24; 2 Cor 5:19-20; Rev 20:11-15).

NEW EXPOSITION

Issues pertaining to 2:3-11: Since John wants the readers to enjoy fellowship with the Lord, he sets forth truths as they apply to the apostles (we, our, us) or to all believers.

Keeping His commands is how apostles perceive their [fellowship] knowing of Him (2:3)

Remember that John uses “we” for the apostles, so “knowing Him” is used in a fellowship sense, rather than in a relationship sense. In other words, it is possible for a believer (even an apostle) not to know Him (in a fellowship sense).

John’s readers [mature church leaders] already knew his Gospel. Cf. 1 John 2:7. Thus, it is appropriate to consider passages in John in their contexts. (I will establish that the Eleven were already believers prior to the Last Discourse: John 13–17, first).

The Eleven (including Thomas) were believers prior to the Last Discourse
John 13:10-11; 15:1-3. What about John 20:27-29?

Some passages that are background for 1 John 2:3: John 14:15, 23; 15:16

Those claiming to know [fellowship] Him who ignore His commands lies and lack truth. (2:4)

The one who keeps His commandments is one in whom his love for God is matured (2:5a)

Specifically, does love of God mean: *People’s love for God* or *God’s love for people*?
Consider this context (2:3-11) as well as 1 John 4:19 in context)

John is saying that obedience to God is the hallmark of maturing love for God.
A toddler (even a disobedient one) can love his/her parents, but an adult child can manifest mature love for parents by living in a way that honors his/her parents.

Verse 7 (and the book) will clarify which commandment John specifically addresses.

Obedience is how the apostles perceive that they are in Him [a fellowship sense] (2:5b)

John uses “in Him” in a fellowship sense, unlike Paul, who uses it for relationship

The one claiming to abide in Christ ought to walk as Jesus did [in the light] (2:6)

John applies 1 John 1:6-7 here—but remember 1:8 (we are not sinless)

John writes an old commandment that they have had since the beginning, rather than writing them a new commandment (2:7)

That old commandment is a new one, though, because the [present] darkness is passing away and the true light already shines (2:8)

One claiming to be in the light who hates a brother (fellow-believer) is still in darkness (2:9)

One loving his brother abides in the light and no snare [for his brother] is in him (2:10)

One hating his brother walks aimlessly in blinding darkness [he snares himself] (2:11)

CONCLUSION