

## What Do You Think?

“There are those who scoff at the school boy, calling him frivolous and shallow. Yet it was the school boy who said, Faith is believing what you know ain't so.”

(Mark Twain, *Following the Equator*)

# What Do You Think?

- What's the difference between *knowing* and *believing*?
- What is the relationship between them?
- Is one better than the other?



“These things I have written to you who **believe** in the name of the Son of God, so that you may **know** that you have eternal life.” (1 John 5:13)





# *Eternal Life*

A Study of 1 John

## 1 John 4:12

- “No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, **God abides in us**, and **His love is perfected in us.**”
  - **God abides in us** – 4:13-16
  - **His love is perfected in us** – 4:17-21



## 1 John 4:13

- “By this we know that we abide in Him and He is us”
  - Not conditions *for* (cf. 3:24), but evidence *of* (*by this we know* - cf. 2:5-6)
  - *Abide* - intimate reciprocal fellowship
    - Grounded in sound doctrine/truth and our walk/obedience (1:3, 6-7; 3:24)

# 1 John 4:13-21

## • *How Do We Know We Have Fellowship?*

1. By His Spirit (13)
2. By Our Confession (14-15)
3. By Our Loving (16)

# 1. By His Spirit

- “He has given us of His Spirit”
  - Emphasizing *the fact of His presence*
    - 3:24 – “He gave” us His Spirit -> the fact that He was given
    - 4:13 – “He has given” -> the fact of His continuing presence in us



# 1. By His Spirit

- “He has given us of His Spirit”
  - Emphasizing *the fact of His presence*
    - Eph. 1:13-14 - hear the truth/gospel -> believe it -> sealed “with the Holy Spirit of promise” (*pledge*)
    - “The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God” (Rom. 8:16)

## 2. By Our Confession

- *Spirit* <-> truth/doctrine (see 3:24 & 4:1-6)
  - The Holy Spirit is intimately involved in our understanding / acceptance of the truth
    - Cf. *anointing* & truth (2:20-21, 26-27)
    - “It is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth.” (5:6)



## 2. By Our Confession

- *Spirit* <-> truth/doctrine (see 3:24 & 4:1-6)
  - “When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, **He will testify about Me**, and **you will testify also**, because you have been with Me from the beginning.” (John 15:26-27; cf. Acts 5:32)

## 2. By Our Confession

- “We have seen and testify...” (14)
  - Father, Son, and Spirit -> *the trinity*
  - “Sent the Son” -> pre-existence; incarnation
  - “to be the Savior of the world” -> purpose
  - “Savior” -> the problem requires *propitiation*
  - “of the world” -> available to all (cf. 2:2)



## 2. By Our Confession

- *Confess = say the same thing*
  - The apostles proclaimed Jesus (1:1-3; 2:14)
  - The Holy Spirit confirms the message and helps us to understand it (cf. 4:2)
  - Those who agree with the apostolic message show the Spirit's work in their hearts (4:6)

## 2. By Our Confession

- *Confession* involves more than lip service
  - “If we **say** that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we **lie** and do not practice the truth” (1:6)
  - “The one who **says**, ‘I have come to know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a **liar**, and the truth is not in him” (2:4)



## 2. By Our Confession

- Verb tense -> one-time confession
  - *Hold to what you agreed with in the beginning*
  - How do we know if we do? Evidence:  
obedience, purification, righteousness, love
- Therefore, *confession* as evidenced by obedience, indicates true, intimate fellowship with God (cf. 2:23-24; 3:24)

### 3. By Our Loving

- “We have come to **know** and have **believed** the love which God has for us”
  - “We have **believed** and have come to **know** that You are the Holy One of God.” (John 6:69)
  - **Faith** is based on **knowledge**, and true **faith** leads to more/greater/deeper **knowledge** (Mark 4:24-25; cf. Heb. 3:6-4:2; 6:4-8)

### 3. By Our Loving

- “We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us”
  - “for us” – Better: “in us” -> God has love *for* us, but He also puts His love *in* us
    - “and I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known, **so that the love with which You loved Me may be *in* them, and I in them.**” (John 17:26)



### 3. By Our Loving

- God has expressed & modelled His love (9-10)
- With the help of the Holy Spirit we come to comprehend and accept God's love and that we should love in response (11)
- Those loving like God loves show they are abiding in love (cf. John 15:10), and they in God and God in them (cf. 1 John 1:5-7; 4:7-8)

# Summary

- God says we can know we are in an intimate relationship with Him if we:
  - Have His Holy Spirit (who enables us to...)
  - Confess the truth about Jesus (and live accordingly, which means...)
  - Love as He loves

## So What?

- Do you really believe what God has said about intimacy with Him?
  - Is that enough, or do you need *more*?
  - What if you don't *feel* it? Does that mean its not true?



## So What?

- Do you really understand who Jesus is, as communicated through His apostles? (1:1-3)
  - What are you doing to know Him better?
- What are you doing to put that knowledge into practice in your life/context?