

# 1 John 2 - Who Is the Real Christian?

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*The main theme throughout the Epistle of 1 John is knowing truth from error, light from darkness, the children of God from the children of the devil. It is written in response to false teachers, who had left the church and were now trying to seduce the believers with heresy.*

*John was opposing and exposing the heresies of what would become Gnosticism. You cannot accurately understand or interpret this Epistle without understanding this historical context.*

*Gnostics believed:*

- *they had superior knowledge that ordinary Christians did not and could not possess nor access.*
- *they were spiritually superior, the elite, which caused them to be unloving and condescending towards others.*
- *the universe was made up of matter (evil) and light (good) and that man's good (the spirit) was trapped inside an evil body.*
- *Jesus didn't come in the flesh; He had a phantom body.*
- *that knowledge saved them, that they didn't need a Savior or Redeemer and that Christianity had misunderstood Jesus' mission and message.*
- *they were sinless because their body was evil and only their spirit mattered, therefore their bodily behavior was meaningless. They could indulge in sin but still claim to be sinless because all that really mattered was the spirit.*

## 1 John 2:3-11

**3 AND HEREBY WE DO KNOW THAT WE KNOW HIM, IF WE KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS.**

**4 HE THAT SAITH, I KNOW HIM, AND KEEPETH NOT HIS COMMANDMENTS, IS A LIAR, AND THE TRUTH IS NOT IN HIM.**

5 But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.

**6 HE THAT SAITH HE ABIDETH IN HIM OUGHT HIMSELF ALSO SO TO WALK, EVEN AS HE WALKED.**

**7 BRETHREN, I WRITE NO NEW COMMANDMENT UNTO YOU, BUT AN OLD COMMANDMENT WHICH YE HAD FROM THE BEGINNING. THE OLD COMMANDMENT IS THE WORD WHICH YE HAVE HEARD FROM THE BEGINNING.**

**8 AGAIN, A NEW COMMANDMENT I WRITE UNTO YOU, WHICH THING IS TRUE IN HIM AND IN YOU: BECAUSE THE DARKNESS IS PAST, AND THE TRUE LIGHT NOW SHINETH.**

*The two basic commandments which John refers to in verses 1-11*

- *keep God's commandments*
- *love your brother*

*are not new commandments, for God has always required them of His people.*

*But now since Jesus, since His example living among us, since our regeneration, since the true light now shines in us and Jesus dwells in us, those commandments take on a whole new meaning with greater enabling, greater expectations, greater standards and greater requirements. Now we have no excuse.*

**Matthew 5:21–22**

21 YE HAVE HEARD THAT IT WAS SAID BY THEM OF OLD TIME, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:

22 BUT I SAY UNTO YOU, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

**1 John 2:3–11**

9 HE THAT SAITH HE IS IN THE LIGHT, AND HATETH HIS BROTHER, IS IN DARKNESS EVEN UNTIL NOW.

10 HE THAT LOVETH HIS BROTHER ABIDETH IN THE LIGHT, AND THERE IS NONE OCCASION OF STUMBLING IN HIM.

11 BUT HE THAT HATETH HIS BROTHER IS IN DARKNESS, AND WALKETH IN DARKNESS, AND KNOWETH NOT WHITHER HE GOETH, BECAUSE THAT DARKNESS HATH BLINDED HIS EYES.

**WHO IS THE REAL CHRISTIAN? THE PRINCIPLE DISCRIMINATORS ARE:**

- **OBEDIENCE** - keeping God's commandments
- **SERVICE** - loving your brother

**1 John 3:10**

**"IN THIS THE CHILDREN OF GOD ARE MANIFEST, AND THE CHILDREN OF THE DEVIL:**

**WHOSOEVER DOETH NOT RIGHTEOUSNESS IS NOT OF GOD, NEITHER HE THAT LOVETH NOT HIS BROTHER."**

**Matthew 7:15–23**

15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

16 **YE SHALL KNOW THEM BY THEIR FRUITS.** Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

17 **EVEN SO EVERY GOOD TREE BRINGETH FORTH GOOD FRUIT; BUT A CORRUPT TREE BRINGETH FORTH EVIL FRUIT.**

18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

20 **WHEREFORE BY THEIR FRUITS YE SHALL KNOW THEM.**

21 **NOT EVERY ONE THAT SAITH UNTO ME, LORD, LORD, SHALL ENTER INTO THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN; BUT HE THAT DOETH THE WILL OF MY FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN.**

22 **MANY WILL SAY TO ME IN THAT DAY, LORD, LORD, HAVE WE NOT PROPHESIED IN THY NAME? AND IN THY NAME HAVE CAST OUT DEVILS? AND IN THY NAME DONE MANY WONDERFUL WORKS?**

23 **AND THEN WILL I PROFESS UNTO THEM, I NEVER KNEW YOU: DEPART FROM ME, YE THAT WORK INIQUITY.**

*We must look beneath the surface appearance. Skills, natural abilities, gifts are not necessarily **OBEDIENCE** or **SERVICE**. Many times those qualities are self-serving used for self-promotion; just the opposite motive and agenda.*