

1 John 2 • Chapter Study

Intro

In the intro to 1 John I gave 1st wk, I mentioned it's a **challenge outlining** it for 2 reasons →

- 1) John doesn't follow the usual ltr format of → *Greeting / Purpose / Main Body / Closing*.
He just dives right in w/o saying who it's **frm** or **to** or **why** he wrote.
- 2) Then, he doesn't stick w/a topic frm beginning to end then move on to the next.
He introduces **several subjects**, then keeps **circling back** to them, **adding** more.
Like this . . .

In & Out	Has gr8 burgers	& fries	3→ Let's go aftr study
101 FWY	Runs thru Oxnard	Backed up at rush hr	1→ 7 to 3 lanes
Weather	Has been warm lately	Humid	2→ Tropcl sys pulld 1500

We'll see this **spiraling development** of his subjects here in ch2.

¹ My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. → PAUSE

Let's be careful to note first → Who John wrote to.
Is this addressed to believers or unbelievers?
This is an important point to settle because the Hypergrace movement I mentioned last week claims John didn't have Christian in view here.
Remember, they claim Christians CAN'T sin because God's already forgiven them.
The may not measure up to the righteousness of Christ, but they don't sin.
So much of what John writes here nukes their doctrine that they have to say he's not addressing believers.
But it's clear he IS! >> 9 times in this short ltr he refers to his readers as "little children;" twice as "MY little children."
Since he's clearly addressing adults, it's obvious he means **spiritual children**; those who've been born again.
Specifically, these are people John has a sense of spiritual responsibility for as an Apostle.

John writes this to **balance something** he'd just written at the end of Ch 1.
There he said anyone who says he/she is **sinlessly perfect** fools no 1 but themselves.
Let's read vs. 8-10 . . .

⁸ If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹ If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰ If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

John knows from his many yrs if that's **all he says** about sin, some will take it as a **license** to sin.
They'll twist his words & make them into an argument that goes like this –
"Okay, I am going to sin. So, I might as well not even bother *trying to be holy*."
John says, "No! Don't twist my words into an excuse to sin."
"I am writing this," he says in v1, **"So that you won't sin!"**
As we read on, he'll arm us w/the knowledge we need to keep all this in proper balance.
But the bottom line is this →
We are to set our sights on **holiness, motivated** by God's love.
The thing is, John says, we'll all stumble along the way.
But God's made provisiuon for that & forgives when we're honest w/Him & each other.
So he goes on in v1 & says →

¹ My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. → And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. ² And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.

In 1:9, John wrote -

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Here in 2:1&2, John explains HOW God can be both faithful AND just to forgive our sins.
Think of sin as a spiritual **crime**.
The Law that's violated is God's Holiness.
This universes was created BY God & operates by both **natural & supernatural** laws.
Natural Law deals with the **physical, material universe**.
Supernatural Law deals with the **spiritual** realm.
If you violate 1 of the Natural Laws, you suffer the consequences in a **physical** way.
If you attempt to **defy gravity**, you're in for a world of hurt.
In the same way, if you violate a **spiritual** law, there are **spiritual** consequences.
The Law, whether natural or supernatural, is simply the rules by which things *work* in the universe God created.
Break the law, there are consequences.

The ultimate & eventual consequence of breaking spiritual law is **death**.
But death was not the end God intended for His creation, so He's provided a way for us to be **forgiven**, w/o nullifying the reality or consequence of the spiritual crimes we've committed.
If some1 commits a crime & goes before a judge for sentencing, we expect that judge to be **just**, not merciful.
We want judges who are **tough** on crime – unless of course, it is US whose standing there!
Then we don't want a judge who's *just* – we **want** a judge who's *merciful*!
God is both *just* **and** *merciful*.
The way He **reconciles** these seemingly opposite things is **in Jesus Christ**.
At His Cross all our sin was paid for.
The demands of God's righteous law were *satisfied* by the sacrifice of Christ.
Now, as we stand before God as the Divine Judge, we have an **Advocate**, a Defense Attorney = Jesus!
When the list of charges against us is read out, Jesus reminds the Judge they've already been paid for.
It would be unjust to require us to pay them **again**.

The word '**propitiation**' in v 2 is a special word translated differently in various versions.
Some render it as 'sacrifice' or 'atoning sacrifice.'
But the KJ & NKJ render it best as '**propitiation**.'
They reach back in time to pull up an old word that sends us scrambling to the dictionary.
It best captures the idea of the Greek word John uses here.
The word is '**hilasmos**' & means '**an appeasing**.'
It's used in a slightly different form in Heb 9:5, where it's translated as '**mercy seat**.'
The mercy seat was that place on top of the Ark of the Covenant where God's wrath was **appeased** by the spreading of the blood of the sacrifice; the place of Atonement.
Once a year on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, the high priest entered the Holy of holies where the ark was kept in seclusion.
Inside the ark were the 10 Commandments – God's Law, written by His finger.
The lid of the ark was the mercy seat, w/2 cherubim facing each other their wingtips touching.
Above the ark between the cherubim was the glowing cloud of God's presence – the Shekinah.

Imagine it if you can: The glory of God / the golden cherubim of the mercy seat / the tablets representing holiness.
But that ark and those tablets are in the midst, the **center** of a people **who do not keep them**.
So the high priest goes in once a year w/the blood of a goat & sprinkles it **on** the mercy seat.
Now, as God looks down from the Shekinah, he sees the law thru the blood.
The sins of the people are covered by the blood.
Atonement has been made. ➔ They are at-one-ment again.
It's all a picture of how a Holy God can maintain relationship with, stay in fellowship with those who aren't holy, those who sin.
The mercy seat was the **place of atonement**, of **reconciliation**.

John says Jesus is our **mercy seat**; the place where a Holy God & sinful people are reconciled.

V2 again ➔

2 And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.

One of the points of the 5-points of Reformed theology is “Limited Atonement.”
It's the belief that Jesus did **not** die for the sins of the world.
He died only for the **elect**; those God **predestined** to be saved.
John is pretty clear here—Jesus is the atoning sacrifice for **the entire world**.
The only ones who benefit from His sacrifice are those who repent & receive it by faith.
But the death of Christ has the potential to forgive the sins of the entire human race.
That's what makes the condemnation of the lost that much more grievous – they *neglect* the forgiveness that could be theirs if they'd only trust in Christ.

3 Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments.

This is where it helps to remember John's overall theme ➔ RELATIONSHIP!
This is the test we're to use to see if we're really in relationship w/God.
If we **know** Him, that is, if we're **experientially relating** to Him, we'll obey Him.

Now John flips it . . .

4 He who says, “I know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, & the truth is not in him.

John doesn't just say people who disobey God aren't in fellowship w/Him, he goes further & proposes an actual person who's making false claim about their relationship with God.
And he does this because there were people doing this very thing.
There were people who claimed to be following Jesus who weren't.
It was obvious they weren't because they weren't obedient to God.

You see, John means “knowing God” not as having certain thoughts **about** Him.
It means being **in communion** with Him.
Those who are walking in Faith, walking in the Spirit, living in fellowship w/God, **obey** Him.
Those who **disobey** CAN'T be walking in the Spirit because the Spirit is grieved by sin.

Think of it this way ➔ Married couple Fred & Monica are vacationing in Amsterdam.
As they're holding hands & strolling along they walk by one of the infamous brothels of Amsterdam.
Can Fred BOTH ➔ Maintain his walk with Monica & pop into the brothel?
Of course not! That's absurd: And a bit scandalous to use such an illustration.
But that's the point ➔ **Our sin** is scandalous because **we're in a covenant relationship** w/God!

5 But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him.

We expect John to say, “Whoever keeps His word, truly the **knowledge** of God is perfected in him.”
He doesn't say “*knowledge*.”
He says what real knowledge & experience of God produce ➔ **Love**!

John can knowing God is marked by obedience, because he knows if we know God, we'll love Him, and love will compel us to obey Him.
To **really know** God is to love Him because He's the **essence of beauty & perfection**.
It's human nature to be **attracted** to beauty & perfection.
That's why we want to fill our homes w/art & beautiful things.
Why we take vacations to beautiful places.
So as we first learn about God, we see His beauty and are drawn to Him.
Drawn to Him, we learn more.
Learning more, we love Him more.
Loving Him more, we're drawn even closer where our knowledge & experience of Him deepens.
Which fuels even greater love, which leads to deeper knowing, to love, to knowing to love.
“On & on & on & on it goes. It overwhelms and satisfies my soul.”

6 He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.

John repeats what he's already said in slightly different terms.
Those who claim to be in fellowship w/God **will have** a lifestyle like that modeled by Jesus.

Please note John doesn't feel the need to prove or argue what he says here.
It's a self-evident truth.
If you know someone who claims to be a Christian yet lives in flagrant sin, challenge them with this v.
Like John, you don't need to **argue** or **prove** your point.
Having shared it, leave it to the Holy Spirit to apply it to them.
There's another way we can apply v. 6 –

7 Brethren, I write no new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you have had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which you heard from the beginning.

This was nothing new.
Everything John says so far they'd learned from the earliest days of their faith in Christ.
He's just reminding them of the basics.
In v8, he flips that & says ➔

8 Again, a new commandment I write to you, which thing is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away, and the true light is already shining.

V8 does not contradict v7.
The commandment John means here wasn't new in the sense they'd never heard it before.
They had!
It was the New Commandment Jesus had given in John 13:34 when He said to the disciples . . .

A new commandment I give to U, that U love 1 anothr; as I have loved U, that U also love 1 anothr.

Jesus made it clear God wasn't interested in a dead religion of rules & rituals.
What He was after was an intimate love relationship with people.
He didn't come to crush all the joy out of life.
He came to bring life; more of it – always more!
And nothing brings joy to life like love.
This imperative of love for God & 1 anothr was 1 of the 1st lessons John's readers had learned.

He reminds them now – because it’s a lesson we need to be constantly brought back to.

Now John brings in a favorite topic ➔ **Light & Darkness**.
Light is the realm of God and His people while Darkness is the domain of satan and the lost.

⁹ **He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now.** ¹⁰ **He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him.** ¹¹ **But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.**

Do you see how John keeps circling back to the idea that those who claim to be right w/God will obey Him & love what He loves? ➔ He’s said

- If we **know** God – we’ll obey Him.
- If we **abide** in Him, we’ll walk as He walked.
- If we’re in the light, we’ll love others.
- But if these things are **not** true of us, then we’re liars, are walking in darkness, & hate others.

John keeps hammering this BECAUSE there were folk who claimed to be solid Christians who weren’t walking their talk.
This isn’t just a modern phenomenon; it was true in the early church as well.
A person who is born again will **want** to walk in *holiness & love*.
Their relationship with God will lead to specific choices and behavior, *because* of that relationship!
I’m married to Lynn.
Because I’m her husband, I make certain choices.
I go home at night to 401 Geranium because that’s where we live together.
I communicate with her on a regular and intimate basis.
I avoid relationships w/others that would threaten the trust Lynn has in me.
And I make it a point to keep our relationship moving forward & not just morphing into a comfortable place of **boredom**.

In a similar way, we’re **betrothed** to Christ.
We make choices aimed at strengthening the loyalty and love we have for Christ.
We spend time with Him.
We avoid competing affections.
We seek to keep growing in the things of God.

In vs12-14 John moves from prose to poetry.
3 groups are given

1. Little Children
2. Fathers
3. Young men – in that order

¹² **I write to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name’s sake.**
¹³ **I write to you, fathers, because you have known Him *who is* from the beginning.**
I write to you, young men, because you have overcome the wicked one.

Then he starts over again . . .

I write to you, little children, because you have known the Father.
¹⁴ **I have written to you, fathers, because you have known Him *who is* from the beginning.**
I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the wicked one.

The msg to the “fathers” is identical, while that to the little children & young men alters.

Now, to be frank – Commentators have puzzled over exactly WHAT John intends here.
What he wrote is clear enough.
But why he wrote it this way presents a challenge to the interpreter.
Let’s just take a look at what he wrote . . .

To those he calls ‘**little children**’ he writes –

- **your sins are forgiven you for His name’s sake.**
- **you have known the Father.**

One of the very first things the new Christian realizes is that they’re forgiven, not because they did some great thing to merit it, but because God loves them and did for them what they could not do for themselves.
God goes from being some ethereal, abstraction to being their Heavenly **Father**.
Then to ‘**fathers**’ John writes –

- **you have known Him *who is* from the beginning.**

They key here is in their identity as “fathers” and not just seniors, elders, the aged.
They’d produced **spiritual offspring** ➔ because their knowledge of God has brought life to both themselves & others.
They are **fruitful**!
God wants each of us to know the joy of bringing someone to faith in Christ.
Just like natural birth, the process of spiritual birth can be painful & slow, but the joy that comes when it’s done is incredible & makes the pain worth it.
To the ‘**young men**’ John writes –

- **you have overcome the wicked one** = Twice – and precedes it the 2nd time with ➔
- **you are strong, & the word of God abides in you.**

This is a characteristic of young men; they’re strong & ready to fight.
Don’t be put off by John’s use of the **masculine** here.
It was customary in that time to refer to **all mixed groups** in masculine terms.

John is likely doing is in these vs is affirming his readers in their different roles.
In terms of their relationship w/God – they’re **little children** who enjoy open access to their Heavenly Father.
As children of the same Father, they are all brothers & sisters.
In their relationship to the lost, they’re **parents** because their witness helps win the lost.
In relationship to the enemy, they’re **young adults** who are vigorous & skilled in wielding the Sword of the Spirit to overcome the evil one.

¹⁵ **Do not love the world or the things in the world. If any1 loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.**

We looked at v15 Sunday but left vs. 16-17 for tonight.

¹⁶ **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 but is of the world.** ¹⁷**And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.**

The corrupt world-system that lies under the sway of the devil, wants to seduce us away from the love of God.
John identifies 3 forms of desire here:

- 1) The lust of the flesh
- 2) The lust of the eyes
- 3) The pride of life

First - The lust of the flesh is a longing for **sensual pleasure**.

It's a corruption of our ***God given desires.***
God created us w/biological drives that ensure our survival.
There's the drive for ***breath, drink, food, rest, & sex.***
Each of these has a God-ordained & honoring way to fulfill them.
But sin has sullied us to our core, corrupting each of these drives.
So, instead of ***breathing*** clean, fresh air, people inhale chemicals that lead sometimes to ***disease*** & other times to ***addictions.***
Instead of ***drinking*** clean fresh water, they imbibe alcohol which can leads to all kinds of problems.
Instead of ***eating*** a healthy diet in moderation, they indulge in gluttony.
Instead of enjoying a healthy marital relationship, they get involved in harmful perversions.
The World is constantly coming up w/new ways to 1st → ***Entice***, then ***Addict*** people to sinful ways of satisfying the desires of the flesh.

Second -The lust of the eyes is the ***insatiable desire*** to see something new & remarkable.
Just like our ***bodies***, our souls have an appetite.
They crave satisfaction thru finding meaning & purpose.
The eyes are the gateway to the soul.
They want to fix on something that will feed the soul on something satisfying.
Voila – we say, “***Feast*** your eyes on this/that.”
In John's day, the Greeks & Romans lived for entertainments that excited their eyes.
That's why sports & festivals were so popular.
The Coliseum in Rome was built for this very reason.
Did you know there were such theaters in most major cities of the empire?
When in *Gladiator*, Maximus cried out to the crowd – “Are you not entertained” that was an historically accurate portrayal of exactly what the gladiatorial games were about.
In fact, the Emperor portrayed in Gladiator was the real life ***Commodus***, son of the famous Marcus Aurelius.
Commodus was arguable one of the ***worst*** Emperors in Rome's history.
He fancied himself the living incarnation of Hercules and did the unthinkable.
He made himself a gladiator and fought in the arena, making the people of Rome pay to come watch him fight prisoners who'd been pre-wounded.
He was all about the spectacle!
In one event he killed over a hundred exotic animals with his own hand.
The people of Rome had become so inured to violence, they needed more & greater demonstrations of brutality to entertain them.
Well → Things haven't changed much.
TV & movies are driven by the lust of the eyes.
So it's no wonder the violence & sex has become more graphic, brutal, titillating.
In Matt 6:23 Jesus said . . .

If your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

The **Third** desire John mentions is the “pride of life” better translated as, “the ***boastful*** pride of life.”
The word refers to a ***braggart*** who tries to impress others with his ***importance.***
This is the deadly game of ***one-upmanship*** that drives so much the world-system.
How many houses are bought, cars purchased, & appliances acquired, out of a desire to impress others?
How many vacations are taken, or clothes worn just to make others ***envious?***
The desire to ***feel, & thought of*** as important has driven & ruined many.

It's thru these 3 desires the World seeks to seduce us to give our love & heart to it rather than God.
What's interesting is to see how what John spells out here chroncilces how satan temped Eve all the way back in Gen. 3

⁶So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food,

That's the lust of the ***flesh.***
that it was pleasant to the eyes,

The lust of the ***eyes.***
and a tree desirable to make one wise,

The ***pride of life.***
she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

Note something critical here → satan ***singled Eve out*** for temptation.
He didn't tempt both A&E at the same time >> Interesting!
More than likely, if he'd approached them ***simultaneously***, they would have *supported each other* in their dependence on God.
The devil knows temptation is *much more effective* when it comes in isolation.
So he'll try to cut you out & separate you frm fellowship w/Jesus & other believers.
One of the ways he does that is by stirring up strife btwn us so we feel justified in not being close to others.

Where Eve gave in to all 3 avenues of desire, Jesus faced the same ones in His temptation in the wilderness; but this time He refused to yield.
The temptation to turn the stones into bread was an appeal to the ***flesh.***
when Satan showed Him all the kingdoms of the world it was an appeal to the ***eyes.***
In the temptation to throw Himself off the pinnacle of the temple in the sight of all the people of Jerusalem, it was an appeal to the ***pride of life.***
The devil used these 3 temptations w/Jesus because they're the same ones he's used endlessly throughout history with such great success.
Why change when it works so well?
If it ain't broke, don't fix it.
And these 3 desires still work on the vast majority of the human race.

¹⁷And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

In v17 John reminds us it's foolish to invest in the world because it can't last.
It's going to dissolve.
So those who've lived by and for it will lose everything.
Those who live for God lose nothing but gain everything worth gaining.
As the old saying goes – “Only one life that will soon be past; only what's done for Christ will last.”
Missionary martyr Jim Elliot penned these words, “He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.”

¹⁸Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour.

How's that for a bombshell? → It's the Last Hour & there are lots of antichrists round about.

What does John mean by – “It’s the last hour”?

2000 years have passed since John wrote. That’s a ***long time!***

Along w/other NT writers, John viewed the whole period between Christ’s 1st & 2nd Coming as the *last days* ,sometimes referred to as the last hour.¹

They called it this because there was no prophecy or revelation of ***another*** period of time ***before*** the return of Christ.

Both the OT prophets & Christ himself made it clear that in the last days, the rebellion of mankind would be consummated in the emergence of the Antichrist → a world ruler who would be the embodiment of evil.

Though **THE** antichrist had not yet risen in John’s day, he witnessed a growing antichrist *spirit*.

19 They [meaning those of the antichrist-party] went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.

Many of the false teachers that harassed the church started out ***in*** it.

But they’d never really been born again.

If they were, they’d have continued in the community of Christ.

That they left proved they were never a part; just posers, fakes, frauds.

If you know anything about the pseudo-Christians cults, you know most of their founders & leaders started out in some Christian denomination.

They often got their start in their religious shenanigizing by presenting themselves as ***reformers***.

They spout just enough truth to deceive the unwary.

Then as they gain a following, they slowly ***out*** their real agenda.

The leader claims special revelations ***equal*** to Scripture.

Then the movement runs into a head on collision w/Biblical Orthodoxy & a break occurs.

20But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things. 21I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and that no lie is of the truth.

John is confident his readers can discern the difference btwn truth & error because they’re indwelt by the Spirit of Truth.

He doesn’t have to worry about them being deceived by the false spirit of antichrist.

22Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son.

We know from history 1 of the first heresies to trouble the early church was called Docetism.

Docetism said Jesus & Christ were 2 separate beings.

Jesus, they said, was ***just a good man***, but not ***perfect***.

Christ, on the other hand, was a ***spirit*** who descended on the man Jesus at his baptism.

It was this Christ-spirit that taught & performed miracles.

Then, just before Jesus was arrested in Gethsemane, the Christ spirit departed from him.

So that what was tortured & crucified wasn’t Christ; it was just a man named Jesus.

These false teachers went on to say the same Christ-spirit would descend upon anyone who made him or herself ***ready*** – as Jesus had.

John called this teaching a manifestation of the Antichrist spirit.

What’s fascinating is that this ancient heresy, which was laid to rest by the late 4th C, has experienced a remarkable revival in the 20th & has found new life in the ***New Age Movement***.

New Agers believe plead with the Christ-spirit to come once again.

What a perfect set up for THE Antichrist to step forward & claim to be the present day embodiment of Christ.

If he work miracles, as 2 Thess 2 says he will, many will be convinced & flock to Him.

In V18, John wrote -

. . . even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour.

He considered the emergence ***of a lot of people*** moved by the spirit of antichrist to be a sign of the ***last days***.

If that was true of His day, HOW MUCH MORE the day in which we live?

In v22, John refutes the Docetic heresy & says **Jesus IS the Christ**; they are 1 & the same!

Another thing the false teachers did was to assign Jesus an identity ***less*** than God.

John dismisses that by ***repeating*** something Jesus said again & again.

23Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also.

In John 12:44-45, Jesus said,

He who believes in Me, believes not in Me but in Him who sent Me. And he who sees Me sees Him who sent Me.

John 13:20 -

He who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.

You simply can’t make much of God the Father w/o making much of the Son.

24Therefore let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father. 25And this is the promise that He has promised us—eternal life.

Don’t miss that v24 begins with “***therefore***.”

Because there’s a dangerous & deceptive antichrist spirit at work in the world, the best way to protect against it is to stay focused on the 1st things & cultivate the basic truths of the faith.

John’s not advocating spiritual shallowness or naivety.

He expects Christians to mature.

But he knows real spiritual growth rests on a solid foundation of the basics.

26These things I have written to you concerning those who try to deceive you. 27But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him.

When he writes →

you do not need that anyone teach you;

He’s NOT saying we don’t need gifted & anointed teachers of God’s Word.

¹ New Commentary on the Whole Bible; Acts 2:17; 2 Tim. 3:1; Heb. 1:2; 1 Pet. 1:20

After all, teaching is 1 of the *ministry gifts & pastor-teacher* is 1 of the offices God’s ordained in the Church.

What John means here is that all genuine teaching is something the Spirit of God does.

He does it THRU the gifted, called and anointed teacher & IN the heart & mind of the listener.

John is saying that there ought to be no one who takes the position that they are God’s official spokesmen and we’re to listen to them no matter what we think or what God’s Word says.

Really, John echoes what Jesus said in Matt 23:9 when He warned His followers to call no 1 *Father*.

He wasn’t prohibiting us using the term with our male parent; He meant it *spiritually*.

We aren’t to give *anyone* the authority of a spiritual ruler over us, such that we fail to check what they say against God’s Word.

We aren’t to just do whatever some supposed religious leader says, because he/she says it and so that’s good enough for us.

No! God has no grand-children – only sons & daughters.

God can certainly use gifted leaders to help us grow.

But we’re ultimately responsible to God for ourselves.

28 And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.

If we’re walking in the Spirit, when Jesus comes, it won’t be all that big a surprise.

And we certainly won’t be ashamed at what we were doing.

BUT – if we’re not abiding in Chris & walking in the Spirit, who knows what we might be into?

Listen you don’t want that most glorious of all moments in your life to be tainted by regret.

29 If you know

Really know, because you know Him and not just about Him -

that He is righteous, you know [as well in a necessary corollary] that every1 who practices righteousness is born of Him.

Johns comes round again to the same things he’s said several times now.

The person in fellowship with God knows He’s righteous.

They also know that to be His child means to bear a *family resemblance to Him*.

We say, “Look, she has her mother’s eyes” or “He has his father’s nose.”

The children of God should have a resemblance to their Father in heaven.

He is righteous, so those who are **born of Him** also have a lifestyle of **practical righteousness**.