

Knowing That We Know Him

1 John 2:3-17

WHAT WE FOUND

John gave us his test for knowing God, and it is not a feeling: "by this we may be sure that we know him, if we keep his commandments" (2:3). Knowledge of God in Scripture is covenant knowledge, proven in walking as he walked (2:6). And before he warned us about anything, John told us what is already true: sins forgiven, the Father known, the evil one overcome (2:12-14). Obedience is response, never audition.

We solved the riddle of the commandment that is both old and new: love of neighbor is as old as Leviticus 19:18, but at the Last Supper Jesus gave that old command its new and fullest measure: not merely "as yourself" but "even as I have loved you" (John 13:34). The cross is now the yardstick.

And we found the world's anatomy hiding in Eden: Eve saw the tree was good for food, a delight to the eyes, and desirable for wisdom (Genesis 3:6), a pattern the Church's readers have long seen mirrored in the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and pride of life John names in 2:16. The world built on those three is passing away, "but he who does the will of God abides for ever" (2:17).

VOICES OF THE CHURCH

VOICES OF THE CHURCH

St. Gregory the Great *Homilies on the Gospels, Homily 30*

Gregory's maxim belongs over this whole passage: the proof of love is shown in deeds. The love of God is never idle, he preaches; where it exists it works great things, and if it refuses to work, it is not love. John's test in 2:3-6 is not a burden added to love but love's own signature.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH

St. Augustine *Ten Homilies on the First Epistle of John, Homily 2*

Preaching on "do not love the world," Augustine asks his hearers why they pour their love into what cannot last. The world passes away with its lusts, he says; what do you prefer, to love the things that pass and pass away with them, or to love Christ and live forever? Hold instead to him who made all things and abides.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH

St. Francis de Sales *Introduction to the Devout Life, Part I*

De Sales insists that fleeing love of the world does not mean fleeing ordinary life. Devotion belongs to the soldier, the tradesman, the married; the same daily duties, done for love of God, become the very path to him. Detachment is a question of the heart's owner, not of the calendar's contents.

LIVE IT THIS WEEK

1.

Choose your dominant concupiscence and take up its classical remedy for seven days: flesh, fast from one comfort; eyes, give alms that pinch; pride, pray hidden prayer no one will ever know about. Tell one person in this group which you chose, for accountability.

2.

Memorize 1 John 2:17 and pray it every time you reach for your phone out of boredom this week. Count how often that turns out to be.

3.

Do one hidden act of love for someone this week that only God will see, and tell no one, ever.

MEMORY VERSE

"And the world passes away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides for ever." (1 John 2:17, RSV2CE)

BEFORE NEXT SESSION

Read **1 John 2:18-27**. Keep the second blank sealed. As you read, underline the words *abide*, *anointing*, and every form of the word *antichrist*, and notice who "went out."

Catechism Connection: CCC 2514; 2055; 1965-1972