

KNOW "LIGHT, LOVE & LIFE"

A Sermonic Commentary of the Epistle of 1 John

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5- Know: To Love the Right Things

1 John 2:12-17

1 John 2:12-17 I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake. 13 I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father. 14 I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one. 15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

Love is a word that we toss around very freely in our culture. We love; cheese, ice cream, watermelon, chocolate cake, swimming, hunting and on and on it goes. We use the word love in our English language to express emotion, to convey affection as well as deep love. Love is sort of a multilayered word when it comes to its meaning.

Love is most often a noun in our sentence structure. May I suggest that it should be treated as a verb because love should show action which is the purpose of a verb? It is true that we many times love the wrong things, would you not agree?

So how do we learn to love the right things? Let's explore this in this section.

I- Four Stages of Maturity:

1 John 2:12-14 I write unto you, little children, [infants] because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake. 13 I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father. 14 I have written unto you,

fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.

John used four different Greek words that show us four stages of maturing in the faith. They range from infants to fatherhood. Let's look at these four words.

1- Infants: *Teknion* Strong's defines this as "an infant, ... darlings..."

2- Little Children: *pahee-dee'-on* Strong's defines this as "a childling (of either sex), that is, (properly) an infant, or (by extension) a half grown boy or girl; figuratively an immature Christian

3- Young Men: *neh-an-is'-kos* Again Strong's says, "a youth (under forty)"

4- Fathers: *pat-ayr'* This is pretty self-explanatory and Strong's simply says, "a "father" (literally or figuratively, near or more remote)."

So there are four states in maturity here and not all can be expected to make decisions with the same amount of wisdom and understanding. John reminds the infant children new born in the faith that their sins

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are forgiven. He reminds the children that they know and have known the father. The young men he addressed by recognizing that their faith is a strong growing faith. The father he spoke to about knowing Christ for a long time, a maturing faith.

Let me give us the rendering of *Wuest New Testament: An Expanded Translation* of these verses that will shed more light on them.

I John 2:12 Wuest I am writing to you, little children , because your sins have been put away for you permanently because of His Name. I am writing to you, fathers, because you have come to know experientially the One who is from the beginning, and as a present result are possessors of that knowledge. I am writing to you, young men, because you have gained the victory over the Pernicious One and as a present result are victorious over him. I write to you, little children under instruction, because you have come to know the Father experientially, with the present result that you are possessors of that knowledge. I write to you, fathers, because you have come to know experientially the One who is from the beginning, and are as a present result possessors of that knowledge. I write to you, young men, because you are strong with endowed strength and the word of God in you is abiding, and you have gained the victory over the Pernicious One, and as a present result are victorious over him.

May I suggest that we should take notice of the place in their walk that an individual is and challenge them on toward more maturity. Also many times we are challenged in our faith from the bottom up. By this I mean that younger ones often act more mature in the faith than some who should be farther down the road.

II- Love the Right Things:

One sign of a maturing faith is that our affection is set on the right things. Notice what John said in *1 John 2:15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.*

Marvin Vincent says the word world means, "*The sum-total of human life in the ordered world, considered apart from, alienated from, and hostile to God, and of the earthly things which seduce from God*"

There are many things in the world that are neutral in many ways but become wrong when we put them between us and God.

John next said, *1 John 2:15 ...If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.*

The three great areas of the attraction of the world are here. Lust of the flesh, the fleshing wanting what it thinks will satisfy it. Next is the lust of the eyes; the eyes seeing the attraction of sin but not the deception. Then the last is the pride of life. You deserve it type attitude.

III- Eternal Things:

1 John 2:17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

When we learn to love the right things as we mature in our walk we will begin to see things from an eternal view point and not just from a moment to moment view to satisfy the flesh, lust and pride. We need to know to love the right things. *Colossians 3:2* says, *Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.*