

Banging the Drum Slowly: I John 4



HEREBY WE KNOW THAT WE KNOW HIM

Review



- Context
- 3 tests or hallmarks of believers
 - Doctrinal
 - Moral
 - Social

A Third Exposition Of The Doctrinal Test - 1John

4:1-6



- 1John 1: 1-4- What we have seen and touched, and which was with the Father, we proclaim so that you might have fellowship with us
- 1 John 2: 18-27- “Who is the liar? It is the man who denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a man is the antichrist”
- 1 John 4: 1-6- “This is how you recognize the Spirit of God. Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus has come in the flesh is from God, but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of antichrist...”

A Sincere Profession Does not Mean Correct Belief:



- V 1- “Dear Friends” (see also 2:1, 2:7, 2:18, 2:28, 3:7, 3:21) followed by an imperative/command- “test the spirits”
- CF. 3:24 “ And this is how we know that he lives in us: we know it by the Spirit he gave us”.
- But how do we know it is the Spirit? Test it by what it says about Jesus
- V 3- “Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus has come in the flesh is from God” and the converse works as well.

John would not have been comfortable with Post-modernism



HIS OBJECTIVE REALITY: THE APOSTOLIC EXPERIENCE OF JESUS TRUMPS PERSONAL FEELINGS, INSIGHTS AND ASPIRATIONS

THEY HAD NO CANON YET, BUT THEY DID HAVE HIM.

AND TODAY, HE WOULD SAY THE SAME THING TO A SOCIALLY CONSTRUCTED MORALITY THAT SHUNS BIBLICAL INSTRUCTION IN FAVOR OF RELATIVISM

A Third Exposition of Social Test- 1John4:7- 19



- 1 John 2:9- “Whoever claims to be in the light, but hates his brother is still in darkness”
- 1 John 3: 16- “This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down for our brothers”
- 1 John 4:19-21-” We love because he first loved us. If anyone says “I love God” yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, who he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen.”

I John 3:1-18- God's Love Lavished

A large, light red arrow pointing downwards, centered on the page. Inside the arrow, there are two rounded rectangular boxes, one above the other, both containing text.

God

Me

Implications of God's Love Lavished Towards Us



- It transforms us to resemble God (v.2)
- It incents us to live consistent with the Gospel (v. 3-10)
- It stimulates us to love community of God's faithful (v.10)

Comparing the message on Love in Chapters 3 and 4



Chapter 3

- How do we know what love is?- v16
- How we then behave? v16, we lay down our lives
- And if we fail? V 19/20 God is greater than our hearts

Chapter 4

- This is love- v10
- How then do we behave? V 11-12, we love one another
- And if we fail? V 19/20- no fear, no punishment.

Echoes from the Gospel



- John 13:34-35 “A new commandment I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you so you must love one another. All men will know that you are my disciples if you love one another”
- John 17:20-23- “ ...I pray for those also who will believe in me.... May they be brought into complete unity to let the world know that you have sent me, and have loved them even as you have loved me...”

1 John 4:10-12



God

Pietism/
Individualism



You



Me

A Powerful Witness Given Life Situations in the First Century (Rodney Stark)



- Fragile health environment
- Strength and disappointments come from family bonds
- Socio-economic disparity
 - From grinding poverty and slavery to wealth often based on exploitation
- Religious supermarket leading to confusion
- Political and military uncertainty
- Religious persecution