

1 John Chapter 2 — Crawford Standard Bible

Bible Study: Walking in the Light and Abiding in Christ

Introduction

1 John Chapter 2 continues John's message that **true fellowship with God produces a changed life**. John addresses sin, obedience, love, spiritual growth, the dangers of loving the world, false teachers, the antichrist, the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and the importance of abiding in Christ.

The chapter repeatedly presents a test of genuine Christian faith:

- Do we obey Christ?
- Do we love other believers?
- Do we reject the values of the world?
- Do we remain faithful to the truth about Jesus?
- Do we abide in Christ?
- Does our life demonstrate righteousness?

I. Christ Our Advocate

1 John 2:1–2

Verse 1 — Jesus Is Our Advocate

John says he is writing so believers **will not sin**, but he also recognizes that Christians can fall into sin. When they do, they have an Advocate with the Father—**Jesus Christ, the Righteous One**.

What does this mean?

Christianity does not teach that believers should deliberately continue in sin. The goal is to live in obedience to Christ.

However, when a Christian sins, failure does not mean that Christ abandons him. Jesus represents the believer before the Father.

Cross References:

- John 14:16
- Romans 8:34
- Hebrews 7:25

Important Truth

There is a difference between:

Falling into sin and **choosing to live in sin**.

John encourages believers to pursue holiness while assuring them that Jesus remains their Advocate when they fail.

Verse 2 — Christ Is the Sacrifice for Sin

Jesus Himself is the sacrifice that atones for sin. His saving work is not limited to one small group of people but is presented as being for the sins of **the whole world**.

What does this teach?

Our salvation is based upon what Christ has done, not upon our ability to make ourselves righteous.

Cross References:

- Romans 3:25
- 1 John 4:10
- John 1:29

Bible Study Question

What should a Christian do when he sins?

Answer: He should not hide his sin or excuse it. He should turn to Christ, confess his sin, and depend upon Jesus Christ, our Advocate and Savior.

II. Obedience and Love

1 John 2:3–11

Verse 3 — Knowing Christ Produces Obedience

John says we can know that we truly know Christ if we **keep His commandments**.

This does not mean that Christians earn salvation by perfect obedience. Rather, obedience is evidence that a person's relationship with Christ is genuine.

Cross References:

- John 14:15
- John 15:10
- John 14:21

Question

How can a person demonstrate that he truly knows Christ?

Answer: His life should increasingly demonstrate obedience to God's Word.

Verse 4 — Profession Without Obedience

A person may claim, "I know God," but if that person continually refuses to obey God's commandments, his profession is contradicted by his behavior.

Lesson

Our words about Christianity must agree with our lives.

Cross References:

- Titus 1:16
- Matthew 7:23
- John 14:21

Verse 5 — Obedience and God's Love

Obedience demonstrates that God's love is being brought to maturity within us.

John gives believers a practical way to examine their relationship with God:

What does my life reveal about my relationship with Him?

Verse 6 — Live Like Jesus

"Whoever claims to live in Him must live as Jesus lived."

This is one of the strongest challenges in the chapter.

Christians are not merely called to believe information about Jesus. They are called to **follow His example**.

Cross References:

- Ephesians 5:1
- 1 Peter 2:21
- John 13:15

Question

What does it mean to live as Jesus lived?

Answer: It means pursuing a life characterized by obedience, love, humility, holiness, compassion, truth, and submission to the will of God.

III. Love Is Evidence of Walking in the Light

1 John 2:7–11

John describes the command to love as both **old and new**.

The command itself was already known, but through Christ its meaning and expression were brought into greater clarity.

Verse 9 — Hatred Reveals Darkness

A person who claims to be in the light but hates his brother is still walking in darkness.

Question

Why does John connect love with light?

Answer: Because genuine fellowship with God produces love for others. Persistent hatred contradicts the claim that a person is walking in God's light.

Verse 10 — Love and Spiritual Safety

The person who loves his brother lives in the light.

Love protects the believer from becoming a stumbling block to others.

Cross References:

- Psalm 119:165
- Romans 14:13
- John 8:12

Verse 11 — Hatred Produces Blindness

John says the person who hates his brother is walking in darkness and does not know where he is going.

Spiritual Principle

Hatred can distort spiritual judgment.

When bitterness controls a person's heart, it can affect how that person sees other people, circumstances, and even God's will.

Cross References:

- 1 John 4:20
- 2 Corinthians 4:4

IV. Encouragement to Believers

1 John 2:12–14

John addresses believers as **children, young men, and fathers**.

These descriptions emphasize different aspects of spiritual maturity.

Children

They know the Father and have experienced forgiveness.

Young Men

They are spiritually strong, God's Word lives in them, and they have overcome the evil one.

Fathers

They know the One who is from the beginning.

Question

What does this teach about spiritual growth?

Answer: Christians should not remain spiritually immature. Believers are called to grow deeper in their knowledge of God, become stronger in the Word, and increasingly overcome spiritual opposition.

V. Do Not Love the World

1 John 2:15–17

Verse 15 — Do Not Love the World

John warns believers not to love **the world or the things in the world**.

Here, "world" refers to the sinful system and values that oppose God—not to the people whom God loves.

Question

What does it mean not to love the world?

Answer: It means refusing to make worldly desires, values, possessions, pride, and sinful priorities the controlling focus of our lives.

Cross References:

- James 4:4
- Romans 12:2

- John 15:19

Verse 16 — Three Dangers

John identifies three major categories:

1. Desire of the flesh

Wrong desires that arise from our sinful nature.

2. Desire of the eyes

Coveting what we see and wanting what belongs to us only because it looks attractive or desirable.

3. Pride of life

Boasting in possessions, status, achievements, or position.

Cross References:

- Genesis 3:6
- Ecclesiastes 2:10
- 1 Peter 2:11

Verse 17 — The World Is Temporary

The world and its desires are passing away.

But the person who does God's will **lives forever**.

Question

Why should Christians refuse to live for worldly desires?

Answer: Because worldly desires are temporary, while obedience to God has eternal significance.

VI. Warning About Antichrists

1 John 2:18–27

Verse 18 — The Last Hour

John warns that the antichrist is coming and that even then **many antichrists have appeared**.

This indicates that opposition to Christ was already active among the people John was addressing.

Cross References:

- 2 Thessalonians 2:3

- Matthew 24:24
- 2 John 1:7

Verse 19 — Departure From the Faith

Some people had left the Christian community.

John explains that their departure demonstrated that they did not truly belong to them.

Question

What does their departure reveal according to John?

Answer: It revealed that their profession of faith was not genuine. Their abandonment of the apostolic truth exposed their true spiritual position.

Cross References:

- Acts 20:30
- Matthew 7:23
- Jude 1:19

VII. The Anointing of the Holy One

1 John 2:20–27

Verse 20 — Believers Have an Anointing

John tells believers that they have an **anointing from the Holy One** and know the truth.

The chapter connects this anointing with God's Spirit guiding believers into truth.

Cross References:

- 2 Corinthians 1:21
- John 14:26
- John 16:13

Verse 21 — Truth and Lies

John is not writing because his readers do not know the truth. He is reminding them because they **do know the truth**.

Truth comes from God; lies do not.

Question

Why is knowledge of biblical truth important?

Answer: Because knowing the truth helps believers recognize deception and remain faithful to Christ.

VIII. The Denial of Christ

1 John 2:22–23

John asks:

Who is the liar?

His answer is the person who denies that Jesus is the Christ.

According to John, denying the Son also means denying the Father.

Question

Why is belief in Jesus as the Christ essential?

Answer: Because Jesus is not merely a teacher or prophet in John's presentation. He is the Son, the Christ, and the way to the Father.

Cross References:

- 2 John 1:7
- Matthew 10:33
- 1 John 4:3

IX. Remain in the Truth

1 John 2:24–27

Verse 24 — Continue in What You Heard

John tells believers to allow the apostolic message they heard from the beginning to **remain in them**.

Spiritual principle

Do not continually chase every new teaching.

Remain grounded in the truth you received concerning Christ.

Verse 25 — The Promise of Eternal Life

The promise connected with remaining in Christ is **eternal life**.

Cross References:

- John 3:16

- John 10:28
- Titus 1:2

Verse 26 — Beware of Deception

John specifically says he is writing because there are people trying to deceive believers.

Question

Why must Christians be careful about false teaching?

Answer: Because false teaching can lead people away from the truth about Christ.

Verse 27 — The Holy Spirit's Ministry

The anointing believers have received remains in them.

John is not saying Christians have no need for pastors, teachers, or biblical instruction. Rather, the Holy Spirit is the ultimate source of spiritual truth and helps believers recognize what is true.

Cross References:

- John 14:26
- Jeremiah 31:34
- John 16:13

X. Abide in Christ

1 John 2:28–29

Verse 28 — Confidence at Christ's Coming

John tells believers to **continue in Christ** so that when Christ appears they will have confidence rather than shame.

Question

What does it mean to abide in Christ?

Answer: It means continuing in fellowship with Christ, remaining faithful to His truth, obeying His Word, and refusing to abandon Him when false teaching or opposition appears.

Cross References:

- John 15:4
- 1 John 4:17
- 2 Timothy 4:8

Verse 29 — Righteous Living

If we know that Christ is righteous, then we should recognize that those who practice righteousness demonstrate that they have been born of Him.

Important distinction

John does not teach that righteous behavior earns the new birth.

Rather, righteous behavior **reveals evidence of the new birth**.

XXXVI. QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

Why does John say Christians should not sin, while also saying that Jesus is our Advocate when we sin?

Answer:

John holds two truths together. Christians are commanded to pursue holiness and not deliberately live in sin. However, Christians can still fall into sin. When they do, Jesus Christ is their Advocate before the Father. The presence of an Advocate is not permission to sin; it is assurance that Christ provides forgiveness and representation when believers fail.

Question 2

How does obedience demonstrate that a person knows Christ?

Answer:

Obedience demonstrates that faith is genuine because a person who truly knows Christ desires to follow His commandments. Obedience does not purchase salvation; it provides evidence of a relationship with Christ.

Question 3

What does it mean to live as Jesus lived?

Answer:

It means following Christ's example of obedience, love, humility, holiness, compassion, truth, and submission to God. The Christian life should increasingly reflect the character of Christ.

Question 4

Why does John say that hatred of another believer is evidence of darkness?

Answer:

Because walking in God's light should produce love. Persistent hatred contradicts the character of God and demonstrates that darkness is controlling the person's life.

Question 5

What are the three things John identifies as belonging to the world?

Answer:

1. The desires of the flesh.
2. The desires of the eyes.
3. The pride of life.

These represent sinful desires, covetous desires, and prideful dependence upon worldly possessions and status.

Question 6

Why should Christians not love the world?

Answer:

Because the world's sinful desires are temporary and are passing away. God's will is eternal. Therefore, Christians should invest their lives in what has eternal value rather than temporary worldly desires.

Question 7

What does John mean by "antichrists"?

Answer:

In this chapter, John describes people who oppose or deny the truth concerning Jesus Christ. He specifically identifies the denial that Jesus is the Christ as antichrist teaching. John also says that many antichrists had already appeared.

Question 8

What evidence does John give concerning those who left the Christian community?

Answer:

Their departure demonstrated that they did not truly belong to the community. Their abandonment of the apostolic truth revealed that their profession had not been genuine.

Question 9

What is the importance of the believer's anointing from the Holy One?

Answer:

The anointing points to the Spirit's ministry of guiding believers into truth. The Holy Spirit helps believers recognize truth and resist deception.

Question 10

Why is denying Jesus as the Christ such a serious matter?

Answer:

Because denying the Son means rejecting the truth about who Jesus is. John teaches that whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either. The relationship with God is inseparably connected to receiving the Son.

Question 11

What does it mean to let the message heard from the beginning remain in us?

Answer:

It means remaining faithful to the original apostolic message about Jesus Christ rather than being carried away by false teaching or new doctrines that contradict the truth.

Question 12

What does John mean when he tells believers to abide in Christ?

Answer:

To abide in Christ means to continue in Him—to remain faithful to Him, His Word, His truth, and His way of life. Abiding produces confidence when Christ appears.

Question 13

How can Christians recognize spiritual maturity in their lives?

Answer:

According to this chapter, spiritual maturity is demonstrated through growing knowledge of God, obedience to His Word, strength against the evil one, love for fellow believers, rejection of worldly values, discernment against false teaching, and continued faithfulness to Christ.

XXXVII. COMBINED PRACTICAL APPLICATION

1. Do Not Make Sin Your Lifestyle

John does not teach Christians to accept sin as normal and remain comfortable with it.

Fight sin. Confess sin. Turn from sin. Depend upon Christ.

2. Remember That Jesus Is Your Advocate

When you fail, do not run away from Christ.

Run to Christ.

Jesus is the Righteous One who represents His people before the Father.

3. Let Your Life Confirm Your Profession

It is easy to say:

"I know Jesus."

The greater question is:

Does my life demonstrate that I know Jesus?

John repeatedly connects genuine faith with obedience.

4. Walk in Love

A Christian cannot cultivate hatred while claiming to walk in God's light without creating a serious contradiction.

Love is not merely an emotion.

Biblical love demonstrates itself through how we treat others.

5. Grow Spiritually

John describes believers at different stages of spiritual maturity.

The Christian life should involve **growth**.

We should know God more deeply, understand Scripture more clearly, become stronger against temptation, and increasingly reflect Christ.

6. Do Not Let the World Become Your Master

Money, possessions, appearance, success, popularity, pleasure, and status are temporary.

They cannot provide eternal life.

John calls believers to seek something greater:

the will of God.

7. Test What You Hear

Not every spiritual teacher speaks the truth.

John warns repeatedly about deception.

The Christian must compare teaching with the truth concerning Jesus Christ and the apostolic message.

8. Stay in the Word

False teaching becomes dangerous when believers become unfamiliar with the truth.

A Christian who knows Scripture is better equipped to recognize error.

9. Depend Upon the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit guides believers into truth.

Therefore, Christians should pray for wisdom, study God's Word, and remain sensitive to the Spirit's work.

10. Abide in Christ Until He Comes

The final instruction of the chapter is powerful:

Remain in Christ.

Do not abandon Him.

Do not exchange truth for deception.

Do not exchange holiness for worldly desires.

Do not exchange love for hatred.

Do not exchange eternal things for temporary things.

Abide in Christ so that when He appears, you may have confidence rather than shame.

Key Lessons from 1 John 2

1. **Christ Is Our Advocate** — When believers sin, Jesus Christ represents them before the Father.
2. **Obedience Demonstrates Genuine Faith** — Knowing Christ should produce obedience.
3. **Christians Are Called to Live Like Jesus** — Our lives should increasingly reflect His character.
4. **Love Is Evidence of Walking in the Light** — Hatred is inconsistent with genuine fellowship with God.
5. **Christians Should Grow Spiritually** — Believers should progress from spiritual childhood toward greater strength and maturity.
6. **Do Not Love the World** — The desires of the flesh, eyes, and pride of life are temporary.
7. **Beware of Antichrist Teaching** — Any teaching that denies the biblical truth about Jesus Christ must be rejected.
8. **Remain in the Truth** — Christians must hold firmly to the message they received concerning Christ.
9. **The Holy Spirit Guides Believers Into Truth** — The believer's anointing helps guard against spiritual deception.
10. **Abide in Christ** — Faithfulness to Christ now prepares believers to stand with confidence when He appears.

Central Message of 1 John 2

A person who truly knows Christ should increasingly walk like Christ, love like Christ, obey Christ, reject the world's sinful system, stand against false teaching, and remain faithful to Christ until He comes.