

17/18 October 2023 //

1 John 2:3-17

Background:

On Sunday, Josh unpack the verses immediately preceding this in 1 John 1:1-2:2. In those verses John reminds us that we are all sinners but equally that we are all given underserved and unconditional forgiveness of our sins because of Jesus. Because of grace.

In the passage we are looking at in groups this week, John introduces three "tests" for a hearer of the Truth to know whether they are truly followers of Christ. The 'love test'; the 'belief test' and the 'obedience test' (**see leaders notes above for more on this**).

Knowing God - This speaks to the 'obedience test'

See 1 John 2: 3-6

John speaks to the claim of "knowing God". What does it mean to us to say that we "know God"? It seems that this knowing is more than cognitive it's also more than linked to an internal sense of companionship with Him even. Discuss what John says here about what it looks like to be a person who "knows God". (*Also see [John 17:3](#) and [Jeremiah 31:31-34](#) - God desires for us all to know Him and this knowing is through Jesus and has very practical outworking in our lives.*)

Loving one another - This speaks to the 'love test'

See 1 John 2:7-11

The command to love is both an old command (see [Deut. 6:5](#) & [Lev. 19:18](#)) as well as a new one (see [John 13:34](#)). Jesus gave this command new depths - this love is to be sacrificial and selfless; available to everyone no matter how they might be different to us. Is this how we have experienced love from others? Is it how we show love to others - whether in the church or far from it? In my heart who comes to mind that I feel justified to continue having a hardened heart towards? Take a few moments to hold that relationship before God in quiet now and ask Him to make a way where there seems to be no way.

Stages in our discipleship journey

See 1 John 2: 12-14

Here John address three distinct categories of followers of Jesus:

- little children;
- fathers; and
- young people.

He recognises that we can be at different stages in our discipleship journey - what does he say to each of these groups? What defines each group? What do you think he was trying to highlight to them / identify in each group as distinct from the others? Which of these groups do you identify with in this season of your faith journey?

Our love - This speaks to the 'love test'

See 1 John 2: 15 - 17

John invites us to consider what/who the object of our love is - the things of this world or God Himself.

- What do we understand "love of this world" - or more accurately translated "love of the world's ways" to mean? What would life look like if our motivation is love of the things of this world?

- In contrast, what kind of presence would we be if we were motivated by "the love of the Father"? What would our deepest longing be when we engaged with other people? How would this look in our day to day thoughts and interactions and decisions and ways of being with others?

- What is the sober warning that John gives us if we centre our hearts on the ways of this world? What is the gift of a life surrendered in love of God?

Responding in Prayer

Spend some time in **prayer** for one another as we consider this assurance that we have in Christ. One option is to pray the words of a psalm in worship and submission to Him and His Love - eg: [Psalm 107 \(the MSG translation\)](#) or [Psalm 37:7-17 \(the MSG translation\)](#)