

Old School Christianity – 1 John 2:1-2:11

I used to really enjoy being one of the youngest around here!
Well... that's not the case any longer! Now the jokes are on me!

"Young" may no longer be the best word to describe me, but I'm not ready to accept the designation of "old" either. So, what other words might fit?

- **Antique** – 100 years old (some define it as over 50) – let's say over 70!
- **Retro** – The time period between the 1950-1960s – 52-71 years old!
- **Vintage** – The time between the 1970-1980s – 32-51 years old!
- **Classic** – At least 20 years old & still in great condition!
- **Collectible** – Has some age to it and is worth holding on to!

All these words are hard to define, as well as distinguish one from another!
But they're all better ways of describing aged things than calling them "old"!

John is trying to give a description of true Christianity! He's answering the question of, "How do you know if you fit the definition of a true Christian?" As we read this letter today, it still provides the answer to that question!

Just as with items of value, cars, etc. there are tests that exist to determine which category a particular thing fits into. John gives us 3 tests here in this chapter to see if Christianity is the proper designation of who we truly are!

Test #1 – A Status Check with God!

Where do we stand with God? What is the nature of our relationship with Him? Are we on good terms w/ God or are we an enemy of God b/c of sin?

That which separates us from God must be addressed and dealt with!

- Jesus is the only appeasement for what separates us from God!

So, what have we done with Jesus in our lives? Is He our propitiation?

The 1st test of true Christianity is having our status with God changed from being a sinner in need of saving, to being redeemed by grace thru Christ!

Test #2 – A Lifestyle of Obedience Check

"And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments" – Vs. 3.

Obedience doesn't change our status with God, but it does confirm our change of status with Him "in Christ"! **Vs. 4-6**

"Walking in the same way as Jesus walked" is to walk in obedience!

Do our lives look more like Jesus today than they did prior to knowing Him? Is obedience to God's Word the defining attribute of our faith expression?

John is not speaking these words to make us feel guilty, but to bring confirmation into our lives that we truly are a changed people!

Test #3 – A Relational Check!

"Whoever says he is in the light & hates his brother is still in darkness" vs. 9.

Hate towards another believer should never exist in the life of a true follower of Jesus!

Anger, bitterness, unforgiveness are all seeds of hate that need to be uprooted in our lives! If unaddressed they lead to darkness!

And even if there is evidence of fruit in other areas of our lives, if there is no love then we have nothing of substance, we are nothing, in the eyes of God!

1 Corinthians 13:1-3

If we want to be light in the midst of darkness, love is always the answer!

"By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" – John 13:35 **1 John 2:10-11**

This is nothing new, not a new revelation from John, not even new with the teaching of Jesus. This command to love is as old as God's people!

"Beloved, I am writing you no new commandment, but an old commandment that you had from the beginning" – Vs. 7.

In the giving of the 10 Commandments, God was establishing a rule of love, love for God & love towards one another, that would stand the test of time!

Jesus was the embodiment of that love, & we are to be the reflection of it!

This command & these tests are old, but they are way cooler than the word "old" implies! And just as what is old often comes back & becomes popular again, so too does the need for God's command to love one another!

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