

Message Twelve

The True One

Scripture Reading: 1 John 5:6, 11-13, 20; 1:1-3; 3:24; 4:2, 6

I. In 1 John 5:20 we have the crucial conclusion of the entire Epistle of 1 John:

- A. This Epistle reveals that now we are truly one with the Triune God, and He becomes true, real, to us—1:3; 3:24; 4:2.
- B. He becomes reality and life to us because we are in Him—5:6; 2:24-25; 4:13.

II. We come to know the Triune God by experiencing and enjoying Him—1:5; 2:27; 4:16; 5:11-12:

- A. The concern of the apostle John in writing his Epistles was the experience and enjoyment of the Triune God—2 John 8.
- B. The Triune God is not merely the object of our faith; He is dwelling in us as our life and life supply for our experience and enjoyment—1 John 4:13-15.
- C. We need to know the Triune God experientially through the inner enjoyment of the subjective God—2:27; 4:4.
- D. If we would know the Triune God, we must be in the line of life and in the process of the growth in life; the more we grow in life, the more we will be concerned with the Divine Trinity.

III. The Epistles of John reveal the Triune God—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—1 John 1:1-2; 2:23-24; 3:24; 4:2, 6, 13-14; 5:6, 11-12; 2 John 9:

- A. To know the Father is to know Him as the source, the unique Initiator, the One who plans, originates, and initiates; everything originates with Him, and everything proceeds from Him—1 John 1:2-3; 2:23-24; 4:2, 6, 13-14; 2 John 9:
 - 1. The Father is the source of the eternal life; from Him and with Him the Son was manifested as the expression of the eternal life for those the Father has chosen to partake of and enjoy this life—1 John 1:2-3; 5:11-12.
 - 2. The title *Father* refers to the impartation of life; through Christ's resurrection the Father imparts His life to His children—3:1; 1 Pet. 1:3.
- B. In 1 John 1:1-2 both *the Word of life* and *life* denote the divine person of Christ, the Son, who was with the Father in eternity and was manifested in time through incarnation—John 1:1, 14:
 - 1. Christ the Son is the eternal, preexisting One who is the word of life from the beginning—1 John 2:13a, 14a.
 - 2. The Son of God was manifested that He might undo and destroy the works, the sinful deeds, of the devil—3:8b.
 - 3. God sent His Son as a propitiation for our sins—4:10.
 - 4. God sent His only begotten Son into the world that we might have life and live through Him—v. 9.
 - 5. The Son of God is the means through which God gives us His eternal life—5:11-12.
 - 6. Our Advocate with the Father is Jesus Christ the Righteous; when we sin, the Lord Jesus, based on the propitiation that He accomplished, takes care of our case by interceding and pleading for us—2:1; Rom. 8:34.
- C. The Spirit of truth in 1 John 4:6 is the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of reality—John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13:

1. The Spirit is the reality; this means that the Spirit is the reality of all that Christ as the Son of God is—1 John 5:6.
 2. By the Spirit whom Christ gave to us, we know that the Triune God abides in us—3:24.
- D. First John 4:13-14 reveals that we are abiding in God the Father and He in us, that God the Father has given to us of His Spirit, and that the Father has sent the Son as the Savior of the world:
1. *Out of His Spirit* (lit.) in verse 13 implies that the Spirit of God, whom God has given to us, is bountiful and without measure; by such a bountiful, immeasurable Spirit we know with full assurance that we and God are one and that we abide in each other—Phil. 1:19; John 3:34.
 2. Our God, the Father, has given us the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit, who is the bountiful supply of Jesus Christ, the Son—1 Cor. 15:45b; 2 Cor. 3:17.
- E. We know the true One and are in the true One—1 John 5:20.

IV. “We know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding that we might know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life”—v. 20:

- A. “We know”:
1. *We* refers first to the apostles in their teaching and fellowship and then to all the genuine believers as members of the Body of Christ—1:3, 6-7.
 2. *Know* here refers to knowing by experiencing, enjoying, and possessing the divine reality—3:2, 5.
- B. “The Son of God has come” through incarnation and through death and resurrection as the Spirit to bring God to us as grace and reality so that we may have the divine life and partake of God as love and light—John 1:14; Eph. 2:17; 1 John 1:5; 4:16.
- C. “Understanding” is the faculty of our mind enlightened and empowered by the Spirit of reality to apprehend the divine reality in our regenerated spirit—John 16:12-15.
- D. “Know the true One,” or “Know Him who is true”:
1. The Greek word translated “true” (*alethinos*) means “genuine, real,” the opposite of false and counterfeit:
 - a. Actually, the Greek word is simply “the True.”
 - b. Only our Triune God is true; everything and everyone else are false.
 2. The term *the true One* (which is subjective) refers to God becoming subjective to us.
 3. In this verse the God who is objective becomes the true One in our life and experience:
 - a. The true One is the divine reality, and we know the true One, know the divine reality, by experiencing, enjoying, and possessing this reality.
 - b. The Son of God has given us an understanding so that we may experience, enjoy, and possess the true God, the divine reality.
 - c. This verse indicates that God has become our reality in our experience.
 - d. The God who was once objective to us has become our subjective reality.
- E. “We are in Him who is true”:
1. We are in the True, in His Son Jesus Christ.
 2. We not only know God—we are in God:
 - a. We not only have the knowledge of Him; we are also in an organic union with Him.
 - b. We are one with Him organically.

3. No longer are we outside the True, and no longer are we outside His Son Jesus Christ.
 4. When John says that we are in the true One, he is making a crucial point: *Not only do we know the true One, and not only do we experience, enjoy, and possess Him as the divine reality, but we are in this reality; we are in the true One.*
- F. “We are...in His Son Jesus Christ”:
1. To be in the true God is to be in His Son Jesus Christ.
 2. Since Jesus Christ as the Son of God is the embodiment of God (Col. 2:9), to be in Him is to be in the true God; this indicates that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the true God.
 3. Whether we say that to be in the true One is to be in His Son Jesus Christ, or we are in the true One by virtue of being in Jesus Christ, the outcome is the same, and the meaning is actually the same:
 - a. To be in the true One is equal to being in His Son Jesus Christ (for the true One and Jesus Christ are one in the way of coinherence).
 - b. We are in the true One by being in His Son Jesus Christ.
- G. “This is the true God and eternal life”:
1. We need to pay attention to the word *this*.
 2. John uses *this* to refer both to the true God and to eternal life; by this we see that the true God and eternal life are one.
 3. Doctrinally, the true One and His Son Jesus Christ may be considered two, but when we are in the true One and in Jesus Christ experientially, They are one.
 4. For this reason, John uses *this* to refer both to the true One and to His Son Jesus Christ.
 5. In our experience of being in the true God and in Jesus Christ, They are one.
- H. We need a clear vision of what *this* in 1 John 5:20 refers to:
1. The word *this* refers to the very God who has become experiential to us through our being in Him.
 2. When we are in the true One and in His Son Jesus Christ, They become one to us; therefore, John says that “this” is the true God, and “this” is eternal life.
 3. “This” is the very God and the very Jesus Christ in whom we are.
 4. “This” includes the condition of our being in God and Jesus Christ; hence, the true God and eternal life include our being in the true One and His Son Jesus Christ.
 5. Now in our experience this true One becomes the true God, and Jesus Christ becomes eternal life.
 6. “This” includes the fact of our being in the true God and eternal life.
 7. We know that we are in the true God and in eternal life because we are in the true One and in His Son Jesus Christ.
 8. When we are in the true One and Jesus Christ, “this,” including the fact that we are in Them, is the true God.
- I. The true God becomes our experience as eternal life—v. 20; 1:2; 2:25; 5:11, 13; John 3:15-16, 36; 4:14; 5:24:
1. This is the basic factor of John’s first Epistle.
 2. In 1 John we have the enjoyment of the Triune God as eternal life.
 3. When we are in the true God, He becomes eternal life to us.