

Know the truth

I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth.

I John 2:21

In the midst of John's warning to his readers about false professors that infiltrate the church, he stops, as he often does in this epistle, to explain his reason for writing. So far, he has warned of those who profess to love God but deny the Lord by their hatred, and, in this immediate context, of those very antichrists who have wrought schisms by their false doctrine that denies the deity of Jesus the Son. Yet to those among his readers who know the truth, he reminds them that they have received from the Lord that very precious gift that will allow and empower them to carry out the tests he admonishes them to perform. He is not treating them like they need to know the truth. He is reminding them to employ the tool that they've been provided. Just before this he reminds them of the unction, the anointing Holy Spirit, promised to the apostles in the upper room, who would deliver this gift of truth and discernment to His own. So the apostle exhorts them, and us, that, though it is a glorious blessing to know the truth, we must not think that it is sufficient for us to only know it, but we must employ it in the discernment of false teachings and false professors.

To know God's truth is to have the holy common sense to be able to humbly identify liars. John is not afraid to use this strong language throughout this epistle. The benefit is two-fold. If the reader is in fact one of these liars, who professes Christ but denies Him in practice and precept, the conviction of these warnings can reveal the need for repentance and surrender to the truth unto salvation. If the reader is a possessor of the truth, acting upon these warnings can guard the heart and mind against error, as well as enable one to gently rescue others out of the snare of the devil. Let us each examine ourselves to discern how we have heeded this warning.

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