

07 - 1 John 2:12-14 - 2018-06-03

Call to Worship: Psalm 96:1-2

Scripture Reading: Psalm 96:3-12

Sermon: "You Have Known Him Who Is From the Beginning" 1 John 2:13

Benediction: Psalm 96:13

1 John 2:12-14 I write to you, little children, Because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake. (13) I write to you, fathers, Because you have known Him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, Because you have overcome the wicked one. I write to you, little children, Because you have known the Father. (14) I have written to you, fathers, Because you have known Him who is from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, Because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, And you have overcome the wicked one.

## INTRODUCTION

Last time we enjoyed the poetic pause of John 2:12-14 by considering ourselves as little children whose sins are forgiven for the sake of Jesus Christ our Savior. The apostle writes this letter with warnings about those all around who present themselves as Christians but truly are not. We Christians, as little children, especially those who are newer in the faith, find those warnings frightening, and need the comfort of the gospel promise that our sins are forgiven.

Today we continue enjoying the poetic pause, looking at the first half of 1 John 2:13, where the apostle addresses fathers, reassuring us of their knowing Jesus Christ.

## TEXT

1 John 2:13a I write to you, fathers, Because you have known Him who is from the beginning.

## BODY

- I. John's Address to Fathers Is to Those Who Know the Things of Christ from Being in the Faith a Long Time
  - A. Greek *pateres*; simply the word for "father" in the plural
  - B. The apostle's letter is written to the whole church, to all Christians, but in this line he addresses some as "fathers"
  - C. By this point in the bible, we have seen this before
    1. Acts 7:2 And he said, "Brethren and fathers, listen: The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran,
    2. Acts 22:1 "Brethren and fathers, hear my defense before you now."
  - D. John is not addressing all who are actual, physical fathers

1. John writes that these fathers know Jesus Christ, which is not true of all fathers
- E. John doesn't address fathers as those who are, in a sense, *his* fathers
1. he is very old, not needing to reverence those who are much older than he is
    - a) not that it is impossible; perhaps John is 70, and there is a man 90 in the church
  2. no one he is addressing first told him the gospel
    - a) 1 Corinthians 4:14-16 I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn you. (15) For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. (16) Therefore I urge you, imitate me.
- F. But he addresses those who have been in the faith for a long time, and so are expected to know the truths of the faith
1. what John means by "fathers" is best discerned by his writing, "you have known." He must, then, mean to be addressing those who know
  2. you know this about fathers; they are the ones who know
    - a) illus. how many times a child asks his father something, because he knows that his father knows so many things
    - b) illus. how many times a teenager thinks his father just doesn't understand, only to realize later that his father knew much more than he realized
    - c) illus. how much of a father's work in the family is teaching his children things they don't know, but he knows, and he knows they need to know
  3. Psalm 78:2-7 I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings of old, (3) Which we have heard and known, And our fathers have told us. (4) We will not hide them from their children, Telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, And His strength and His wonderful works that He has done. (5) For He established a testimony in Jacob, And appointed a law in Israel, Which He commanded our fathers, That they should make them known to their children; (6) That the generation to come might know them, The children who would be born, That they may arise and declare them to their children, (7) That they may set their hope in God, And not forget the works of God, But keep His commandments;
  4. long ago, the fathers in the church came to know themselves sinners;
  5. long ago, they came to know terror at the wrath of God to come;
  6. long ago, they heard that Jesus Christ has died for the sins of sinners, has been buried, and has risen again the third day;
  7. long ago they heard that there is forgiveness of sins for sinners who repent of their sins and believe in Jesus Christ;

8. long ago they heard of eternal, everlasting life in heaven with the Lord Jesus;
9. long ago they came to know what it is like to hear the preacher say, "Repent and believe," and to find they indeed are repentant, and they indeed do believe;
10. long ago they began to know that blessed hope we have in the resurrection of the body on that day when the Lord Jesus comes back

the fathers being addressed are those who have been in the faith a long time, and so are expected to know the truths of the faith, and to be passing down that knowledge to those who are new

### John's Address to Fathers Is to Those Who Know the Things of Christ from Being in the Faith a Long Time

- II. John Needs to Address Such Fathers for Their Own Sake, and for the Sake of the Church
  - A. For their own sake
    1. John has needed to write about those who say they know Jesus Christ, but are only lying
      - a) 1 John 2:3-4 Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. (4) He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.
    2. he has put this very strongly
    3. but John would not have the oldest, most experienced Christians begin to doubt themselves because they think the Lord's apostle is writing to them, that they do not know Christ
      - a) John is writing to us about those who say they know Christ but are liars; does he mean me? does John think me or people like me are just liars? does that mean I am deceived?
  - B. For the sake of the church
    1. the apostle has addressed the whole church as "little children;" in a sense we are all alike little children; but we are not all alike little children in every sense; there are some in the church who, in a sense, are fathers rather than little children
    2. there may be men in the church who have been in the faith 30, 40, 50 years or more
      - a) the young people in the church should not think of them just as little children, but as fathers
      - b) they should listen to them when they speak, and should follow their example
    3. there may be women in the church who have been in the faith for many years: through getting married, bearing children, raising their children, seeing their children off to form their own households; or possibly

through a long life of singleness, being devoted for many years to serving the Lord Jesus in their homes and in His church

- a) the young people in the church should not see them as just little children with them, but should look up to them, submitting to be trained in godly living by such women, and looking to their lives as patterns to follow
4. it would not be the apostle's intention to have the leadership or authority of these mature saints to be undermined, or their example ignored; so, they are addressed as "fathers"

-John's Address to Fathers Is to Those Who Know the Things of Christ from Being in the Faith a Long Time

-John Needs to Address Such Fathers for Their Own Sake, and for the Sake of the Church

### III. John's Message to Fathers Is That They Know Jesus Christ

#### A. You have known Him

1. RWP: *egnokate*, you have come to know and still know
2. it's true that the apostle John needs to write to the church, warning and explaining about those who say they know him, but are lying
3. but as to those in the church who have been in the faith for decades, and have shown themselves and others that they are not unrepentant, but repentant; not unbelieving, but believing; not lawless, but obedient, John is not writing to them because they do not know Christ, but because they have known Him, and know Him
4. so his message is not, "You fathers in the faith, you are liars and do not know the Lord." his message is, "Fathers, you know Him"

#### B. You have known Him who is from the beginning

1. we have found that fathers know things that go farther back than what we know
  - a) my own excellent father was born 1928; he knew things, and told me things, from being a child in the Great Depression, a teenager during WWII, a soldier in the Korean War
  - b) one of my friends in Bonham knows what it was to see men working with a team of mules; he worked Saturdays cleaning the cotton mill that used to sit right by the creek in what is now Powder Creek park
  - c) I can tell my kids what I remember from when Jimmy Carter ran for President in 1976, which seems like ancient history to them, who were born in the 21st century
2. John reminds the church's fathers that they know someone who goes much farther back than any of that: they know the one who is from the beginning; at the same time John reminds the rest of the church of it

- a) remember that John sounded this note in the first words of this letter
- b) it is not that the Son of God was created at the beginning; no, that was Adam, from whom we descend physically
- c) but the Son of God already was at the beginning, not being a creature, but being very God

## CONCLUSION

-John's Address to Fathers Is to Those Who Know the Things of Christ from Being in the Faith a Long Time

-John Needs to Address Such Fathers for Their Own Sake, and for the Sake of the Church

-John's Message to Fathers Is That They Know Jesus Christ

Fathers, fulfill your role in Christ's church.

Little children, see the fathers in the church as little children to their own father.

Aspire to be the fathers in the church.

Psalm 78:2-7 I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings of old, (3) Which we have heard and known, And our fathers have told us. (4) We will not hide them from their children, Telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, And His strength and His wonderful works that He has done. (5) For He established a testimony in Jacob, And appointed a law in Israel, Which He commanded our fathers, That they should make them known to their children; (6) That the generation to come might know them, The children who would be born, That they may arise and declare them to their children, (7) That they may set their hope in God, And not forget the works of God, But keep His commandments;

Acts 7:2 And he said, "Brethren and fathers, listen: The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran,  
Acts 22:1 "Brethren and fathers, hear my defense before you now."

1 Timothy 5:1-2 Do not rebuke an older man, but exhort him as a father, younger men as brothers, (2) older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, with all purity.

John 4:12 Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?"

John 4:20 Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship."

John 6:31 Our fathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written, 'HE GAVE THEM BREAD FROM HEAVEN TO EAT.'"

John 6:49 Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead.

John 6:58 This is the bread which came down from heaven--not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever."

John 7:22 Moses therefore gave you circumcision (not that it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and you circumcise a man on the Sabbath.

John 8:56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad."

Acts 3:13 The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified His Servant Jesus, whom you delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let Him go.

Acts 3:22 For Moses truly said to the fathers, 'THE LORD YOUR GOD WILL RAISE UP FOR YOU A PROPHET LIKE ME FROM YOUR BRETHREN. HIM YOU SHALL HEAR IN ALL THINGS, WHATEVER HE SAYS TO YOU.

Acts 3:25 You are sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, 'AND IN YOUR SEED ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH SHALL BE BLESSED.'

Acts 5:30 The God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom you murdered by hanging on a tree.

Acts 7:2 And he said, "Brethren and fathers, listen: The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran,

Acts 22:1 "Brethren and fathers, hear my defense before you now."

1 Corinthians 4:14-16 I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn you. (15) For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. (16) Therefore I urge you, imitate me.

1 Timothy 5:1-2 Do not rebuke an older man, but exhort him as a father, younger men as brothers, (2) older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, with all purity.

2 Peter 3:4 and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation."

Calvin:

he mentions three ages, the most comon division of human life.

**I write to you, fathers** G3962 *pater*

Gill:

here it designs such, who, in comparison of others, were perfect, and were spiritual, and judged all things; had a well informed and established judgment in divine things, and were, in understanding, men, fathers, and not babes in Christ

the reason here given, engaging to it, is exceeding suitable to their character, it being what fathers and aged men delight in, even ancient things, to call them to remembrance, to talk of them as things well known unto them; but nothing is more ancient than what is here instanced in, and nothing so honourable and profitable to know as this, or to be gloried in; and therefore the argument from hence to love those that belong to him, who is the everlasting Father, is very strong and forcible.



JRY:

not because you do not know Christ, but because you know him  
a characteristic of fathers is that they know things

“Father knows best” is even a saying or proverb  
e.g. my father

### **I write to you, young men**

JRY:

not because you have *not* overcome the wicked one, but because you *have*

Prelude: Trinity 176 “Not All the Blood of Beasts”

Camille: piano 1

Noah: trumpet - see attached in B

Anna: clarinet - see attached in B

Sarah: piano 2 (if you want)

Trinity 125 “Psalm 45”

Camille: piano 1

Noah: trumpet - see attached in E

Anna: clarinet - see attached in E

Sarah: piano 2 (if you want)

Grace 68 “Holy Child”

Camille: flute

Noah: trumpet - see attached in G

Anna: piano 1

Sarah: piano 2

Trinity 187 “Hark! The Voice of Love and Mercy”

Camille: sing

Noah: trumpet

Anna: piano - transpose down

Sarah: sing

Grace 40 “Down at the Cross”

Camille: piano 1

Noah: sing

Anna: sing

Sarah: piano 2 (if you want)

Grace 140 See What a Morning

Trinity 134

from Sarah:

Wonderful Merciful Savior

My Precious Savior Gave His All

It Is Enough That I Am In Christ