

PART VII**VERSES FREQUENTLY MISUNDERSTOOD**

The aforementioned argument has demonstrated that the purpose of the book is determining true access to God the Father or who are the “Children of God”). At the beginning of the article the book was studied by exposition of the contextual argument. However, at this point it is necessary to interact with some of their more prominent misinterpretations of individual verse or verses, which provide, in part, the foundation of many views. The following short appendix will deal with these passages to show what they actually say in terms of John’s goal of proving that those who believe in Christ are the true “children of God.” Again, the underlying problem that these interpreters are not seeing that John is using the Old Testament as the source of his definition of terms and phrases.

**1 John 2:19: “They Went Out From Us . . .”:
is Identifying “False Teachers” By Their Rejection Of Jesus
As The Means To The Father**

“They went out from us for they were not from us, for if they were from us they would have abided with us, but in order that they might be revealed that they all were not from us” (1 John 2:19).

Probably one of the most quoted verses in 1 John 2:19, this verse is errantly proffered that there are those (“they”) within the Christian congregation (“us”) who have professed Christ as their Savior but not truly believed. In this view, since all those in the church profess Christ as part of the requirement for membership, true identity is known when these leave the congregation,⁶⁰ typically because of an evil lifestyle or denial of some Christological tenet⁶¹ even to the point of total rejection of Jesus as the Christ. Yet, simple logic, the immediate context, as well as the Old Testament allusions, fail to support this interpretation.

*The “us” is the apostles, not the professing Christian congregation*⁶². Most commentators from the commonly held views hold that the “us” is the church⁶³, or more

⁶⁰ This is normally referred to as “head knowledge” or academic knowledge wherein a professing Christian has at some time trusted in Jesus Christ, but his habitual and evil works have identified him as a non-Christian, and thus he must not have had “heart” (or true) trust. While beyond the scope of this article, there does not appear to be any Scripture that ever questions “trust” as being false. If one “trusts” or “believes” in the Scripture they are in every case to be a true believer to the degree they do, and based on the content they know. The opposite of “trust” is “denial.” Any level of faith appears to be effective to the degree to which it is expressed. Thus initial faith in the Scriptures is valid regardless of how much as long as its content is based on the truth of Jesus Christ.

⁶¹ On the face of it, this seems to be a semantic way around the “eternal security” problem created when a professing Christian abandons the faith, even after a period of time where they seemed to be “Christian,” and had a habitually consistent lifestyle. Since this view believes in good works as confirmation of salvation, this creates a problem when one who seems to have confirmed their salvation by good works for a while, then abandons the faith. So, in order to avoid the problem of their doctrine of eternal security or election (i.e., once saved, always saved; or the elect must persevere), they logically must declare that these were never saved. If isolated out of its context, this verse gets regularly used for that sole purpose, yet in context, is dealing with those who have never professed salvation through Christ, never claimed to be Christian. So these interpreters are in a totally different category.

⁶² In addition, the reader, or the congregation to whom John is writing is typically addressed in the second person plural, “you.”

specifically the congregation, of professing Christians.⁶⁴ Yet the “us,” or “we,” has been shown to be apostles since they are the ones who set the criteria (i.e., apostolic doctrine, see 1:1-4, 4:5-6) for determining the truth against the claimants (see 4:6).

In addition, logically the “us” cannot be the congregation since John is writing the church to keep them from being deceived and thus departing from the faith themselves. Thus, if the church members are the ones subject to deception, they can hardly be the absolute determiner of true or false professors.⁶⁵

The “they” are Antichrists (2:18, 22), who were never professors of Jesus since they deny (saying), “Jesus is not the Christ.” First of all, by just following the grammar it is clear that the “they” is clearly the “antichrists” of 2:18 and 2:22. These are defined as deniers (*saying*),⁶⁶ “Jesus is not the Christ.” Thus these are not professing Christians by definition. Nor is this a description of those who have strayed down some road of a sinful lifestyle. Nor does the text allow for enlargement of the wording to include some Christological error. It simply and clearly describes someone who does not, nor ever has, embraced Jesus as the Christ. The term “anti-christ” by definition says that.

⁶³ The NET Bible sees this as the congregation, “The opponents departed from the author's congregation(s) and showed by this departure that they never really belonged.” Dr. Daniel Wallace states, “The immediate occasion for this epistle is that the false teachers had left the church (2.19), but were harassing the church and enticing it from a position outside: (Daniel Wallace, “1 John, *www.Bible.org*, 1 John: Introduction, Argument, and Outline, “Occasion.” (Accessed July 4, 2015)).

⁶⁴ They see the use of the pronoun “us” throughout the epistle as usually the addressed congregation (4:7), but at times may be apostolic (4:6).

⁶⁵ This is rather obvious from the New Testament epistles, most of which were written to churches being led astray, who were not holding strictly to the apostolic doctrine, which was why the letter had to be written.

Simple logic rejects this tenet. If there were false professors in the group, then logic would allow that those professors could be the very ones who are the determiners of the churches (false) doctrine and thus the determiners of the true “children of God.” Thus, the church cannot be the basis or tester of false doctrine or of false professors, as they themselves are too variable and easily deceived (which is what prompted the letter). Note that in Third John this is exactly the case. A doctrinal misfit (an unbeliever) is in charge of the church and is throwing out believers and even rejecting the apostles. Thus the ones leaving are the true believers while the ones staying (determiners) are the false teachers. John will not even attend the church, thus making him one who is outside this local church. Thus, the church is not the determiner, but the apostolic doctrine.

⁶⁶ The form of the verse makes it a direct quotation, and thus “saying” is added.

“Antichrists” are those who are the “seed of the serpent,” who by context of Genesis 3, opposed the “Seed of the Woman,” or the “Christ.” Thus these “seed of the serpent” are the “anti-christs.” Thus the context as well as its defining basis in Genesis 3 rejects the view that this is a problem of false professors of Christianity.

Here the problem of these common interpretations rears its head. Since their premises are based on an errant interpretation, their conclusions must also be errant. Since these common interpretations wrongly apply the “us” to the congregation, they then make a natural conclusion that John must be dividing the professing Christian congregation into true and false confessors of Jesus Christ.⁶⁷ Then because the interpreter does not see another possibility⁶⁸ than the professing “congregation” (or in some cases, the congregation formed from the apostles⁶⁹) in 2:19, he then must alter the plain meaning of 2:22 where the “they” who went out “deny (*saying*), “Jesus is not the Christ,”” to include an evil lifestyle or denial of some Christological tenet. This is necessary since (again, logically) it would be quite obvious that a denier of Jesus Christ would not be a professing “Christian,” since it is self-confirming (i.e., who would be questioning, since they admit it?). Yet, the grammar of 2:22 is quite simple and does not imply any deviation other than a clear (verbal) denial of Jesus.⁷⁰ The struggle of these

⁶⁷ It is possible to have deniers of Jesus as the Christ in the congregation as can be seen by the second and third epistles of John as well as the seven churches of Revelation 2—3. Some of these churches had unbelievers (deniers of Jesus as the Christ) in their membership. However in the First Epistle, the obvious situation is that John is emphatic about the fact that he is writing to believers, and in fact, confirming that they are believers. There is no hint in the book that the actual addressed readership is being questioned about their own confession.

⁶⁸ That the congregation as the group is not valid is seen in 3 John where Diotrophes is one who rejects the apostolic teaching and rejects the brothers, all clear testimony that he, as the leader of the congregation, is not embracing Jesus in any sense as the Christ. “For this reason, if I come, I will call attention to his deeds which he does, unjustly accusing us with wicked words; and not satisfied with this, he himself does not receive the brethren, either, and he forbids those who desire *to do so* and puts *them* out of the church.” Another example is the Church at Laodicea in Revelation 3:20: where it is clear that some members of these churches are deniers, not of some narrow heretical doctrine, but that Jesus is the Christ.

⁶⁹ This view is held by Zane Hodges, “The Epistles of John: Walking in the Light of God’s Love” (pages 108-110). Note, however, as is common between the two views, they make the same error, thinking that these antichrists had at one time been professing believers in Jesus as the Christ, which contradicts 2:22.

⁷⁰ Since the sentence does not infer any deviations from the obvious fact that these antichrists want nothing to do with Jesus, the interpreters, in order to solve the incongruity (i.e., professors who deny their profession?) have searched for some

views becomes self-evident as most commentators do not admit that the simplicity of the grammar indicates a simple denial of Jesus as the identifying characteristic of these antichrists. Thus, having denied this simplicity (“Jesus is not the Christ”) because it opposes their view they must either enlarge it with their own information (e.g., include a perceived historical Christological heresy), or simply pass by it without explanation since it does not fit their conclusions.

The Old Testament basis for 2:19: Genesis 3—4: The whole context of 1 John 2:15—28 is alluding to Genesis 3—4. The readers are urged to avoid the deceit of the antichrists to lure them to trust in the visible, materialistic, old cursed world (2:26) as Eve did (2:15-17). These antichrists have now appeared (2:18) as predicted in Genesis 3:15, and as the “seed of the serpent” they deny the Christ as access to the Father (2:22). They, like Cain (Genesis 4:16), have rejected the revelation of the Christ revealed in the apostolic doctrine and “gone out” from the apostles and their doctrine.⁷¹ Thus 2:19 is affirming that the issue is that the claimants of the identity as “children of God” (“they”) reject (“go out from”) the apostolic doctrine (“us”) and thus are clearly identified by their denial of Jesus Christ.

Validation in 1 John 4:1-6. A parallel passage to 2:18-26 occurs in 1 John 4:1-6 which confirms the interpretation of 2:19 to that of the “Children of God” view in that it reflects a rejection of the apostolic doctrine (“us”) by unbelievers in the Christ (“they”). The “false prophets” in 4:1-6 are parallel to the “they” in 2:19 and are, like 2:18, the antichrist. And like the “they” in 2:19, have “gone out” into the world. In 4:6, the basis of the separation is clearly the apostolic doctrine. It is that doctrine which separates those false prophets, antichrists, and the world, from those who are truly in God’s family.

- In both passages John alerts them to the fact that the prophecy of the antichrists (Genesis 3:15, “seed of the serpent”) is being fulfilled in their day.

2:18: you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have

deviation within their Christology that might explain what appears to be a clear denial of Jesus Christ, but yet still be a professing Christian (a seeming insolvable contradiction). Thus, they must say that a denier of Jesus Christ is a denier, not of the Name of Jesus as the Christ (which is the way the text reads), but of some essential narrow Christological doctrine. This allows them to still have a profession, but not a true (i.e., accurate) one. This explains why Gnosticism is input into this even though there is no evidence that this heresy existed at the time of John’s writing, nor that anything in the grammar allows anything but a blatant denial of Jesus as the only access to the Father.

⁷¹ One might question how they have “gone out” from the apostles if they were never a part of the apostolic group, i.e., never saved. Observing the allusion to Cain solves this. He was confronted by God, but rejected and thus “went out.” Here the false teachers were confronted by the apostolic doctrine, but rejected and also “went out.”

appeared; from this we know that it is the last hour.

4:1: of which you have heard that it (the *spirit* of the antichrist, 4:3) is coming, and now it is already in the world.

- In both passages “they” (“antichrists”) have rejected the apostolic doctrine (“us”) and were shown to be (“went out”) false claimants to the “Family of God.”

2:19 “they (antichrists, 2:18) went out from us,”

4:1 because many false prophets (the *spirit* of the antichrist, 4:3) have gone out into the world

4:5-6 They (false prophets (4:1), antichrists (4:3)) are from the world; therefore they speak *as* from the world, and the world listens to them. ⁶ We are from God; he who knows God listens to us; he who is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

- In both passages, the “children of the devil” (“antichrists, 2:19, 4:3) are identified by their rejection of the apostolic doctrine that Jesus is the Christ prophesied in the Old Testament.

2:22-23 Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son. ²³ Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also.

4:2-3 By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; ³ and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the *spirit* of the antichrist

Conclusion: They went out from us because they were not of us . . . is identifying the “they” (2:19) as the antichrists who claim (profess) to have access to God but do not because they reject the apostolic doctrine (“us”), which is that Jesus is the Christ. Thus, this passage confirms that John’s purpose is to identify the true “Children of God,” or those who actually have access to the Father. The criterion is, very simply, those who trust in Jesus as the Christ.

**1 John 1:6: “Fellowship With Him”
Is “Fellowship With God The Father”**

Throughout the epistle, one of the biggest errors is the misapplication of pronouns to Jesus instead of God the Father. Because of the pronouns being wrongly applied to Jesus, if John is instead speaking about access the Father, then the interpreter will wrongly think that the book is about access to Jesus. This error then wrongly supports the “access to Jesus” views. An illustration of this is the common misunderstanding of the “Him” in 1:6.⁷²

1:6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him and [yet] walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth;

When it says, “. . . fellowship with Him”, the two views not infrequently state that the antagonist is claiming a relationship with Jesus (“Him”). Yet the “He” is actually God the Father and again confirms the “Children of God” view.

It is clear that since the subject change occurring in 1:4, there has been no mention of Jesus Christ, only God. Thus the antagonist (the liar here and in 2:19) is saying that he has fellowship with God.

Further validation of this is in 1:7, the verse immediately following.

1:7 but if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.

The pronouns “He Himself” and “His” Son in this verse show that the specific One walking in the Light is not Jesus,⁷³ but God. To say that the pronouns refer to Jesus creates a problem in the statement of “Jesus His Son”. And, in fact, all the third person singular pronouns thus far refer to the Father, or God.⁷⁴

⁷² Many commentators, however, do understand this verse correctly. Typically, the academicians tend to identify it as God the Father since the next verses show it to be. This particular verse is probably misused more by those who do not study it in depth.

⁷³ Jesus is the revelation (the Light) of God, so in order to walk with God; one must have the Light (Jesus). But there is no passage in the Bible that tells one to “walk” with Jesus. It would seem that there could be a sense in which one would “walk with Jesus” in order to “walk with God,” but that is not the sense here. The sense is one must trust in Jesus to “walk with God”.

⁷⁴ The “heard from Him” in 1:5 is also the Father since John is referencing the Old Testament, saying those Scriptures matched up with Jesus’ words and works. In 1:1 there is a difference in the tenses of this sentence in the verbs. “Heard” and “seen” are

1 John 2:3-4 “Come To Know Him”
Is “Come To Know The Father”

2:3-4 By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments. ⁴ The one who says, "I have come to know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him;

Here again, frequently the views state that the One who the antagonist is claiming to know is Jesus. But in reality the antagonist is claiming to “know” God.⁷⁵ Thus, the issue again is who the pronoun, “Him,” references.

Knowing “Him” (2:3) refers to knowing the Father (not Jesus). In the use in 2:3ff, the “Him” pronoun grammatically could refer to 2:2,⁷⁶ that is Christ as the propitiation for our sins. However, the subject, from 1:5 is the relationship with God. The mention of Jesus since 1:5 has been to establish Him as a means of that relationship (“the blood of Jesus, 1:7; the propitiation for our sins, 2:1). Thus, contextually, the issue is that Jesus is the means to “know” the Father. And with the parallel statement regarding “His” commandments in 3:23-24, the “His” must refer to God.

“His” Commandments refers to the Father’s. The question is ‘whose commandments, Jesus’ or God’s. God’s commandments occur throughout the Old Testament. Jesus’ commandments are referred to in John 14--15. But when it comes to 1

perfects, while “beheld” and “handled” are in the aorist. The last two indicate the eyewitness testimony of Jesus on earth since it occurred in the past and now is over. The first two (and more likely the first; “heard”; cf. 2:7) are referencing the Old Testament that was continued in the eyewitness testimony of Jesus. Thus the “heard” in 1:5 is a perfect tense and matches that of 1:1 where John “heard” what was from the beginning (Genesis 1:1), the continuity of the Old Testament, realized in Jesus, and that continues today (e.g., the reader can find Jesus in the Old Testament and the apostolic testimony).

⁷⁵ This term is not proof of a Gnostic antagonist as is so often used. The use of this term is from Jeremiah 31:34 which John quotes in 2:27. See the earlier discussion.

⁷⁶ Some make a claim that the pronouns are very difficult to differentiate between God and Jesus and that it almost seems somewhat intentional since Jesus and God perform the same function. However, by using that premise, the actual problem of the book is covered up, since it is essential to John’s argument to differentiate between God and Jesus in the sense that one needs the function of Jesus Christ (The Son) in order to have the Father. John insists on differentiating so that the antagonists’ arguments (the claim to have the Father without the Son) are exposed because of the necessity of The Son. Since many see the epistle as evaluating one’s relationship with Jesus (which automatically relates them to God), he does not see a critical issue in relating to God.

John there is never a statement that alludes to the commandments as those of Jesus. In fact the clear references (e.g., 3:23-24⁷⁷) relate the source of the commandments to God, not Jesus.

3:23-24 This is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as He commanded us. The one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him . . .

This also would be confirmed by his statement in 2:7 that what John is referencing is an “old commandment” which you have had from the beginning⁷⁸.” Thus, the “old commandment” is from the Old Testament, which relates them to God’s commandments, and of course, the “new commandment” is the belief in Jesus Christ (see 3:23).

The issue of “keeping the commandments⁷⁹” is the means of having a relationship with the Father. Note that the “Abide in Him” in 2:6 is also the Father as the same phrase

⁷⁷ The references to “commandment(s)” are 2:3, 2:4, 2:7, 2:8, 3:22, 3:23, 3:24, 4:21, 5:2, 5:3. None of these commandments are the commandments of Jesus, but are the commandments of God (although Jesus fulfilled them).

⁷⁸ This puts the commandment back in the first chapters of Genesis, and thus the promise of Messiah in Genesis 3:15 once more is the basis of the Old Testament including the Old Covenant which was fulfilled in Jesus.

⁷⁹ “Keeping the commandments” is an issue in the Old Testament which was always sanctificational, which they could not keep and necessarily needed the sacrifices. Deuteronomy 28 was particularly notable as it provided blessing and cursing based on the performance of the commands.

John’s point here is that “Keeping the commandments” was always a perfect “keeping” and as such could only be kept by no one other than the Messiah (see Matthew 5:17-18). All others would fail and need to turn to Messiah as the sacrifice of the Old Covenant represented Him. Thus “keeping the commandments” would only be enabled to man through the New Covenant, which established a new heart in the believer that would keep the commandments because it was inherently the righteous character of God. This is not ethical behavior, as ethical behavior was never “keeping the commandments” (see Matthew 5:18-19), but required a perfect character that does not sin at all. One still sins due to the continuing presence of the Adamic nature as source (see 1 John 2:1-2), but has Jesus as the propitiation with the Father to forgive the sins of the old character (still present) in the Adamic nature. Thus when interpreters change 1 John 3:9 to a “continuous” present to agree with the admitted sinning of a believer in 2:1-2, they do so because they do not recognize that the believer has two characters. One, the Adamic nature, still sins but is propitiated. The other does not sin and is the “eternal life” in the believer. This is all in Jeremiah 31:31-34.

is used in 3:23-24 and is the Father (see below). Thus also, the claim is to “know Him,” that is, the Father.

“Know,” Defined by Jeremiah 31:34 is to know “God” (not a reference to Gnosticism). The use of “know” (*γινώσκω*) in 1 John has prompted some interpreters to posit a historical Christological heresy, that of Gnosticism, into the problem of 1 John. While historically Gnosticism cannot be found until the late 2nd Century (about 100 years or more after the epistle was written), its advocates postulate that there were (unsubstantiated) “seeds” of it in the first century, and thus it is called “incipient Gnosticism.”⁸⁰

One way the proponents justify this pervasive view that Gnosticism as the main heresy of the book is from the prominent use of the word “know” (*γινώσκω*) in the epistle (25 times in the verbal form). It is from that word that the Gnostics derive their name.

Of course, an obvious difficulty exists for the interpreter because John would be defining “know” from a historical heresy found one hundred (or more) years later. In their view the use of “know” would be a subtle reference to Gnostic heresy, that is, that their higher *knowledge* made them closer to God?

First of all, it is rightly perceived that John uses “know” frequently (25 times in the verbal form) throughout the epistle. However, it is not just *γινώσκω* that he uses to communicate the word “know,” but also uses the synonym *οἶδα* (15 times) as well. Both Greek words are used interchangeably and synonymously as can be seen in 2:29 and 5:20 where they are used in the same verse with the same meaning. Thus, while *γινώσκω* appears somewhat more than *οἶδα*, the synonymous use and interchangeability would argue against John using *γινώσκω* as a literary polemic since he used another word, *οἶδα*, unrelated as a direct allusion to the heresy, forty percent of the time. Polemic, as suggested in this case by the Gnosticism advocates, is a literary device meant to reference John’s opposition in a literary emphasis in an overused, as well as perhaps sarcastic, manner. They would propose that he takes the word (*γινώσκω*), which is central to his

⁸⁰ The attempts to merge Gnosticism, a late second century heresy, closer to the date of John’s writing have been varied. One of these is to identify Cerinthianism, an earlier problem, to be some sort of early Gnosticism. This pushes the date earlier due to the testimony of Polycarp (a disciple of John) who stated that John had abandoned a bath where Cerinthius entered due to this heresy. Cerinthianism is simply the rejection that Jesus died bodily on the cross, having departed His body before that event. (See Christian Classics Ethereal Library, “Cerenthus,” at <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/wace/biodict.html?term=Cerenthus,%20opponent%20of%20St.%20John>, accessed June 21, 2015.) The relationship to Gnosticism is that they are both heretical, but not synonymous (See Hall Harris, “1 John,” at www.Bible.org, “Heresies” for a discussion of Cerenthus’ heresy along with others.

opposition's prime tenets, and uses it against them by citing the correct use of the word in his theology. However, adding an unrelated word (*οἶδα*) almost one-half of the time with the intended word (*γινώσκω*) would certainly change the likelihood of this, since the use of *oida* would dilute the clarity, and certainly the impact, of this device. As weak as the Gnostic argument is, it does not have *γινώσκω* as a literary polemic.

As has been shown in this article, John is proving the Christ is the means of access to God from the Old Testament. Thus, his argument and definition for “know” would also come from that same source. In addition to Psalm 2 and Genesis 1—4, Jeremiah 31:31-34 is frequently overlooked as playing a foundational part in John's epistle. It is clearly alluded to in 1 John 2:7-8 where the old commandment and new commandment are mentioned, as well as in 1 John 2:20, 27.

Jeremiah 31:34 "And they shall not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know (LXX: γινώσκω) the LORD,' for they shall all know (LXX: *οἶδα*) Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the LORD, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

1 John 2:20 But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know (*oida*).

1 John 2:27 And as for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him.

In Jeremiah 31:34, the word “know” (the Lord) is a prominent and important word as it speaks of a relationship with God being fulfilled and final under the New Covenant which existed only in a partial and incomplete form under the Old.

From these verses in Jeremiah, the New Covenant child of God would “know” the Lord fully, having his sins completely forgiven and the “Law written on his heart.” This “Law written in the heart” is a figure of speech pointing out that the commandments, the character desires of God, would become the character of man as well, enabling the “keeping” of the commandments⁸¹ and the inability to sin. This is the new heart given at the new birth. It is the new character, “eternal life.” The “forgiveness of sins” (1:7, 9) and “eternal life” anticipated by Jeremiah are declared by John to have come to pass in the Christ. In addition, the Gospel of John focuses on the same use of the word “know,” in John 17:1-2, “This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.” (John 17:3)

⁸¹ This is also alluded to in Ezekiel 36:27 as a result of the new heart and new Spirit that God puts in them.

Interestingly, many have pondered why John uses *γινώσκω* and *οἶδα* synonymously. They are used as synonyms clearly in 2:29 and 5:20. Yet this synonymous use adds to the literary connection to Jeremiah 31:34 as exactly the same synonymous use is found in the LXX, translated from the same Hebrew word, **יָדַעַ**, thus indicating John's source for the two terms and their interchangeability.

Jeremiah 31:34 "And they shall not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know (LXX: *γινώσκω*, Heb.: **יָדַעַ**) the LORD,' for they shall all know (LXX: *οἶδα*, Heb.: **יָדַעַ**) Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the LORD, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

1 John 5:29: If you know (*εἰδῆτε*) that He is righteous, you know (*γινώσκετε*) that everyone also who does the righteousness is born of Him.

1 John 5:20: And we know (*οἶδαμεν*) that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding so that we may know (*γινώσκωμεν*) 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.

1 John 2:7-8 John also alludes to Jeremiah 31:31, where the prophecy was made the Old Covenant would go away and the New Covenant will replace it by putting the Old in a new heart, forgiving sins under the old heart. Thus the "child of God" would "know" God because he shared God's character.

Jeremiah 31:31-34: "Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, ³² not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them," declares the LORD.

1 John 2:7-8: Brothers, I write no new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which you heard from the beginning. Again, I write a new commandment to you, which is true in him and in you; because the darkness is passing away, and the true light already shines.

1 John 2:6: “Abides In Him . . . Walk As He Walked.”
The “Him” And “He” Is God, The Father.

“the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He⁸² walked” (1 John 2:6).

⁸² The NET Bible makes the first pronoun “God” and the second pronoun “Jesus” and in fact inserts these Names in their translation instead of the pronouns. Unfortunately this makes the translation an interpretation and sets in stone the pronoun’s referent as that determined from the interpreter. They supply different referents for each stating, “the one who says he resides in God (lit.: Him), ought himself to walk in the same manner that Jesus (lit.: that One) walked.” Thus they see the antagonist as claiming to “abide in God” but see the criteria as practical works, which would match those of Jesus’ holy life, Thus “walking with Jesus” is walking in some similar ethical sense to Jesus, an impossible, and unattainable task. The justification for this by the NET Bible is due to a change in the pronouns from *autos* to *ekeinos* within the sentence. The claim is that *ekeinos* is always used for Jesus in the book. The difficulty with this is that John’s change of pronouns is not to differentiate between the Father and the Son (cf. 1 John 3:6 where both *autos* and *ekeinos* are used for the same personality or in John 1:31 where both are used in the same sentence to reference Jesus). So the change in pronouns is from a general reference to God (He, Him) to a specific demonstrative “that One.” To do more than that is to force the grammar to do more than John intended. The NET Bible states, “In fact, ἐκεῖνος occurs 6 times in 1 John (2:6; 3:3, 5, 7, 16; and 4:17), and each one refers to Jesus Christ.” As this article will show, they make the same error in their proof texts as they do in verse to be proven, and thus circular reasoning. This is exactly the common error discussed in this article. Mistaking the pronouns and their referent is made due to not recognizing the Old Testament anticipation of a relationship to the Father. The referencing of these pronouns using *ekeinos* to Jesus by the NET Bible exemplifies the common error of the book as all are referencing the Father, not Jesus. This is again circular reasoning. They assign a pronoun to Jesus and then reference as proof other pronouns that they have also wrongly assigned to Jesus.

The NET Bible also claims that the “He walked” proves that it is Jesus that it is being referenced. They state regarding this verbal activity “. . . a reference to Jesus Christ is confirmed by the verb περιπάτησεν (*periepatesen*), an activity which can only describe Jesus’ earthly life and ministry, the significance of which is one of the points of contention the author has with the opponents.” However, that use of περιπάτησεν refers to God the Father, not Jesus. See the earlier discussion that discusses this. Again, this is circular reasoning as follows: The “He” must refer to Jesus because the purpose of the author is to determine a relationship with Jesus and thus the pronouns must refer to Jesus. Thus they assume the wrong purpose of the book based on their theology, and then they make all the references coordinate with their composed purpose, which then validates their assignment of the references. This is circular reasoning where the premise assumes the conclusion. Interestingly the commentator offers no evidence for his confirmation, only assuming its truth.

Likely most readers would shift to the “Him” in 2:6 as being Jesus, particularly since they assume that the phrase “ought to walk in the same manner as He walked”⁸³ is referring to Jesus. (In addition in the Gospel, John 6:56, 15:1-7, uses “abide” with Jesus, and so that theology is seen as justified and is assumed to be imported here). However, as noted previously the overriding context here is that of relationship with God, the Father. Based on the previous evidence of “know Him,” and “keeping His commandments,” the “abide in Him” would also be a claim to abide in God, the Father. The parallel in 3:23-24 confirms that use of “abides in Him,” where it is God, the Father.

3:23-24 This is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as He commanded us.²⁴
The one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him . . .

In addition, John’s stated issue of the book of having a relationship to the Father is put in terms of “abiding in God” in 4:13-16.

¹³ By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. ¹⁴ We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son *to be* the Savior of the world. ¹⁵ Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. ¹⁶ We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him (1 John 4:13-16).

Now, most readers would say the “as He walked” refers to Jesus, but it is one of those assumptions that, while seeming to be obvious, is almost totally without substantiation. The use of “*peripateo*” (“walk”) is used only one other time in the epistle and that is of a person walking (“in the light” or “in the darkness,” 1:6,7; 2:6,11) which was shown to be synonymous with light as an attribute of God the Father, and thus one is to walk with God the Father in that case (by walking in the light, i.e., through belief in Jesus). Thus the epistle never refers to Jesus walking or to anyone walking with Jesus. Even in the Gospels (John and the synoptic gospels) there is never a use of the verb or noun, “walk,” where Jesus is walking in some symbolic or spiritual sense (i.e., holiness or purity). Thus if this is a reference to Jesus “walking” in some spiritual sense it occurs only this one time in the whole of the Bible.⁸⁴ On the other hand, there are multiple uses

⁸³ In addition, see the discussion elsewhere that shows the pronoun “He” as being God the Father.

⁸⁴ Colossians 2:6 does relate one walking “in Him” as referring to walking in Jesus, but it is not saying Jesus “walked,” nor that the believer is to walk “with” Jesus as if Jesus is walking. Thus it is referring to the believer’s walk but not to Jesus as walking.

of *God* walking in the Old Testament⁸⁵, particularly in Genesis 3:5 where God appears⁸⁶, and others (Gen. 3:8, 5:22, Lev. 26:1, Judg. 2:17 (refers to walking as parallel to obeying the commands of the LORD, cf. also Jer. 7:23)), and 2 Sam. 6:4.

However, within the epistle's context, "walking as He walked" is a direct reference to the statement in 1:5,7 where it was stated that "we" should "walk in the light." That "light" is a reference (as previously shown) to God the Father and the expression of His character, which is "eternal life" (1:1-3). Thus in those verses one should walk in the revelation of the character of the Father. Now in 2:4 one should walk as He walked, again in the Father's character. As stated in 1:5-9, the revelation of God's character is only accessed through the perfect One, who covered sins, Jesus Christ the Righteous (1:7,10).⁸⁷ What John is saying is that one should "walk" in the revelation of God's character, by trusting in Jesus Christ, the Righteous. It is through Jesus, that the believer receives the total perfection of God's character, witnessed in the Son (i.e., eternal life), that one can have fellowship (i.e., share a common bond) with the Father. Thus again, John is pointing out that the access to the Father's character is only through Jesus Christ.

Genesis 3: God walking in the Garden: The Old Testament reference for this "walking as He walked" is Genesis 3:8, which fits in with all the other Genesis 1—4 allusions in 1 John 1:5--3:23.

They heard the sound (lit. "voice") of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool (lit.: "spirit" or "wind") of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence (lit.: the face") of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. (Genesis 3:8)

Again, God's presence appears in all of its holiness and Adam and Eve must hide since they now are not holy. They have covered themselves with leaves in a self-effort to

⁸⁵ There is a reference to God "walking" in the New Testament in 2 Corinthians 6:6 where it is a quotation from the Old Testament.

⁸⁶ See the reference to this Genesis event in 1 John 2:28.

⁸⁷ One might object here saying that "walking in the light" is walking "with" Jesus, since Jesus is that light. That would be a confusion of the figure of speech that he is using. God's character is being revealed through the expression of His character, which is light. Thus to walk with God one must access Him through that expression. But the expression is not God, the Father, but the expression or revelation of God, the Father. This is again, confusion of the point of the book. Jesus is the access to being able to "walk with God" so as to return to the state that existed in the garden. It is very interesting that no one anywhere in the Bible is told to "walk with Jesus" using that expression, which is otherwise quite common.

cover their sin from God (recall, “we have no sin” (1 John 1:8) and “we have not sinned,” (1 John 1:10)) and thus could not walk with God. Immediately following was the provision of Genesis 3:15, which was to give them a new righteous character of God through the Messiah so that they could return to a walk with God. Thus, the only way one could “walk as He walked,” was to access God through His (coming) Messiah and be pure once again.

Later in Genesis 5:22 and 6:9, it is also stated that Enoch and Noah “walked with God.” This simply indicates that they were both trusting in the coming Messiah⁸⁸ of Genesis 3:15 which enabled them to share the hope in the future Messiah to forgive their sins.

⁸⁸ Note that Lamech, Noah’s father, reflects his trust in the coming Genesis 3:15 Messiah in 5:29 as he refers to One who will remove the curse of the ground which was cursed in Genesis 3:17.

**“The One Born Of God Does Not Sin” (3:9) Is Referencing
The Righteous Character Of God Imputed To Man Through Christ**

Probably the most difficult of passages to deal with is the passage of 1 John 2:29—3:10, where the proponents of the two views advocate that the issue is whether the professor of Christianity is in a continuous state of sin which defines them as an unbeliever (or an unsanctified believer in the case of the “Fellowship View”).⁸⁹ The most central problem is the issue of the present tense of “sin” (*amartano*) or of “do” (*poieo*), which is commonly translated “continually sin” or “practice sin.” In an earlier discussion the issue of the present tense was dealt with, demonstrating that there is no justification for a “continual present tense” within the verb itself, nor in any of its forms. Justification for its use as continual is totally based on the context and is never inherent in the verb itself (it can be used in a continual context but does not bring that sense on its own). Thus, the present tense of “to stand,” (i.e., “stands”) may be used in a one-time sense when standing for the National Anthem, and the same “to stand” may be used in a continual sense when one is standing for hours on end while waiting in line, or even in the figurative sense when one “stands” for some principle. The verb itself does not change, only the context. Thus the translation of the verb should not change since if continuity is justified by the context then the context should also carry the continuity in the English translation. Thus, “I stand for the National Anthem” is totally different than “I stand for eternal security” but the verb does not need to indicate continuity, since the context carries it in the text. Thus the error the translators subtly admit when they add “practice” or “continually” is that they are admitting that the context does not have obvious continuity implied and thus must add it based on their theological perception of the meaning of the passage. Had the context justified continuity then they could have left it alone since their translation of the context would have indicated it. Of course, their translations then go to the pulpits of America where they exegete on the English text, assuming that “continually” or “practice” is a legitimate translation, thus importing, not the translation, but the interpretation which conforms to the theology of the translator.

This has been covered earlier in the discussion of Genesis 3 as related to this passage. Very simply the forgiveness of sins and the new life prophesied in the New

⁸⁹ The likely difficulty that commentators see is the inability to reconcile these verses and their literal translation that this one born of God “does not sin” (3:9) with the statement that the antagonist seems to claim wrongly that he has “no sin” or is “not sinning” in 1:8 and 1:10. The difficulty is solved (as discussed in this article) when one realizes that John is referencing in 1:8, 10, Adam’s wrong claim of innocence before God (Genesis 1:10), while in 3:9 he is referencing the new identity in the “Seed of the Woman” which he needed to be resurrected into the kingdom. Again, the Old Testament context of Genesis 3—4, and Jeremiah 31:31-34 (forgiveness of sins for the old heart and the sinlessness of the new heart) must be utilized. Thus one still has sin due to the presence of the Adamic nature, which is forgiven through Christ, yet one has the new character, which is the character of Christ imputed into the believer.

Adam would provide a new character that could not sin. Interestingly the literal translation of 3:9 overemphasizes the total inability for this new character to sin.

- A Each one who is born of God
 B does not sin,
 C because His seed abides in him;
 B' and he cannot sin,
 A' because he is born of God.

While it has been important to define things primarily from John's Epistle and his references to the Old Testament, it might behoove the reader to refer to Matthew 5:19 where Jesus defines the requirement for entry into the kingdom . . . absolute perfection.

"Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others *to do* the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven;⁹⁰ but whoever keeps and teaches *them*, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Clearly by comparison, there are two categories, those who are perfect ("keeps") and those who are less than perfect ("looses the least of these commandments"). Thus one must be perfect to enter the kingdom, not close, nor even have a consistent lifestyle, nor have a "continual," "habitual," lifestyle of good deeds. This perfection will be accomplished only by the imputation of a new heart.

⁹⁰ Jesus then goes on to illustrate those who negate the "least of these commandments" who will be "least in the kingdom" by stating "unless your righteousness exceeds that of the Scribes and the Pharisees, you shall not enter the Kingdom of God." And later in the immediate context He illustrates this by saying that if one calls their brother a fool they are guilty enough to go into hell fire (i.e., negated the least of these commandments).