

## **Our Blessed Fellowship With The Father And The Son.**

Text: 1 John 2:12-17

1) What a blessed privilege this is

Suggested Hymns:

2) Resolve not to give it away for the lust of the world

338, 344, 597, 151, 610

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.

The text for our sermon today is 1 John 2:12-17, *<sup>12</sup> I write to you, little children, Because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake. <sup>13</sup> 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. <sup>14</sup> 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.*

*<sup>15</sup> Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. <sup>16</sup> For all that is in the world — the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life — is not of the Father but is of the world. <sup>17</sup> And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever. (NKJV)*

Lord God, heavenly Father, sanctify us through Your truth. Your Word is truth. Amen.

Dear friends in Christ,

Among the many unforgettable pictures from the life of Jesus that we remember there stands out one in which we see a solitary figure standing on a high mountain. It is a man in utmost destitution and misery.

Without food for forty days and nights and entirely without comfort: wilderness, heat, frost, wild animals. Probably never owned a penny and now far removed from any relief.

Forgotten, lonely. — Then the Tempter conjured up before His eyes a view of the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them. Food, drink, comfort,

luxury, riches, and pleasure in great abundance. Power and great opportunities for doing things on a large scale.

And the devil said in Luke 4:6, ***“All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish.*** There was truth in what he said. He is the ruler of this world. He rules and can bestow favours. And might not this Man Jesus make good use of all these opportunities?

What good is this miserable seclusion in the barren wilderness? Just see, all this is within easy reach! — Only one condition, as we read in Luke 4:7, ***7 Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours.*** I must have a share in all this worship, devotion, love, which you give to God. Only some of it. Give worship to God; but I must have some of it. It is impossible to succeed in the world without giving it devotion, and love.

Thereupon Jesus immediately, uncompromisingly, indignantly, without a moment’s hesitation replied in Luke 4:8, ***“Get behind Me, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.’”***

All His life Jesus had given His love, devotion, and worship, to God alone. The loving fellowship with His heavenly Father had been His life all along. In the wicked, cruel streets of Nazareth. As a lad of twelve he had said to his parents in Luke 2:49, ***“Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father’s business?”***

And only a few weeks ago the heavenly Father had openly acknowledged Jesus at His baptism as we read in Matthew 3:17, ***17 And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”***

This — ***“in whom I am well pleased.”*** — What beautiful fellowship of love! It was life to Jesus. He clung to that. Even the utmost suffering in the wilderness could not shake His loving trust.

Now would He prostitute that love? Would He divide it between God and the wicked world? Would He flirt with the ungodly world when it smiled and offered ease and plenty? Certainly not! ***‘You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.’***

That is the picture. How does it apply to us?

You, too, my dear friends, are the beloved of God. In Holy Baptism God adopted and openly acknowledged you and said: This is my beloved child, in whom I am well pleased. And God has established a blessed and wonderful fellowship, communion, and intimate relationship with you by means of the Gospel, a fellowship of love.

Could you wish for anything better or greater? Is it not your best possession? Would you sell it — at any price? Would you want to give part of it away?

Come, let us learn from Jesus. On the basis of our text let us now meditate upon *Our Blessed Fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ*. May the Lord bless our meditation.

## **1. Our Blessed Fellowship With The Father And With His Son Jesus Christ.**

### **Let Us Consider What A Blessed Privilege This Is**

St. John divides his readers into two groups. He first addresses them altogether, then each group. And he does this twice, to emphasise what he has to say of their high privilege.

First, he addresses them all as *“little children”*; not merely by virtue of his own very old age, nor because he is their teacher, but he has learned this term from Jesus himself.

We read in John 13:31–35, <sup>31</sup> *So, when [Judas] had gone out, Jesus said, “Now the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in Him. <sup>32</sup> If God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and glorify Him immediately.*

<sup>33</sup> *Little children, I shall be with you a little while longer. You will seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come,’ so now I say to you.*

<sup>34</sup> *A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. <sup>35</sup> By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.*”

The term *Little children* is a term of endearment. They are God's dear children. Then he addresses the older readers as "*fathers*" and the younger generation as "*young men.*"

Our text begins "*Little children,*" God's beloved children! Remember the love God has bestowed upon you — "*your sins are forgiven you.*" They are forgiven. This is an accomplished fact. All sins forgiven, completely forgiven.

Through faith you have accepted this and received it. And as our text says, *for His name's sake.* Likewise we read in 2 Corinthians 5:19, *that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.*

The hymnist writes,<sup>1</sup>

When darkness round me gathers,  
Thy name and cross, still bright,  
Deep in my heart are sparkling  
Like stars in blackest night.  
O heart, this image cherish:  
The Christ on Calvary,  
How patiently He suffered  
And shed His blood for me!

Our text continues, *I write to you, little children, Because you have known the Father.* Not as you know this or that man on the street but as beloved and loving children know their own father, as only those know who love. Remember, little children, this your great distinction!

Second, he addresses them as "*Fathers!*" <sup>13</sup> *I write to you, fathers, Because you have known Him who is from the beginning.* This refers to Jesus.

We read in John 1:1-3, <sup>1</sup> *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* <sup>2</sup> *He was in the beginning with God.* <sup>3</sup> *All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.*

And in John 1:14, <sup>14</sup> *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.*<sup>2</sup>

When someday they will sum up your life's story, whether you have been famous or obscure, considered fortunate or afflicted, this is your one great and enviable distinction: you have known, known lovingly, trustfully, believingly, Jesus, who was dead, who died for you; and, behold, He is alive forevermore.

Jesus helped, rescued, forgave, carried, counselled, comforted, and saved you. Remember, fathers, this great distinction. You are nearing life's end. Through Jesus you have conquered thus far. Soon the conflict will be over. But still there are trials to be expected. Don't forget Jesus Christ, the Everlasting.

Third, he address the "Young men." *I write to you, young men, Because you have overcome the wicked one.* You, the young men are just beginning life's battles. Fierce struggles may have to be met with, and ruthless enemies will seek your soul's harm, your eternal destruction.

You need confidence, you must be brave. Here is assurance: "*you have overcome the wicked one.*" You have gained the victory. The battle is won.

Martin Luther wrote,

This world's prince may still  
Scowl fierce as he will,  
He can harm us none;  
He's judged, for e'er undone;  
One little word can fell him.

You heard the tune of "A mighty fortress is our God" earlier during the lighting of the candles.

Yes, Jesus obtained the victory, and it is yours through your fellowship with the Father and the Son. And as our text says, "*you are strong, and the word of God abides in you.*" God's Word dwells in your hearts and wants to continue therein.

Remember this your strength, you young people, remember! I am not speaking of your physical, mental, or moral strength, but of God's, given to you through His Word, by means of which you have overcome the Wicked One. Away with faint-heartedness, fear, doubt, uncertainty, and anxiety! Be strong!

O you children of God, all of you, bear well in mind your blessed privilege through fellowship with the Father and the Son. Remember that Jesus remembered that when standing lonely on that mountain-top.

## **2. Our Blessed Fellowship With The Father And With His Son Jesus Christ.**

### **Let Us Certainly Resolve**

#### **Not To Give It Away For The Lustful Love Of The World.**

Remembering this, you will certainly not want to give away your blessed fellowship with the Father and His Son and exchange it for the lustful love of the world.

Our text says <sup>15</sup> *Do not love the world or the things in the world.* “The world”? Does not God love the world, even the sinful world? Indeed, remember John 3:16, <sup>16</sup> *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

Jesus gave His life for this world, and there can be no greater love than that. He loved it with the same love predicated of His Father. But the love to which He was invited on that mountain was a love directly opposed to God, in opposition to Him, a lustful love.

The world of which St. John here speaks is the world which is ruled by its ruler, the devil, and which in all its thinking and desiring is an enemy of God and His children.

“*The things in the world*” refers to its pleasures, riches, and honours. The world is steeped in enmity against God. Love for that world simply is not compatible with love of the Father, *If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.* Such love is a betrayal of the love of the Father, an adulterous love.

Our text continues, <sup>16</sup> *For all that is in the world — the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life — is not of the Father but is of the world.*

“*Lust of the flesh*” refers to sexual uncleanness, money and the power it gives. We read Ephesians 5:3–4, <sup>3</sup> *But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; <sup>4</sup> neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.*

People often wonder why in texts like Eph. 5:3 sexual lust and greed are mentioned together. They go together. A lustful life costs money. And all such lust is not of the Father, but of the world.

***“Lust of the eyes.”*** The eye, seemingly so harmless and innocent, is the ready tool of lust. It likes to feast on forbidden things. We read in Genesis 3:6, ***“So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.***

And in Genesis 39:7 we read about Potiphar’s wife. ***“<sup>7</sup> And it came to pass after these things that his master’s wife cast longing eyes on Joseph, and she said, “Lie with me.”<sup>3</sup>***

The scandalous novels, pictures, and TV shows of our time are all examples of this. All this is not of the Father, but of the world.

***“The pride of life.”*** In the papers one daily reads the opinions and over the radio one constantly hears the proud voice, of the nations of the world, and that is but the accumulated voice of the inhabitants of all the world. All this is a degenerate deformation of the world God created; and this is not of the Father but of the world.

Our text concludes. ***“<sup>17</sup> And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.*** All this lustful and proud world is but a passing show, and behind its mask there is much horror and abomination. The person who lusts after these things must likewise perish. And, note well that the world offers its fleeting success only to those who give it their devotion.

O you children of God, keep your hearts clean! Give your love to Jesus Christ who forgave you and in whose fellowship you are so blessed.

You fathers! You have known Jesus. Remain true to Him. Do not as you grow older become fools through love of the world. Solomon did, and David did, and they suffered greatly in the eventide of their lives, although they were forgiven.

You young people, be strong! You have God’s strength abiding in you. Do not waste your strength on the lust of the world. The world wants your love and lust, abandon it. Think of Jesus on the mountain-top when He was tempted by

the devil! Remain true to the Father and His Son Jesus Christ. For as our text says, *he who does the will of God abides forever.*

Let us close with the words of the hymnist,<sup>4</sup>

Jesus, Thy boundless love to me  
No thought can reach, no tongue declare;  
Unite my thankful heart to Thee,  
And reign without a rival there.  
Thine wholly, Thine alone, I am:  
Lord, with Thy love my heart inflame. Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep our hearts and minds, in Christ Jesus. Amen.

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<sup>1</sup> Hymn 474 v 3

<sup>2</sup> See also Heb. 13:8, Rev. 22:13

<sup>3</sup> See also 2 Pet. 2:14

<sup>4</sup> Hymn 151