

The Basis of Christian Fellowship

1 John 1:1-4

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Christ is the basis of Christian fellowship.

2. Joy is the result of Christian fellowship.

Practical Application

1. Let's worship the Lord who became man forever.

Questions

1. What is the only basis of Christian fellowship?
2. What is the theme of the epistle of 1 John?
3. Who is the author of 1 John?
4. What other books of the New Testament did he write?
5. When did the author write 1 John?
6. What was the author's purpose in writing this epistle?

Answers

1. Christ Himself and Christ alone.
2. Christian fellowship.
3. The apostle John.
4. The epistles 2 John and 3 John, the gospel of John and the book of Revelation.
5. Sometime between 95 and 100 A.D.
6. When John wrote this epistle, false teaching and false teachers had already infiltrated the Christian church, and a number of people had followed these false teachings. John wanted to warn the church about these false teachings and to refute the false teachings. He wanted to give true believers assurance of their salvation.

Discuss / Consider

1. False teaching and false teachers had infiltrated the Christian church. John was concerned that the church would be drawn away from the truth that Christ and Christ alone is the basis of Christian fellowship. The false teaching, later called Gnosticism, denied truths about Christ as the Son of God - they denied that He was pre-existent and they denied that He became incarnate. See 1 John 1:1-2. Are you aware that there are false teachers today who perpetuate these false teachings? Other false teaching?

2. Consider three points of the false teaching of Gnosticism: a) it wrongly taught that Christ was not fully God, but that He was only an emanation from God that came upon the man Jesus, b) it wrongly taught the material world was intrinsically evil, and only the world of the spirit was good, and c) it wrongly taught that salvation was only for the enlightened ones, those who had gained certain mystical knowledge or gnosis. Consider how you could refute this false teaching.

3. "These things we write to you that you joy may be full." (1 John 1:4). Apart from Christian fellowship there can be no true joy, because apart from Christ there can be no true joy. Apart from Christ, you may have temporary happiness, but no real lasting joy. The essence of Christian fellowship is intimate communion with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. To experience the joy of Christian fellowship, you must meet with other believers. Don't forsake the assembling of yourselves together. See Hebrews 10:25. Is your joy full?

Challenge

1. Do you fully understand the implications of the incarnation? It took place at conception in Nazareth, not a birth in Bethlehem. Before conception, the eternal son of God was 100% God and 0% man. After conception, he was 100% God and 100% man. Now, after our Lord's death and resurrection and ascension He still remains 100% God and 100% man forever. For our sakes, the eternal Son of God became man forever. Is your response one of worship?

The Requirements of Christian Fellowship
1 John 1:5-10

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. Walking in the light is a requirement of Christian fellowship.**

- 2. Confessing our sins is a requirement of Christian fellowship.**

Practical Application

- 1. Let's practice the presence of the Lord.**

Questions

1. What was the apostle John's purpose for writing this epistle?
2. Compare the purpose of this epistle of 1 John with the purpose of the gospel of John.
3. How is 1 John like a family picture album?
4. What is the theme that emerges from the pages of 1 John?
5. What is the basis of Christian fellowship? What is the result of Christian fellowship? What are the requirements of Christian fellowship?

Answers

1. The purpose is to give believers the assurance of their salvation and to encourage them in their faith. "These things are written...that you may know that you have eternal life." (1 John 5:13)
2. The purpose of John's gospel is to lead people to salvation in Christ (see John 20:30-31). The purpose of the epistle of 1 John is to give the believer the assurance of salvation (see 1 John 5:13). The gospel of John is about relationship and union with Christ. The epistle of 1 John is about fellowship and communion with Christ and communion with Christ and fellow believers.
3. Open an album and you will see your picture there. Open the album of 1 John and you will see your picture there if you are in the family of God.
4. Christian fellowship – who is in the fellowship and who is not in the fellowship.
5. The basis of Christian fellowship is Christ Himself. The result of Christian fellowship is joy. the requirements of Christian fellowship are walking in the light and confessing our sins.

Discuss / Consider

1. Refer to 1 John 1:7. What does it mean to walk in the light? Refer to 1 John 5. What does it mean that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all? Refer to 1 John 1:6-7. Are you walking in the light? Do you check your thoughts and actions in light of the light?

2. Refer to 1 John 1:8-10. In these verses we have our responsibility and God's promise in reference to dealing with our sins. Our responsibility is to acknowledge our sin and to confess our sins. If we confess our known sins, God promises to forgive our sins and further cleanse us from unrighteousness in our lives. What a wonderful promise! A clean slate! Do you confess your known sins?

Challenge

1. Do you practice the presence of the Lord in your life? Do you consider the fact that the Lord is with you in whatever you are doing and in whatever you are saying? Practicing the presence of the Lord in your life is an important part of walking in the light. Do you talk to Him throughout the day and in the night watches? See Philippians 4:5 and Hebrews 13:5.

Christ As Our Advocate, and Two Tests of Christian Fellowship
1 John 2:1-11

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. Obedience to Christ's commands is a test of Christian fellowship.**
- 2. Love for fellow believers is a test of Christian fellowship.**

Practical Application

- 1. Remember the illustration of the GI bill.**

Questions

1. What is the theme of the first epistle of John? What is the result of this theme?
2. What are the two requirements of Christian fellowship as seen in 1 John 1?
3. What is God's standard of perfection? (See 1 John 2:1-2)
4. What happens when believers sin?
5. What does it mean that Christ is the propitiation for our sin?

Answers

1. The theme is Christian fellowship, with Christ alone as the basis of Christian fellowship. The result is joy.
2. We must walk in the light, and we must confess our sins.
3. God's standard of perfection is that believers may not sin.
4. Confess and turn to our Advocate (defense lawyer) with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous. See 1 John 2:2.
5. When Christ died on the cross, He satisfied the wrath of a Holy God directed against sin, the sins of the whole world. The work of Christ on the cross is sufficient to save everyone in the world, but effective only for those who believe, not for those who reject.

Discuss / Consider

1. People who say they are in fellowship with the Lord but are not willing to obey Him are liars. See 1 John 2:3-6. A lifestyle of disobedience puts a big question mark on our salvation. If, on the other hand, we are wanting and trying to be obedient, then we know that we are abiding in God and the love of God is in us and we are in fellowship with Him. Is the desire of your heart to keep His commandments by knowing and obeying them?

2. The true Christian does not live a life of hating a fellow believer without getting differences straightened out. If there is continual hatred, then that person is blinded and still in darkness. See 1 John 2:9-11. Could this be true of you? Or are you practicing and showing love to your fellow believers. Be careful that you do not stumble someone because you refuse to be reconciled with a fellow believer.

Challenge

1. The benefits under the GI bill are a good illustration of the unlimited and limited aspects of Christ's atoning work on the cross of Calvary. Payment made by the U.S. government for the educational benefits under the GI bill was unlimited in provision, but only those who chose to receive a college education at government expense benefited. It was limited in effectiveness to those who accepted. So, it is with Christ's atoning work on the cross. It is unlimited in provision, but limited in saving results to those who accept and receive it.

A Test of Christian Fellowship: Separation from the World
1 John 2:12-17

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. Separation from the world is a test of Christian fellowship.**
 - a. The standard operating procedure of this world system.**

 - b. The future of this world system.**

Practical Application

- 1. Use the word to separate from the world.**

Questions

1. See 1 John 2:1 and 1 John 2:12. The apostle John writes to “little children.” To what does this refer?

2. See 1 John 2:13-14. List the three maturity groups into which John divides the Christian family.

3. How are each of these groupings characterized?

4. What is the exhortation given in v.15-17? To whom is it addressed? Why is such an exhortation necessary?

5. “Do not love the world or the things in the world.” (1 John 2:15). The New Testament uses the word “world” in three different ways. List these three meanings and star the one that is meant in this reference.

6. To whom did the Lord Jesus refer as the ruler of this world?

Answers

1. It refers to all believers. The Greek word used here literally means, “born ones,” which conveys the idea of being born into god’s family.
2. Fathers, young men and children. These groupings include both men and women.
3. Fathers are characterized as mature believers; young men are characterized by vigor and combat and strength; children are characterized as babes in Christ.
4. It is an exhortation to separate from the world, especially addressed to the young men category. This world system is appealing and attractive to this category of believers. Thus, separation from this world system becomes a test of Christian fellowship.
5. The meanings of the word “world” – 1) the material world that God has created (Acts 17:24), 2) the world of people (John 3:16), and *3) the Satanic world system of values and attitudes that are opposed to God.
6. He referred to Satan as the ruler of this world, the god of this world system.

Discuss / Consider

1. Refer to 2 Corinthians 4:3-4. We are commanded in 1 John 2:15 not to love the world. In fact, it is a test of Christian fellowship. Remember, the essence of Christian fellowship is fellowship with those who love the Lord and are walking in the light.
2. Review the areas of the standard operating procedure of the world system: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. All three of these strong areas of desire are not of the Father, but are of the world. Satan knows that we are vulnerable in all three of these areas because of our fallen, human and sinful nature. Review these desires as seen in Genesis 3:6. Recall these same desires as Satan presented them to the Lord Jesus. Eve succumbed to the temptations, but Jesus stood firm, countering the temptations with the word. Satan approaches us in the same way. Stand firm and counter with the word.
3. A day is coming when there will be no more world system. Why are you investing so much of your time and effort in this world system? It is passing away. Consider what is going to count for eternity.

Challenge

1. When Jesus was tempted, he quoted Scripture, “It is written... it is written... it is written.” Refer to these quotations in Matthew 4 and from the book of Deuteronomy. Do you want to overcome the wicked one? Then you must abide in the word. See 1 John 2:14. Abiding in the word means that you must know the word and it must become a part of you. Then the Holy Spirit can bring it to mind when Satan uses his world system appeal on you. Eve did not know the word and she misquoted what God had said. No wonder there was failure. What about you? How well do you know the word? How much time do you spend in the word?

A Test of Separation from False Teaching
1 John 2:18-29

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Separation from false teaching is a test of Christian fellowship.

a. The reality of false teaching.

b. The restraint of false teaching.

Practical Application

1. Let's be ashamed to be ashamed.

Questions

1. Is everyone who claims to be a Christian a true believer?
2. John warned the believers about a certain false teaching. What was given to this it in the 2nd century A.D.?
3. Which group of believers are especially vulnerable to false teaching?
4. What is the difference between spirituality and spiritual maturity?
5. Who is the enemy who targets new believers?

Answers

1. No. Some so-called Christians even deny that Jesus is God.
2. It was called Gnosticism. Among other things, it denied the full deity of Christ.
3. The babes in Christ (the new believers) because they haven't been exposed to as much teaching as the other groups.
4. Spirituality has to do with your love and devotion to the Lord. Spiritual maturity has to do with your knowledge of the word.
5. Satan is the enemy, trying to get new believers confused.

Discuss / Consider

1. Refer to 1 John 2:24-25. Notice how separation from false teaching is a test of Christian fellowship. If you don't abide in the core teachings of our Lord and His apostles, it is evidence that you are not part of the Christian fellowship and you don't have eternal life. Are you abiding in the core teachings of Scripture?

2. The author's point in 1 John 2:18 is that the false teaching was definitely a reality that they were facing because they were already in the last days. The last days really began with the coming of Christ (see Hebrews 1:2), but they continue to get worse and worse, as seen from 2 Timothy 3:1, 13. The core of false teaching is a denial of the full deity of Christ and a denial that Jesus is the Messiah and Savior. Any religion that says that Jesus was only a good man, or only one of many other ways of salvation is a false religion. Check out false religions.

3. How do we protect ourselves from false teaching? By the Holy Scripture (see 1 John 2:24-25) and by the Holy Spirit (1 John 2:26-27). We need to abide in the word for protection – read, meditate and obey the word daily.

Challenge

1. Re-read 1 John 2:28-29. Are you a faithful servant of Jesus Christ? Let's be ashamed to be ashamed.

The Family Likeness of Righteousness
1 John 3:1-10

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. The family likeness of righteousness is a test of Christian fellowship.**
 - a. Those who practice sin fail the test.**

 - b. Those who practice righteousness pass the test.**

Practical Application

- 1. Always think of the Lord's return.**

Questions

1. What great truths are found in 1 John 3:1?

2. What great hope is found in 1 John 3:2?

3. Can you know that someone is a child of God just by looking at him?

4. How will we one day be like Christ?

5. What does it mean in the family of God to be "Like Father, like son?"

6. Refer to 1 John 3:9. Are believers sinless?

Answers

1. As a believer, you are not only a forgiven sinner, but you have been brought into the family of God because of His great love and sacrifice.
2. One day we shall be like Him (Jesus Christ).
3. Not yet, but when the Lord returns there will be no doubt.
4. We will be like Him morally. In glory we will not only be sinless, but we will not be able to sin. See Philippians 3:21.
5. Believers should exhibit family traits or characteristics of God.
6. The Greek present tense is used here, which implies continuous action. The idea is that whoever is born of God does not continue to live a life of sin or habitually sin or practice sin.

Discuss / Consider

1. Refer to 1 John 3:4-10. If you are practicing righteousness, it is evidence that you are a true believer, and you really pass the test of Christian fellowship and you really are in the family of God. If, on the other hand, you are practicing sin and not righteousness, then it is evident that you are only a professing Christian and not a true believer, and you are not in the family of God. Are you practicing righteousness? Are you passing the test of Christian fellowship? Are you in the family of God? Examine your heart.

2. Consider the absolute perfection of our Lord Jesus. Read 1 John 3:5; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:22. The new life that we receive in Christ is righteousness. We are partakers of the divine nature (2 Peter 1:4). Because of our fallen sinful natures, we will continue to sin until we get our new resurrection bodies in glory. But because of the new righteous life we now have in Christ, we will not live a life of sin; we will not be characterized by sin; we will not practice sin. Are you practicing righteousness? Or are you practicing sin? There is no middle ground. Are you a child of God or a child of the devil? (1 John 3:8)

Challenge

1. Read 1 John 3:2-3. When we think of the Lord's return and the changes that will take place in us then, it will have a sanctifying or purifying effect on our lives now. Try this – every day this coming week, three times a day think of the Lord's return and say, "Maybe the Lord will return today." if you do this, it will have a definitely purifying effect on your life as a believer.

The Family Likeness of Brotherly Love
1 John 3:11-24

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. The family likeness of brotherly love is a test of Christian fellowship.

a. A negative example of brotherly love.

b. A positive example of brotherly love.

Practical Application

1. Don't be surprised if the world hates you.

Questions

1. What is the theme of this epistle?

2. How is fellowship defined in Scripture?

3. State the basis of Christian fellowship and the result of Christian fellowship.

4. List the tests of Christian fellowship as stated in 1 John 2.

5. Likenesses in God's family picture album are given in 1 John 3. What are they?

6. List a negative example of brotherly love from the Bible. List a positive example of brotherly love.

Answers

1. Christian Fellowship.
2. "Truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ." (1 John 1:3) When together our focus is on the Lord and what He has done for us and is doing for us, then and only then are we enjoying and experiencing real Christian fellowship.
3. Christ is the basis of Christian fellowship and true joy is the result of Christian fellowship.
4. Obedience to the word, love for fellow believers, separation from the world, and separation from false teaching.
5. Righteousness and brotherly love.
6. Cain is listed as a negative example. The Lord Himself is the supreme positive example.

Discuss / Consider

1. Cain came in his own way to God, not God's way of sacrifice. That's like a lot of people today. They try to come to God in their own way rather than God's way through Christ alone. Did you ever have this problem? Cain hated his brother because his brother's works were righteous. Again, that's like a lot of people today. A person who calls himself/herself a Christian and yet continually hates his/her fellow believers is not in the family of God. What is your attitude and action toward fellow believers?

2. See 1 John 3:16: John 3:16 and Romans 5:8. The Lord laid down his life for us. The latter part of 1 John 3:16 says, "And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." Are you aware of the many missionaries, pastors and believers throughout the world who are laying down their lives for the brethren today? Become aware of the persecutions of this age and pray for those who are laying down their lives for the brethren that Christ might be preached?

3. Read 1 John 3:17 as a minimal expression of brotherly love. You may not be called upon to lay down your life for the brethren, but you are called to share with your brothers and sisters in need. Are you aware of those in need? What are you doing about it?

4. God helps us examine our hearts concerning brotherly love. God shows us by

- a) our conscience,
- b) our prayers, and
- c) the Holy Spirit.

See 1 John 3:20-24. Examine your heart before the Lord.

Challenge

1. "Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you." (1 John 3:13). When you present the truth of the gospel you will experience the mockery and hate of this world. When you stand for biblical moral standards, God will bless you, but the world will hate you. Are you willing to experience this kind of hate for the sake of the gospel?

Detecting False Teachers and Characteristics of Christian Fellowship **1 John 4**

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Love is the obvious trait of Christian fellowship.

a. The evidence of spiritual life is love.

b. The evidence of spiritual maturity is love.

Practical Application

1. Remember the illustration of the spokes on a wheel.

Questions

1. What was John's purpose in writing this epistle?
2. Where is the test for false teachers given in this passage?
3. What is the bottom-line test for detecting false teachers and false prophets?
4. Are there religious groups today that fail this test?
5. How are believers encouraged in 1 John 4:4?

Answers

1. To give true believers assurance of their salvation and to warn them of the false teaching and to inform them how to detect false teachers.
2. The test for false teachers is given in 1 John 4:2-3.
3. Do they confess Jesus is Lord because He is God incarnate? Do they believe that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh? Do they believe that he is fully God and fully man?
4. Yes, when they deny the truth of the incarnation and when they deny that Jesus is still 100% God while being 100% man. They may call themselves Christians and they say that they accept the bible as God's word, and they say that they follow the teachings of Christ, but they are false teachers because they fail this bottom line test of 1 John 4:2-3. As such, they are really antichrists.
5. Believers are encouraged to know that they have the Holy Spirit in them. And He is greater than Satan who is in the world.

Discuss / Consider

1. The non-Christian world said of the first century Christians, "My, how they love one another." Love for fellow believers is a test of Christian fellowship, and love is an important family characteristic. The obvious trait of Christian fellowship is love. Love is the mark of the Christian. How do you see this love worked out in your life and in the lives of your circle of believers?
2. The word for love, as used in 1 John is "agape." Agape love is not an "if" type of love (I love you if you do this for me), and it's not a "because" type of love (I love you because you love me). No. It's an "in spite of" type of love (I love you in spite of what you are, and in spite of what you have done to me). That's the kind of love God has shown to us when He gave His only begotten Son for us and when He sent His Son to the cross to become the propitiation for our sin. If God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. The evidence of spiritual life is love. Do you evidence agape love?
3. Read 1 John 4:12-18. The word "perfected" comes from the Greek word, "telios," which means come to maturity. The point of this passage is that believers who have divine life and are indwelt of the Holy Spirit, as they walk with the Lord and abide in His love, that love will be manifested in their lives. The evidence of God can and will be seen in the mature believer's life (1 John 4:12). Is this true of your life? How spiritually mature are you as a believer?

Challenge

1. Read 1 John 4:19-21. As spokes get nearer to the center of a wheel, they get closer to one another. Since God is love, that love should characterize us. As he is, so are we in this world (1 John 4:17). Are you exhibiting love for your fellow believers? If we truly love God, who is the hub of the wheel, then we as spokes will truly love one another, because as spokes get closer to the center of the wheel, they get closer to one another. How is it with you? Remember the illustration of the spokes on a wheel.

The Reliable Witness that Supports the Christian Faith
1 John 5:1-12

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Christian faith is the essential characteristic of Christian fellowship.

a. Christian faith is the means to overcome the world.

b. Christian faith has a sufficient witness.

Practical Application

1. Whether you like it or not, there is only one road up the mountain.

Questions

1. Why is 1 John 5:1-3 called the cycle of love?

2. Are the Lord's commandments burdensome?

3. Refer to 1 John 5:4-12. The subject moves from Christian love to Christian _____.

4. What is the three-fold enemy of the Christian?

5. How do believers deal with this enemy?

Answers

1. If we are born of God, we will love God, and if we love God we will keep His commandments, and if we keep His commandments, we will love our fellow believers, and if we love our fellow believers, it is evidence that we love God and that we are born of God.
2. The Lord's commandments are not easy, but they are not burdensome. An illustration would be the command to a mother to love her baby. It is not a burdensome command, even if it's a lot of work.
3. Faith.
4. The world, the flesh and the devil.
5. Flee (the flesh), fight (the devil) and walk by faith (to overcome the world). Refer to 2 Timothy 2:22, Ephesians 6:10-17 and 1 John 5:4-5.

Discuss / Consider

1. "Whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world – our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1 John 5:4-5) Consider the three-fold enemy of the Christian: the world, the flesh and the devil. By faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ we can overcome the world. Do you really believe that the world is passing away and the lust of it, but he who does the will of God abides forever? (1 John 2:17). If so, materialism will not be a problem for you. If, on the other hand, you are trusting in this world for your security and you love your earthly possessions, then you are not living by faith and you will not overcome the world. Check out what you are trusting in.

2. The Christian faith is not a blind leap of faith, but it is a reasonable step of faith because the Christian faith has a reliable and sufficient witness backing it up. Review both the external witness (1 John 5:6-9) and the internal witness (1 John 5:10).

Challenge

1. Many people today believe that the Christian faith is only one of many paths that lead up the mountain to heaven and to eternal life. Not so! According to the Bible, there is only one road up the mountain. Re-read 1 John 5:11-12. There is no middle ground. Perhaps you have been told that there are many paths, but as a true witness of the Lord Jesus Christ, you are on solid ground by showing the many-path person these verses.

Benefits of Christian Fellowship **1:13-21**

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. Assurance of salvation is a benefit of Christian fellowship.**
- 2. Confidence in prayer is a benefit of Christian fellowship.**
- 3. Protection from Satan is a benefit of Christian fellowship.**

Practical Application

- 1. It is God we want to know, so the idols must go.**

Questions

1. What is the essence of Christian fellowship?
2. State the purpose of John's gospel and the purpose of John's first epistle.
3. Are you meeting the requirements of Christian fellowship?
4. Are you passing the tests of Christian fellowship?
5. Are you exhibiting the family characteristics of the Christian fellowship?
6. Are you experiencing the joy of Christian fellowship?

Answers

1. The essence of Christian fellowship is intimate communion with God Himself, and that is what unites believers together. See 1 John 1:3
2. John's gospel is evangelistic; John's first epistle is written to believers to give them assurance of salvation. See 1 John 5:13.
3. Requirements of Christian fellowship are walking in the light and confessing your sins.
4. Tests of Christian fellowship are obedience to the commands of the Lord, separation from the world and separation from false teaching.
5. Characteristics of Christian fellowship are righteousness, brotherly love and faith.
6. Joy is one of the results of true Christian fellowship.

Discuss / Consider

1. "These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life." (1 John 5:13). What a blessing and benefit it is to know that you are saved, and not have doubts concerning your salvation. Have you ever had doubts concerning your salvation? Read this verse from the Bible and rest on God's promise to you.
2. "This is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us...and we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him." (1 John 5:14-15) Notice God's gracious limitation to this promise – "according to His will." Aren't you glad that God doesn't say "Yes" to all of your prayers? Are you praying in His will? If so, then expect an answer to your prayers.
3. "We know that whoever is born of God does not sin; but he who has been born of God keeps himself and the wicked one does not touch him." (1 John 5:18) The whole world system is satanic in its operation, but the believer is protected from Satan. As long as you are not practicing sin and you are living in the enjoyment of Christian fellowship, Satan cannot touch you. This is what the spiritual armor is all about in Ephesians 6. This does not mean that we will not be tempted, for we will be tempted, but we are protected. Are you thanking God for this protection?

Challenge

1. Re-read 1 John 5:20-21. Observe both a promise ("we may know Him") and a command (Keep yourselves from idols"). The Gnostics of the first century prided themselves on knowledge, but they didn't know God. The true believer may come to know not just about God, but to know God Himself, more and more in an intimate and deep way. It is God we want to know, so the idols must go. Remember, an idol is anything that takes the place of God, keeping the believer from knowing God more. Is there an idol in your life (possessions, interests, pastimes, human priorities, human plans)? Examine your life and clear out the idols.