

quiet life. His point, then, that God desires “all men” to be saved, if understood in the context, means that God desires all kinds of people to be saved, even kings and government officials who of all people, from a human standpoint, may be considered most unlikely to receive the Gospel.

We may also note 2Pet 3:8–9:

But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day. The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.

In the previous context, Peter writes that in the last days there would be mockers, denying that Yeshua would return in accordance with His own words. Their argument is that everything remains the same from one era to the next, and that the idea of Yeshua’s return and the judgment that would prevail is a hoax. Peter notes how mistaken they are, and then gives a word of hope to those believers to whom he is writing. He affirms that “The Lord is not slow about His promise...but is patient toward you...” The pronoun “you” in this case refers to the believing community. Thus, the following phrase, “not wishing for any to perish” refers most naturally to those who are believers and those who would become believers through the Gospel.

In the end, the Scriptures clearly teach that God has chosen those who will be saved, and He has paid for their sins through the death of His Son, Yeshua. While the Gospel is surely to be given to all people without distinction (what we have termed the “general call”), the reality is that God has determined to save an innumerable host of people, and these are those who will inevitably be saved (cf. Rev 7:9). The efficacious nature of the atonement assures that.

----- *End of Excursus* -----

3–4 By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments. 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;

John now begins to make a specific application of his teaching in the previous verses of the epistle. He has made it clear that for believers in Yeshua, He (Yeshua) acts as an Advocate for them before the Father. As such, the promise given in 1:7 that “the blood of Yeshua His Son cleans-

es us from all sin” is secure, for though a person who is truly born again strives not to sin, if he or she does sin, confessing the sin is one of the marks of truly being a child of God. Thus (1:9), “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

Further, in 2:2 John has emphasized that the forgiving act of God in His Son Yeshua, whereby the penalty for the sins of all who are saved was paid, was not directed toward a single people-group but that Yeshua Himself was the propitiation for all who would become members of God’s family, whether Jew or non-Jew. But the propitiation that was accomplished for God’s people through the work of Yeshua has as its goal and purpose not only to pay the penalty for their sin but even more, to bring them into full and lasting fellowship with God. Indeed, fellowship with God and with fellow believers is stressed in chapter one (cf. 1:3, 6, 7). And, John makes it clear that “walking in the light in fellowship with God means that we confess our sin (1:9).

While confession of sin deals with a negative, the ongoing battle against sin in the believer’s life, now, in v. 3, John emphasizes the positive aspect that likewise characterizes the believer’s life in Messiah, namely, that knowing God means obeying His commands.

The connectivity of these verses is a bit more apparent in the Greek than in some of the English translations. In the Greek, v. 3 begins with the connective *καί* (*kai*), often translated as “and,” but this is left untranslated by some English translations (NASB, NIV, HCSB, CJB). Some translate *kai* as “Now,” seeking to show a logical connection to the previous contexts.

But the main point is this: having made the broad statement in the previous verse that “He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world,” John immediately emphasizes that not only is confession of sin a mark of true salvation, but so is one’s life of obedience to God’s commandments. In short, the propitiation which has been accomplished by the salvific work of Messiah for all who will be saved is inevitably accompanied by a changed life that not only seeks to obey God’s commandments but is enabled to do so. As Kruse nicely puts it:

Ongoing assurance that we are people who know God is dependent upon ongoing obedience to his commands.¹

1 Colin G. Kruse, *The Letters of John* in D. A. Carson, ed., *The Pillar New Testament Commentary* (Eerdmans, 2000), p. 77.

By this we have come to know that we know Him ... – As noted above, the line actually begins with a connective *kai*, “And by this...,” connecting this to the previous context. Both confession of sin as well as an obedient life are marks of genuine faith.

The word “know” (γινώσκω, *ginōskō*) is used twice in this opening line. In the first occurrence, the verb is in the present tense, while the second time the verb is in the perfect tense. In this case the present tense would emphasize an on-going characteristic of knowing, while the perfect tense would emphasize a past event which has ongoing effects in the present. We could paraphrase the line this way:

We have an ongoing, settled assurance that our initial confession of faith in Yeshua was genuine and thus gave us right standing and fellowship with the Father, if our lives are characterized by keeping His commandments.

In the above paraphrase, I’ve characterized the phrase “we have come to know Him” by the phrase “gave us right standing and fellowship with the Father.” I have therefore understood that the pronoun “Him” in the phrase “come to know Him” primarily refers to the Father, as does the pronoun “His” in the phrase “by keeping His commandments.” Obviously, “to know Yeshua” is likewise to “know the Father,” and Yeshua’s commandments are one and the same with those of the Father. But it is clear in the Gospels that the goal of Yeshua’s very incarnation as well as His redemptive work is that He would effect eternal fellowship between those who would be saved and the Father. He does this by revealing the Father in truth, by taking away the debt of sin which separates the sinner from the Father, and, through the work of the Ruach, by granting faith which results in a life of ongoing sanctification.

All things have been handed over to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him. (Matt 11:27)

Yeshua said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me. (Jn 14:6)

Yeshua said to him, “Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? (Jn 14:9)

For Messiah also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; (1Pet 3:18)

The practical ramifications of this opening line are clear. First, John teaches us that we may have true knowledge of our relationship with God. We can know that we know Him. In fact, the word “know” and the concept of “knowledge” is dominant in this epistle. The Greek verb *ginōskō* (γινώσκω) is found 21 times¹ with various nuances. Another Greek term bearing a general sense of “to know” or “to understand” is *oīda* (*oīda*), found 13 times.² It seems clear why John would lay such emphasis upon the believer’s ability to know the truth and thus to know God in truth. The nascent Gnosticism that was infiltrating the communities of “The Way” had as one of its errant teachings that only through special, mystical experiences, could a person have knowledge of the Gnostic god. What is more, one of the foundational questions which the Greek philosophers sought to answer is whether certainty in knowledge was even possible. Plato, for instance, taught that one could only see the “shadow,” not the reality. Thus growing Gnosticism already had an ally in the Greek philosophical schools, which formed the worldview for the Greek culture at large.

John clearly combats the Gnostic heresy by boldly proclaiming himself and the other Apostles as eyewitnesses of Yeshua, and as having given factual testimony of the truth about Him. But even more, he makes it clear that every believer in Yeshua may have full assurance of their own righteous standing before God through the fellowship they have with Him, and that assurance rests upon the reality of a changed life—a life that not only desires to live in obedience to God but is also enabled to do so.

if we keep His commandments. – This phrase does not indicate the means by which the believer knows that they know God, but rather keeping His commandments is the inevitable fruit of knowing Him in truth. It is not that one must first “keep His commandments” before He will reveal Himself to that person, but rather, His drawing the sinner to Himself and granting the sinner faith in Yeshua, is efficacious in that it brings about an inward change—a being “born again” to a new life. Put simply, obeying God’s commandments is the fruit of saving faith, and thus the proof that such faith exists.

An obvious question is this: what exactly does John mean by “His commandments”? It is not uncommon among Christian commentators

1 2:3-5, 13-14, 18, 29-3:1; 3:6, 16, 19-20, 24; 4:2, 6-8, 13, 16; 5:2, 20.

2 2:11, 20-21, 29; 3:2, 5, 14-15; 5:13, 15, 18-20.

to read that when John writes of God’s “commandments,” he intends his readers to understand that these have all been summed up in the one commandment of Yeshua, that we should love one another, based upon Yeshua’s words as recorded in John’s Gospel.

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” (Jn 13:34–35)

This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you. (Jn 15:12)

Kruse, in his comments on 2:3, takes this position:

What does the author mean by ‘his commands’? He uses the word ‘command’ (*entolē*) 14 times in 1 John. Sometimes it is found in singular form, other times in plural form. When he uses the singular form, it always refers explicitly to Christ’s command that his followers should love one another. The plural form occurs where there is no explicit reference to Jesus’ command, though in all but two of these references the context indicates clearly that Jesus’ love command is in mind. The exceptions are 2:3, 4, where the evidence that people know God is that they keep his commandments and walk as Jesus walked. At first sight this could be taken to refer to God’s law, especially the Ten Commandments, which Jesus observed during his incarnate life. But there is no hint elsewhere in the letter that the author is concerned about obedience to the Mosaic law. And in 3:21–23 he speaks about God answering believers’ prayers because they obey his commands, and then continues: ‘and this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he has commanded us’ (3:23). God’s commands are that we believe in Christ and do what he commands, and this letter highlights Jesus’ command to love one another. It may be best, therefore, to interpret the reference to ‘his commands’ in this verse in that light also.

The thrust of 2:3, therefore, is that it is those who, like the readers, believe in Jesus Christ, God’s Son, and obey his command to love one another who truly know God.¹

Other commentators take the view that by “His commandments”

1 Kruse, *1John*, pp. 78–79.

John is referring to the “moral” commandments of the Torah, not the “civil” or “ceremonial,” and that the moral commandments are summed up in Yeshua’s commandment to love one another. Smalley writes:

The moral law of God as a whole is represented by the “orders” (ἐντολάς [“commandments”]) to which John refers, and to which (he says) obedience is necessary. The background to the concept of God’s “commands” is to be found in the OT. The law of God (given to Moses) is contained in the Decalogue (cf Ex 20:2–17), which epitomizes the Jewish Torah. In the NT this is summarized positively by Jesus in terms of love: for God, and for other people...¹

But it seems quite obvious that these common explanations of what the Apostles mean when they refer to God’s “commandment(s)” is theologically driven rather than based upon the exegesis of the Apostolic Scriptures themselves. Moreover, when John writes in this very context (2:6) that the one who “abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked,” one can hardly overlook Yeshua’s teaching in Matt 5:17–19.

Do not think that I came to abolish the Torah or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Torah until all is accomplished. 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; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (Matt 5:17–19)

In light of these words of our Lord, it is impossible that by giving His commandment to love one another (Jn 13:34–5; 15:12) He was at the same time setting aside other commandments of the Torah as no longer necessary.

Further, the idea that when the Greek word ἐντολή (*entolē*), “commandment,” is found in the singular, it refers to Yeshua’s commandment to love one another and not to the commandments of God as a whole, cannot be sustained by its use in the Tanach or the Apostolic Scriptures. Note, for instance, these examples of the singular use of the Hebrew word מצוה (*mitzvah*, “commandment”) in the Tanach:

1 Stephen S. Smalley, *1, 2, 3 John in Word Biblical Commentary* (Zondervan, 1993), pp. 45-6. [Hereafter, Smalley, *1John*]

Now this is the commandment, the statutes and the judgments which ADONAI your God has commanded me to teach you, that you might do them in the land where you are going over to possess it, (Deut 6:1)

Therefore, you shall keep the commandment and the statutes and the judgments which I am commanding you today, to do them. (Deut 7:11)

that his heart may not be lifted up above his countrymen and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, to the right or the left, so that he and his sons may continue long in his kingdom in the midst of Israel. (Deut 17:20)

The statutes and the ordinances and the Torah and the commandment which He wrote for you, you shall observe to do forever; and you shall not fear other gods. (2Kgs 17:37)

and commanded Judah to seek ADONAI God of their fathers and to observe the Torah and the commandment. (2Chr 14:4)

In 1John, Greek *entolē* (commandment) is found seven times in the singular (2:7-8, 4x; 3:23, 2x; 4:21) and seven times in the plural (2:3-4; 3:22, 24; 5:2; 5:3, 2x).

It seems quite clear that what John is emphasizing in this verse is the very reality of the new covenant prophesied by Jeremiah, namely, that the Torah would be written on the heart, which means the commandments of God become a pattern of life for those who are members of the new covenant. Having referenced the new covenant text of Jer 31:31–34, Kistemaker's conclusion on v. 3 is:

The distinctive characteristic of the child of God is that he obeys God's commands. When he keeps these commands, he demonstrates that he has come to know God. But this is not always the case, as John points out in the next verse.¹

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; – Once again, John uses similar verb tenses as he did in v. 3. In the phrase "I have come to know Him," the verb "to know" (ἐγνώκα, *egnōka*) is in the perfect tense, which envisions a past event (initial confession of faith in Yeshua) which is

1 Kistemaker, *1John*, p. 256.

claimed to be ongoing in the present. In the phrase “does not keep His commandments,” the verb “to keep” (τηρῶν, *tērōn*) is a present participle, which pictures repetitive action that signals the person’s character. Thus, there is an obvious disconnect: he states that he has truly come to know God, but his life is one characterized by disobedience to God’s commandments. Thus, such a person is a “liar” and his confession of faith in God and His Messiah is not true.

Here we see the fuller picture: the one who truly has fellowship with God through His Son Yeshua, has a life characterized by obeying God’s commandments. When a believer sins, confession of sin and restoration is the norm. Thus, John is not speaking of a “sinless life” as characteristic of the true believer, but of a life characterized by obedience and marked by a willingness and desire to confess one’s sin and thus to experience the ongoing forgiveness purchased by Yeshua on the cross, and applied through His always making intercession for His people.

In contrast, the one who claims to know God and to have fellowship with Him, but whose life is characterized by disobedience, he is a liar and does not know the truth, but is self-deceived and lost.

The word liar describes the character of the man whose entire conduct is opposed to the truth.¹

And this perspective is summed up in the final phrase of verse four: “...and the² truth is not in him.” That is, even though the person claims to possess the truth about God, he does not, and the fact that his life does not demonstrate obedience to God’s commands is the incontrovertible evidence that he lacks the truth about Who God is and how He redeems those who are His.

Thus, John makes it quite clear that the biblical concept of “knowing God” is not summed up in a purely intellectual or philosophical knowledge, but is, at its core, relational. The knowledge John is speaking of here is the special self-revelation of God to those He intends to save and thus to bring them into fellowship with Himself and with one another. Therefore, to claim that one “knows God” while at the same time living

1 Kistemaker, *1John*, p. 256.

2 Some manuscripts leave out the word “the” in the phrase “the truth is not in him.” But retaining the word “the” is supported by the weight of manuscript evidence as original. As such, John’s point is that not all truth but specifically the truth about knowing God is lacking in someone who claims to know Him and lives a life of disobedience.

a life of disobedience to Him, brings into dire question whether a real relationship with God actually exists.

But we must be careful to understand John's emphasis in this text. These words are not primarily written in order to give us criteria to judge others as to the genuineness of their faith. While a life characterized by obedience to God is surely foundational for receiving someone's claim that they truly "know God," the admonition given in our text is for each person to receive personally in order that each one might judge themselves as to how their life measures up with their confession of faith in God.

5-6 but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him: the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.

Now, in the phrase "but whoever keeps His word," John gives us the positive counterpart to the previous negative "does not keep His commandments." Thus, we see that the commandments of God are given to us in the word of God. If we are to know what constitutes obedience to God, then we must know the word of God, for it is the word of God that marks the distinction between God's commands and the traditions of men.

Some question whether the possessive pronoun "His" refers to the Father or to Yeshua. It seems quite clear that the pronoun refers to Yeshua, for in the opening verses of our chapter, Yeshua is stated to be the believer's "advocate with the Father" (v. 1) and He is the "propitiation for our sins" (v. 2). Thus, when John writes about "whoever keeps His word," he is referring to the word of Yeshua, for Yeshua Himself is "the Word" (Jn 1:1) and in Him "the Word became flesh" (Jn 1:18). Moreover, Yeshua affirmed both the integrity and the authority of the Tanach in Matt 5:17–18.

Do not think that I came to abolish the Torah or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Torah until all is accomplished.
(Matt 5:17–18)

And we see the same affirmation for the authority of the Tanach in His post-resurrection appearance to the disciples.

Now He said to them, “These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Torah of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures.... (Lk 24:44-45)

Thus, when John uses the phrase “whoever keeps His word,” there is every reason to interpret this to mean the word of God, the Bible, which is the inspired word of God, i.e., Father, Messiah, and Ruach (Spirit).

in him the love of God has truly been perfected. – Once again, John may be combating Gnostic teachings here, for the Gnostics claimed to reach levels of perfection through their mystical, secret arts, and “extolled gathering knowledge at the expense of obedience.”¹

How are we to understand the phrase “the love of God”? If we take the genitive as objective, then it would mean “man’s love for God,” God being the object of love. Or, if the phrase is subjective, then it would mean “God’s love for man,” God being the subject Who does the loving. Another option is that the phrase means “love that is peculiar to God Himself.” If we allow the context to determine John’s emphasis here, we should opt for “God’s love for man” (a subjective genitive). In the previous verse John states that “[God’s] truth is not in him,” that is, in the one who claims to know God but lives in disobedience. In contrast, our verse gives the positive, for “God’s love is in him,” in the one who keeps His word. And in the larger context, John teaches us that “love comes from God” (4:7) and that God’s dwelling with us causes His love to be made complete in us (4:12). Thus, God is the source of truth and of love, and one who, by faith and the power of the indwelling Spirit lives in accordance with God’s word, becomes a living testimony of God’s love.

A second question is this: what does John mean by the phrase “has truly been perfected.” Actually, the Greek word translated “truly” is placed first in the clause: “Truly in this one the love of God has been perfected” (*ἀληθῶς ἐν τούτῳ ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ θεοῦ τετελείωται*). The verb “has been perfected” is in the perfect tense, and is in the middle voice. This would indicate that the perfecting is a process, being the inevitable fruit of being born again by faith through the work of the Ruach HaChodesh (Holy Spirit). And the middle voice would indicate that this work of perfecting is a cooperative effort between the person whom God has redeemed and God Himself.

Culy suggests that this particular grammatical structure is

1 Kistemaker, *1John*, p. 257.

used to indicate, “to be completely successful in accomplishing some goal or attaining some state.” The (hyperbolic) claim, then, is that such a person’s ability to love God has reached a state of maturity.¹

To put this simply, the language John uses in this phrase would indicate that God’s love of each and every one of His redeemed children secures a growing maturity in the believer to love God in truth, that is, to be enabled to live in accordance with His revealed will—to be obedient children of God.

By this we know that we are in Him: the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked. – John now uses language which seems parallel to Paul’s well-known phrase, “in Messiah,” for he speaks of the believer being “in Him,” that is, in Yeshua. To be “in Him” means to “know Him” in truth, and thus the relational aspect of “knowing” is highlighted. To be “in Him” is to be identified with Him, to have fellowship with Him, and thus to be like Him. This means that the believer in Yeshua has received the gift of God’s forgiveness through the redemption purchased by Yeshua’s death and made secure by His resurrection, ascension, and intercession. It means that the Father receives the child of God into His presence just as He receives His own dear Son, for the believer is “in Him.”

But how can one know that he or she is in Him? John writes “By this we know,” but to what does the word “this” refer? Some would have it refer to the previous context while others take this to be an introduction to v. 6. But it seems best to understand this verse as being based upon the previous context as well as moving us forward to the concluding statement of v. 6. Thus, we know that:

1. We know that *we are in Him* when we have come to know Him as He has revealed Himself in truth. Thus, to be “in Him” is just another way of saying “we have come to know Him” in truth (2:3). We live in the reality of the salvation He has procured for us through His death, resurrection, ascension and intercession.
2. We know that *we abide in Him* when we have ongoing fellowship with Him, through prayer, through the inward leading of the Ruach (Spirit), through the word of God being our guide, and through fellowship within the body of Messiah. “In Him we live, and move and have our being” (Acts 17:28). Our

¹ Martin M. Culy, *I, II, III John: A Handbook on the Greek Text* (Baylor Univ Press, 2004), pp. 28–29.

“knowing Him” is relational, not merely intellectual.

3. We know that *we walk as Yeshua walked* when we seek to pattern our lives after the example of Yeshua, which means that a submissive life of obedience to God’s revelation of righteous living is that which characterizes our daily walk of faith.

the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked. – The final phrase of our verse uses the common term “walk” to describe the pattern or characteristic of one’s life. Though not found in the Bible, the later rabbinic term *halachah* (הלכה) is derived from the Hebrew verb *hālach* (הלך), “to walk.” The verb itself, however, is used in the Tanach to describe one’s behavior. Note these examples:

Sinners in Zion are terrified; trembling has seized the godless. “Who among us can live with the consuming fire? Who among us can live with continual burning?” He who walks righteously and speaks with sincerity, he who rejects unjust gain and shakes his hands so that they hold no bribe; he who stops his ears from hearing about bloodshed and shuts his eyes from looking upon evil; (Is 33:14–15)

ADONAI, who may abide in Your tent? Who may dwell on Your holy hill? He who walks with integrity, and works righteousness, and speaks truth in his heart. (Ps 15:1–2)

A worthless person, a wicked man, is the one who walks with a perverse mouth, who winks with his eyes, who signals with his feet, who points with his fingers; (Prov 6:12–13)

What does it mean “to walk in the same manner as Yeshua walked”? It is clear that in our context this phrase means to imitate the life of Yeshua in the manner in which He obeyed His Father’s commands. In the parable of the vine and the branches, in which Yeshua pictures Himself as the true vine, He uses similar language as John does here in our context, namely, that those who are His, will “abide in Him.”

Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. (Jn 15:4)

If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. (Jn 15:7)

And note how Yeshua concludes the parable of the vine and the branches:

Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. (Jn 15:9–10)

Note the clear parallel in this teaching of Yeshua. To “abide in My love” is likewise to “keep My commandments.” Thus, to walk as Yeshua walked is to live in obedience to God’s commandments and to do so by following Yeshua’s example. And what is it that was primary in Yeshua’s life of obedience? It was the relationship of love He had with the Father. In like manner, what is the primary motivation we must have to “walk as He walked,” that is, to live a life of obedience in imitation of Him? It is to “abide in His love,” that is, to grow in our understanding, appreciation, and application of the fact that Yeshua loved us by giving His life for us, by paying the supreme price necessary to rescue us from the Father’s holy wrath, and enabling us through the work of the Spirit to become more and more set apart unto God. Thus, as those who are “in Him,” i.e., “in Messiah,” we are able to fulfill the very purpose for which we were created, that is, to sanctify His Name by giving Him the glory, praise, and honor He deserves. We do this by living in obedience to Him, expressed by our love for Him and for one another.

There is one caution that should be voiced as we seek to understand the meaning of the phrase to “walk in the same manner as He walked.” John is not teaching us here that we should seek to return to a 1st Century culture or to mimic ancient near eastern society. That, of course, would be impossible. Nor, for instance, is John suggesting that one should remain single since Yeshua never married. John’s point is that those who claim to abide in Him must be known as those who obey God’s commands, motivated from love—love for God and love for one another. And the manner in which Yeshua demonstrated this kind of obedience is the pattern we too must strive to follow.

7–8 Beloved, I am not writing a new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you have had from the beginning; the old commandment is the word which you have heard. On the other hand, I am writing a new commandment to you, which is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true Light is already shining.

John now addresses his readers by referring to them as “Beloved”