

## I JOHN: TRUE SPIRITUAL FELLOWSHIP

### VI. The Three Levels Of Spiritual Maturity, 1 John 2:12-27

#### B. The Young Man Level Of Spiritual Maturity

(1 John 2:13b, 14b-17)

#### I. Introduction

- A. When John wrote 1 John, he implied in 1 John 1:3 that a number of his readers did not enjoy spiritual fellowship with the Apostles, with God the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ!
- B. Such a lack of true fellowship occurs in many believers today, what Christ predicted for our era in Revelation 3:14-22. We thus continue our study of 1 John in viewing 1 John 2:13b, 14b-17 on the "young man" level of spiritual maturity, and what is required for one to grow from that level on to be spiritual "fathers" (as follows):

#### II. The Young Man Level Of Spiritual Maturity, 1 John 2:13b, 14b-17.

- A. Having addressed the most mature group, the spiritual "fathers" in 1 John 2:13a and 14a, John wrote to the intermediate group of "young men" in 1 John 2:13b, 14b-17; John G. Mitchell, Fellowship, 1974, p. 65-70.
- B. Spiritual "young men" have come to overcome (perfect tense in *nenikekate* from *nikao*, "conquer, overcome," (The Analyt. Grk. Lex. (Zon.), 1972, p. 276; Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 541) the Evil One, that is, Satan, and that victory is explained in 1 John 2:13b, 14b (as follows):
  1. After stating that the "young men" had come to overcome Satan in 1 John 2:13b, and repeating that fact in v. 14c, John described how the "young men" achieved this victory in 1 John 2:14b (as follows):
    - a. First, believers at the "young men" maturity level are "strong" (*ischuros*, Ibid., p. 383-384), v. 14b.
    - b. Second, the "young men" have also come to have the Word of God, Scripture, abiding in them, v. 14b.
  2. These two activities are more fully described elsewhere in Scripture (as follows):
    - a. To be "strong" in reference to dealing with Satan, Ephesians 6:10-12 with its context (v. 13-20) teach a believer is to rely on the Lord and His spiritual resources, so "young men" have learned to rely on God's gifting, spiritual enabling and power by faith with prayer (Ephesians 6:18) to overcome Satan.
    - b. To have God's Word abiding in one means to have a working knowledge of Scripture and to use it like Jesus did in applying Deuteronomy 8:3 in Matthew 4:1-4, in applying Deuteronomy 6:16 in Matthew 4:5-7 and in applying Deuteronomy 6:13 and 10:20 in Matthew 4:8-11 when Christ was tempted by Satan.
  3. Accordingly, "young men" are believers who have come to live by faith in God's spiritual provisions and who have come to know and apply Scripture to overcome Satanic opposition in their lives and ministries.
- C. However, "young men" must cease relying on the world as an idol and instead rely on Christ, 1 John 2:15-17:
  1. The command in 1 John 2:15a for "young men" to "love not the world nor the things in the world" is a call to **stop** an *ongoing* action, for the imperative *agapate* is the present imperative of *agapao*, to "love," and it is modified by the negative particle, *me*. (U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 815; Ibid., The Analyt. Grk. Lex., p. 2; Dana & Mantey, A Manual Grammar of the Grk. N. T., 1955, p. 301-303)
  2. "Young men" thus need to *cease* loving the "world" and all that is in it, for loving the "world" and its things means that a love for the Father is not in them, 1 John 2:15b; B. K. C., N. T., p. 891; James 4:4.
  3. John then explained **why** loving the "world" conflicts with loving the Father, that all that is in the "world" is not of the Father, but of the "world," and John then defined the "world" as the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of "earthly life" (*bios*, Ibid., Arndt & Gingrich, p. 141), 1 John 2:16. These lusts are illustrated in Eve's fall in Genesis 3:6: when she saw that "the tree was good for food," that "it was pleasant to the eyes" and "to be desired to make one wise," she put these innately innocent desires above God's order **not** to eat from **that** tree, producing the lusts of the flesh, of the eyes and of pride respectively!
  4. John added that loving the world is a futile exercise, for the "world" and its lust is currently passing away (present tense *paragetai* from *parago*, "pass away") where [loving God so as to] do His will [cf. 1 John 2:5] keeps one remaining (present tense in *menei* from *meno*, "remain" (Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T., p. 816; Ibid., The Analyt. Grk. Lex., p. 301, 263; Ibid., Arndt & Gingrich, p. 619, 504-505) forever, 1 John 2:17.

***Lesson:*** "Young men" have overcome Satan by relying on God and His enabling and applying Scripture in life. However, they must stop making an idol out of the world by realizing that loving the world conflicts with loving God, and loving the world yields ongoing, futile loss where doing God's will yields eternal stability and reward.

***Application:*** If we are "young men," may we rejoice in our victory over Satan by faith and the application of Scripture, but stop loving the world and do God's will to avoid futile loss and gain stability and eternal reward.