**1 John 2:3-6 (KJV)** 3 And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.   
4  He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.   
5  But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.   
6  He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.

**1 John 2:3-6 (GW)** 3  We are sure that we know Christ if we obey his commandments.   
4  The person who says, “I know him,” but doesn't obey his commandments is a liar. The truth isn't in that person.   
5  But whoever obeys what Christ says is the kind of person in whom God's love is perfected. That's how we know we are in Christ.   
6  Those who say that they live in him must live the same way he lived.

1. “And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.”
   1. This statement is made in response to some people in Ephesus – it is not clear that they were actually part of the body of believers – who were saying they knew God, but did not attempt to obey God’s commandments.
      1. Their attitude was we don’t need to obey commandments because we have a greater knowledge and more understanding of God than others.
      2. That is partly where the name of their religion came from as they were called Gnostics.
   2. We apparently have many people in the world today who claim that they know God – that is that they claim to be Christians – but have decided that the plain word of God revealed in the commandments of God does not apply to them.
      1. John immediately clarifies the situation with both a positive and a negative response to what these people say.
         1. The one who says he knows Jesus and does not keep God’s commandments is lying, both to himself and to others.
         2. The one who says he knows Jesus and then commits himself to obeying God’s commandments has assurance that he is indeed a believer and knows God.
      2. John concludes the discussion by stating clearly and simply that an individual who truly knows Jesus (intimately as Lord and Savior) ought to be committed to living his life based on the same motive that Jesus did.
         1. Jesus said, “For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him (God the Father) that sent me.” (Jesus).
         2. If Jesus’s motive for what He did day by day was to do the will of the Father and He is our example, then we must also understand that our motive should be to do the will of the Father.
2. Let’s look more closely at the meaning of the words, “To know God.”
   1. Knowing is a concept which is found often in 1 John. In this Epistle the author uses two different words to express this concept; together they occur a total of 42 times. The first (Greek *ginóskó*, as in [v. 3](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1John%202:3)) occurs 25 times; the second (Greek *oida*) occurs 17 times.
      1. One Greek scholar, Schütz, examines the usage of these two terms, and he does not find a significant difference in meaning. He writes,
         1. “Both contain the implication of certainty based on **experience**.”
         2. John apparently used Gnostic terminology to combat Gnostic ideas. Schütz writes, “He faces the Gnostic on his own ground and combats him with his own weapons.”
      2. Remember that the basic idea of fellowship is
         1. the state of sharing mutual experiences, activities, interests, etc.
         2. companionship; friendship
   2. To know God is to live in daily fellowship with Him
      1. To be in fellowship with God, one must be where He is – mentally, emotionally, spiritually.
      2. The believer can know if he is truly in a relationship with God in which he “knows” Him – if he keeps the commandments of God.
         1. It is given in a simple test founded on obedience.
         2. The keeping of His commandments becomes the means by which the believer can be sure that he really knows God.
      3. Logically following the assertion that one knows that he knows God by keeping His commandments is the negative opposite. If one does *not* keep His commandments but claims to know God, he is a liar.
         1. In the last words of [v. 4](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1John%202:4), John describes the false teacher by saying that “the truth is not in him.”
            1. This statement has two implications.

First, a lie is the opposite of truth, which like ‘light and darkness’ cannot exist at the same time in the same place. The truth was exchanged for a lie ([Rom. 1:25](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Rom%201:25)).

Second, they do not have the abiding truth of Christ dwelling in them.

* + - * 1. If they do not have this truth abiding in them, they are incapable of teaching the truth of Christ.
    1. They therefore claim to teach the truth that they do not know.
       1. They do not know the truth of God nor the God of truth.
       2. Therefore they are teaching about “another god.”
       3. The evidence that they do not know the God of Truth is demonstrated in that they do not keep the commandments of God.
    2. The love of God is perfected in every person who keeps God’s word.
       1. There are various interpretations concerning what is meant by “the love of God is perfected.” One I think that fits very well in the context follows. We know that we are in Him because of the close personal relationship that we share with Him.

“Note a most wonderful result: the person who keeps God's Word has the love of God perfected in his life. What does this mean? When we draw near God and begin to keep His Word, we begin to establish a relationship with God. It is just like a boy who meets a girl and begins to draw near her. He begins to know her and to develop affection for her, and the more he associates with her, the more he loves her. So it is with God. The more we draw near Him and keep His Word and please Him, the more we learn about Him and love Him. The word "keep" (*tērē*[PWS: 2242](http://www.crossbooks.com/book.asp?pub=0&book=748&tocpath=K\#2242: Keepeth; Keeps)) is continuous action. It means to continue on and not to stop. It means day by day obedience. If we keep God's Word day by day, then we learn more and more about God; we learn to love Him more and more. His love becomes perfected, completed, and fulfilled in us.”  
Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible - Commentary - 1 & 2 Peter; 1, 2 & 3 John; Jude.

1. Commentary Notes

“Apparently, some people in Ephesus claimed to know God, but they made no effort to keep God's commands. The religion that came to be known as Gnosticism prided itself in knowing God through mystical enlightenment, though that knowledge had no bearing on their moral behavior. They had no understanding that sin was a barrier to their relationship with God. John set them straight about this claim: ‘If you know God, you keep his commandments, and if you make no effort to keep his commandments, but still claim to be a Christian, you are a liar.’

This distinction is comforting when we look at extreme sin, assuming we are not involved in extreme sin. It makes it plain that those who clearly live like the devil can make no claim to be Christian. However, it is very discomforting when we consider more subtle sin. How obedient do we have to be? I violated one of God's commands just last night. Am I a Christian, or am I a liar? Must we obey all commands perfectly? If that is the case, are any of us saved?

Clearly, the Bible is not saying that we have to exhibit perfect obedience. **1 John 1:8** just told us that if we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and make God out to be a liar. The issue appears to be whether or not we take God's commandments seriously and are trying to keep them. We may not keep them perfectly. We may not even have a perfectly consistent desire to keep them. But if we are truly born again, we will not live our lives in disregard for God's commands.

The Gnostics, it can be assumed, weren't even trying to keep God's commands. It is their behavior that the Bible condemns.”  
Holman New Testament Commentary - I & II Peter, I, II & III John, Jude.

“The believer who wishes to know if he is truly in a relationship with God in which he “knows” Him, regardless of any personal shortcomings, is given a simple test founded on obedience. The keeping of His commandments becomes the means by which the believer can be sure that he really knows God.

Logically following the assertion that one knows that he knows God by keeping His commandments is the negative opposite. If one does *not* keep His commandments but claims to know God, he is a liar. John uses direct and strong language to condemn the false teachers. They cannot claim to teach the truth when there is no evidence in their daily walk that they really know God.

In the last words of [**v. 4**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1John%202:4), John describes the false teacher by saying that “the truth is not in him.” This statement has two implications. First, a lie is the opposite of truth, which like ‘light and darkness’ cannot exist at the same time in the same place. The truth was exchanged for a lie ([**Rom. 1:25**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Rom%201:25)). Second, they do not have the abiding truth of Christ dwelling in them.

There is a shift in vocabulary usage in the fifth verse. John substitutes “word” for “commandment.” The word represents the whole of revelation, which includes all commandments. The two vocabulary words are still easily connected because we are instructed to keep both the word and the commandments.”

Randall House Bible Commentary Series - 1, 2, 3 John & Revelation.