

What Christians Know in 1 John

The verbs οἶδα *oida* and γινώσκω *ginôskô* can overlap in meaning as used by different authors in various contexts. In 1 John, the author seems to make a distinction between the two verbs: οἶδα *oida* pointing to factual knowledge, and γινώσκω *ginôskô* describing that which is known by experience.

What Christians know as a fact (οἶδα *oida*)

1. You have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all have knowledge [know (it)]. 2:20
2. I write to you, not because you do not know the truth, but because you know it. 2:21
3. You know that he is righteous. 2:29
4. We know that when he appears we shall be like him. 3:2
5. You know that he appeared in order to take away sins. 3:5
6. We know that we have passed out of death into life. 3:14
7. You know that no murderer has eternal life. 3:15
8. I write these things to you ... that you may know that you have eternal life. 5:13
9. We know that he hears us ..., we know that we have the requests. 5:15
10. We know that everyone who has been born of God does not keep on sinning. 5:18
11. We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. 5:19
12. We know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding. 5:20

What Christians know by experience (γινώσκω *ginôskô*)

1. By this we know that we have come to know him.. 2:3, 13, 14
2. By this we may know that we are in him. 2:5-6
3. We know that it is the last hour. 2:18
4. You may be sure that everyone who practices righteousness has been born of him. 2:29
5. By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us. 3:16
6. By this we shall know that we are of the truth and reassure our heart before him. 3:19
7. By this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us. 3:24
8. By this you know the Spirit of God. 4:2
9. Whoever knows God listens to us... By this we know [οἶδα] the Spirit of truth. 4:6
10. Whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. 4:7
11. By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. 4:13
12. We have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. 4:16
13. By this we know that we love the children of God. 5:2
14. We may know him who is true; and we are in him who is true 5:20

The two verbs complement each other

If you know [οἶδα] that he is righteous, you may be sure [γινώσκω] that everyone who practices righteousness has been born of him. 2:29

We know [οἶδα] that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know [γινώσκω] him who is true; and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. 5:20