

Message #6**I John 2:7-11**

The Gnostics moved among the people of God and presented themselves to be bona fide Christians. All the while they were trying to undermine the teachings of the apostles. Irenaeus said of these Gnostics, “And committing many other abominations and impieties, they run us down (who from a fear of God guard against sinning even in thought or word) as utterly contemptible and ignorant persons, while they highly exalt themselves, and claim to be perfect, and the elect seed.”

John came up with a series of tests that one could objectively use to determine whether or not one really had fellowship with God: **1)** There will be an acceptance of what the apostles proclaimed about Jesus Christ, namely, He was the God/man (1:1-4). **2)** There will not be a persistent life that walks in things evil and sinful (1:5). **3)** There will be a belief that God is absolutely righteous and holy and pure (1:5). **4)** There will be a willingness to acknowledge one’s own sin and confess sin when one does sin (1:6-10). **5)** There will be an attitude that does not want to sin, but one that realizes Jesus Christ is the only means of forgiveness when we sin (2:1-2). **6)** There will be an assurance that comes through obedience that one will have that he knows God (2:3-6). Now we come to the seventh test and it is this:

ONE WHO HAS TRUE FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD, WILL HAVE A CONTINUAL LOVE FOR HIS BROTHER OR SISTER WITHIN THE CHURCH FAMILY, AND NOT A CONTINUAL HATRED.

From **verse 7** the first thing we observe is that this text is addressed to the believer, called “beloved.” There are four family terms used in the book of I John—“little children” (teknon); “beloved” (agapetoi); “children” (paidion); “brother” (adelphos).

The term “beloved” is a term that refers to one who is loved based on esteem, not emotion. The emphasis of this term is more of a spiritual affection based on will and reason. We can be commanded to love another person at this level as a duty because this is not a command for feeling. This term refers to one who is in the family of God, and therefore is esteemed by God and should be esteemed by those in the family (G. Abbott-Smith, pp. 3-4).

POINT #1 – The command to love a brother in the family and not to hate a brother in the family is not new. **2:7**

In Greek there are two words that may be translated “new”: 1) Neos, which speaks of newness in time; 2) Kainos, which speaks of newness in kind. The Greek word used here for commandment is “kainos.” Kainos may describe that which is new in kind, that is it is novel or strange in contrast to that which is known or familiar.

What John is saying here is when I write about loving a brother and not hating a brother, I am not writing something that is new in kind.

Now that prepositional phrase “from the beginning” may refer to one of three things:

- 1) It may refer to from the beginning of the written Scripture (i.e. Lev. 19:18).
- 2) It may refer to from the beginning when Christ presented the Gospel (John 13:34). This occurred some 60 years before I John was written.
- 3) It may refer to from the beginning when you first heard the Word of God (I John 2:7d).

POINT #2 – The command to love a brother in the family and not to hate a brother in the family does have some new Grace Age ramifications. **2:8**

The phrase “on the other hand” or the word “again” is a word that does not refer to introducing a new subject, but taking a second look at the same subject. The concept is not new, but there are principles and ramifications that are new about this concept, particularly in regard to having fellowship with God in the Grace Age. Three new principles are seen in the Grace Age:

- 1) That which is in Christ is now in you. **2:8a**
- 2) Darkness is in the process of passing away in your life. **2:8b**
- 3) True light is in the process of shining through your life. **2:8c**

POINT #3 – Fellowship with God is not determined by what one says, but by the attitude he actually has concerning his brother. **2:9**

Now the word “hate” is present tense speaking of a habitual, continual hatred. This is not referring to some moment of anger. Furthermore, the word “hatred” is being used in the full sense of the word—a hatred that is in such full bloom that it could kill someone. We could call this a murderous type of hatred (I John 3:15).

POINT #4 – Fellowship with God is determined by loving a brother. **2:10**

The word “love” is that word which speaks of the mental and volitional choice to love someone rather than the emotional surges which are often irrational.

- 1) If we love our brother, we will not cause another brother or sister to stumble.
- 2) If we love our brother, we will not stumble into sin ourselves.
- 3) If we love our brother, we will not stumble in our fellowship with God.

POINT #5 – Not having fellowship with God is determined by hating our brother. **2:11**

Three very pointed facts are brought out about this person:

- 1) They are in darkness; 2) They are walking in darkness; 3) They are blindly lost.

Listen, if you have a murderous hatred toward someone in this family, you cannot possibly be in fellowship with God. You can say you are all you want, but what you say is not what really is.