

(10-3-99)

What Love Reveals
1 John 2:7-11

INTRODUCTION

1. 1 John 2:7-11
2. This morning we are introduced to yet another test of true saving faith—the test of love of the brethren.
3. In these five verses John gives us commentary on what it means to “love your neighbor as yourself” (Lk. 10:27).
4. Do you remember that the greatest commandment is to “love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,” and “your neighbor as yourself” (Luke 10:27; quote from Deut. 6:5; Lev. 19:18).
5. It is as if John is saying “What is your love-life like?”
6. Because as you go through these verses you are challenged to examine your love-life.

7. Now, of course, I am not talking about your love-life as pertaining to boyfriend and girlfriend or husband and wife but to your relationship to God and your brother and sister in christ.

8. So as John addresses the issue of love, he gives us **2** concepts pertaining to love.

I. The Commandment (vv.7-8)

A. An Old Message (v.7)

1. You had it "from the beginning"

- a) "Brethren" Gr.adelphos, "coming from the same womb," "brother". The better manuscripts have Gr.agapetoi, "beloved ones" (Wuest, Rienecker)
- b) "new" Gr.kainos. This does not mean "new in time" (neos) but "new in quality" (MacArthur) or "form" (Rienecker). "It refers to something that would replace what has been worn out" (MacArthur)
- c) "commandment" Gr.entole, "precept" (Strong)

John is saying, "I'm not giving you something you've never heard before. I'm just telling you an old commandment that you've heard from the beginning— from the first time you heard the Gospel."

2. You "heard" it "from the beginning"

- a) He says "The old commandment is the word which you heard from the beginning."
- b) What they heard from the beginning was to "love."
- c) The Old Testament is marked by many exhortations to love

- (1) Lev.19:18 - 'You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.
- (2) Lev.19:34 - 'The stranger who dwells among you shall be to you as one born among you, and you shall love him as yourself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.
- (3) Deut.10:19 - "Therefore love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

B A New Meaning (v.8)

"Again, I new commandment I write to you"

"new" Gr.kainos, "new in quality" (MacArthur)

"John makes a significant word play here. Though he doesn't state here what the command is, he does in 2 John 5,6. It is to love. Both of these phrases refer to the same commandment of love. The commandment of love was "new" because Jesus personified love in a fresh, new way and it was shed abroad in believers' hearts (Rom. 5:5) and energized by the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:22; 1 Thess. 4:9). He raised love to a higher standard for the church and commanded His disciples to imitate His love ("as I have loved you"; cf. 3:16; John 13:34). The command was also "old" because the OT commanded love (Lev. 19:18; Deut. 6:5) and the readers of John's epistle had heard about Jesus' command to love when they first heard the gospel" John F. MacArthur, Jr., The

MacArthur Study Bible, (Dallas: Word Publishing) 1997.

1. "It's true in Him"
 - a) John 13:1 - Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.
 - b) John 14:21 - "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."
 - c) John 14:31 - "But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave Me commandment, so I do. Arise, let us go from here.
 - d) John 15:10 - "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.
 - e) John 15:12-13 - "This is My commandment, that you love one another (as I have loved you)
13 "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.
 - f) John 17:25-26 - "O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me.
26 "And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them."

2. "It's true in you"

a) "Because the darkness is passing away"

"Passing away" Gr.paragetai (pres.mid.ind.),
"to pass away" (Rienecker), "to disappear"
(Wuest). "The picture is that of the darkness of
sin and unbelief as passing by as a parade goes
by on the street. All parades have an end. So
will end some day the parade of Satan's hosts"
(Wuest).

- (1) John 12:46 - "I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness.
- (2) Acts 26:18 (Paul's testimony before King Agrippa about the vision on the Damascus road) 'to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.'
- (3) Eph. 5:8 - For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light.
- (4) 1 Thess. 5:5 - You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness.

- b) Because “the true light is already shining”

“Already” Gr.ede, “Now, even now, already.”

This indicates that “Its spiritual effects are already here in the present life of the believer (Rom.8:23). But there is much more coming” (Spiros Zodhiates, The Epistles of John, p.76).

II. The Consequences (vv.9-11)

“These verses attack the hypocrisy of the Gnostics, who claimed to be in the light but didn’t love the Christian brethren. That revealed they were still in darkness. Your claim to be a Christian is valid only if it’s verified by a life of love” (John MacArthur, Love Not the World, p.15).

A. If You Hate Your Brother (vv.9,11)

1. You are in darkness (vv.9,11)

a) The claim

“He who says he is in the light”

b) The reality

(1) “hates his brother”

(a) “hates” Gr. miseo, (pres.act.part.)
“detest” (strong) “This term is found from an early period in the sense ‘to dislike,’ ‘to hate’” (Kittel)

(b) “brother” Gr. adelphos

- (2) "is in darkness until now"

"until now" Gr. apti, "now, at the present time" (Rienecker)

2. You walk in darkness (v.11)

"Walk" Gr. peripateo (pres.act.ind.), "to go about, walk around" (BADG), "to live, regulate or conduct one's life" (Strong)

a) Unbelievers walk in darkness

- (1) John 12:46 - "I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness."

If you don't believe you abide in darkness →

- (2) John 3:19-20 - "And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. 20 "For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed."

Our deeds reveal what we love... Darkness or Light.

b) Believers use to walk in darkness

- (1) Eph.5:8 - For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light

Our Testimony is we have been delivered from Darkness

- (2) Col.1:13 - He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love.

- (3) 1 Pet.2:9 - But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.

3. You are blinded by the darkness (v.11)

“Blinded” Gr.tuphloo, “to blind, make blind.”
Metaphorically it means “to blunt the mental discernment, darken the mind” (Strong)

2 Cor.4:3-4 - But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, 4 whose minds the god of this age has *blinded*, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.

B. If You Love Your Brother (v.10)

1. You abide in the light

“Abides” Gr.meno (pres)act.ind.), “to remain, stay, continue” (Strong)

a) If you are in the light you will have the love of God in you - 1 John 4:16

b) If you are in the light you will love your brother

- (1) ✓ 1 John 3:11
(2) ✓ 1 John 3:14-16
(3) ✓ 1 John 3:23
(4) ✓ 1 John 4:7-8

- (5) ✓1 John 4:11
- (6) ✓1 John 4:20-21
- (7) ✓1 John 5:1-2

2. You have no cause to stumble

“Stumbling” Gr.skandalon, “The word meant, ‘the movable stick or trigger of a trap; a trap or snare; any impediment placed in the way and causing one to stumble or fall; a stumbling block’” (Wuest).

→ Vincent says, “The meaning is not that he gives no occasion of stumbling to others, but that there is none in his own way.” Smith comments, “There is no occasion of stumbling, nothing to trip him up and make him fall” (Quoted by Wuest).

CONCLUSION

“The Christian who loves knows where he’s going. He walks in the light and doesn’t stumble. That is evidenced by his obedience and his love. The one who does not love is in the darkness. If you habitually conduct yourself in a sphere of darkness that is void of love, you are not saved” (John MacArthur, Love Not the World, p.15).