

Walking Like Jesus

1 John 2:1 – 11

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Main idea: When we follow Jesus' command to love one another, we show that we love him.

Introduction

So many people today believe that we are “New Testament Christians” and that means we want to follow anything in the Old Testament. These people claim that the Old Testament is nice reading but we don't really have to do anything in there at all. The Natalia that we have to follow certain things like the Ten Commandments. There in a quagmire of sinking sand because they want to honor the Old Testament but they don't think it has any value. But this is not at all why we have the Old Testament in our Bibles. The Old Testament shows us how God has revealed himself throughout human history. There are things that change but there are things that do not.

For instance, God never changes. Thus, all of God's word is valuable to us as believers. Today John is going to show us that there are commandments that are still true for us today as much as they were true in the Old Testament. In one sense, this commandments seem new but in another sense, this commandments are very old and still very relevant to our lives today. The command to love one another is one of those eternal commandments. We must still practice this today as much as we practiced it back then.

Text – 1 John 2:1 – 11

1 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. **2** He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. **3** And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. **4** Whoever says “I know him” but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, **5** but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: **6** whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked. **7** Beloved, I am writing you no new commandment, but an old commandment that you had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word that you have heard. **8** At the same time, it is

a new commandment that I am writing to you, which is true in him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining. **9** Whoever says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in darkness. **10** Whoever loves his brother abides in the light, and in him there is no cause for stumbling. **11** But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

I. We love Jesus by being obedient to his commandments (vv. 1 – 5a).

A If we fail Jesus is there for us.

- 1 John begins to explain the new commandment that is an old commandment by talking about the mediator of the Testaments, Jesus the Righteous.
- 2 It is most likely that John is now an old man as he leaves the churches in Ephesus and the surrounding communities of Asia Minor. For this reason, and for the fact that he led in the church, he is usually called John the Elder.
- 3 In this historical tradition John addresses his audience in his letter as “My little children.” When John first mentioned his purpose in writing to this group he cited his joy in their obedience. Now as he writes that joy is made complete in them not sinning against the Lord.
- 4 Sin is pervasive to the individual and to the community of faith. John’s fixation with sin is not unhealthy because it hurts everyone involved and destroys all of the good things God is doing in our lives.
- 5 Because sin is so dangerous to the individual and the community we must have a way to free everyone from its grasp when it occurs. If there is no power in the community to free us from sin, then we are destined to look just like the world and they would find nothing they don’t have already.
- 6 But we do have a way to get rid of sin! Jesus is our Advocate. Once again Jesus is shown as the cure| for the plague of sin. Only he can save us from sin.
- 7 Many people think that the Godhead is a confused organism. It seems that John might be saying on the surface that Jesus is the one who coddles us while the father is the one who is after us.
- 8 This is totally inaccurate. The father is one of the judges in Jesus is mentioned as a judge as well. The idea here is that Jesus in the Trinity is

especially able to be our Advocate because he understands humanity experientially.

- 9 Unlike God the father and the Holy Spirit, Jesus has lived among us as one of us. This gives them a special ability to understand us and because he is the one who was crucified for, he is the one who represents us when God as judge.
- 10 Many times in the Scriptures Jesus is referred to as the judge of the wicked while the father is the judge overall. All of this language that John uses to explain this is a legal and court image-based.

B Our connection to Jesus is based on following his commandments.

- 1 John mentions that Jesus is the propitiation for our sins and the sin of the world. But this term “propitiation” is one that we find hard to understand.
- 2 This word is very large but also very important in salvation history. Jesus is chosen by the father as the ultimate and final sacrifice that does not only remove all of our sin but also removes our guilt.
- 3 Even the temporary sacrifices done in the Old Testament and ordained by God did not remove the guilt of sin. While the people were justified before the Lord when they offered their sacrifices of animals, they still carried the guilt of what they did.
- 4 However, when Jesus came, the book of Hebrews explains how he is not only our high priest but also our great sacrifice. The idea of propitiation is that Jesus did the final work that completely worked.
- 5 Nothing else is needed for our sin now. Jesus’ sacrifice is the best and final work of God. Better than any other sacrifice Jesus completely reconciled God to humanity. He did not discover a person; he is eradicated sin.
- 6 Our love for Jesus is not in emotional attachment only. The kind of love that John describes throughout all of his letters and his Gospel is an act of love full of the commitment of following Jesus’ commands.
- 7 We demonstrate our love best when we follow his commandments. John is not just referring to teachings like the Sermon on the Mount. He is also referred to the commandments of God in the Old Testament.
- 8 It is most likely we should interpret these Old Testament commandments as at least a 10 commandments. The Old Testament law, or Torah, is replete with laws and commandments for Israel to follow. Not all of these commandments are for Christians today. But the moral commandments are still very much a part of our relationship with Jesus.
- 9 Rather than being “New Testament Christians” we are both testament Christians. The difference is that it is easier to follow God’s laws because

Jesus makes it easier through the power of his indwelling Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit keeps us on track and doing things that please Jesus like following his commandments both old and new.

10 Jesus' love being shown by us is complete not when we love him here and there when life is good, as an emotional attachment, but when we demonstrate our love through doing what Jesus told us to be doing.

II. We walk in the light by loving one another (vv. 5b – 8).

A The commandment to love each other is not new.

- 1 We prove that we love Jesus when we walk as he walked. The word “walk” is often used figuratively and Scriptures of a person's lifestyle. So when John says we walk after Jesus, he is saying that we live like Jesus lived.
- 2 This does not mean that we wear sandals and the same types of garments that Jesus wore and need the kind of food that he ate. It means that we live in the same moral lifestyle that Jesus commanded and demonstrated to us.
- 3 We begin to look like Jesus and act like Jesus when we demonstrate this walking in the light. God is light and Jesus is like. He called himself “the light of the world.”
- 4 Remember that lights is also usually used as a metaphor in the Scriptures for living righteously as opposed to the darkness which talks about living in sin and wickedness.
- 5 The commandment to love one another is not a new commandment as John points out. This commandment can be found in Leviticus 19:18, part of the Old Testament Torah or law.
- 6 **Illustration:** the 10 Commandments produce an interesting way of showing our love toward God. The first four commandments are what we would call vertical commandments because they include prerogatives for having a relationship with God. Now the last six commandments are what we call horizontal commandments. They demonstrate our love for our fellow human beings. When Jesus died, he died on a cross that had both a vertical board and a horizontal board. Loving God and loving others are the two greatest commandments. Jesus died to show us how to love one another and if we love one another we show our love for God.
- 7 Our love for God is not just based on how we treat God. It is also based on how we treat one another. Because we were all created in God's image, disrespecting and abusing one another is disrespecting and abusing God's creation that he made with his own hands, and therefore, disrespecting God himself.

8 **Application:** this commandment to love one another, the second greatest commandment in the Scriptures, even though it comes in the Old Testament is still the standard for the New Testament Christian. Our love demonstrates God's love. When the world sees us loving one another and Karen one another, this is the ingredients that they are missing from what they already know in the world. We must show them this love to flavor their lives with the desire to follow Jesus like we do.

B The commandment to love is new because of this world.

1 The world is not used to the kind of love and fellowship that we have in our community of faith. They are not used to others loving them and treating them as equals.

2 Because we live in an unforgiving and unloving world tainted by sin and fallen for so long, this commandment is new especially to the world. Although they long for such love and community, this can only be created by Jesus himself.

3 This unconditional love becomes new in this world of hate. It is misunderstood and unusual to them. It is an enigma. People don't treat each other with unconditional love.

4 Because the point of reference for unconditional love does not exist for the unbeliever, it is a brand-new idea to them and when we demonstrated, they have no idea how to respond.

5 Unconditional love can only happen in human beings when Jesus is the engine of that unconditional love. He has taught us how to love unconditionally.

6 Otherwise we would not know how. It is our community of faith together connected to Jesus himself that makes it possible for us to give and take unconditional love for one another.

7 We live in the community of light and righteousness. The community is open to one another and authentic. Because of this community of lights and revelation, darkness is passing away.

8 Indeed, there should be no darkness in our community because John has already shown us how sin is easily disposed of if it is committed at all. This openness is what the world wants but cannot have because of sin.

9 Jesus is our light and he makes us light. In other words, Jesus is righteous and he makes us righteous. Because of this community, this fellowship of believers, we can have this openness. Jesus makes it happen.

III. Hating our brothers and sisters is sin (vv. 9 – 11).

A Loving our brothers and sisters is part of walking in light.

- 1 John is not so starry eyed concert in the church that he does not realize we all have problems living in unity together. People church have different personalities and different ideas and different cultures.
- 2 John knows that the church has struggle within it. He's not saying everything's perfect. He knows that issues arise between brothers and sisters in Christ. There are disagreements and personality clashes.
- 3 The differences that unlike the world, brothers and sisters in Christ must not be attacking one another. When we attack one another, we lose the precious gifts of community and unconditional love.
- 4 For this reason, love must be abundant among us. John uses one of his favorite words to explain the relationship of true brothers and sisters in Christ. We deal with things up front. We are not taught by Jesus to hide from one another when we have conflict.
- 5 Instead, we demonstrate love. This demonstration of love allows us to abide in the light. This word for abide is so important because it maintains the ideas not just of living but of remaining relationship.
- 6 When we can have disagreements and uniqueness among us and still have unity under the banner of Christ, this is called abiding were remaining together. We make the active choice to work out our differences and to remain in fellowship.
- 7 This is what it means to abide in the light. The light is Jesus and when we abide in Jesus, when we remain in Jesus, we share relationship with him and with all of his people, our brothers and sisters.
- 8 **Application:** When we can get along with one another in brotherly love, we keep ourselves from breaking Jesus' commandments. Loving our brothers and sisters in Christ keeps us from the edge of sin and temptation. Living in a loving together is more than a support group in and of itself. It is the protection from that cool dark world that all of us learned for.

B Hating our brothers and sisters means we walk in darkness.

- 1 John does not leave anything to chance as far as understanding what a Christian is like. He lays out playing simple reminding us of Jesus who said we would know people by their works.
- 2 John tells us that a person who hates his brother or sister in Christ is not really practice true Christianity. Instead of being part of Jesus' family, this person is in darkness.
- 3 To be in darkness as we have the saying means to be practicing wickedness. For as long as the brother is heated, this person is not walking in the community and fellowship and love of Jesus' family.

- 4 John makes a distinction between what it was in the light and the one who is in darkness. The one who is in light does not stumble. He knows where he is walk because the light guide to.
- 5 But the one who is in darkness cannot see where he is going and stumbles all over the place. He is blinded by the darkness. He stumbles around not knowing what to do or how to fit in. He is without direction.
- 6 John makes two distinctions about the brother who hates. His hate blinds him to the light and to what Jesus expects of him. First, in verse 11, John points out two things about this person.
- 7 He is “in darkness” meaning that’s this person is momentarily committing we can ask. But this all changes with the very next phrase. Remember that John makes distinctions between momentary sin and a sinful lifestyle.
- 8 But in the second phrase, “walks in the darkness” John is making the distinction that if this person continues to harbor the state, he is no longer committing a momentary sin but rather engaging in a sinful lifestyle.
- 9 **Application:** The danger of going from a momentary sin to a sinful lifestyle is beyond the purview of the sinner. He does not realize that change has happened between momentary sin and a sinful lifestyle. In harboring that hates of his brother or sister, he has given up all of the wonderful gifts that come to us when we live in fellowship and love. May we never get to a place where we hate each other so much that we separate ourselves from the righteous group all because of something that we could’ve sorted out biblically. Don’t give up this great gift to harbor hates that can be extinguished.

Conclusion

Jesus always conquers sin so that we can continue to live in community, fellowship and lots+. He is our ultimate sacrifice, finishing the work of salvation, through his blood. He made the way to restore our relationship with God. Now we have opened fellowship with God and one another because of that sacrifice. But that sacrifice maintains our fellowship by allowing us to abide in the light of who Jesus is and who we are in him.

We live in this community of faith together and we have unconditional love for one another because Jesus taught us how. We must walk in righteousness together and help one another. Our love makes us different from the world because they are not used to seeing unconditional love displayed for them. But if we hate one another the world sees the same thing that it is used to. Our love is a witness of God’s love to the unlocked. Let us go forth and live in unity under the banner of Jesus, loving one another until the date our Savior returns for us.