

An “Old, Yet New” Commandment

1 John 2:7-11

Study #4

(Not entirely original with me)

INTRODUCTION:

1. In our study of 1st John, we have seen thus far...
 - a. That John’s aim is that we may have fellowship with the Father and Son, so our joy may be full - **1 Jn 1:1-4**
 - b. That fellowship with the Father is contingent upon:
 - 1) Walking in the light - **1 Jn 1:5-7**
 - 2) Confessing our sins - **1 Jn 1:8-10**
 - 3) Making use of our “advocate” and “propitiation”, Jesus Christ the Righteous - **1 Jn 2:1-2**
 - c. And that fellowship with the Son (Jesus) depends upon:
 - 1) Keeping His commandments - **1 Jn 2:3-5a**
 - 2) Walking as He walked - **1 Jn 2:5b-6**
-- Otherwise, it is not true that we “abide in Him”, nor truly “know Him”
2. Having stressed the importance of keeping the commandments of Jesus if we are to have fellowship with Him and the Father...
 - a. John proceeds to discuss one commandment in particular - **1 Jn 2:7-11**
 - b. He discusses what can be called “**An Old, Yet New Commandment**”

I. THE COMMANDMENT ITSELF

A. IT IS AN “OLD” COMMANDMENT... (8)

1. He does not write about something totally new to them
2. But something they had heard “from the beginning” (i.e., from the beginning of the gospel)

B. IT IS A “NEW” COMMANDMENT... (9)

1. That is, it is ever fresh; though old in time, it is never stale
2. It is a commandment that is ever true in Jesus, and it is true in His disciples
3. It is both true and new because...
 - a. “the darkness is passing away, and the true light is already shining”
 - b. With the coming of the Messiah (Jesus), light has begun to penetrate the darkness - cf. **Isa 9:2; Mt 4:13-17; Jn 1:4-9; 8:12**

C. IT IS THE COMMAND TO “LOVE ONE ANOTHER”...

1. How do we know this?
 - a. It is implied by **verses 9-11**

- b. It is stated clearly in **1 Jn 3:11; 4:21**
 - c. This command was “from the beginning” (of the gospel) - **Jn 13:34-34; 15:12,17**
2. What does it mean to “love one another”?
- a. It may be helpful to first review the different Greek words for **love**
 - 1) **storge** - describes love of family
 - 2) **eros** - carnal, sexual love
 - 3) **phileo** - love for dear friends
 - 4) **agape** - active goodwill toward others
 - b. It is **agape** love that we are commanded to have in this text
 - 1) It is also the same kind of love commanded in **Jn 13:34-35**
 - 2) It is that concern to meet the needs of others that is best exemplified in the life and death of Jesus - cf. **1 Jn 3:16-17**
 - c. Therefore, to “love one another” is to consider the needs of one another, and to actively work toward meeting those needs (i.e., follow Jesus’ example!)

II. THE EFFECT OF NOT KEEPING THIS COMMANDMENT

A. ONE “IS IN DARKNESS”... (9)

- 1. When a person claims to walk in the light, but hates his brother, he is still in darkness!
- 2. Indeed, he has always been in darkness!
 - a. Cf. “is in darkness until now”
 - b. Despite what they may claim, they have not yet passed from darkness to light!
 - c. Or as expressed later, they have not yet passed from death to life! - **1 Jn 3:14**

B. ONE “DOES NOT KNOW WHERE HE IS GOING”... (11)

- 1. He may “think” he has fellowship with God, that he is saved, but he is blind!
- 2. He fails to realize the absurdity of his claim to know and love God - cf. **1 Jn 4:20**
- 3. Blinded by darkness (hate), he cannot see that he is on the road to hell!

III. THE EFFECT OF KEEPING THIS COMMANDMENT

A. ONE “ABIDES IN THE LIGHT”... (10a)

- 1. Meaning that they are in full fellowship with the Father! - cf. **1 Jn 1:7a**
- 2. And they enjoy the cleansing power of the blood of Jesus! - cf. **1 Jn 1:7b**
 - So unless we love one another, fellowship and forgiveness is not possible!

B. “THERE IS NO CAUSE FOR STUMBLING”... (10b)

- 1. Abiding in the light, he can see clearly as he walks

2. Fellowship with God makes it possible to “know where he is going” (unlike the one who hates his brother and is in darkness)
3. This does not imply sinlessness
 - a. Remember **1 Jn 1:8,10**
 - b. But as one walks in the light (in fellowship with God), he knows what to do when he sins, and in what direction he should be headed - cf. **1 Jn 1:9**

CONCLUSION:

1. This “old, yet new” commandment is very important...
 - a. If we are not keeping it, we are still in darkness!
 - b. If we are in darkness...
 - 1) We are not walking in the light!
 - 2) We are not having fellowship with God, and the blood of Jesus does not cleanse us from our sins!
 - 3) We cannot have that “fullness of joy” of which John wrote in **1 Jn 1:4**
2. It is only appropriate, then, to close this lesson with the admonition of John found later in his epistle...
“Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.” - 1 Jn 4:7-8
3. For those not yet Christians seriously consider the next two verses:
“In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” - 1 Jn 4:9-10

Jesus is not only the “propitiation” for our sins, but is available for the whole world (**1 Jn 2:2**). Have you appropriated this wonderful offer from God?

(Material from Mark A. Copeland)