

verses. Yes, a Christian CAN walk in darkness.

- 4) When in darkness, the Christian does not know factually where he is going, v.11. The word “*know*” is *eidō*. We identified it last week as factual knowledge. Since he is in darkness, he cannot see the right way to go in life. Because he has not cast off the works of darkness (Ro 13:12) and he is having fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness (Eph 5:11), that darkness has blinded his eyes (2Pe 1:5-9).

**b. Loving one another requires God’s light, v.9-10**

- 1) Loving as Christ is supernatural. We need His enabling to love as He loves, v.10.
- 2) To love like Christ, we must be abiding in the light of God’s presence. We must be close to the Lord. Fellowship with God is essential in order for you to love fellow Christians as Christ loves you.
  - a) If you are married to a Christian, this means that you must love your spouse as Christ loves you.
  - b) However, you cannot love your spouse as Christ loves you if you are not walking in God’s light, abiding in Christ, walking in the Spirit and fellowshiping with God.
  - c) The main reason for disharmony, unloving actions, and hate in a church or in a marriage is that those involved are not walking in God’s light and obeying Christ’s new commandment to love as He loves.
- 3) When we are abiding in God’s light, we are living in a way that we will not cause others to stumble.

**Conclusion:** God’s command is not for us to pour out sentimental complements on one another. It is to love fellow Christians sincerely by sacrificially giving of ourselves to meet their needs as Christ gave Himself for us. Christ-like love must begin in our homes and extend to our fellow-Christians. If you have not been loving as Christ loves, the solution is to apply 1 John 1:5-10 to get back in fellowship with God.

**Song:** Teach Me Thy Way, O Lord - 337

# A Commandment: Old & New

10 March 2019 PM – 1 John 2:7-11 – 1Jn2019 – Scott Childs

**Introduction:** John Fawcett lived from 1740-1817. He spent 54 years as the pastor of a poor Baptist church in Wainsgate, England. His preaching and writings blessed many, including King George III. He penned the following hymn about Christian love. “*Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love! The fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above. Before our Father’s throne we pour our ardent prayers; our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, our comforts and our cares. We share our mutual woes, our mutual burdens bear; and often for each other flows the sympathizing tear. When we asunder part it gives us inward pain; but we shall still be joined in heart, and hope to meet again.*” (Great Hymns, p.187)

**Transition:** Our text speaks of two commandments. This evening we will look at the old commandment, the new one, and the application.

## 1. The Old Commandment, v.7

**Note:** John is addressing Christian *brethren*, not unbelievers! He is not questioning their genuine faith in Christ. It appears that John is building on what he has just said (1Jn 2:3-6).

### a. The old commandment identified

- 1) What commandment did John’s readers have from the beginning? At the beginning of Christ’s ministry, Israel already had this old commandment.
- 2) In John’s second epistle, he identifies that commandment. (2 John 1:5) “*And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another. And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.*”
- 3) When did they receive that old commandment to love?

### b. The old commandment’s origin

- 1) In the days of Moses, God gave Israel His Law.
- 2) Within the Law, God included this command. (Leviticus 19:18) “*Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD.*”

- 3) Jesus, who lived His entire human life in the Old Testament dispensation, affirmed this commandment. (Matthew 5:43) "*Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.*"
- 4) The commandment John was putting forward was an "Old Commandment."

## 2. The New Commandment, v.8

### a. The new commandment identified

- 1) The night before He went to the cross, Jesus placed a new qualification on the old commandment "love thy neighbour as thyself". He said that His disciples were to love each other as He had loved them. (John 13:34) "*A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*" (John 15:12) "*This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.*" (John 15:17) "*These things I command you, that ye love one another.*"
- 2) Three truths stand out in this new commandment.
  - a) First, it was an intensified version of the old one.
  - b) The second truth is that they were to focus their love especially on **Christian brethren**, not just on a neighbour. Christians are to love fellow Christians. This love is not just emotional feelings that ignore sin and false doctrine. It is a giving love that seeks the best for fellow Christians. Sometimes that means confronting their error and seeking to build them up.
  - c) The third truth is that they were to **imitate** the love Christ had shown to them. His love had been sacrificial for them. In love, He met their needs. He had loved them despite their frequent failures. In love, He was about to go to the cross to pay for their deserved damnation in hell. As John writes this epistle, he could now see that. He just told us in 1Jn 2:2, that Christ is the propitiation for our sins and for the sins of the whole world.

### b. The new commandment empowered, v.8

- 1) Sacrificial giving love is in Christ's very nature as God.
- 2) Sacrificial giving love is now in the new nature of every true Christian. The Holy Spirit lives in you to empower you to love (Gal 5:22-23).
- 3) Darkness is now past. Christ has delivered us from darkness. He has placed His light in us. True light now shines through Christ. We can now walk in the light with God. (2 Corinthians 5:17) "*Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*"

## 3. The Commandment Applied, v.9-11

### a. Darkness is outside of God's light, v.9, 11

- 1) Remember, John is addressing Christians not unbelievers. He speaks of hating a brother – not a blood brother, but a Christian brother.
- 2) Can a true Christian hate another Christian? Yes! Can he be right with God and hate? No, he is walking in darkness outside of God's light.
- 3) Darkness is any place outside of God's light, v.11. Look back at 1Jn 1:5. God wants every Christian to walk in the light. The Bible says much about believers who walk in darkness.
  - a) They are carnal, not spiritual (1Co 3:1).
  - b) They are not building with materials that will last in eternity (1Co 3:11-15).
  - c) They are disobeying the God's commands (Ro 13:12-14; 2Co 6:14; Eph 5:8, 11; Col 3:1-5).
  - d) They will be chastened by the Lord (Heb 12:5-7).
  - e) If God does not chasten them for walking in darkness then they are illegitimate and were never truly saved (Heb 12:8).
  - f) They will give account of their sin to God (Ro 14:12).
  - g) They will lose rewards at the Judgment Seat (2Co 5:10).
  - h) Those who claim that a true Christian cannot walk in darkness will have a difficult time explaining these