

“THE DARKNESS IS PASSING AWAY”

I JOHN 2:7-11

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INTRODUCTION

If we know him, we will keep His commandments (v. 3).

If we keep His word, then the love of God has truly been perfected in us (v.5).

This mention of love prepares for the passage we study here.

John said that one who claims to abide in Christ must “walk” as He walked while on earth—and **Jesus’ life on earth was characterized by love.**

John shows here that the one who walks in love walks in the light and does not stumble, but the one who walks in darkness—hate toward the brother—is in the darkness and walks in it without knowing where he is going—darkness has blinded his eyes so that he cannot see.

DO NOT BE BLINDED BY THE DARKNESS.

- I. THE OLD COMMANDMENT THAT IS ALSO A NEW COMMANDMENT (7-8)
 - A. Our Teaching is not our Invention—it is divinely given and inspired (7).
 1. John addresses the “beloved”—they are loved by God and him, and he is about to talk of love. This is one of his favorite terms of affection in I John along with “little children.”
 2. John speaks of the “beginning” of the Gospel as received by them—the “word, message” which you have heard—once and for all, solidly established and grounded for all time.
 - The key to understanding this statement is II John 5.
 - The original command to “love one another” was given by Jesus in John 13:34-35.
 - Jesus there called it a “new” commandment” but by now it had been familiar to believers for some years and so is an “old commandment.”
 - The command was part of God’s very being—who is love—and was demanded of man from the beginning as can be seen in God’s anger with Cain over killing Abel.
 - The OT law in Dt. 6:5 is to love God with all one’s heart, and the second is like to it in Lev. 19:18—love your neighbor as yourself; Jesus said these were the two greatest commandments upon which all the Law depends (Mt. 22:37-40).
 3. The point is that our teaching is no man’s invention; we pass to you the truth of the word you’ve had from the beginning—unlike those teaching their errors which are new man-made inventions.
 - B. However, our teaching is “new” in another sense and this newness is “true”—based on truth and genuine.
 1. It is true in Him—Jesus manifested the reality of the commandment of love—His “new commandment” in His earthly life, His teaching, and His sacrificial death and resurrection in order to provide redemption—this manifestation provides a “new” comprehension of love never known in the OT and surely not in the world at large.
 2. It is true in you—your response to the gospel and union with Christ has resulted in your experience of the love of God in Christ, and its manifestation to other believers. The world has never seen anything like the love that Christians have—especially toward one another (and even toward all men).
- II. THE DARKNESS IS PASSING AWAY AND THE TRUE LIGHT IS SHINING (8b).
 - “Is past” is not a correct reading of the Greek tense which is present—“is passing”!
 - The battle is not over yet!
 - A. Darkness is the absence of light—as light shines the darkness dissipates.

1. As seen in 1:5-6, God is Light and has no darkness in Him.
 2. Christ is the Light of the world—he has defeated the darkness and brings his people out of the domain of darkness into His kingdom of light (Col. 1:13).
 3. As people are saved and dwell in the light (v. 9) and walk in the light (1:7), darkness disappears more and more.
- B. The True light is shining.
1. It is already happening and increasing.
 2. The Gospel will continue to introduce light, until one day Christ returns and defeats darkness in this world.
- C. The unstated purpose for John “writing” to them is that they might walk in the light more and more and totally disassociate themselves from the darkness—see the “I am writing...because” in v. 8.

III. ABIDING IN THE LIGHT IS LIVING IN LOVE—ESPECIALLY TOWARD ONE’S BROTHER (9-11)

- A. The one who does not love his fellow Christian—who “hates” him and what he stands for—is really in darkness (9, 11).
1. His claim to be “in the light” while “hating” his brother shows the claim to be false.
 - The two practices are diametrically opposite and **cannot exist together**.
 - He is in the darkness “until now”—the whole time; there never was a time that he was not in the darkness (9).
 2. He also “walks in” the darkness—it is his lifestyle (see 1:6-7).
 3. He also does not know “where he is going”
 - He is going away from truth but really does not know where it leads.
 - In reality, he is on the way to ruin and destruction—even eternal ruin.
 4. The darkness “has blinded his eyes.” He cannot see and has lost the capacity.
 - Hatred of truth, the believer, what is righteous removes sight so that one is blind.
 - One can reach the point of no return.

[Fish in Mammoth cave that have lost their eyes because of darkness; ponies working in the mines that become blind.]
- B. The one who loves his brother—fellow Christian—is in a better condition (10).
1. He remains/abides in the light.
 2. There is no “cause of stumbling” nor “does he stumble” over the stumbling blocks that he himself sets up! (cf. v. 11)

CONCLUSION

Don’t be fooled. One who rejects the Christian, the simple gospel message, and the practice of love is not in the light—is not a true believer. He is in fact in the darkness, walks in the darkness, does not know where he is going, and is blind. His destiny is fearsome!

The one who loves like Christ loves is in the light and does not stumble.

The darkness is passing away; the true/genuine/not counterfeit light is shining.

You must walk in the light; you must obey His commandments; you must keep His word; you must love your brother.

WALK IN LOVE AS JESUS WALKED IN LOVE.

DO NOT BE BLINDED BY THE DARKNESS.