

9.27.20 ~ 1John 2:3-11, The Life and Light of God...

Read 1John 2:3-6... John repeatedly states that those who genuinely know Christ (i.e., Christians) will strive to keep the commands of God. Our obedience illustrates that we are indeed saved (**Ephesians 2:10**), "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them."

To call yourself a Christian and not seek to do the good works God has prepared for you to do, is to call God a liar (**1John 2:3-4**).

A person who has truly been saved (**1John 2:5-6**) will live in a manner that honors the One who has saved them. In other words, if you are a Christian, you will purpose to follow Christ's example as you live in this world for Him.

God is "light" (**1:5, 7**) and therefore His people will reflect that light; just as Jesus Christ obeyed the Father, so those who have come to the Father through Christ will follow Christ's example.

God gives you His Spirit so that you will have both the capacity, and the capability, to do that which pleases Him, i.e., that which reflects your obedience to the most fundamental command of Christ (**Mark 1:15, 17**).

Jesus' by His words and deeds summed up all of that is written in the Law and the Prophets.

Jesus set the example of what real love is, when He took upon Himself our punishment, though He Himself was innocent of any crime. We who have received God's sovereign payment for sin (cf. **1John 1:9**), will want to honor and imitate Him (cf. **1John 4:7-11**).

Jesus' crucifixion is the greatest expression of love the world will ever know; and though Jesus is in heaven, we serve Him here on earth, following His example and obeying His commands.

John 10:14-18, "I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me, even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock *with* one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again. No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father."

John 15:12-17, "This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends. You are My friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you

friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you. You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and *that* your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you. This I command you, that you love one another.”

Read 1John 2:7-8... John says he isn't giving us a new command, but an old one; and yet, he says it is a new command manifested in Christ. What does he mean?

Well, the command that we should love one another has been taught since the events in the Pentateuch took place (**Leviticus 19:18**), “You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the sons of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the Lord.”

In **Romans 13**, Paul gives instruction on how we are to love one another, our neighbor, quoting from **Leviticus 19:18**, but also from the Decalogue [The Ten Commandments: **Exodus 20; Deuteronomy 5**].

Romans 13:8-10, “Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled *the* law. For this, ‘You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,’ and if there is any other commandment, it is summed up in this saying, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of *the* law,” (the Royal Law, James 2:8).

John exhorts us to obey what God commands, for that expresses our Love for God (cf. **John 14:15, 21, 23**), the biblical word ‘love’ and the word ‘obedience’ are synonymous, i.e., those who love Christ will live in obedience to God’s Word, and they will love others.

In **Matthew 22:34-40; Mark 12:28-34**, Jesus repeats what the Old Testament teaches about loving others, calling this the Greatest Commandment because it fulfills all the Law and the Prophets.

By His own willful sacrifice to the point of death, Jesus demonstrated how we, God’s people, are to love.

John 13:34-35, “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

How did Jesus love us? He died for us, taking our punishment upon Himself (**2Corinthians 5:21**), “[God the Father] made [God the Son] who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

But you know, Christ commands us not to just love one another, and love our neighbor, but we are also to love our enemies (see **Luke 6:27-36**).

Our relationship with Christ is reflected in the way we treat others, even our enemies. To “love” someone does not mean we have to “like” them or have good

feelings for them; in fact, we are never commanded in the Bible to “like” someone, but we are commanded to love everyone. You see, God’s love [*agapao*] is a verb, meaning a willful and intentional act, saying and doing what is necessary or required to be an example of Christ to someone.

The oldness and newness of this commandment about perfect love (**1John 2:7-8**), is made manifest in and through the incarnation of Jesus Christ, God’s Son, Lord and Savior, for He fulfills all the Law of the Old and New Testaments.

Read 1John 2: 9-11... We can say we are Christians, but if we aren’t ‘loving’ others by God’s definition, we are expressing hatred toward them and rebellion toward God. According to God’s definition (**1John 3:18**), we must “not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.”

Colossians 3:12-17, “So, as those chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you. Beyond all these things *put on* love, which is the perfect bond of unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms *and* hymns *and* spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. Whatever you do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.”

Colossians 3:23-24, “Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.”

The false teachers of John’s day, like those in our day, claimed to know and to teach Christ; but their actions negated that they had any personal knowledge of, let alone a relationship with, Christ the Lord.

I’m sure you have heard it said that your walk [your way of life] should match your talk; in other words, what you say you believe in your heart should be reflected in how you behave in this life.

Words are cheap, but if you are genuinely saved and living in obedience to God’s Word, it will be plainly seen by the way you treat other people.

Ask yourself, “Are my actions and words toward others reflective of the teachings of the Bible and the character of Jesus Christ?” If your answer is unabashedly “yes,” perhaps you should, if you dare, ask those who know you the best if that is indeed true most of the time.

Is the Light and Life of God being exemplified in and through your life, where others can see it?

Ephesians 5:7-13, "Therefore do not be partakers with them; for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light (for the fruit of the Light *consists* in all goodness and righteousness and truth), trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them; for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret. But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light.

Look at **1John 2:11** again... There is no middle ground with God, no gray area, nothing hidden in the shadows; everything is to be brought out into the Light of God's Word; if nothing shines, if nothing shows up, then it is all darkness.

John says, "the one who hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness," i.e., those who live apart from Christ or in disobedience to His Word are groping around in the darkness with no idea what direction they are going in, because the darkness has blinded them.

We must be witnesses of the message of Christ and we must be coming together to encourage one another toward love and good deeds, in order that we will help the blind to see, and set the prisoners free, as Paul writes in **2Corinthians 4:3-6**, "And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, 'Light shall shine out of darkness,' is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ."

Last week I reiterated that God's Word, from beginning to end, demonstrates God's sovereign plan to separate Light from Darkness, forever; darkness exists and is representative of all things that are offensive to God and void of the Life and Light of God.

Genesis 1:1-4, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters. Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness."

In **Revelation 22:3-5**, [Speaking of when the end will come to all things that are under the curse of sin, it says "There will no longer be any curse... ...And there will no longer be *any* night [darkness]; and they [God's people] will not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illumine them; and they will reign forever and ever."

1John 1:5-6, "This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.

Listen, all those who genuinely belong to Christ will desire to shine the Light of God, by displaying Life from God, as they walk by the Spirit of God, in obedience to the Word of God.

We must each seek to know, to show, and to share the Good News of God's Word, that everyone who repents of sin and believes in Jesus Christ, God's Son, for salvation will be saved; and then they will know, and show and share this message with others.

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