



1 John 2: 7-11

The love of God at work in me makes me hate with the hatred of the Holy Ghost all that is not in keeping with God's holiness. To walk in the light means that everything that is of the darkness drives me closer into the center of the light.

--Oswald Chambers

Hate is the evidence of blindness to the light of God. Love is the evidence that sight has been given to the blind. This is the miracle of the new birth. This is the true light that is already shining. This is the fountain of love in every believer.

-- John Piper

If you were asked the two greatest commands in the Bible what would you say? Many would respond with "Love God" and "Love others".

This section of scripture opens with a reminder to the readers of the "old commandment" which they have "had from the beginning". This commandment refers to Jesus' command to His disciples to "love one another as I have loved you".

We learned last week that that part of loving God and walking in the Light means walking as Jesus walked. In the same way, this passage of 1 John highlights another characteristic of those who abide in the Light: loving your brother.

In this passage from 1 John we learn that anyone claiming to be "in the light" and "of God" but carries around hate for a brother or sister is still walking in the darkness and the truth is not in them. That is a pretty harrowing truth.

We learned last week about what it is like to be in the darkness: not knowing which way is up or down, being blind, stumbling around chaotically. This is exactly what hate does to our hearts and lives.

Furthermore verse 10 is clear that by loving your brother and abiding in the Light you avoid living in the darkness.

So what's your response? Choose life in the light over life in the darkness?

Read 1 John 2:7-11

7Beloved, I am not writing a new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you have had from the beginning; the old commandment is the word which you have heard. 8On the other hand, I am writing a new commandment to you, which is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true Light is already shining. 9The one who says he is in the Light and yet hates his brother is in the darkness until now. 10The one who loves his brother abides in the Light and there is no cause for stumbling in him. 11But the one who 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.

Opening Questions

1. How have you been challenged by the teaching in 1 John? How have you “walked in the light”? What area of darkness has been brought to life?

2. In broad terms, how would you fill in the blanks:
 - a. I love...

 - b. I hate...

3. Describe a time where you had to forgive someone when you were hurt. How quickly were you able to forgive them? If you harbored “hatred” towards them, how did it affect your walk with Christ?

Observations from the text:

4. Underline where the words “new commandment” are used. Circle every time the words “old commandment” is used.

5. John opens this section addressing them as “Beloved”. What are words we would use today to greet people in a similar situation?

6. John distinguishes old and new commandments. What words does John use to describe the old commandment? New commandment?

7. What are the outcomes in this passage for walking in darkness?

Applications from the text

8. John writes about three tragic outcomes of believers who do not love others:
 1. (v9) The believer thinks he sees, but is really blind
 2. (v10) The believer becomes a cause of stumbling
 3. (v11) The believer walks in darkness with blinded eyes

Use the 3 outcomes above to answer this question. If we hate our brother, what is an example of each outcome listed above?

Blind:

Stumbling:

Walk in darkness:

9. How does the Gospel define loving your brother?
10. Love is both a choice and emotion. What happens when we anchor love as just an emotion?
11. What are examples in your life where “love required sacrifice”?
12. How do we call out a fellow small group member who seems to harbor hatred toward another?

13. At times, we might replace the word “hate” with words that are softer (or at least make us feel better). Either way, it is what John is talking about when we describe ourselves as “in the light and yet hates his brother”. What relationship(s) do you have in your life marked by hatred (or absence of love)?

14. How can the power of the gospel speak to this situation to bring forgiveness and healing?

15. What is the next practical step you need to take toward forgiveness? How can your small group community help?

Close in prayer. Pray specifically for relationships marked with hate and the power of the Gospel to bring love and healing. And then truly walk in the Light.



© Park Community Church
1001 N. Crosby St. | Chicago, IL 60610
www.parkcommunitychurch.org