

**“A NEW KIND OF LOVE”
I JOHN 2: 7-11**

LOVE IS THE PREEMINENT MARK OF A GENUINE CHRISTIAN. LOVE FOR GOD IS THE BENCHMARK OF ONE’S RELATIONSHIP TO HIM, AND LOVE FOR OTHER PEOPLE IS THE EPITOME OF HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS. THE NEW TESTAMENT REPEATEDLY SETS FORTH THE SUPREMACY OF LOVE. JESUS CITED TWO OLD TESTAMENT VERSES (DEUT. 6:5; LEV. 19:18) AS PROOF THAT TO LOVE GOD AND MAN IS TO FULFILL THE SUPREME COMMANDMENT OF THE LAW.

JOHN IS TELLING US THAT LOVE IS THE CHRISTIAN’S HIGHEST MORAL DUTY TOWARD OTHERS, AND IT IS CLEARLY HIS THEME IN THIS PASSAGE THIS MORNING.

I. AN OLD COMMANDMENT (V. 7)

LOVING GOD AND LOVING ONE’S NEIGHBOR WERE OLD FAMILIAR RESPONSIBILITIES LONG BEFORE JESUS EVER CAME TO EARTH. JOHN IS REMINDING HIS CHRISTIAN READERS OF SOMETHING THEY ALREADY KNOW. IT WAS A PART OF THE GOSPEL INSTRUCTION THEY HAD RECEIVED WHEN THEY BECAME CHRISTIANS. IT HAD BEEN TAUGHT THROUGHOUT THE OLD TESTAMENT.

JOHN PICKS UP FROM THE PREVIOUS PASSAGE WHERE HE SAYS THAT IF WE LOVE GOD, THEN WE WILL OBEY HIM AND WILL KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS. THERE IS AN INSEPARABLE LINK BETWEEN OBEDIENCE AND LOVING GOD AND ONE’S NEIGHBOR. JOHN IS EMPHASIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF REALIZING THAT ALL OF THIS IS REALLY AN OLD COMMANDMENT BECAUSE IT WOULD HAVE BEEN A PART OF EVERY CHRISTIAN’S ETHICAL TEACHING UPON BEING DISCIPLED AS A NEW CHRISTIAN. IT WAS A TEST OF THEIR CONVERSION AND A CENTRAL ELEMENT IN THE SUBMISSION OF ALL WHO CALL THEMSELVES CHRISTIANS.

II. A NEW COMMANDMENT (V. 8)

JOHN GOES ON TO SAY THAT ALTHOUGH LOVING GOD AND OTHERS IS REALLY AN OLD COMMANDMENT, IT IS ALSO “NEW.” THE GREEK WORD HE USES FOR “NEW” LITERALLY MEANS “SOMETHING THAT IS FRESH IN ESSENCE AND QUALITY WHILE NOT CHRONOLOGICALLY NEW.” IT WAS BASICALLY “NEW IN QUALITY, NOT NEW IN KIND.” HOW WAS THIS “LOVE” REALLY NEW?

- A. THIS NEW COMMANDMENT TO LOVE WAS NOW RAISED TO A COMPLETELY NEW STANDARD IN THE LIFE OF JESUS. IT WAS AS JESUS LOVED MEN THAT WE ARE NOW TO LOVE OTHERS.
- B. IT BECAME NEW IN THE EXTENT TO WHICH IT REACHED. IN JESUS LOVE REACHED OUT TO THE SINNER.
- C. IT BECAME NEW IN THE LENGTHS TO WHICH IT WOULD GO. NOTHING COULD TURN JESUS’S LOVE TO HATE.

III. A WAY OF LIFE (VV. 9-11)

IN THESE LAST VERSES JOHN APPLIES THE TEST OF SUPERNATURAL LOVE TO THOSE WHO CLAIM TO BE CHRISTIANS. ITS PRESENCE IS A SURE INDICATOR OF TRANSFORMATION, SALVATION, AND DIVINE LIFE. IT IS A MEANINGLESS BOAST FOR SOMEONE TO SAY THAT “HE IS IN THE LIGHT” IF HE OR SHE HATES HIS BROTHER. THAT IS AN INDICATION THAT THEY ARE “WALKING IN DARKNESS.” “DARKNESS” AND “HATE” GO TOGETHER, JUST AS “LIGHT” AND “LOVE” GO TOGETHER. THOSE WHO LOVE AND OBEY GOD’S WORD AND EXPRESS SELFLESS LOVE TO OTHERS ARE TRULY TRANSFORMED, BUT THOSE WHO DON’T ARE CLEARLY OUTSIDE THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND ARE VOID OF SPIRITUAL LIFE. AGAIN, JOHN CALLS SUCH CLAIMANTS AS LIARS.

**SOUTH POINT
BAPTIST CHURCH**

Finding God's Direction for Life



Presented by Dr. Jimmy Hilton

JOHN GOES ON TO SAY THAT THE MAN WHO HATES HIS FELLOWMAN IS NOT ONLY WALKING IN DARKNESS, BUT SINCE HE IS IN THE DARKNESS HE CANNOT FIND HIS WAY— HE DOESN'T KNOW WHERE HE IS GOING. HE HAS NO IDEA OF HIS DESTINY. HATRED ROBS US OF ALL SPIRITUAL INSIGHT.

AS CHRISTIANS WE ARE TO KEEP THIS “OLD, NEW COMMANDMENT” AND WALK IN THE LIGHT EVERYDAY.