

Proof of Life: The New Old Commandment

1 John 2:7-14

Introduction

The New Old Commandment (vv.7-11)

▪ The beloved...those in the Church

- **V.7** – Here, John gives us a view of the affection he has for the church to which he is writing. As well, it provides a glimpse into what he is speaking of related to this commandment that he is referring to.
- **Consider verses 4-5.** John is continuing to make his argument for those who truly know God by stating that those who profess to know Him will keep His commandments and His love will be in Him (**v.5**). This gives us a view of how Christ lived and walked (**v.6**).

▪ What is the Command?

- **Lev.19:18**
- To Love God and others, putting on display the character and identity of our Lord, Jesus Christ.
- This command to love is most plainly stated by Christ
 - Great Commandment
 - Love of God is commanded NOT commended
 - Those who follow Christ obey His commands
 - **John 15:1-11**
 - This passage connects so tightly with our passage today. We have the inseparable language of love, abiding and Christ-likeness.
 - The mark of knowing that you are a true Christian is that you reflect His nature and character. The ultimate expression is love.

▪ Why is the Commandment “Old”?

- **V.7**

- It has been revealed in the Law (mentioned above in **Lev.19:18**)
- It has been spoken of by Christ (**John 15**)
 - Began at their hearing, but consistent with the message they’d known in the OT Scriptures

▪ Why is the Commandment “New”?

- **V.8**
- The commandment is new (fresh) because it has been fulfilled in Christ
- We love in the manner of Christ
 - **John 15:12-17**
 - We are to love others like Christ loved us (sacrificially, humbly, obediently, joyfully) – particular emphasis is given to the joy of the one loving others as doing the very will of the Father
 - **John 17:20-26**
 - Love with unity so that the world may see the reality of Christ
 - This is corporate evangelism at its core
 - Everything the church does must reflect the **glory of God** – loving each other is the primary way we are reflect His glory
 - Loving one another puts on display the love of Christ for His own AND the love between the Father and Son
 - This is victorious and hopeful – the darkness is passing away and true light already shining (through the church)
 - This is true corporately in the church and individually in the believer.
 - Progressive sanctification is marked by an increased love for the people of God.
 - The encouragement in this progressive sanctification is that the realm of darkness (this world) is passing away and His kingdom light is already starting to shine.
 - Both of these are ongoing (**v.17**) – the believer only needs to endure a short

time awaiting the establishment of Christ's kingdom.

- This battles the false teaching in this church. Darkness and Light cannot be equally present. Darkness must give way to the presence of the Light (God).

▪ **What does the Commandment Require?**

- **Vv.9-11**
- The commandment requires a faithful confession – Our words must match our practice.
 - If we say we love “the church” and our reference point is merely a building with reminiscent memories (looking for the good ‘ole days) yet are critical of the people, we are deceived and either out of fellowship with Christ or perhaps unsaved. The church is the redeemed and we are commanded by Christ to gather in local churches to put our Redeemer on display where we live.
- The commandment requires faithful living
 - While not perfect we can still live without causes for stumbling. Essentially, we should not stumble (as true believers) because we do not love God's people.
 - “Skandalon” is the word – not lead to sin (scandal)
- The commandment requires honesty
 - If we hate the church (the redeemed of God) we are deceived (there is that lying element of sin again) and blinded by that deceit, not even realizing that we are really lost.
 - Some wonder where the church is “going” and sometimes that question is asked by those who do not know where THEY are going and are looking for some other church “fix” besides simply loving the body.

The New Old Commandment in Context (vv.12-14)

▪ **The Context is the Church – The Family of God**

- These three verses give us a view of 3 types of believers in the church (children, fathers and young men)
 - John gives great care to how he writes about these 3 types and is distinct in his writing purpose.
 - It is unclear if these are 3 categories of Christians by chronological age or spiritual development.
 - To Children, he writes because their sins are forgiven for His name's sake and because they know the Father
 - To Fathers, he writes because they know Him who is from the beginning (re-emphasizing this point)
 - To Young Men, he writes because they have overcome the evil one, are strong and the word of God abides in them
 - With every believer at every point of spiritual development, Christ is their all in all and the fact that John addresses these various stages confirms that the love that we are to have for the body is not bound by some homogeneous principle. Rather, all of us can have confidence to love each other because Christ alone is our hope.
- #### ▪ **Christ is the Confidence of the Church**
- He saves (children)
 - Knowing God the Father through Christ the Savior, the one who has purchased their pardon, affecting the forgiveness of sins.
 - He sanctifies (young men)
 - Empowering to overcome sinful desires and competitors for our affection (John Mueller will deal with this most effectively next week in **vv.15-17**.)
 - He preserves (fathers)
 - Knowing God in fullness is the aim.
 - These “father” types have experienced salvation, made it through the most serious battles and are left knowing God who is from the beginning, which gives a strong resolution to seeing maturity as the realization that God is and is in control of all things.

- **The Commandment Lived out in the Church in Christ-Centered Confidence**

- Loving brothers in Christ reveals that we can have confidence in being born again.
 - If we do not love the church, we do not love Christ
 - **1 John 4:20-21**
- How can we better live out this commandment in Christ-Centered Confidence?
 - Know the Gospel
 - Beyond knowledge, practice your knowledge in the church – serve the body and let your love be tested
 - This is why church fights are particularly difficult – they often expose those in the church who are actually unsaved
 - Those with a lack of love
 - Those who claim no sin
 - So, RECONCILE
 - The gospel will not be put on display effectively through UBC if the people of UBC are at odds.
 - Is a lack of love for the body of Christ worth the doubts, ineffectiveness and perhaps even lost-ness it proves?