



III. THE COMMANDMENT OF LOVE (1 John 2:7-11)

A. A New/Old Commandment (1 John 2:7-8)

1. Contrasting statements given (1 John 2:7-8)
 - a. I write no new commandment...but an old commandment (1 John 2:7).
 - b. A new commandment I write unto you (1 John 2:8).
2. An old commandment (1 John 2:7)
 - a. The origin of the commandment
 - (1) A “commandment which ye had **from the beginning**”
 - (2) “The word which ye have heard **from the beginning**”
 - (3) John often used the word *beginning* to designate the start of our Lord’s earthly ministry or teaching.
 - a) Jesus knew from the beginning who believed not (John 6:64).
 - b) Jesus said, “Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning” (John 8:25).
 - c) The apostles were with Jesus from the beginning (John 15:27).
 - d) Jesus had spoken some things since the beginning (John 16:4).
 - e) Christ, as heard, seen, and handled by John, was from the beginning (1 John 1:1).
 - f) The truth heard by from the beginning was to abide in the saints (1 John 2:24).
 - g) The message of love had been heard from the beginning (1 John 3:11; 2 John 1:5-6).
 - b. The reception of the commandment
 - (1) The audience receiving the commandment—“brethren”
 - (2) The manner in which the commandment was received
 - a) They heard the commandment from the beginning.
 - b) Now they were receiving it in written form.
 - c. The identity of the commandment
 - (1) Given away by the origin of the commandment
 - a) The message that was **heard** “from the beginning” is that we should love one another (1 John 3:11).
 - b) The message that was **had** “from the beginning” is that we should love one another (2 John 1:5-6).
 - (2) Confirmed in the context of the passage
 - a) 1 John 2:9 deals with the wickedness of hating a brother.
 - b) 1 John 2:10 deals with the righteousness of loving a brother.
 - (3) The content of the command
 - a) The object of our love (John 13:34)
 - b) The sincerity of our love (Romans 12:9; 1 John 3:18; 1 Peter 1:22)
 - c) The severity of our love
 - i) Preferring one another (Romans 12:10)
 - ii) Willingness to die for another (1 John 3:16)



3. A new commandment (1 John 2:8)
 - a. The old commandment that is new
 - (1) The word *again* shows the commandment is being repeated.
 - (2) John is using the same phrasing that the Lord used, and that is how he can state that it is a new commandment meaning that it was new when they received it (John 13:34).
 - b. The truth of the commandment
 - (1) In Him
 - a) Christ's love is the foundation for man's love (John 15:12-13).
 - b) Christ's love is the example of man's love (Ephesians 5:2).
 - c) Christ's love is the motivation for man's love (1 John 3:16).
 - (2) In you
 - a) Man's love identifies him with Christ (John 13:35).
 - b) Man's love assures him of life in Christ (1 John 3:14-16).
 - c) Man's love should parallel God's love (1 John 4:11).

- B. The New/Old Way (1 John 2:8-11)
 1. The position of the believer (1 John 2:8)
 - a. The position stated (1 John 2:8)
 - (1) The darkness is past.
 - (2) The true light now shineth.
 - b. The position changed (Acts 26:18)
 - (1) Turned from darkness
 - (2) To light
 - c. The practice prophesied (John 8:12)
 - (1) He that followeth me [the Saviour] shall not walk in darkness.
 - (2) But shall have the light of life
 - (3) Note: Right practice follows the right position, but never precedes it. Right practice confirms a right position just as a wrong practice unveils a wrong position. The idea that people get saved and never change is based upon emotion rather than scripture.
 2. The position tested (1 John 2:9-11)
 - a. Abiding in darkness (1 John 2:9, 11)
 - (1) The claim of light (1 John 2:9)
 - a) The claim is made of being in the light.
 - b) The claim is refuted.
 - (2) The reality of darkness (1 John 2:9, 11)
 - a) Hatred of a brother declares
 - i) The person is in darkness (1 John 2:9, 11).
 - ii) The person walketh in darkness (1 John 2:11).
 - b) The blindness of darkness (1 John 2:11; Proverbs 4:19)
 - i) A darkened path (John 12:35)
 - ii) Blinded eyes (John 12:40)
 - b. Abiding in light (1 John 2:10)
 - (1) Abiding in the light causes a love for the brethren.
 - (2) Abiding in the light prevents stumbling.



IV. THE CONTRAST OF LOVES (1 John 2:12-17)

A. The Reason for the Audience (1 John 2:12-14)

1. The pattern established (1 John 2:12-14)
 - a. I write unto you...because (1 John 2:12)
 - b. I write unto you...because (1 John 2:13)
 - c. I write unto you...because (1 John 2:13)
 - d. I write unto you...because (1 John 2:13)
 - e. I have written unto you...because (1 John 2:14)
 - f. I have written unto you...because (1 John 2:14)
2. The groups and causes named (1 John 2:12-14)
 - a. The first group (1 John 2:12-13)
 - (1) The address (1 John 2:12-13)
 - a) Little children (1 John 2:12)
 - b) Little children (1 John 2:13)
 - (2) The cause (1 John 2:12-13)
 - a) Their sins are forgiven for His name's sake (1 John 2:12).
 - b) They have known the Father (1 John 2:13).
 - b. The second group (1 John 2:13-14)
 - (1) The address (1 John 2:13-14)
 - a) Young men (1 John 2:13)
 - b) Young men (1 John 2:14)
 - (2) The cause (1 John 2:13-14)
 - a) They have overcome the wicked one (1 John 2:13).
 - b) They (1 John 2:14)
 - i) Are strong
 - ii) Have the word of God abiding in them
 - iii) Have overcome the wicked one
 - c) Note: Some have misunderstood the concept of overcoming as a matter of works, but scripture is clear this is not so.
 - i) The source of overcoming
 - (a) We overcome because of God in us (1 John 4:4).
 - (b) Those born of God overcome the world (1 John 5:4).
 - (c) Faith provides the victory (1 John 5:4-5).
 - ii) The rewards of overcoming
 - (a) Rights to the tree of life (Revelation 2:7)
 - (b) Exemption from second death (Revelation 2:11)
 - (c) White raiment (Revelation 3:5)
 - (d) Heavenly position (Revelation 3:12, 21)
 - c. The third group (1 John 2:13-14)
 - (1) The address (1 John 2:13-14)
 - a) Fathers (1 John 2:13)
 - b) Fathers (1 John 2:14)
 - (2) The cause (1 John 2:13-14); They
 - a) Have known Him that is from the beginning (1 John 2:13)
 - b) Have known Him that is from the beginning (1 John 2:14)



3. The groups discussed
 - a. The controversy
 - (1) Do the distinctions represent age classifications?
 - a) It seems possible that the distinctions are age specific because of the knowledge of God.
 - i) The little children have “known the Father” (1 John 2:13).
 - ii) The fathers have “known him that is from the beginning” (1 John 2:14). This would be referring to the Lord Jesus in His earthly ministry.
 - iii) This seems to indicate that the little children did not personally witness the earthly ministry of the Lord Jesus, but that the fathers did. If *The First Epistle General of John* was written around AD 90 as some suppose, this would make perfect sense.
 - b) It seems possible that the distinctions are age specific because of the prime of a man’s life.
 - i) Statements concerning the young men (1 John 2:14)
 - (a) They are strong.
 - (b) They have overcome the wicked one.
 - (c) They have the word of God abiding in them.
 - ii) These truths most likely occur in the peak of a man’s natural physical and emotional strength.
 - (2) Do the distinctions represent spiritual maturity classifications?
 - a) The usage of these terms elsewhere in the New Testament
 - i) *Little children* is often used to refer to believers of any age (John 13:33; Galatians 4:19; 1 John 2:1, 18, 28; 1 John 3:7, 18; 1 John 4:4; 1 John 5:21).
 - ii) *Father* is used at least once to describe someone who has led others to the knowledge of Christ as Saviour (1 Corinthians 4:15).
 - b) Stages of the Christian life identified
 - i) Little children = the newborn believer
 - (a) Thrilled because of the forgiveness of sins
 - (b) Thrilled to know the Lord as Saviour
 - ii) Young men = the maturing believer
 - (a) Overcoming the wicked one in the daily fight
 - (b) Strong in the Lord and the power of His might (Ephesians 6:10)
 - (c) Constantly feeding on the word of God
 - iii) Fathers = the aged believer
 - (a) Thrilled once again at the opportunity to know the Lord
 - (b) This knowledge of God is deeper than the first knowledge of God.
 - (c) This explains some of Paul’s statements (Philippians 3:8-10; Colossians 1:10).

**B. The Contrasts Described (1 John 2:15-17)****1. Between two loves (1 John 2:15)****a. The love of the world****(1) Believers are not to love this world.**

- a) The world hates believers because of their association with Christ (John 15:18-19; John 17:14; 1 John 3:13).
- b) The world and the saints are crucified one to another (Galatians 6:14).
- c) The world's works are evil (John 7:7).
- d) The whole world lieth in wickedness (1 John 5:19).
- e) Satan is the god of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4).

(2) Believers are not to love the things that are in this world.

- a) At first, this may provide a stumblingblock to the believer.
 - i) What if this speaks of people?
 - (a) Family
 - (b) Friends
 - (c) Brothers and sisters in Christ
 - (d) The lost
 - ii) What if this speaks of neutral or godly things?
- b) Context clears the trouble by identifying the "things that are in the world" (see 1 John 2:16).
 - i) The lust of the flesh
 - ii) The lust of the eyes
 - iii) The pride of life

b. The love of the Father**(1) It is false to think that two opposing loves can coexist.****(2) According to the word of God, this is not true.**

- a) We cannot simultaneously love the world and God (1 John 2:15).
- b) Ye cannot love two masters (Matthew 6:24; Luke 16:13).
- c) Friendship with the world is enmity with God (James 4:4).

(3) This makes sense when we consider the fact that love is not merely an emotion but is confirmed by action (John 14:15, 23). Loving the world is disobedience to the commandments of God which, therefore, demonstrates a lack of love for the Father and the Son.**2. Between two contents (1 John 2:16)****a. All that is in the world****(1) The three areas of temptation**

- a) The lust of the flesh
- b) The lust of the eyes
- c) The pride of life

(2) The sin in the garden (Genesis 3:6)

- a) The tree was good for food—lust of the flesh.
- b) It was pleasant to the eyes—lust of the eyes.
- c) A tree to be desired to make one wise—pride of life



- (3) The temptation of Christ (Hebrews 4:15)
 - a) The lust of the flesh (Matthew 4:3-4; Luke 4:3-4)
 - i) Satan commanded Christ to turn stones into bread (Matthew 4:3).
 - ii) Christ quoted the word of God (Matthew 4:4; Deuteronomy 8:3). Note: Christ quoted the word *word* without italics.
 - b) The lust of the eyes (Matthew 4:8-10; Luke 4:5-8)
 - i) The temptation of Satan
 - (a) The Devil took the Lord to a high mountain (Matthew 4:8; Luke 4:5).
 - (b) The Devil showed Him the world's kingdoms (Matthew 4:8; Luke 4:5).
 - (c) The Devil offered them to Christ (Matthew 4:9; Luke 4:6-7).
 - ii) The response of Christ (Matthew 4:10; Luke 4:8)
 - c) The pride of life (Matthew 4:5-7; Luke 4:9-12)
 - i) The temptation of Satan
 - (a) The Devil took the Lord to Jerusalem (Matthew 4:5; Luke 4:9).
 - (b) The Devil set Him on a pinnacle of the temple (Matthew 4:5; Luke 4:9).
 - (c) The Devil told the Lord to cast Himself down and quoted scripture (Matthew 4:6; Luke 4:9-11; Psalm 91:11-12).
 - ii) The response of Christ (Matthew 4:7; Luke 4:12; Deuteronomy 6:16)
- (4) The temptation of every man (1 Corinthians 10:13; 2 Corinthians 2:11)
- b. Is not of the Father
 - (1) Righteousness is of God (Philippians 3:9).
 - (2) Love is of God (1 John 4:7).
- 3. Between two ends (1 John 2:17)
 - a. The world passeth away.
 - (1) The world itself will pass away (Psalm 102:23-28; Isaiah 40:6-8; 2 Peter 3:9-10).
 - (2) The lust of this world will pass away.
 - b. He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.
 - (1) The will of God (Isaiah 55:8-9)
 - a) Man has lusts.
 - b) The Devil has lusts (John 8:44).
 - c) God has a will.
 - (2) The lasting effects—abiding for ever
 - a) The will of God is that none should perish (2 Peter 3:9).
 - b) The will of God is that we should believe on the Lord Jesus Christ (John 1:13; John 6:40).