

Notes for the Ones Called-Out to Meet

Info: (651) 283-0568 Discipleship Training Ministries, Inc. www.dtmwebsite.org Today's Date: August 3, 2025

Loving Others Is A Sign Of Abiding In The Light

by Dan Trygg

“Beloved, 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. ⁸ On 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. ⁹ The one who says he is in the Light and yet hates his brother is in the darkness until now. ¹⁰ The one who loves his brother abides in the Light and there is no cause for stumbling in him. ¹¹ But 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.”
1 John 2:7-11

John is writing about “the Life”, ...the “age-type life” that was seen and heard by those who met Jesus. John said that what he had seen and heard was now what he intended to proclaim to us, so that we might have a sharing of life with the Father and with Jesus. **This life is made evident when we walk in the Light, as He Himself is in the Light.** If anyone is walking in the darkness of evil, then he is deceived or attempting to deceive others. This does not mean that Christians do not have sin. We all have sin in our members, as part of the fallen human race, ...and every one of us has chosen to sin in the past. **Sin still remains a possibility for us, but, because of Jesus' atoning sacrifice, we can confess our sins, and God will cleanse us.** Part of what John wanted to say, however, is that **it is now possible to *not* sin, because of this new life that is in us.**

Moreover, those who have come to know God, and walk in this new life, will see a new desire and ability to obey His commandments. Anyone who claims to know Him, and does not keep His commandments, is deceived. Whoever keeps His word, however, truly in that person the *agapē*-love of God has grown to maturity. **By this walk of obedience, we can know that we are “in Him”. The person who claims to abide in Him ought to walk as Jesus walked.**

“The Life”, ...the “age-type-Life”, ...walking in the Light, ...experiencing cleansing, and walking in victory over sin, ...walking with a new desire and ability to obey God, as a result of His love maturing in us, ...and walking in a way that looks like Jesus' heart and character, ...these are all descriptions of what it means to be “in Him” and “abiding in Him”.

John is going to add another dimension to this Life that is in us who are “in Him”. Before going there, however, the author introduces another new term. He addresses us as “*Beloved*”. It is a noun of direct address, and is plural, because John is writing to a number of people who fit this category. A better translation would be “Beloved-ones”. The Greek word is “*Agapētoi*”. Notice that it is not an emotional love, like *phileō* would be. It is from *agapē*, a freely-given choice to act to benefit someone else. It is a “chosen love”. In our case, the Lover has chosen to work toward our well-being and our fulfillment. **Out of the fullness of His heart, He delights to act on our behalf.** He has done this repeatedly in history, ...and even in our own personal history..., more than we could possibly know. **You and I are ones whom He has chosen to prefer, to benefit, to invest in, ...and He has done so at great personal cost to Himself.**

“God so *agapē*-loved the world that He gave...” *What did He give? “...He gave His only Son!” Why? So that we might not perish, but have “age-type Life”* (Jn. 3:16). Jesus could take our sins *upon* Himself, and be the satisfactory sacrifice on our behalf, ...and not just for us, but for *everyone* who would believe in Him (Jn. 3:16; 1 Jn. 2:2). **Jesus demonstrated this kind of love.** Although He was existing in heaven's glory and power as God, He did not consider His privileges and glory as something to be held on to. **He chose to empty Himself** of His great majesty, and became a human being. And being a man, **He humbled Himself and obediently gave Himself** to die on the cross *for US* (Phil. 2:5-8). John will tell us later on in this letter, “**By this, the *agapē*-love was manifested (was revealed, made visible, and clearly evident) among us, that God has sent His only Son into the world in order that we might live by means of Him**” (4:9). Romans 5:8-10 tells us that **it was *not* because we deserved this.** God showed us this kind of love even when we were still sinners, ...even while we were hostile, or at enmity, toward Him! **Clearly, this “choice-to-love” came from the fullness of His heart, ...not because we had done something to earn His help, or because we were “loveable”.** And, *because* it is about the fullness of HIS heart, and not *our* performance, we can be secure in His chosen-love.

“Beloved-ones, not a new (or strange, recent) commandment do I write to y'all, but an old (former) commandment, which y'all were having from the beginning; the old commandment is the message that y'all heard. Yet, a new commandment I do write to you, which is true in Him and in y'all, because the darkness is passing away (is-being-led-aside), and the true Light already is shining.” This may seem a little confusing, at first. **In 2 John 1:5, we have almost an identical parallel, only it is much more forthright.** “Now I urge you, ...not as writing to you a new commandment, but the one which we were having from the beginning, that we might love one another.” So, if this is

an accurate parallel, **what John is saying is that, whereas they had been given the commandment to love one another from the beginning, yet now it is like a fresh and new commandment.** It is now evident in their lives because the Light is displacing the darkness. **The command to love one another is not new to their minds, but it has become new in their lives, because of the advance of the “age-type Life” within them. It is no longer an unfulfilled wish; it has become reality in them,** ...just as it is evident in God's character. **How? It is a result of the outshining of the Light of Life, ...the outflashing and radiance of God's glory within them, ...the expression of the Holy Spirit.**

In Jesus' high priestly prayer, He said, “The glory which You have-given to Me, I have-given to them, in order that they might be one, even as we are one” (Jn. 17:22). What was He talking about? The Holy Spirit. The apostle Paul wrote that the *agapē*-love of God has-been-poured-out into our hearts by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 5:5). Jesus is described as “the outshining (or radiance) of God's glory, and the exact representation of His nature” (Heb. 1:3). **Just as the Eternal Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, so that we could behold His glory, which was grace and truth (Jn. 1:14), in a similar way, it has been God's plan, and it was Jesus' prayer, that we would be indwelt by the Living Spirit of God, so that He could shine out from our lives.**

What John is saying here, in this passage, is that **while the command to love one another was without fulfillment and full expression when the recipients of this letter first came to faith, ...by this time, in which he was writing them, that same commandment was fresh and new, and was actively being fulfilled in their lives, because the Light, ...the radiant-glory of the Holy Spirit within them was dragging the darkness aside and filling their hearts with His agapē-love.**

Note that John is indicating that there is a process of growth involved here. Just as he had previously said that obedience is the fruit or by-product of the *agapē*-love of God coming to maturity within us (2:5), so here.

When we first hear about God's commandments, we do not have the established walk in the Spirit to enable us to live in victory over sin. We struggle with sin. Thankfully, there is grace and mercy for us to be found in Jesus, and God is faithful to forgive and cleanse us when we fall short (1:9; 2:1). **But, as we become more acquainted with and established in the agapē-love of God, we find new trust and motivations arising within us. Our love and loyalty toward God grows, and we find ourselves satisfied and contented in our relationship with Him. He fills us with His life, and we are no longer in the angst of longing for something to fill our emptiness (Eph. 4:17-19). We find ourselves trusting Him, loving Him, wanting what He wants, and it becomes easier and easier to reject sin, and to choose to fulfill the leading of the Spirit.**

In a similar way, when we first come to Christ, and hear the command, “Love one another”, we might want to do that, but the influence of our former life is much greater at that point, than our knowledge or experience of walking in the new life. We stumble and fall. Our attempts at love are a mixture of spiritual desire and fleshly inability. It does not take long for the darkness of selfishness and sin to dominate our thoughts, emotions and actions. **We don't look much like the love of Jesus. We don't walk as He walked.**

John knows the people he is writing this letter to. They have had time to grow, and John's testimony is that this commandment to love one another is no longer an empty wish or intention. The Spirit of God, ...the Light of God's indwelling glory..., has been at work within them. The Holy Spirit has been changing them, transforming them, renewing their minds, and leading them to put aside the thoughts, false-beliefs, negative feelings and hurts of the past. He has been leading the darkness off to the side so that they would be able to be impacted more fully by His restorative Light. **His life within them, ...the “age-type life” of the Spirit..., has grown in them.** They had become more aware of His leading, and were more in tune with His heart. **They were more free to follow His promptings, even when they went against their previous, “before Christ”, experiences and mindset.**

They were also more confident in God's care of them. They came to know by experience that they could trust Him. They had learned to respond when God told them to choose to benefit someone else. They found themselves having hearts like Jesus, ...being willing to give of themselves to help someone else in personal and pragmatic ways. They were even willing to bear the costs of love, ...because the choice to love will have a cost. The *agapē*-love of God led Him to a cross. **If we are to love like He does, we will find that not only will we share His life, but we will also share His cross.**

The one who says he is in the light, and yet hates (or disregards) his brother is still in the darkness. He or she is in the darkness, and walks about in the darkness. They do not know where they are going, for the darkness blinded their eyes. Satan is at work to blind the minds of unbelievers, so that they would not perceive the truth. He uses strongholds, ...scripts and arguments we have heard or thought up..., that are opposed to the experiential knowledge of God, and block our perception. To find freedom, we need to relentlessly choose the truth and the life-giving Light that is in Jesus. An unwillingness to choose to love is a sign of fear and selfishness. It is lack of trust.

The one loving his brother abides in the Light, and there is no cause of stumbling in Him. Note again that the desired outcome is a fruit of abiding, ...living in, staying in, continuing in the Light. **Love comes from abiding.**