

Module 5: 1 John 2:7-11

- 1) Read 1 John 2:3-17 for context.
 - a) What words do you see repeated often in this section?
 - b) What titles do you suggest for the paragraphs starting in verse 7?

- 2) Today's focus is verses 7-11.
 - a) Rosscup's view
 - i) Obedience to the Commandments (2:3-17)
 - (1) The pattern of it: consistency with Christ (3-6)
 - (2) The pathway of it: light and love (7-11)
 - (3) The participants in it: the categories (12-14)
 - (4) The peril of it: worldliness (15-17)
 - ii) His Commandments
 - (1) Love (7) Also in 3:11 and 4:21, and 2 John 5.
 - (2) Belief (3:23)
 - (3) Truth (2 John 4; 3 John 3, 4)
 - (4) "Love is apparently a summation of all the commandments (2 John 5, 6)"
 - (5) What we are to obey
 - (a) "His Word" (5a)
 - (b) "The word of God" (14)
 - (c) "The will of God" (17)
 - b) Stott's view
 - i) Obedience, or the moral test (3-6)
 - ii) Love, or the social test (7-11)
 - iii) A digression about the Church (12-14)
 - iv) A digression about the world (15-17)
 - v) Belief, or the doctrinal test (18-27)
 - c) Hiebert's view
 - i) The Sign of Obedience (3-5a)
 - ii) The Sign of Imitation (5b-6)
 - iii) The Sign of Love (7-11)
 - iv) The Sign of Separation (12-17)
 - d) "Beloved" (*agapetoi*) at the beginning of verse 7 (NASB, ASV, ESV)
 - i) More appropriate than "Brethren" (KJV, NKJV)
 - (1) Some newer manuscripts use a different Greek word (*adelphoi*).
 - (2) Believed to be a scribal correction.
 - ii) Stronger than "Dear friends" (NIV)
 - iii) Do you think it is purposeful that John refers to his audience as "Beloved" before he addresses them about love and hatred?
 - iv) "In urging them to love one another, he assures them of his love for them" (Stott).
 - v) Is John practicing what he preaches?
 - vi) Do you think John was showing love to the non-Christians who would read his words? Who were these non-Christians?

- e) Old and New commandment (7, 8)
 - i) Are there two commandments, one old and one new? Alternatively, is there one commandment with both an oldness and a newness about it?
 - ii) How can this commandment be both old and new?
 - iii) Old
 - (1) Not new (7)
 - (2) Old in terms of length of time the commandment has been known – “which you have had from the beginning” (7b)
 - (3) Not old in the sense that it no longer applies. Indeed, it still is a command to obey.
 - (4) When is this “beginning” -- from the start of human existence, from the time of OT Law (Leviticus 19:18), from the time that Christ came (John 13:35; 15:12)?
 - (a) “which you have had” – imperfect tense, gives the meaning “which you were having on an on-going basis”. John’s audience was participating in this commandment.
 - (b) “the word which you have heard” -- at least the older members of John’s audience were present and heard this commandment personally.
 - iv) New
 - (1) Old, yet new. (8)
 - (a) The connecting word translated “On the other hand” (NASB) or “Again” (NIV) doesn’t introduce a new subject (commandment), but proceeds to describe something more about it. In this case it is described as new. So, on one hand, the commandment is old, and on the other hand, the commandment is new.
 - (b) “which is true in Him and in you” – this word “which” (neuter) does not refer to “commandment” (feminine). Instead, it refers to the newness of it. That is, the commandment isn’t a new one, but there is a new quality about this old commandment that John discusses here.
 - (2) This newness “is true” – it is a factual reality
 - (a) It is “in Him” – Christ lived it out on earth and ultimately via His death.
 - (b) It is “in you” – it is in John’s Christian audience because of the indwelling Holy Spirit.
 - (c) What allows this newness to be true?
 - (i) “the darkness is passing away” – that is, the “present age” (also, the world in verse 17) is progressing to its eventual end.
 - (ii) “the true Light is already shining” – Christ has come to earth and His Light is shining. This coming of His has ushered in the “age to come” (Matthew 12:32).
 - (3) New in what ways? (Stott)
 - (a) In emphasis, bringing together love for God and love for neighbors. (Deuteronomy 6:5; Leviticus 19:18)
 - (b) In quality, loving not just as loving yourself, but loving as Christ sacrificially loves.

- (c) In extent, regardless of race or rank (as in the parable of the Good Samaritan).
 - f) What is this commandment which is both old and new?
 - i) Does John say explicitly what this commandment is?
 - ii) Note that it is singular (7, 8) rather than plural (3, 4).
 - iii) Does it refer to what was written earlier (6) or to what is written later (9-11)?
 - iv) I think the context and our understanding of the previous verses points to the “commandment” being explained further in verses 9-11.
 - a) The test of love for fellowship with God
 - i) Part 1 (9)
 - (1) Condition – says he is in the Light while at the same time hates his brother.
 - (2) Reality – is in darkness up to this point
 - ii) Part 2 (10)
 - (1) Condition – loves brother
 - (2) Reality
 - (a) Abides in the Light
 - (b) No cause for stumbling in him. “If we love people, we see how to avoid sinning against them” (Stott).
 - iii) Part 3 (11)
 - (1) Condition – hates his brother
 - (2) Reality
 - (a) Is in darkness
 - (b) Walks in darkness
 - (c) Unaware of direction, because darkness has blinded his eyes.
 - b) Review verses 7-11. What is your summary interpretation?
 - c) What are some applications of these verses?
 - i) This commandment of love being old and new both assures those who oppose innovation in their faith and satisfies those who are invigorated with newness.
 - ii) This is the third test we can apply to ourselves to assure us that we truly are saved and walking in Christ. The three tests again are: obedience, imitation, love.
 - iii) We can use these tests as a diagnostic when counseling others.
 - iv) We can have realistic expectations of the behavior of the unsaved.
- 3) Handout for next week
- a) Pray for the Holy Spirit’s illumination before you begin your study.
 - b) Reread verses 3-17 for context.
 - c) Thank God for what you learned from verses 7-11.
 - d) Focus on verses 12-14.
 - e) Make as many observations as you can by comparing and contrasting the similar phrases.
 - f) Do you think these groups of people being addressed are different groups or the same group? Give reasons for your answer.

- g) What do you think is the one main point of these verses? Make sure to base this interpretation on what you observe in the text. Remember, observation, then interpretation, then application.
- h) Fill in the title for the paragraph beginning in verse 12 in the SURVEY CHART.