

Life in the Word

Cornerstone Sermon-based Life Group Lesson



Sermon Series: 1 John Series

Sermon Title: The Test of Love

Scripture Passage: 1 John 2:7-11

Getting Started Sharing from personal experience

Think about a team that you've worked, served, or played with. How is a team impacted by a member who has different goals or lives under a different moral standard than everyone else?

Anger and hatred are related in certain ways. Anger is a strong, but often temporary emotion that can lead to rash action if left unchecked. Hatred, on the other hand, is a sustained feeling of hostility or extreme disgust towards another person. While anger is an emotion we can learn to control, why is hatred such a dangerous thing to permit in our lives?

John teaches that love, not hatred, is the distinguishing characteristic of those who abide in Jesus. Does love mark your relationship to others within the church? If so, how does your love show itself?

Observation Discovering the context

John wrote this letter to protect churches against the rising threat of Gnosticism, a belief system that undermined the singular nature of Jesus, dismissed sin and promoted spiritual arrogance. Which of these topics does this passage best address?

The previous passage taught that the depth of our relationship with Jesus is revealed by our obedience to his commands. This passage presents a second "test" of our relationship with Jesus - love. How does obedience relate to love?

What is John's intent for the churches who read this passage? How should believers respond on both an individual and corporate level?

Interpretation Discovering the meaning

John claims that the commandment he is sharing is "an old commandment." If it is familiar, where in scripture can you find it? Start your search in Mark 12 and then examine Ephesians 5, James 2, and 1 Peter 2. Can you find it elsewhere?

In verse 8, John says that it is also a new commandment "which is true in him (Jesus) and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining."

a. In what ways does Jesus make this old commandment new?

b. In what ways is the commandment true in Jesus? In us?

What is the fundamental test of love that John offers to us in verses 9-10? What are the benefits of walking in the light of love?

We may be familiar with walking around a dark home at night and stubbing our toe on a toy or a piece of furniture. Imagine the spiritual equivalent of walking in hatred-fueled darkness. What consequences might you see in your life and relationships if you are blinded by such darkness?

If you have lost your way due to harboring hatred or bitterness in your heart, what is the pathway back to living in the light and life of Jesus Christ?

Core Truths Discovering Biblical truth

In your own words, share at least one core truth God has shown you in this week's study and why it is timely or significant for you.

Practice Makes Progress Putting knowledge into practice

What action is the Lord prompting you to take this week as a result of being in His Word?

Worth Memorizing

Scripture: ⁹ Whoever says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in darkness. ¹⁰ Whoever loves his brother abides in the light, and in him there is no cause for stumbling. (1 John 2:9-10)

Prayer Time

How can your Life Group pray for you this week?

Praise Time

How has God blessed you and answered prayer this week?