



CAPITOL COMMISSION

Marks of the Genuine 1 John 2:6-11

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John is laying the foundation for determining if someone is a genuine believer. That this need would come to pass was made evident by Jesus during the close of His Sermon on the Mount when he said, “*Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.*”²² *On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’*²³ *And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'* (Mat 7:21-23 ESV).

John is penning this epistle because the major group has experienced the stress and havoc as a result of just such a group of people; they *professed* The Faith without *possessing* The Faith.

In chapter 1 John establishes what one must believe to be genuine. This is the doctrinal basis or test. There are two doctrines: the Deity of Jesus and the Depravity of mankind. John covers the Deity of Jesus in verses 1-4 and the Depravity of mankind in verses 7-10.

John then transitions to the Moral test of genuine belief in verses 7-11.

Verse 7: An Old Message

Beloved, I am writing you no new commandment, but an old commandment that you had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word that you have heard. (1Jo 2:7 ESV)

The beginning John refers to is quite probably the beginning of their faith commitment and not the beginning of the world. They had been acquainted with and/or instructed in the Decalogue and would have been familiar with Deuteronomy 6:4, 5 “*Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.*”⁵ *You*

shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. They would also be familiar with Leviticus 19:18 *You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.*

The command to love God and neighbor represent both tables of the Law. Table one represents Love to God and Table two love for one’s neighbor. If one loves one’s neighbor, one will not murder, one will not steal, one will not commit adultery, and one will not bear false witness. This is the content of the old message with which they were familiar.

Verse 8: A New Meaning

At the same time, it is a new commandment that I am writing to you, which is true in him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining. (1Jo 2:8 ESV)

John isn’t introducing a contradiction as it is unfolded in the little phrase which is true in him and in you.

Jesus brought to light, brought into stark clarity, the potential of love shed in the heart by God the Spirit and possible to the one who progresses in the faith. We see it illustrated by the Lord Jesus the last evening he was with the twelve.

They are in the Upper Room for the Passover celebration. John’s gospel tells us Jesus knew exactly what was to transpire shortly (John 13:1-3).

He knew what was in the mind of Judas who was to betray him with a few hours.

He knew what was in the minds of James and John, especially as just previously they had been vying for

BIBLE STUDIES

LEGISLATORS, STAFF, LOBBYISTS: THURS..AT 1215-1245 HOURS-LOCATION 2ND FLOOR SENATE CONF. ROOM

Delaware

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seats on either side of Jesus when he came into his kingdom.

The other disciples were just as ambitious as manifested by their response when they learned of the request.

It is in this context Jesus assumes the role of the lowliest of servants, a service not one of the twelve thought to perform. In fact, culturally, it was the lowest form of service, much as the individuals who collect human waste for fertilizer in Japan. Jesus rises from the meal to assume this role, clothes himself with a towel and proceeds to wash their feet. We know it is mind-blowing as we read of Peter's response.

It is in this context Jesus declares the new meaning of Love when he says, "*A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.*"³⁵ *By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.*" (John 13:34, 35)

As in verse 8 of chapter 2, the word "new" is *καινήν* in the Greek signifying new in essence or quality. In John 13:34, the new is *καινήν*.

So, the Moral test for a believer is that of Love, and love of a new essence. Love for God and love for one's neighbor motivated by this new essence.

Bottom line:

The genuine believer will manifest two distinct aspects: 1) Correct doctrine as to Christ and Mankind and, 2) A manifest love for God and for one's neighbor.

Love Illustrated

Verse 9

Whoever says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in darkness.

In chapter 1 verse 5, John said God is light and in him is no darkness. In this context then, one who hates his brother cannot be "in God" on the side of God, etc.

In this epistle, while not explicitly declaring the case, John is illustrating the contrast between Christianity as a philosophy of life and that of non-Christian philosophies. Christian philosophy is anchored in, grounded by a system of morality. The system doesn't have to simply "think right", it has to live right.

Verse 10

Whoever loves his brother abides in the light, and in him there is no cause for stumbling.

In this context the word "abide" suggests a settled disposition, a lifestyle and one, by definition is "in God". It is a lifestyle that isn't characterized by habitual sinning, not conducive to prompting sin in others. Finally:

Verse 11

But whoever 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.

John concludes his illustration denoting the habitualness of the one "not in the faith". His/her hatred of the other is of a continuing nature, his/her walking in this lifestyle is of a continuing nature and the reason of because of their spiritual blindness.

Review: Marks of a genuine believer

Doctrine/Belief

Duty/Behavior