



CAPITOL COMMISSION

The Wave Of The Future

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Wave of the future: an idea, product, or movement that is viewed as representing forces or a trend that will inevitably prevail¹. a trend or development that may influence or become a significant part of the future²

3By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments. 4The one who says, "I have come to know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; 5but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected By this we know that we are in Him: 6the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked. 7Beloved, 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. 8On 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. 9The one who says he is in the Light and yet hates his brother is in the darkness until now. 10The one who loves his brother abides in the Light and there is no cause for stumbling in him. 11But 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.

“...BECAUSE THE DARKNESS IS PASSING AND THE TRUE LIGHT IS SHINING...” 1 John 2:8b

The advent of the Lord Jesus and His finished work ushered in a whole new era. It didn't come as a thunder clap or blinding light. Instead, it was a seed planted in the ground.³ In one of His kingdom parables, Jesus likened the kingdom growth to the process of a seed being sown in a field and then elaborated on the stages of growth.⁴ He also likened the growth to that of a mustard seed: it starts small and grows exceeding large.

The “seed” fell into the ground on a specific day in AD 30 and three days later “sprouted”. Since that day, the kingdom has been growing by fits and starts.

But, first: in a previous session we gave thought to what John meant by “light”. We concluded ‘LIGHT’ was a metaphor for Truth and Understanding. What does John mean by “Darkness”. If darkness and light are in opposition, darkness stands for that which is not true and/or a mis- or incomplete understanding

What, in John's lifetime was passing away at the time of his writing?

It certainly wasn't Gnosticism. It was just beginning and the same goes for Docetism. Judaism continued and at John's writing was an aggressive opponent of Christianity. Might John be referring to the Old Covenant? We learn from the epistle To The Hebrews the Old Covenant was but a shadow of reality, and that it was, at

its writing “passing away”⁵. The New Covenant having been instituted by the Lord Jesus on his last night with the Twelve was then coming into its full establishment.⁶

I would like to suggest The New Covenant is the wave of the future. It is what Thomas Chalmers called “the expulsive power of a new affection”.⁷

John begins in this segment to speak of “knowing” and “doing”.

By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments. 1 John 2:3

KNOWING

Two times in this one verse John mentions **knowing**.

The Greek way of knowing took two routes: Rationalism and Mysticism. They knew by reason alone, objective and intellectual, or by experience, subjective and mystical. In stark contrast stood the biblical way of knowing, Revelation informing reasons.⁸

Unaided human reason will never be able to know what Francis Shaeffer called “**True Truth**”⁹ Natural man's thinking is stained by Adam's sin (theologically referred to as the *noetic effect* of sin). Zophar intuitively knew this long ago!¹⁰ This same impact of Sin distorts man's subjective experiences making it impossible for me to **truly** know. All man can arrive at is useful opinion. He is forever correcting his “truths”. (I recall memorizing the table of periodic elements back in the early 50s which, at that time was in the low 90s).

In contrast, John informs his readers that they can “know that they know” (verse 3). And in light of Jesus' work, John says this assurance will come by virtue of obeying Jesus' commands. Jesus began to signal a coming change during his Sermon on the Mount when he contrasted his teaching with that of Moses and the religious leaders.

Under the Lord Jesus, the standards are elevated, and this is what I am seeking to capture in today's study title; The Wave of the Future.

John tells in verse 4 how to discern the false from the true...those who are not keeping Christ's commands are not “walking in the light” regardless of what they say.

In stark contrast, those who are walking in the Light find themselves growing in their maturity within the Household of The Faith.

State

THE WAVE OF THE FUTURE

This is not to suggest a believer can see into the mind/heart of the one making the assertion as to being a member of the Household of the Faith. Only God knows the heart!¹¹ But we are obligated to serve one another by holding one another to the standards Jesus set.

One's assurance grows and deepens as one walks in the light.

John then informs us we are to be "imitators of Christ", just as Paul had informed the Corinthians in his epistle to them.¹²

DOING

Verses 5 & 6 begin to anchor one's assurance in **doing** as well declaring that followers of Jesus are to be imitators of Jesus... *but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him: the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.*

Not only does our assurance of salvation grow, but as John says our love of God correspondingly matures.

John begins the segment from verse 7-11 speaking of Love. He speaks of the new commandment and then of the old. This idea of loving "the other" was not new to the Hebrew experience. They had been commanded under the Old Covenant to "...love their neighbor..." (Leviticus 19:18) with the graphic example of returning your enemy's straying animal if you should happen to come upon it.¹³ Jesus himself had demonstrated this command in the story of The Good Samaritan.¹⁴

What seems to be new is the example set by Jesus during his three years with the Twelve. In the record we have a few examples of the degree to which he went to serve them: from washing their feet¹⁵, to calming their panic¹⁶, to denying an ambitious request¹⁷, to rebuking them when in error¹⁸. All of these appear to be manifestations of love.

So we begin to see the "old" is incorporated/enfolded within the "new" but in a manner not quite like the Old. Under the Old, specifics were stated. Under the New they are not.

Under the New we are instructed/taught that Theology drives Ethics. (Is this not the very pattern of the Apostle Paul in his didactic epistles: Romans; Ephesians; Colossians?) Correct Knowing leads to correct Doing.

Which presses us to consider constructing a definition of Love.

We have Paul's admonition in 1 Corinthians 10:24 (*Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth*).

We have Paul's admonition to the Philippians 2:3, 4 (*Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory. But in lowliness of mind let each esteem another better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.*)

Finally, we have Paul's summation in his first epistle to Corinth in chapter 13. (*If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing. Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away.*)

With that amount of input, how would you define Love?

Your assignment for next week is to give thought to a biblically oriented working definition of love and bring it to the study

¹ <http://mw1.m-w.com/dictionary/the%20future>

² <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/wave+of+the+future>

³ John 12:24

⁴ Mark 4:26-29

⁵ Hebrews 8:13

⁶ Hebrews 12:24-28

⁷ <http://www.monergism.com/Chalmers,%20Thomas%20-%20The%20Expulsive%20Power%20of%20a%20New%20Af.pdf>

⁸ Proverbs 3:5, 6

⁹ Francis A Shaeffer, *Escape From Reason* (IVP, 1968) page

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¹⁰ Job 11:7

¹¹ 1 Sam. 16:7

¹² 1 Corinthians 11:1

¹³ Exodus 23:4, 5

¹⁴ Luke 10:30-36

¹⁵ John 13:1-5

¹⁶ Mark 4:39

¹⁷ Matthew 20:21-24

¹⁸ Matthew 16:23