

DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

Our Mission: Reaching Out to Leaders Who Can Change the World.

May 2016

True Christianity

INTRODUCTION

What are some practical ways to express love to someone that is hard to love?

OBSERVATION/INTERPRETATION

Read 1 John 2:7-14

Note: The NASB starts verse 7 with the term “beloved” - a term of endearment. In one word, John is pointing out that his readers are recipients of both his love and divine love. From this first word, John draws attention to the theme of love. This term of love is not some strange new gospel teaching. ¹ In his earthly ministry Jesus initiated this kingdom through his submission and perfect obedience to the will of the Father. In his death and resurrection, the power of sin and death was broken and the kingdom was inaugurated. The transformed lives of his followers provide infallible evidence for this victory. The battle, however, is not over. Despite the fact that the victory over darkness has been secured, the complete eradication of evil and the end of the old age will not occur until the consummation of all things. This passage describes the inaugurated eschatology that is in one sense already realized, but not yet completed. ²⁰⁶ ² “Just as Christ reveals the truth of God and champions God’s cause, so is the evil one the representative of all that is opposed to God.” ²³⁶ “The evil one” has been defeated by Jesus Christ by victory over death and sin. ²³⁷ As a result, when someone is born of God, Jesus Christ secures victory over death for that person. ³ The terms “children, fathers and young men” probably refers to believers with different levels of spiritual maturity. It may also represent how long they have been believers.

1. Why should Christians love fellow Christians? **John 13:34**
2. Why is this not one more ethical restriction placed on new believers? **Lev 19:18**
3. What is Biblical love? **John 13:34-5; Phil 2:1-8; 1 Jn 3:17; 2 John 5-6; Rom 13:8-10; 1 Cor 13**
4. John appears to give a contradictory statement - that love is not new, then that it is. (Vv 7-8)
What makes it new? **Jn 13:1; Eph 5:2; 2 Cor 5:17**
5. If Christ (the true light) has already overcome the darkness, why are we still dealing with evil? Vs 8
6. Walking in the light is living out the life of God. Only “regenerated” people can do that. Why would a true believer walking in the light *not* be able to hate his brother? Vs 9; **Jn 3:19**
7. Why are Christians less likely to stumble in darkness than non-Christians? Vv 9-10
8. How does unethical behavior contradict one’s claim to be a Christian? Vs 11
9. Why is Jesus’ name significant? Vs 12; **John 20:30-31; 1 Jn 2:2**
10. How does verse 13 (forgiveness of sins and knowledge of the Father) show a fulfillment of the prophecy expressed in **Jeremiah 31:31-34**? (and continuity between the Old and New Testament)
11. Why (& how) are young men (believers) strong? Vs 14; **Deut 31:6; Josh 1:7; 1 Jn 5:4**

APPLICATION

How can you make love a natural way of your life?

¹ Kress, E. E. (2002). *Notes for the Study and Exposition of 1st John* (48). The Woodlands, TX: Kress Christian Publications.

²⁰⁶ Bruce, *The Epistles of John*, 54; Smalley, *1, 2, 3 John*, 58; Schnackenburg, *The Johannine Epistles*, 106; Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, 612-13; D. Guthrie, *New Testament Theology* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1981), 798-801.

² ³ Akin, D. L. (2001). *Vol. 38: 1, 2, 3 John* (electronic ed.). Logos Library System; The New American Commentary (97). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

²³⁶ Schnackenburg, *The Johannine Epistles*, 117.

²³⁷ See now J. E. Bruns, “A Note on John 16.33 and 1 John 2.13-14,” *JBL* (1967): 451-53.