

The First Epistle of John

(Week 42 – 1John 4:7-11)

I. Final points regarding false teachers

A. 2John 1:9 (ESV), “*Everyone who goes on ahead and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God. Whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son*”

1. **Question: According to this passage, what do false teachers do?**
 - a. They “*go on ahead*” and do not abide in the teaching of Christ, that is, they “*run ahead*” and do not stick to the revealed teachings of Jesus.
 - b. KJV says “*transgresseth*” – to transgress means to violate a command.
2. A false teacher sees himself as an “advanced” thinker.
 - a. He gives an appearance of wisdom when the reality is he is going beyond what is clearly written in the New Testament.
 - b. Those who do not abide in the teaching of Christ have actually “advanced” themselves right out of Christianity!
 - i. This is why we must be very careful what books we choose to read outside the Scriptures.
 - c. Be careful when others tell you that they discovered “new truths!”
 - i. There are no “new truths” other than what the NT writers have taught 2000 years ago!
 - d. **Question: Give some modern examples of 2John 1:9?**
 - i. Avoiding the doctrine of sin, hell, judgment.
 - ii. Labeling some of God’s commands as “cultural” or “traditional”
 1. Such labeling causes people to view some of God’s commands as being something that only applied back in the first century (for example, the role of women, cf. 1Corinthians 14:33-38).
 2. Calling something a “tradition” implies that it could be broken and/or it is a command of men (see Matthew 15:1-3).

II. John re-emphasizes the topic of love

A. 1John 4:7-8 (ESV), “*Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸ Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.*”

1. In the previous classes, we spent a lot of time on what love is and what love is not. You may want to review the past notes that deal with love.
2. Those who are truly born of God are known by their love (agape).
3. Agape love is of divine nature; it is unknown to the world.
4. “*...God is love!*”
 - a. **Question: How is this powerful and glorious statement misunderstood?**
 - i. Some misunderstand this to mean that God is tolerant towards -- or overlooks -- sin.
 - ii. Some misunderstand this to mean that since God is love, He could not condemn souls to an eternal hell.
 - b. The fact that God is love doesn’t negate the fact God is also light (in other words, He is holy) – 1John 1:5

- c. The fact that God is love doesn't negate the fact that God is righteous (in other words, He is just) – 1John 2:29
 - d. And being that He is a holy and just God, His wrath remains on the unrepentant sinner (John 3:36).
 - i. God is “a consuming fire” (Hebrews 12:29).
 - 1. He will punish unrepentant sinners.
 - e. So how is God a loving God?
 - i. The answer is found in verses 9-10...
 - 1. 1John 3:9-10 (ESV), *“In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. ¹⁰In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”*
 - 2. The fact that Jesus died for our sins demonstrates God's love (cf. John 3:16).
 - 3. The cross also shows God's holiness and righteousness:
 - Sin angers God
 - God punishes sin.
5. Some think speaking the truth is “unloving”
- a. John just warned the true Christian of the false teachers
 - b. God's wrath is against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth (Romans 1:18).
 - i. Who are those who suppress the truth?
 - 1. A false teacher suppresses the truth, like the Gnostics (cf. 1John 4:1-6).
 - ii. It is a false notion to assume that a loving God excuses false teachings.
 - iii. Love does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but it rejoices with the truth! (1Cor. 13:6)
 - c. Would a doctor be called “loving” if he were to give lots of hugs to a cancer patient, never warning the patient of his serious condition?
 - d. God is love because He warns the sinner of his serious condition and provides a way out: That way is called the gospel of Jesus Christ!
- B. 1John 4:7-11 (ESV), *“Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.”*
- 1. Since God demonstrated His love by sending His Son to be the propitiation for our sins, that very love ought to cause us to love Him and one another.
 - a. Jesus' disciples are known by their love (John 13:34-35)
 - b. It is God's love that constrains, compels, controls us (2Cor. 5:14).