

1 JOHN 2:7-14

The Bible provides us with consistent authority and guidance in our lives. While the world opinions (and our minds) change constantly, God's Word stays perfectly the same. It is reliable, trustworthy, and relevant to the situations we face today. The Bible may not answer every detailed question we ask, but it always gets to the heart of every question: Who am I? How should I live? What is next? How should I treat others?

In this letter, John lays out a very straight forward argument that the way we please God and know that we have a deep relationship with him is through the way we love and care for each other.

"7Beloved, 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. 8At 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. 9Whoever says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in darkness. 10Whoever loves his brother abides in the light, and in him there is no cause for stumbling. 11But 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. 12I am writing to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven for his name's sake. 13I am writing to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. I write to you, children, because you know the Father. 14I write to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one."

God calls us to love each other like family, because He has saved us into his family. Family is messy at times, but there is a call for us to sacrificially love (agape) one another in a way that changes both us and them. The reward of loving each other is drawing near to God (abiding in the light) and have a clear conscience and reputation (no cause for stumbling). The warning comes from hating one another, which stems from hating one another (racism, elitism, rivalries) and hurting one another (words, actions, injustice).

And we have the reminder that God has saved us to do this very thing. In our own strength? No shot. But because God has already forgiven, saved us, and adopted us, we can do the same thing to others!

Study Questions (30 min)

- Take a moment to read the passage. What did you observe about the commandments God gives us?
- What does it practically look like to hate one another?
- What does it practically look like to love one another?
- Based off our discussion, what do we want to do with this as a group?

D&A (20 min)

- How is your time with God going?
- What are you praying about currently?
- What is something you are struggling through (sin or hurt)?