

Wednesday Night Yard Teaching Guide: 1 John 2:7–17

[7] 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. [8] 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. [9] Whoever says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in darkness. [10] Whoever loves his brother abides in the light, and in him there is no cause for stumbling. [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.

*[12] I am writing to you, little children,
because your sins are forgiven for his name's sake.*

*[13] I 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.*

*[14] I 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.*

[15] Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. [16] For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. [17] And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever. (ESV)

Main Idea

Jesus has changed the world, and those who belong to him will assuredly receive all the benefits of his changing the world.

Outline

- I. Jesus has changed the world (vv. 7–11, 15–17)
 - A. “The darkness is passing away” (v. 8) and “the world is passing away” (v. 17). Jesus has brought an end to Satan’s dominion.
 - B. This is taught elsewhere in the NT, such as Colossians 1:13–14.
 - C. Jesus has defeated Satan. Satan’s grip on the world no longer holds. However, Jesus’ reign hasn’t come in full – it is steadily growing.
 - D. If Jesus has changed the world, and those who believe in him belong to the new world, are we living in a manner consistent with that new world?
 1. Vv. 7–11: those who are in the darkness hate the brothers. Those who are in the light love the brothers.
 2. Vv. 15–17: those who love the world are in bondage to the desires of the flesh, the desires of the eyes, and the pride of life. Those who love the Father do the will of God.
 3. *What do you love?* is the principal question here. We ought to love one another, just as Jesus has loved us (John 13:34–35).
 - E. John calls his readers “beloved.” They are beloved by God and beloved by John. In the same way, you are beloved of God, and those who teach you the word – me and your leaders – love you very much.
- II. We belong to Jesus, the world-changer (vv. 12–14)
 - A. The primary purpose of this section is *assurance* to those who believe in Christ.
 - B. “*Your sins are forgiven for his name’s sake.*” All of your wrongdoing has been put away; it was borne by Christ on the cross. You are forgiven.
 - C. “*You know him who is from the beginning.*” God, from whom we were separated due to sin, has called us, and we have come to know him in Christ – not merely to know about him, but to know him even as you know your friend.
 - D. “*You have overcome the evil one.*” Satan, whom we used to serve, has been defeated, and we have been liberated from his tyranny. Sin no longer has dominion over the Christian.
 - E. “*The word of God abides in you.*” This can mean both that God’s commandments abide in the Christian and that the Incarnate Word abides in the Christian. The Father and the Son have made their home with all those who love them (John 14:23).

Discussion Questions

1. What is wrong in the world and how do you want to change it? Where do you see sin and brokenness in the problem that you identified?
2. Does the fact that Jesus has changed the world matter for your everyday life? How might you live differently knowing that you live in a world that has been radically changed by Christ?
3. Jesus' kingdom has already come, but it also has not yet been fully consummated. What do you make of this tension? Does this knowledge help you to follow Jesus more faithfully?
4. Satan no longer has dominion over the world and those who belong to Jesus. How does this knowledge change how you think about your own sin? Does it encourage you as you seek to put away sin and become more like Jesus?
5. Are you living in a manner consistent with the new world?
 - a. Look at vv. 7–11. Apply John's statements about love to yourself. Do you love your brothers and sisters in Christ? How can you grow in such love?
 - b. Look at vv. 15–17. Apply John's statements about love to yourself. Do you love the Father? How does love for the Father motivate us to do his will?
6. John refers to his readers as "beloved." What does this mean? What does this mean for you? Is it reassuring?
7. Take a look at the assurances that John gives his readers about their standing in Christ. If you trust Christ for your salvation, these are for you! Meditate on each one and consider what it means for your life (and the lives of your brothers and sisters in Christ).