

Shalom AZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption



“Walk as He Walked”

Rabbi Cosmo Panzetta

Devotion and Discussion Questions

Key Texts (TLV): 1 John 2:7-11; 1 John 1:5-10; 2:1-6; Deut. 6:5; Lev. 19:18; Matt. 22:37-40; John 13:34; Luke 6:27-36; Rom. 13:12; 1 Cor. 13:4-7

“Loved ones, I am not writing a new commandment for you, but an old commandment—one you had from the beginning.” There are some things we know so well that we can unintentionally stop *hearing* them. We have heard, “Love God.” We have heard, “Love your neighbor.” We have heard, “Walk as Yeshua walked.” But sometimes the oldest truths become the easiest ones to treat like background noise. They become familiar, and because they are familiar, we assume they are settled in us. But the real question is not whether we know the command; the real question is whether the command is being formed in us.

John has already told us that God is light, and there is no darkness in Him. If we say we have fellowship with Him while walking in darkness, we are living a lie and not doing the truth. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves. But if we confess our sins—if we say the same word about our darkness that God says about it—He is faithful and righteous to forgive us and cleanse us from every not-right thing. Now John narrows the focus. What does walking in the light actually look like? It looks like love. Not sentimental words. Not religious claims. Not simply saying, “I love God.” Walking in the light is revealed in how we love our neighbor.

1. The Command Is Ancient: Love Has Always Been at the Heart of God’s Word

John begins with tenderness: *“Loved ones.”* This correction is not coming from irritation or contempt. It is flowing from love. John is writing to people who have received the love of God, people whose identity is wrapped up in being loved by Him. Before he calls them to love, he reminds them that they are loved. The command he gives is not meant to crush them; it is meant to call them back into alignment with the very heart of the Father.

John says, *“I am not writing a new commandment for you, but an old commandment—one you had from the beginning.”* This command is not novel. It is not a new religious idea. It is ancient because it is rooted in the eternal character of God Himself. The heart of the Torah and the Prophets has always been love for God and love for others. *“Love ADONAI your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength”* (Deut. 6:5). And again, *“... love your neighbor as yourself. I am ADONAI”* (Lev. 19:18). Yeshua confirmed that the entire Torah and Prophets hang on these two commandments: love God and love your neighbor. The problem with old messages is that they are easy to forget, or easy to repeat without obeying. So John brings the ancient command back before us: loved ones, love.

2. THE COMMAND IS RENEWED: LOVE HAS BEEN REVEALED FULLY IN YESHUA

John then says something that may sound like a contradiction: *“Yet I am writing a new commandment for you.”* It is old, and yet it is new. It is ancient, and yet it has been renewed. The command to love has always been there, but now it has been revealed in its fullest and clearest form in Yeshua. The old command is new again because love is no longer only commanded in words; love has been embodied in the Living Word. In Him, we see what love looks like when it walks among us.

Yeshua loved with humility, self-sacrifice, compassion, truth, and mercy. He loved the hurting and the broken. He loved those who misunderstood Him. He even loved His enemies. And when He corrected, His correction was still rooted in love, because His desire was not destruction but restoration. Yeshua said, *“I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, so also you must love one another”* (John 13:34). This is why John says the command is *“true in Him and in you, because the darkness is fading and the true light is already shining.”* The Light has come. The darkness is passing away. The night is almost gone, and the day is near. So the call is not merely to admire Yeshua’s love, but to let His love become true in us.

3. THE COMMAND REVEALS WHERE WE ARE WALKING: LOVE ABIDES IN THE LIGHT

John becomes very direct: *“The one who says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in the darkness.”* Hatred is not only the desire to destroy someone. It can also be contempt, rejection, exclusion, disdain, or dismissing someone as unworthy of care. We may say, “I do not hate them,” because we do not wish them harm, while still treating them with coldness, resentment, superiority, or indifference. John is not merely addressing extreme hostility; he is exposing a heart posture that cannot live comfortably in the light of God.

Then John gives the contrast: *“The one who loves his brother abides in the light, and in him there is no cause for stumbling.”* Love keeps us walking clearly. Hatred blinds us. Contempt disorients us. Bitterness makes us stumble around in the dark while still claiming to see. Yeshua calls us even higher than loving those who love us. He says, *“Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for the ones who mistreat you”* (Luke 6:27–28). If this is how Yeshua calls us to love our enemies, how much more must we bring our contempt, resentment, and bitterness toward brothers and sisters into the light? The question is not, “How little love can I show and still be obedient?” The question is, “How did Yeshua love me, and how is He teaching me to love like Him?”

CONCLUSION

The ancient command has been renewed in Yeshua: love one another. It is old because it has always been rooted in God’s character. It is new because it has now been displayed in Messiah with breathtaking clarity. We do not have to guess what love looks like. We look at Yeshua. We look at His humility, His compassion, His patience, His willingness to lay down His life, His mercy toward the guilty, and His prayer, “Father, forgive them,” even as He suffered.

So we bring our hearts into the light. Not just our obvious sins, but our hidden resentments. Not just our actions, but our attitudes. Not just what we say out loud, but what we quietly rehearse in our minds about others. Love is patient. Love is kind. Love keeps no account of wrong. Love does not rejoice over injustice but rejoices in the truth. This love is not natural; it is supernatural. It is the love of God being formed in us as we abide in the light and walk as Yeshua walked.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Why do you think John begins this section by calling his readers "*loved ones*" before giving them a serious correction?
2. How can an "old commandment" like loving others become easy to forget or treat like a cliché?
3. What does Yeshua's life reveal about the kind of love John is calling believers to walk in?
4. In modern life, what are some ways contempt, resentment, or exclusion can hide beneath the claim, "I don't hate them"?
5. Is there a relationship, attitude, or wound that you need to bring into the light so Yeshua can teach you to love more like Him?

CLOSING PRAYER:

Avinu, Our Father, thank You that You are light, and there is no darkness in You. Thank You that You do not call us into the light to shame us, but to cleanse us, restore us, and make us whole. Help us not to merely know the command to love, but to live it.

Spirit of God, empower us to walk as Yeshua walked. Show us where contempt, bitterness, resentment, or indifference have blinded our eyes. Give us the courage to bring those things into Your light. Renew Your ancient command in us, and let Your love become true in us. Make us patient, kind, humble, truthful, merciful, and faithful. May we love because You first loved us.

B'Shem Yeshua, In the name of Yeshua, amen.