

Discussion Questions: Love Indicators 1 John 2:1-11

Drawn from the September 17, 2023 sermon by Dr. Jeff Chandler

Opener: In what situations are you tempted to say one thing and do another?

These are indicators of an authentic Christian life

I. Living Obediently to God's Commands

My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. ² He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world. ³ We know that we have come to know him if we keep his commands. ⁴ Whoever says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person. ⁵ But if anyone obeys his word, love for God is truly made complete in them.

1 John 2:1-5 (NIV)

1. How would you describe your attitude toward God's commands? When do you find them burdensome? How have they been a source of guidance and blessing in your life?
2. Share an example of a time when obeying one of God's commands led to a positive change or growth in your life.
3. How does knowing that Jesus is your Advocate and atoning sacrifice for your sin change the way you live on a day-to-day basis?

5 Living the Jesus Standard

This is how we know we are in him: ⁶ Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did. 1 John 2:6 (NIV)

4. Reflect on your daily life and actions. Do you believe your life reflects the "walk and talk" of Jesus? In what ways are you aligning your life with His example?

6 Living the Love Quotient

⁷ Dear friends, I am not writing you a new command but an old one, which you have had since the beginning. This old command is the message you have heard. ⁸ Yet I am writing you a new command; its truth is seen in him and in you, because the darkness is passing and the true light is already shining. 1 John 2:7-8 (NIV)

5. How can the command to love God and others be old and new at the same time?

6. How did Jesus live out this old/new commandment?

7. When people encounter you, do you think they perceive love in your actions and interactions? Share examples of moments when you believe your love for others was evident.

⁹ Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates a brother or sister is still in the darkness. ¹⁰ Anyone who loves their brother and sister lives in the light, and there is nothing in them to make them stumble. ¹¹ But anyone who hates a brother or sister is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness. They do not know where they are going, because the darkness has blinded them. 1 John 2:9-11 (NIV)

8. How should we respond when we find ourselves in deep disagreement with someone else in the church?

9. Reflect on your life before receiving Christ and your life after. Are there noticeable differences in how you express love and treat others? How has your relationship with Jesus impacted your capacity to love?

Group Prayer Time: This section talks about the making God's love complete by living a life of love and relying on the forgiveness of Christ. Pray for one another that you would continue to be open to God's work in your lives, and work to bring reconciliation to troubled relationships. Also pray for any needs people are facing in the group.

For Personal Reflection on your own:

Who are you mad at right now? Is anyone you know mad at you?

How has one of your relationships changed for the better by applying God's commands?

The Background of 1 John

The Apostle John is historically credited with writing the Gospel of John in about A.D. 90 and his three letters soon after. He wrote in the City of Ephesus a few years before being exiled to the Island of Patmos, where he would pen the apocalyptic book of Revelation. John had helped start several churches in Asia Minor, and his pastoral letters were addressed to congregations which were now experiencing a crisis of faith.

False teachers had come in and confused the churches, and in response John wrote letters which help to anchor them (and generations of Christians to follow) in the essentials of the faith. He gets right to the core of what it means to live as children of God. John's invitation is to walk in love. Our spiritual confidence, hope, power to overcome, forgiveness of sin, and direction in life all begin and end with the love of God, and our love for one another.

John provides a series of tests for distinguishing between genuine Christians and those who falsely claim to know Jesus Christ. There is the doctrinal test: What does this person believe about Jesus? There is the moral test: How does this person respond to his commandments? Finally, there is the social test: Does this person love others?

In this series "Love, More than a Feeling" Pastor Jeff will be taking us through several ways to apply John's focus on God's love in our lives:

September 10: The Foundations of Love (1 John 1)

September 17: Love Indicators (1 John 2:1-11)

September 24: Impediment to Love (1 John 2:15-17)

October 1: Love in Action (1 John 3:11-24)

October 8: Love is the Theme (1 John 4:7-16)

October 15: Love to Change the World (1 John 5)