

1 John Lesson 27-FAQ

July 16, 2025

1. What are the two primary moral/spiritual tests of salvation according to the teaching?

The two primary moral or spiritual tests of salvation, as discussed in the lesson, are obedience and love. Obedience involves "keeping His commandments," while love is considered the "supreme test" and the "greatest commandment," encompassing the fulfillment of all other commandments, particularly those related to human relationships. The passage from 1 John emphasizes that both are essential indicators of a transformed life in Christ.

2. How is love presented as both an "old commandment" and a "new commandment" in the scripture?

Love is presented as an "old commandment" because it has been known "from the beginning," dating back to the Old Testament, such as in Leviticus 19:18 ("You shall love your neighbor as yourself") and embedded within the Ten Commandments (Decalogue). This understanding was foundational for Jewish believers and was part of the original apostolic doctrine taught to new Christians.

It is considered a "new commandment" not in terms of its chronological existence, but in its "quality," "essence," and "character." The newness is found in its perfect manifestation through Jesus Christ. His life and death on the cross provide the ultimate example of perfect love, which was never fully understood or demonstrated before His coming. This "newness" also implies a fresh understanding and application of love by believers, true "in Him and in you."

3. What does the passage suggest about the relationship between love and obedience to God's commandments?

The passage strongly links love and obedience, often combining them as intertwined aspects of a Christian's life. It posits that if one truly loves God and others, they will naturally strive to obey God's commandments. Love is described as the "fulfillment of the law" (Romans 13:8-10), meaning that if love guides one's actions, they will not commit acts like adultery, murder, stealing, or coveting. The lesson argues that acts of immorality and societal breakdown stem from an "absence of love." Therefore, genuine love leads to a life marked by obedience.

4. How does the speaker contrast the teachings of John with worldly philosophies?

The speaker contrasts John's teachings with worldly philosophies by highlighting that philosophies are "always inventing something new" and lack any "attachment to morality" or connection to how people truly live. Philosophers often seek their "own worldly wisdom," refuse to see the world through "God's eyes," and are unwilling to "give up their sin." In contrast, John's message emphasizes that Christianity is not about believing whatever one desires; rather, it demands a regenerated life marked by obedience to God and love for other Christians, challenging the notion that one can live an immoral life while claiming to be a moral person.

5. What is the significance of the phrase "the true light is already shining" in understanding the newness of the commandment?

The phrase "the true light is already shining" (1 John 2:8) is crucial because it signifies the advent of Jesus Christ as the perfect manifestation of love. This "true light" personifies the love that was previously commanded but never perfectly exemplified. Jesus' life and sacrifice provide an unparalleled standard and understanding of love, making the "old commandment" qualitatively "new" through His perfect demonstration. It implies that believers now have a living, perfect example to follow, enabling a deeper comprehension and application of love.

6. Why does the speaker emphasize the "cost" of being a Christian in the historical context of the New Testament church?

The speaker emphasizes the "cost" of being a Christian in the New Testament era because becoming a Christian at that time brought significant life changes and often led to persecution. New believers needed to understand from the outset that their commitment involved a "call to obedience" to God's law and a "call to love other people." This understanding of the heavy cost was a fundamental part of the "apostolic doctrine" taught to early converts, preparing them for the narrow and challenging path of Christian life.

7. What critique does the speaker offer regarding modern evangelical churches and their teaching?

The speaker criticizes modern evangelical churches for not sufficiently emphasizing "obedience" and "life transformation." He argues that obedience is

often considered "legalistic" and avoided, with an overemphasis solely on "grace, grace, grace." This neglect, according to the speaker, leads to a failure to address the necessity of righteous living, obeying God's word, and loving other Christians, thereby "cluttering up grace" with what some might label as "human effort." The speaker contends that this approach deviates from the comprehensive gospel taught by the apostles.

8. How does the lesson connect the concept of "love" to societal issues like crime and family breakdown?

The lesson directly connects the absence of love to societal issues, citing high crime rates, specifically "over 2,000 shootings in the city of Chicago" in the last 12 months, as an example. The speaker attributes these problems to a lack of love among people. He further links the disproportionate violence among specific demographics to the "absence of love" within families, specifically pointing to the lack of "black husbands in the home" as a root cause, suggesting that individuals only love themselves, leading to the breakdown of society in major cities.