

A Commandment from the Beginning

John wrote:

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 (**I John 2:7**; ESV).

And again:

Let what you heard from the beginning abide in you. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, then you too will abide in the Son and in the Father. And this is the promise that he made to us—eternal life (**I John 2:24-25**; ESV).

What is this message from the beginning? What is this all-encompassing instruction causing us to abide in God and grants us eternal life?

I John 3:11 says, “For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.” **I John 3:23-24** says:

And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. Whoever keeps his commandments abides in him, and he in them.

We must have a submissive faith in Jesus Christ, which manifests itself in a loving relationship with each other. In fact, **I John 4:20-21** says:

If anyone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother (ESV).

How is this the commandment from the beginning? Because it was a commandment taught since Jesus established His covenant.

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (**John 13:34-35**; ESV).

Jesus explained the purpose behind all His commandments in **John 15:17**: “These things I command you, so that you will love one another” (ESV).

What I take away from this concerns me. I like to judge my relationship with God based on how often I make it to the assemblies, how much I put in the plate, how good my last sermon was. John explains I can actually judge my relationship with God by examining my relationship with His children. The fact is I deceive myself if I think my relationship with God exceeds my relationship with my brethren. I have to do some soul searching and relationship examination. What is my relationship with my brethren like and what does it say about my relationship with God? What does yours say?

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