

1 John 2:7-11

2/11/19

We all are interested in things that are 'the real deal.' I'm not sure exactly how each of us would define that, but it has to do with being authentic. That also implies that there are things that are not 'the real deal.'

This applies to those who claim to be Christians as well. In John's first letter he is instructing his readers, and us, how to tell 'the real deal' when it comes to Christianity. There were those who had left the faith, or more exactly demonstrated that they never really had authentic faith. In addition, there were those John was concerned might not be authentic in their faith who were still part of the churches to which he was writing.

In addition to the tests for genuine faith we have already considered previously, there is the test of loving our brothers and sisters. John says that if we say we are in the light, but hate our brother we prove our statement wrong. Remember as we discussed the idea of walking in light, it is walking in the piercing revelation of God's character and commands. It is following what He says about who He is and what is right and wrong.

He now says that hating our brother blinds us to truth. It causes us to not be able to see what really is. Lack of love blinds and binds us. Unforgiveness and bitterness kill relationships, and kill individuals. What I notice in my life is that when I am consumed with myself I have no capacity to love others.

The problem is, that I can't be consumed with myself and consumed with Jesus at the same time. Being consumed with Jesus causes me to properly love myself, which in turn causes me to love others like He does.

Again, this is difficult teaching because none of us does this perfectly. I guess the test of authenticity might be asking ourselves if there are those that we stubbornly refuse to love. If that is the case, then it continues to taint our perspective on nearly everything else and definitely blinds us to what God wants to do in us.

The real deal is never as prevalent as cheap copies, but the real deal is incredibly valuable and attractive, isn't it?

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- How is what John is writing about both a new commandment and an old commandment?

- How does hating our brother or sister shut out or blind us to God's light?

