



Contradictions, Conflicts, Complexities and Love | 1 John 2:1-11

May 4, 2025

By Pastor Tim Ghali

Group Leader Notes

Welcome to our second sermon of our new series, *Just Love: Living Out the Vision of 1 John*. Last week we discussed chapter 1 and focused on the idea of walking in the light of Jesus. We learned that when we live in the light of Jesus, we become empowered to love others in the same way that Jesus loves us. Today, we will discuss chapter 2, and what it looks like when we don't show that love to others.

Questions: How do we love others in the midst of contradictions, complexities and conflicts?

Bottom Line: We don't need more people that think like you and I do, we need more people to love like Jesus loves.

Memory Verse: 1 John 2:9

Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates a brother or sister is still in the darkness.

Take Home Message: We are people deeply loved by God and are called to love others.

Main Scripture Reading: 1 John 2:1-11

2 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^[a] is truly made complete in them. This is how we know we are in him: **6** Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did.

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.

9 Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates a brother or sister^[b] is still in the darkness. **10** Anyone who loves their brother and sister^[c] 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.

Group Discussion

Begin in prayer before reading and discussing the text.

1. Pastor Tim began the message with the idea of walking contradictions, sharing that although he loves coffee, he dislikes coffee breath. If you examine your own life, you could find some of your own personal contradictions. Give your group a few minutes to reflect and ask for volunteers to share their own personal contradictions.
2. One theme from today's message is to *begin with love*. How do you respond with love when someone cuts you off on the highway or sends you a nasty email?
 - What explicit steps or actions could you take to manage our anger or emotions and our instinct to retaliate? What does that look like for you?
3. The theologian NT Wright points out that the commandments are all summed up in one word: *LOVE*.
 - Take turns reading the following Scriptures:
 - 1 John 2:7
 - Deuteronomy 6:4-5
 - Leviticus 19:18
 - Mark 12:29-30
 - 1 John 2:8
 - John 13:34-35
 - How is Jesus' command to his disciples to *love one another* different than the greatest commandment(s) from the Torah?
4. Are there people in your life whom you dislike, disdain, or even hate? Are there people whom you resent or hold a grudge against? Ask for one or two volunteers to share how they were wronged and why they have not forgiven these people. You don't have to share names.
5. Hypocrisy is a common charge leveled against Christians by atheists as well as fellow Christ followers. Pastor Tim points out that obedience is less about knowing it, and more about showing it. Give some examples of hypocrisy that you have personally observed.
6. Pastor Tim shared a personal story of a friend who left the church because there were too many contradictions and too much hypocrisy. Do you know anyone like this? What was the specific event or trigger that led to their decision to leave the church?
7. The love of Jesus is just, sacrificial, and unconditional; in addition to praying for our hearts to grow in this love of Jesus, what practical things can we do to imitate Christ's love?

Let's Pray

Dear Lord, bless me with the courage to ask my brothers and sisters in Christ to point out my personal contradictions, and the humility to listen with an open heart. Help me to obey your commands and to remember that actions speak louder than words. When I am feeling disrespected, hurt, or angry, bless me with strength and patience to hit pause and to remember the amazing grace and forgiveness that you have shown to me. In my daily relationships, help me to model your love that is just, sacrificial, and unconditional. In Jesus' name, Amen.