

**SERMON: Walking with Jesus is Love for Christians shown by good works****GOOD Morning OIC & Welcome to Father's House**

Today, we continue the First Letter of John the Apostle. As is the whole Bible, it was inspired by Holy Spirit. In my previous messages from the First Letter by the Apostle John, I have attempted to bring out the meaning of John's instructions to Christians. This was to help them to do the will of God, by **Walking Close with Jesus**. I have summarized what John has said so far in this First Letter of John by four things:

1. **Walking in the Light and not sinning in Chapter 1- 2.2**
2. **Walking in Love and especially in loving fellow Christians in Chapter 2.2 – 2.14**
3. **Walking with Heart Holiness, a heart that desires God in Chapter 2.15-25**
4. **Walking with your Teacher the Holy Spirit in Chapter 2.26-3.9**  
and Today I add-
5. **Walking with Love for Christians must be shown by good works in Chapter 3.11-23**

Now the Apostle John reminds us about his previous teachings. These teachings have given the true Christians the instructions and confidence they need. In **(1 John 3.10)** he says: *10So now we can tell who are children of God and who are children of the devil. Anyone who does not live righteously and does not love other believers does not belong to God.*

**(1John 3.11)** *This is the message you have heard from the beginning: We should love one another. from the beginning--* John must have thought the words “*from the beginning*” to be three kinds of beginnings: 1) Jesus before Time Began, 2) Jesus coming to Earth, and even more personally, 3) since people and John saw Jesus in person. It was John who wrote most eloquently and poetically of the true Divinity of Jesus, the Word, in the Gospel of John, **(John 1.1-4)**:

*In the beginning the Word already existed.*

*The Word was with God,*

*and the Word was God.*

*He existed in the beginning with God.*

*God created everything through him,  
and nothing was created except through him.*

Before Jesus came to Earth, Mankind had no hope for any good beginning to also have a good or happy ending. Sin, Separation from God, and Death ruled all people, but for a few Chosen people in the land of Israel. John and many people in Israel, had seen and met Jesus, the *Word become flesh*. This was God in a human body. This was Mankind's and John's *beginning* on Earth. The personal *beginning* for John was his relationship with Jesus. Those who would not receive Jesus, never had that kind of *beginning*. John writes the Gospel of Jesus and his Letters proclaiming that Jesus is the Hope of Everlasting Life for all people who would receive Him, even to believe in His name. **John writes to give these people, Christians, the confidence which John had received directly from Jesus in person.** John was there at Jesus' Last Passover Supper before His Crucifixion on the Cross. That was when He, God in the flesh, gave this *New Commandment* in **(John 13.3)** *Dear children, I will be with you only a little longer. And as I told the Jewish leaders, you will search for me, but you can't come where I am going. 34 So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. 35 Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.*” Now John points back to that Last Supper and that proclamation by God in the Flesh in **(1John 3.11)** *This is the message you have heard from the beginning: We should love one another.* This beginning for these Christians was as John's, but not for all necessarily seeing Jesus. But this by a real personal relationship with Jesus by believing in His Name, and His teaching.

This is a more mighty message than that which came with fire that blazed when God wrote the Ten Commandments on stone tablets. **{The Ten Commandments are listed in (Exodus 20.1-17)}** This was about 1400B.C., that many years Before Christ came to Earth. God wrote these for Moses to give to the Jewish people to know right from wrong in God's eyes. As Moses told the Jews in **(Deuteronomy 9.15)** *So while the mountain was blazing with fire I turned and came down, holding in my hands the two stone tablets inscribed with the terms of the covenant.* A covenant, also called a testament, is an agreement between two parties, in this case God and the Jews. **{NOTE: These words describe the titles: the Older Testament, or Covenant, based on the Law; and for the Newer Testament or Covenant, based on the Blood of Jesus!}** But Jesus' *new commandment* is to proclaim, to prove or to show, the power of everlasting life bought for men by The *New Testament of Jesus' shed Blood*. Christians obeying this *new Commandment* prove and proclaim to the world that God's Love, God Himself, is alive only inside people who believe in Jesus....Christians.

John now uses the first murderer as an example in **(1 John 3.12)** *We must not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and killed his brother. And why did he kill him? Because Cain had been doing what was evil, and his brother had been doing what was righteous.* There are actually two points in this example of murder by Cain.

1) {Cain} *who belonged to the evil one.* John is still contrasting good with evil, the *Children of God* with the *Children of the devil* as in the above verse, **(1John 3.10)***So now we can tell who are children of God and who are children of the devil. Anyone who does not live righteously and does not love other believers does not belong to God.* Cain was the first child born to Adam and Eve at the *Beginning of Planet Earth History.* We read in **(Genesis 4.1)** *Now Adam had sexual relations with his wife, Eve, and she became pregnant. When she gave birth to **Cain**, she said, “With the Lord’s help, I have produced a man!” Later she gave birth to his brother and named him Abel.* John concluded that Cain *belonged to the evil one* by Cain's actions, even as John had instructed Christians to conclude the same regarding the *Antichrists* in churches.

2) ***And why did he kill him?*** – There is hateful jealousy by children of the devil towards those who do what is good. This is why Cain murdered his brother, Abel. ***And why did he kill him?*** *Because Cain had been doing what was evil, and his brother had been doing what was righteous.* We Christians, Children of God and not Children of the Devil, still have our old sinful nature inside of us. We will finally have complete victory and freedom from this when we leave this world. So we must be aware and prayerful for this same sin, missing the mark of God's Law, with a murderous “thought.” Christians walking close with Jesus may have a righteous lifestyle. But a passion of jealousy and hate can strike like lightning with a murderous thought against a brother or sister in Christ. We may be jealous of their Spiritual Gifts that appear greater than ours! Or, a Christian may have treated us cruelly and we react with thoughts of vengeance. Jesus' little brother, James, was speaking to Christians, warning them of this in **(James 4.2)** *You want what you don’t have, so you scheme and kill to get it. You are jealous of what others have, but you can’t get it, so you fight and wage war to take it away from them. Yet you don’t have what you want because you don’t ask God for it. 3 And even when you ask, you don’t get it because your motives are all wrong—you want only what will give you pleasure.* John, like James, knew that we Christians' old nature can make noise. Then, if we don't sense the Holy Spirit's check or warning, the noise will become sinful thinking in our heart. Outer actions against fellow Believers may result. Therefore, with God's Helper, Holy Spirit : **(1 John 3.12)** *We must not be like Cain.*

This fits into the next verse with **(1 John 3.13)** *So don't be surprised, dear brothers and sisters, if the world hates you. About 75% of Planet Earth are Children of the Devil. In Japan, about 99.5% of this nation are Children of the Devil. Hate may be hidden more here due to the *tatemai society training*, but dear OIC Saints, don't be surprised. The more they hate, the more God's Spirit will give us His love for them if we ask Him to.*

Reading **(1John 3.14)** *If we love our brothers and sisters who are believers, it proves that we have passed from death to life. But a person who has no love is still dead. A Christian with no love, cannot have Jesus inside them. Jesus, God's Seed, brings Love into the hearts of all who Believe. A "Christian with no love" is still spiritually dead, or a *false Christian*. John also in **(1 John 3.14)** says that Christians who **love their brothers and sisters who are believers have passed from death into life**. Remember, Jesus used this same expression of words in **(John 5.24)** : *"I tell you the truth, those who listen to my message and believe in God who sent me have eternal life. They will never be condemned for their sins, but they have already passed from death into life."**

Next, John writes in **(1 John 3.15)** *Anyone who hates another brother or sister is really a murderer at heart. And you know that murderers don't have eternal life within them.*

As I mentioned already, **"But a passion of jealousy and hate can strike like lightning with a murderous thought against a brother or sister in Christ."** James wrote, even a flash like lightning of hate from jealousy is unacceptable. Christians must have instant prayers when Holy Spirit shows hate in our heart to a fellow Christian. Even a fleeting thought must be dealt with by instant prayer. This should be an instant prayer, strong and more instant than Maxim instant Japanese Coffee, my friends. Holy Spirit will help us to do as it says in **(Romans 6.11)** *So you also should consider yourselves to be dead to the power of sin and alive to God through Christ Jesus.* Next we see that this English translation as most, for *Anyone who hates* is misleading. The Greek New Testament verb tenses clearly say: *Anyone who continues in hating another brother or sister is really a murderer at heart. And you know that murderers don't have eternal life within them.*

**Note that---** It is also important to note that hating non-Christians is also unacceptable to God. The Lord Jesus instructed us all in **(Matthew 5.44)** *But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you!* The Bible allows us Christians to hate only one being in the whole Universe, the Devil, even as our Lord Jesus does. We read this in **(Hebrews 1.8-9)** *8 But to the Son he says,*

*“Your throne, O God, endures forever and ever. You rule with a scepter of justice. <sup>9</sup>You love justice and **hate evil**. Therefore, O God, your God has anointed you, pouring out the oil of joy on you more than on anyone else.”*

**(1 John 3.16)** *We know what real love is because Jesus gave up his life for us. So we also ought to give up our lives for our brothers and sisters. Feelings of love, are wonderful. But, even so, real love is something you do! Jesus gave up his life for us. Now John points Christians to their responsibility to acts of love to one another, not just feelings and friendly talk: (v.16) So we also ought to give up our lives for our brothers and sisters. Jesus knows to what extent of time and sacrifice that we can do this. But, we must prayerfully check our priorities, especially with Christians having severe trials. Such a trial may be a financial one, as in (1 John 3.17) If someone has enough money to live well and sees a brother or sister in need but shows **no compassion**—how can God’s love be in that person?*

**no compassion** – God sees the need of the Christian in need, as well as the heart and the means or financial condition of the giver. Another of my favorite Christian Hymns says it clearly: *Little is much if God is in it!* But John has emphasized that, *If someone has enough money to live well, he has the burden or requirement to help out a struggling brother or sister in Christ.*

**(1 John 3.18)** *Dear children, let’s not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions. James also was inspired to write about being saved by faith and not works as an excuse to not act. In (James 2.18) we read: Now someone may argue, “Some people have faith; others have good deeds.” But I say, “How can you show me your faith if you don’t have good deeds? I will show you my faith by my good deeds.” This fits in with (1 John 3.18) Dear children, let’s not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions.*

**Reading (1 John 3.19):** *Our actions will show that we belong to the truth, so we will be confident when we stand before God. Pastor Bruce, you may ask, Is John referring to Christ's Return in (1 John 2.28)? Which reads: And now, dear children, remain in fellowship with Christ so that when he returns, you will be full of courage and not shrink back from him in shame. Well, any Christian acting miserly and without compassion to a fellow Christian should have cause for fear and shrinking back when Jesus returns. As in last week's Message, this might be under my “Causes for a Christian to Shrink Away” #1) Staying safe in an hostile world....is often based on making the main purpose in life to achieve financial strength on earth rather than placing treasures in Heaven. The Lord Jesus alerted us to this weakness in (Mark 8.36) And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul? This would prevent*

being *confident when we stand before God*. **This is confirmed or seems so by (1 John 3.19) Our actions will show that we belong to the truth, so we will be confident when we stand before God. So, my answer is Yes! ..... “ Our actions” or lack of any action, is a real reason to shrink back when we see Jesus.**

**GUILTY FEELINGS** – Some of the most compassionate Christians have a loving and sensitive feeling to others. These Believers show love to other Believers. But, they sometimes, are too sensitive to their own failings and lack of perfection. There can be no true “guilt” in God's eyes for a true Christian. True “guilt” in God's eyes can only be for Non-Christians. The Greek translation (NTG) is needed to bring out the real meaning of this emotional state in a Christian. **(1 John 3.19/NTG) And by this we will know that we are of the truth, and will set our consciences at rest in His presence.** A Christian's conscience may be creating “guilty feelings” that are against God's will. Many Christians who were not raised in a Christian Family may have a conscience poorly formed or twisted by parents' bad discipline, abuse, or simply their lack of knowing the Word of God. These may be loving parents, but only Christians have **the real power of GOD'S love** to give to their children. Jesus wants such Christians to be rid of all *false feelings from conscience* before He returns and they see Him face to face. This becomes more clear with **(1John 3.20/NTG) that if our conscience condemns us, God is greater than our conscience and knows all things.** The Greek translation gives a much more powerful help for mis-formed consciences in Christians. A healthy conscience puts up a red flag or a warning alarm inside us to keep us from sin. The Holy Spirit agrees and we sense Jesus' AMEN. For a true Christian, the phrase, “*if our conscience condemns us,*” is simply an **untruthful conscience** in God's sight. The Bible declares in **(Romans 8.1) So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. But a runaway or loud and mis-formed conscience of self-condemnation can hinder a Christians' walking close with Jesus. If you say, “That sounds like me, what can I do?”**

1. **Remember, and Memorize (1 John 3.20 / NTG or NASB, which is almost identical):**  
*God is greater than our conscience and knows all things.*
2. **Pray! Ask God to heal your conscience. Ask for His Holy Spirit to overpower your conscience so that it agrees more with God and His Holy Word.**
3. **Seek counsel. I suggest with your pastor, me. Call the OIC Office for an appointment. This is one reason why I am here.**  
**A great blessing from a clear conscience is in (1 John 3.21):** *Dear friends, if we don't feel guilty, we can come to God with bold confidence.*

**Bold confidence** – Any Christian who keeps coming to God *with bold confidence*, will be caused by the Spirit to also have more **courage**. God loves for His Dear Children to come to Him with bold confidence. I believe He would prefer an honest complaint to Him, expecting an answer, over Christians keeping complaints to themselves, or, only to other Christians. I love what Charles Haddon Spurgeon said to Christians about prayer: “A prayer should be like shooting up a silver arrow to God in Heaven.” Spurgeon's idea was that God knows your arrows are in love but like a warrior, you must have results! Again, this Christian who *Feels Guilty* will be hesitant for any bold prayers. That is why Christians who are Feeling Guilty must be healed as soon as possible, to **walk forward and close to Jesus...with courage in a world full of fears!**

**The promise for answered prayer is filled to overflowing in (1 John 3.22):** *And we will receive from Him whatever we ask because we obey Him and do the things that please Him.*

***because we obey Him and do the things that please Him.*** -John stated earlier in this Letter that obedience of Jesus' commandments is vital or important for our confidence that we are truly Christians. We see this in **(1 John 2.3)** *By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments.* Salvation is a gift and not from anything we Christians did, but simply believe in Jesus and His Sacrificial Death which took away our sins. But, after a Christian has been thus born-again, obedience is vital and part of a **Close Walk with Jesus**. Having that **Close Walk with Jesus** and having a clear conscience, sets Christians free to ask Big Things from our Big Omnipotent Father God in Jesus' righteous Name.

***receive from Him whatever we ask*** - **You may ask, I can receive everything I want, Pastor Bruce, because it says in (1John 3.22)** *And we will receive from Him whatever we ask.* When Christians walk close to Jesus, it is amazing that they often ask for the very things God the Father was waiting for them to ask! Still, our loving Father may say: **Yes, Wait, or No!** For we know that **“Father knows Best!”** But many time years later, we often realize that He was saying Wait..not No! A real relationship with God through Jesus means knowing He gives us personal answers to our prayers and that often means more than what we had asked for. Don't allow yourself to be satisfied until you hear an answer: **Yes, Wait, or No!** This is clear in **(Hebrews 11.6)** *And it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely { or diligently } seek him.* I could never understand Christians who simply say “I prayed about it” with no sense that God would act upon their prayer! Why Pray at all if you don't expect your Loving Father to answer you!

**Persistent prayer, is persevering prayer.** Christians who persevere in prayer, find an amazing thing happens. God increases their faith while they persevere before He answers many prayers. They receive more of God's power to keep **(Acts 14.22)**, *Continue in the Faith*. Maturing Christians persevere in persistent prayer. God is more interested in their everlasting safety in Christ to *keep the Faith*, than any temporary benefits on Earth. But, I am convinced, that as a Christian's faith grows, walking **Closer with Jesus**, there will be seasons of prayers answered as instantly and strong as that MAXIM instant Japanese coffee.

Next, and ending today's Message, in, **(1 John 3.23)** *And this is his {the Father's} commandment: We must believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as he {Jesus} commanded us.* John is an evangelistic as well as a pastoral writer. John wrote of Father God's answering Christians' prayers in the previous verse, **(1 John 3.22)**. Now, he adds the Evangel or proclamation of Jesus' Gospel here in **(1John 3.23a)**: *We must believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ. This is {Father's} commandment.* John wrote of God the Father's answers of obedient Christians' prayers in the previous verse, **(1 John 3.22)**. Next he connects obedience to the Son that must follow the obedience to the Father. That is **(1 John 3.23b)** *and love one another, just as he {Jesus} commanded us.* To be Christians at all, we all as sinners had to obey the Father's command *to Believe in Jesus, His Son.* Now, we can **obey the Son of God's commands** as well and **Walk with Jesus in Love for Christians which we show by good works. And, we can walk forward and close to Jesus, with confidence in Jesus, and with courage in a world full of fears!**

**Let Us Pray,**

## **REFERENCES**

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