

You Just Can't Do That

No. 288

Introduction.

I. Once two little girls spent the whole day fighting. That evening, as they prepared for bed, they were still mad at each other. As usual, they knelt beside their beds for prayers. The 8 year old prayed, "Dear God, Bless Daddy and Mommy, bless our cat and dog." Then she stopped. Her mother gently prodded, "Didn't you forget somebody?" She glared across the bed at her 6 year old sister and added, "And, oh yes, God bless my ex-sister." We are like when we fight and become angry with one another. We are like that when we refuse or fail to "love one another."

II. With this in mind, I would like to read one of the greatest passage ever written on love. (1 Jn. 4:7-5:3).

7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.

8 The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love. 9 By this the love of God was manifested in us,

that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. 10 In this is love, not

that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. 11 Beloved, if God

so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 12 No one has beheld God at any time; if we love one another,

God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us. 13 By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because

He has given us of His Spirit. 14 And we have beheld and bear witness that the Father has sent the Son to be the

Savior of the world. 15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. 16

And we have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who

abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. 17 By this, love is perfected with us, that we may have

confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world. 18 There is no fear in love; but

perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love. 19

We love, because He first loved us. 20 If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the

one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen. 21 And this

commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also. 1JO 5:1 Whoever

believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God; and whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him. 2 By

this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments. 3 For this is

the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.

II. In this passage John has many great things to say about love.

- A. He speaks of God's great love for man. (1 Jn. 4:10).
- B. He tells us that we are to love one another. (1 Jn. 4:11).
- C. He tells us that those who love one another know God and are born of God. (1 Jn. 4:7).
- D. He also tells us that we cannot love God if we do not love one another. (1 Jn. 4:20).

III. Paul once said. (Phil. 4:13).

A. This grand statement of Paul means that he and we can do great things through the power of Christ, but we misuse this verse if we use it to teach that we can do everything.

B. There are all sorts of things we cannot do.

- 1. We cannot find **a right way to do a wrong thing!**
- 2. We **cannot please God without faith.** (Heb. 11:6).
- 3. We cannot please God **without works of faith.** (Jas. 2:17).
- 4. We **cannot serve God and mammon** or anything else! (Matt. 6:24).
- 5. We **cannot go to heaven without Christ.** (Jn. 14:6).
- 6. **John adds one more thing to this list of impossible things.** (1 Jn. 4:20a).

C. **Some protest** this conclusion by saying, **"I can too!** I can love God and hate my brother. God is easy to love but my brother, well, that's another story."

D. **Most of us are the same way.** We find it rather easy to love God especially as we think about His great blessings. But loving most or all of our brothers is another thing. But John's statement is 100% accurate. We cannot love God if we not love our brother!

I. We Cannot Do the Greater if We Cannot Do the Lesser - God's word teaches we cannot do the greater if we cannot do the lesser.

A. This is a principle of life that is true in the **physical realm.**

- 1.. **God once asked the troubled Jeremiah,** "If you have run with footmen and they have tired you out, then how can you compete with horses?" (Jere.12:5). This was God's way of saying, "If you cannot the lesser, how can you do the greater?"
- 2. **I submit to you we cannot lift 200 pounds if we stagger under 50!** We cannot eat a cow if we stuff ourselves with a hamburger. We cannot run a mile if we cannot walk a block!

B. This principle of not being to do the greater if we cannot do the lesser is also **true in the spiritual realm.**

- 1. Jesus said. (Lk. 16:10).
- 2. Jesus also gave this reply to the lawyer. (Matt. 22:37-39).

- a. Jesus taught that love for God is the greatest commandment of all.
 - b. He taught loving neighbor is the second greatest commandment.
- C. John insists that if we do not keep the second greatest commandment that it is impossible for us to keep the greatest commandment. (1 Jn. 4:20).
- 1. It is much easier to love what is near.
 - 2. If we cannot love our brother who is near and who is made in the image of God, how can we possibly love God whom we have not seen.

II. We Cannot Separate Love Toward God from Love Toward Others - God's word teaches we cannot separate love toward God from love toward others. (1 Jn. 5:1).

A. John ties love of the Father inseparably to love of His children.

- 1. The meaning is that "to truly love the Father one has to also love His child!" True love of God always includes true love of His children!
- 2. You can't have one without the other!

B. In Matthew the 25th chapter we have a preview of the great judgment scene at the end of time. (Matt. 25:31- 46).

31 "But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. 32 "And all the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; 33 and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left. 34 "Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. 35 'For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; 36 naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.' 37 "Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You drink? 38 'And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? 39 'And when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' 40 "And the King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.' 41 "Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels; 42 for I was hungry, and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink; 43 I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you

did not visit Me.' 44 "Then they themselves also will answer, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?' 45 "Then He will answer them, saying, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.' 46 "And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

1. Jesus is very clear in this judgment preview.

2. Jesus showed that to love others was love to Him and to do good to Him.
3. He also showed that to neglect others was to neglect Him . (Matt. 25:45).
4. John declares we do love God if we hate and neglect His children. (1 Jn. 3:17).
5. We must always love all men, but especially God's family. (Gal. 6:9. 10).

C. **Lucian**, a non-Christian Greek writer who lived in the second century A.D.. He made this observation about Christians.

"It is incredible to see the fervor with which the people of that religion help each other in their wants. They spare nothing. Their first legislator [Jesus] has put it into their heads that they are brethren."

1. Lucian said that Christians had "put it into heads that they are brethren." They "spare nothing."
2. "Sparing nothing" is an indication of unconditional love. It is with this kind of love for God's children that we demonstrate our unconditional love for God.

III. **We Cannot Love God and Disobey Him** - God's word teaches we cannot love God and disobey Him. (1 Jn. 5:3).

- A. Loving others is not optional. Neither is keeping God's commandments
- B. It is mandated. It is commanded. It is required. It is essential.
- C. To refuse to keep God's commandments is indisputable evidence that one does not truly love God.
- D. You cannot call yourself **a good citizen and be a lawbreaker**. You cannot be a **good employee and ignore company policy**. You cannot be a **good soldier and disobey orders**. And you sure cannot love God and disobey Him! (1 Jn. 2:3-6).

Conclusion.

I. Brethren, we can separate **cream from milk**, we can separate **impurities from clean air**, we can separate **dross from gold**, but we cannot separate love toward God from love toward others and from keeping His commandments

II. **It is essential that we learn this lesson on love.**

- A. Learning this lesson will cause us to delight in God's word. (Psa. 119:16).
- B. Learning this lesson will completely change our lives. Once we learn this lesson we will not focus on,

“Bless me!” We will pray, “Lord, make me a blessing. Lord, help me bless and touch the lives of others.”

C. May each of us seek to bless someone today and every day. May each of us reach out to others with love remembering this is the kind of life that pleases God and shows indeed we are God’s children.

IV. We now urge those outside of Christ to come to the One who gave His life for us. Trust Jesus, turn from your sins, and be baptized for the remission of sins. Christ will bless you and make you a blessing. Come as we stand and sing.

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