

## Assurance of Salvation Part 101

Love for the "brothers":  
Our obligation to have this love

GOD

WE WILL START WITH...

**A**  
**Sovereignty / Responsibility**  
**Reminder**

PEOPLE

- Though our main focus is on things related to **human responsibility**...  
– (our actions, our choices, our obligations)

... this issue is like all other aspects of life:  
**God's sovereignty is also involved.**

.....

- God's sovereignty guarantees that those who love the "brothers" will be saved. The devil can't keep it from happening!  
– God also gives us the ability to have this love.

## TODAY – Three main issues

We will look at:

- 1) The command to love.
- 2) Our struggle to obey.
- 3) The offer of hope to those who lack it.

**- THE COMMAND -**  
Our obligation to have  
"love for the brothers"

>> Our goal: To ENCOURAGE <<

- To those who have this love:  
– Encourage them to have it more.
- To those don't have it:  
– Encourage them to change.

**YES, Love for the brothers is  
an OBLIGATION**

And this is his [God's] commandment: We must **believe** in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and **love one another**, just as he [Jesus] commanded us.

1 John 3:23 (NLT)

**ONE command;**  
**TWO parts.**

- **Trust** Jesus, and
  - **Love** each other (=the brothers).
- If you fail one of these parts, you've failed the whole command.

## Two more passages that show us our obligation:

Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, **love as brothers**, be compassionate and humble.

1 Peter 3:8 (NIV)

Show proper respect to everyone: **Love the brotherhood of believers**, fear God, honor the king.

1 Peter 2:17 (NIV)

- It's obviously a duty!

## We also need to: 1) Keep on having love, and 2) Grow in our love.

**Keep on loving each other as brothers.**

Hebrews 13:1 (NIV)

→ Keep on doing it!

Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that **you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart.**

1 Peter 1:22 (NIV)

→ You have this love.

→ But it needs to grow "deeper"!

## Now here's a SURPRISE! The command to love is BOTH old and new!

- It's OLD!

... we should **love one another**. This is **not a new commandment**, but one we had from the beginning.

2 John 1:5b (NLT)

- It's NEW!

So now I am giving you a **new commandment: Love each other**. Just as I have loved you, you should **love each other**.

John 13:34 (NLT)

## It's BOTH!

Dear friends, I am **not** writing a **new commandment**, for it is an **old** one you have always had, right from the beginning. This commandment—to love one another—is the same message you heard before.

Yet **it is also new**. This commandment is true in Christ and is true among you, because the darkness is disappearing and the true light is already shining.

1 John 2:7-8 (NLT)

- How does this work? 

## How is it OLD? (Reason #1)

When *John* said it, he was reaffirming what *Jesus* said 60 years previously... *so it's not new!*

**[JESUS]: Love each other.**

John 13:34 (NLT)

**[JOHN] ... love one another.**

2 John 1:5b (NLT)

- John added **nothing** to what Jesus said!

## How is it OLD? (Reason #2)

Jesus' *New* Testament statement is a reflection of an *Old* Testament obligation... *so it's not new!*

[You must] love your neighbor as yourself.  
I am the Lord.

Leviticus 19:18b (NLT)

- **THE PROBLEM:**

- The sinful heart is *unwilling* and *unable* to fulfill this obligation from a pure heart.
- The command is *external* to an unsaved person. It "shouts out" its obligation, but we don't want to hear it.

## How is it NEW?

Jesus brought us under a NEW covenant.  
– This was accomplished by his death and resurrection.

Everyone will know that you are *my disciples* because of your **love for each other.**

John 13:35 (GW)

- **THE SOLUTION:**
  - Under the New Covenant, the command becomes *internal*. God makes it the desire of the heart.
  - This covenant changed the significance of the command - especially for his disciples (the "brothers").

## NEW Covenant?

I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts.

I will be their God, and they will be my people.

Hebrews 8:10b (ISV)

- **God changes us**, by changing our hearts.
  - Therefore: the *desire* to love becomes internal.
- **We become willing** to learn God's ways and to follow him.
  - Therefore: the *desire* to love results in *action*.

## - OUR STRUGGLE - To "love our brothers"

- God's people **desire** to obey his commands.
  - *Including* the command to love one's "brother."
  - Because of the effects of the New Covenant.
- **Even so, we need God's help to do so.**
  - The sinful impulses of our *past life* still attack us.
  - It's a battle between the "**flesh**" (sinful nature, old habits, desires, etc.) and the **Spirit** (who now indwells us).

## The issue of "struggle vs. strength"

- We have:
  - **A struggle with sin\*** (because of the influence of our old ways),
    - yet also --
  - **Strength to resist** (because of the Spirit working in us).

This is illustrated in parts of  
Romans 7 & 8.

\*(This struggle exists *only* in this present life.)

## STRUGGLE

... but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members.

Romans 7:23 (NIV)

- In a follower of Jesus:
  - **The "law of sin"** controls the "flesh" (sinful nature and impulses, etc.).
  - **The "law of God"** controls the mind.

## STRENGTH

What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God--through Jesus Christ our Lord!

Romans 7:24-25a (NIV)

- **In this present life**, *we have power* to fight the "law of sin."
  - But it's *God's* power, not *ours!*
- **In eternity**, the battle will be over. Victory!

**THE TWO "SWORN ENEMIES"...**  
Fighting from two different vantage points.

So then, I myself in my **mind** am a slave to God's law,  
but in the **sinful nature** a slave to the law of sin.

Romans 7:25b (NIV)

- **The MIND** – Where the Spirit works.
- **"The FLESH"** (also translated as **"SINFUL NATURE"**) – Where sin works.

But we who are willing to **"FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT"**\* have **HOPE!**



**WE HAVE VICTORY... NO CONDEMNATION!**

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.

Romans 8:1-2 (NIV)

\*(1 Timothy 1:18; 6:12; 1 Timothy 4:7)

**- HOPE -**

**Confident anticipation of what is going to happen.**

(Based on the foundation of truth.)

**We who follow Jesus HAVE this hope.**

**&**

**We want to SHARE it with others.**

**We offer hope for the weak**

Those who are trying to follow Jesus.

- HOPE for those who are:
  - Aware of their **need to love** the brothers and who want to love them.
  - Aware also of their **weaknesses**.

**You can have hope, because:**

**Jesus understands!**

**Yes, Jesus understands!**

This High Priest of ours [= Jesus] understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the same temptations we do, yet he did not sin.

Hebrews 4:15 (NLT)

- **So keep on trying!**
  - If you stumble... get up & start again!

- **And keep your focus on Jesus!**

... keeping our eyes on Jesus, on whom our faith depends from start to finish.

Hebrews 12:2a (NLT)

**But make sure you are not a FAKE**

**Being "WEAK" vs. being "FAKE"**

- **Those who are weak**
  - They do want to love their brothers.
  - They will strive to grow in love for the brothers.
- **The fakes:**
  - They may want their consciences to "feel good" (though without any real interest in love for the brothers).
  - They won't strive to grow in love for the brothers.

## We offer HOPE for the spiritually dead/blind

Those who are NOT trying to follow Jesus.

- **They are in a terrible situation:**
  - Those who walk in darkness tend to be *blind* to their condition.
- **But it's not as though nobody warned them!**



### • **Here's the warning!**

But whoever **hates** his brother is in the **darkness** and walks around in the darkness; ...

1 John 2:11a (NIV)

### • **Here's the terrible situation!**

... he does not know where he is going, because the darkness has **blinded** him.

1 John 2:11 (NIV)

This is why so many unsaved church-goers think they are saved.



## But the situation is even worse than just being "blind" ...

- Not only is your **lack of love** PROOF that you are NOT saved...
- But Scripture also describes you as: evil, wicked, spiritually dead, ungodly, unrighteous - even a "**child of the devil**"

I'M NOT THAT BAD!

LET'S SEE WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS!

## You're one of the devil's children IF ...

This is how we know who the children of God are and who **the children of the devil** are:

Anyone who **does not do what is right** *is not a child of God*; nor is anyone who **does not love his brother**.

1 John 3:10 (NIV)

IF you *don't* love righteousness.

IF you *don't* love people who are righteous (= the brothers).

## But we offer you **hope!**

(IF you're willing to accept the offer.)

- 1) Admit that Scripture describes you accurately...

-- and --

- 2) Decide you want to change...

**THIS is the first step toward salvation!**

– Without this first step (and the others that follow), you **cannot** be saved!

# YOUR MISSION: "Love your brothers."

1) Pay attention to the command!

2) Offer hope to the weak and the blind/dead.

•••••

[If you are the weak or blind/dead, accept the hope that has been offered to you.]

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