

1 John 2:8

by John Gill

John Gill's sermon on 1 John 2:8 emphasizes the transformative power of Christ's commandment of love in the lives of believers, contrasting it with the darkness of sin and ignorance.

Scripture: Matthew 5:43, John 1:9, John 13:34, Romans 13:10, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 5:22-23, Ephesians 5:8, 1 Peter 2:9, 1 John 2:8, 1 John 4:7

Topics: "Transformation in Christ", "Brotherly Love"

Description

John Gill emphasizes the significance of the new commandment of love as taught by Christ, which is a renewal of the old commandment but with deeper understanding and application. This commandment is not only a reflection of Christ's love but also a transformative force in the lives of believers, who are made new creations through the Spirit. Gill explains that the darkness of the old covenant and sin is passing away, making way for the true light of the Gospel and the love that should characterize the lives of Christians. He encourages believers to embody this love sincerely and universally, as it is a true reflection of Christ's love for them. The sermon highlights the ongoing journey of moving from darkness to light, and the importance of love in that transformation.

Transcript

Ver. 8. Again, a new commandment I write unto you,.... Which is the same with the former, considered in different respects. The command of brotherly love is a new one; that is, it is an excellent one, as a new name is an excellent name, and a new song is an excellent one; it is renewed by Christ under the Gospel dispensation; it is newly explained by him, and purged from the false glosses of the Scribes and Pharisees; see Mt 5:43; and enforced by him with a new argument, and by a new example of his own, even his own love to his people; and which is observed by them in a new manner, they being made new creatures; and this law being anew written in their hearts, under the renewing work of the Spirit of God, as a branch of the new covenant of grace; see Joh 13:34. The Jews {c} expect hvdx hrwt, "a new law" to be given them by the bands of the Messiah; and a new one he has given, even the new commandment of love, and which is the fulfilling of the law.

Which things is true in him, and in you. The Alexandrian copy reads, "in us"; the sense is either, it is true "in itself", as the phrase will bear to be rendered, and it is verified in you, or in us, to be a new commandment; or it is true in Christ, it is yea and amen in him; it has its full completion in him, who is the fulfilling end of the law, as well as it has been faithfully delivered, truly explained, and warmly and

affectionately recommended and urged by him; and he is the great pattern and exemplar of it: and the love which this new commandment requires is really and truly in the saints, implanted in them in regeneration, is a fruit of the Spirit, and which faith works by, and will always continue in them; and should be in its actings like Christ's, true, sincere, cordial, affectionate, constant, and universal: and some think the word *esti*, or *estw*, "is", or "let it be", is wanting in the last clause, and may be read, "which thing is true in him, and is", or "let it be in you": that is, as love to the brethren is true and sincere in Christ, so it is, or should be in you; it should be without dissimulation, and so it was, as the reason following shows:

because the darkness is past, or is "passing"; meaning either the darkness of the ceremonial law, which lay in dark types and shadows, and in cloudy sacrifices, and mystical representations of things, and was a shadow of good things to come; and its shadows were now fleeing away apace, in fact as well as in right; and so the Alexandrian copy reads, "because the shadow is passing away"; the night of Jewish darkness was far spent, and the Gospel day was not only broke, but it was, or near noonday, which brought the light of faith, and the heat of love with it: or else the darkness of sin and ignorance, of a state of nature, and of the kingdom of Satan, in which the people of God are before conversion; which then passes away gradually, by little and little, for it is not removed at once, or wholly gone; for though the saints are at once removed out of a state of darkness, and from the kingdom of darkness, and the power of it, yet they are not wholly free from the darkness of sin and ignorance, they still see but through a glass darkly: and the words are better rendered, the darkness passes", or "is passing away", and not is past", or "has passed away"; for as yet it is not entirely gone;

and the true light now shineth; either the Gospel, which is a light, and a true and substantial one, in distinction from the dim light of nature, or the shadowy law of Moses; and which now, under the present dispensation, shines out in a most glorious manner, as the sun in its full strength; and so the Ethiopic version renders it, "the light of truth"; the word of truth, the Gospel of our salvation: or Jesus Christ, who is so called, Joh 1:9; in distinction from typical lights, as the "Urim" on the high priest's breastplate, the candlestick in the tabernacle and temple, and the pillar of fire by night, which guided the Israelites through the wilderness; and in opposition to all false lights, to the Scribes and Pharisees, to false Christs and false prophets, which are so many "ignes fatui"; but Christ is the sun of righteousness that is risen in our "horizon", and the true light which shines out in a most illustrious manner: or the light of grace is here intended, that light which the Spirit of God illuminates with in conversion; in which a man sees sin in its true colours, and has a spiritual and saving sight of Christ, of pardon, peace, life, righteousness, and salvation by him; which is no other than the light of faith, by which an enlightened person sees the Son, looks to him, and has an evidence of the unseen glories of another world. Now this is a true light, things are seen by the believer in a right light, both his own sins, and the person, blood, and righteousness of Christ; this is a shining one, which cannot but be observed by himself, and shines more and more to the perfect day; and it now shines as it did not before, in a state of nature, and continues to shine, and ever will: this light will never be put out, and is the cause of brotherly love, being truly in the saints, and of the continuance of it; before this light shines, men live in malice, but when it comes and shines, as they walk in light, they walk in love.

{c} Yalkut Simconi, par. 2. fol. 461.

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