

The Love Test

The AIM is:

To willingly and purposefully embrace the test of Love for our walk with God so that we can be sure our faith is not in vain.

Read 1 John 2:3-11

Notice the structure “He who say’s” in vv 4,6,9 similar to the three “If we say” in 1:6,8,10

What *command* do you think John has in mind in v3-5? (see v7-8)

What *walk* do you think John has in mind in v6?

- What do you think John is seeking to correct?
- Why does John use *love* rather than *correct doctrine* as the test?
- How would you summarise John’s test? (Love is the only true test of our knowledge of God.)
- Who does John apply the test to? (see 2:3, v4, v12-13, 5:13)

How should we apply the test to ourselves?

(A question for serious consideration and sharing)

What benefit is there in applying this test to ourselves?

What do you find when you apply the test to yourself? (If John Stott and Watchman Nee confessed they always struggled with selfishness then we do not need to feel especially bad if we too struggle)

- What fruit of love can you give testimony to?
- What areas of growth do you long for?

What test do we actually apply?

Our reactions betray the tests that we apply to ourselves.

- When we are in a minor conflict what do we try to prove? (That I am right!)
- What *test* are we applying?
- Which *tree* does this indicate we are eating of?
- What do you most admire in others? (Love, knowledge, skill, wealth???)

How can we learn to apply the right test?

Firstly recognise that our “knowledge” test is attractive to us because it operates in independence from God, whereas the “love” test is impossible to pass without constant drawing upon God’s life.

How can we grow in love? (see v5)

There is a cooperation between God showing us His love for us and us exercising faith and discipline in seeking to reflect that love to others.

Our Response:

Practice trying to replace the “Prove I’m right” response with “I love you” response.

Any examples?