*“With the Master Before the Mirror of God’s Word”* by Susan Heck

A Ladies Bible Study on First John

Tuesday, January 8, 2019

*Susan reminds us ”…that the Apostle John writes of the importance of loving our brethren…he will mention it several times throughout his epistle. The question we must come to grips with is this: Is it possible for you and me to not love our brother and at the same time have genuine saving faith?” (pg.62)*

**Susan’s Summary** of Chapter 5– “Do You Love Your Brother?” – 1 John 2:7-11 (pg. 70-72)

“The question asked by ancient man is also the question asked by modern man: “How can I know for certain that I really know Jesus Christ?” And in view of the clear revelation in the New Testament concerning the multitudes that will discover, to their horror, that they never really knew Jesus Christ, this question must be answered by every thinking man or woman.

John answers by two clear objective tests:

***First***, we can know we know Jesus Christ by a life which is manifesting obedience (2:3-6). Obedience to His words is the maturing fruit of genuine love for Jesus Christ, which motivates the believer to follow in His steps.

***Second***, we can know for certain we really know Jesus Christ by a life manifesting love (2:7-11).

The commandment to love one another is not novel, as the Gnostics were claiming, but tried and tested with lasting value. At the same time, it is also fresh and vital, as exemplified through the example of Jesus Christ and lived out by true believers now. The reason it is both “old” and “new” is because the age of darkness (i.e., evil and error) has begun to shine.

*The Nature of the Old Commandment* (v7) is to love the brethren.

*The Nature of the New Commandment* (v 8) is to love the brethren as Christ did.

*The Nature of Those who Hate Their Brother* (vv 9,11) is that they are in darkness, they walk in darkness, and they don’t know where they are going because the darkness has blinded their eyes.

*The Nature of Those Who Love Their Brother* (v 10) is that they abide in the light and do not stumble.

Do you love the brethren? Do you really love the brethren?

Are you patient with people, especially your husband and your children and those in your family? **Love** **is very patient**.

Are you kind to others? Does it show in your tone of voice and in your body language? **Love is kind**.

Are you jealous of other people, wanting what they have? Do you envy their position, their looks, or their material possessions? **Love is never jealous or envious**.

Do you boast around others about how great you are or what you have accomplished? Do you secretly think you are better than others and judge others in your heart? **Love is never boastful, proud, or** **haughty**.

Do you always insist on your own way? Do you pout when you don’t get your own way? Do you resent the time or energy that you give to others? **Love is not selfish, nor does it demand its own way**.

Do you cut people off in traffic? Do you treat your children or husband as second-class citizens? Are you abrupt on the phone with others? **Love is not rude**.

Are you agitated and frustrated with others or with circumstances that God allows? Do others know it is that “time of the month” by your behaviour? **Love is not irritable or touchy**.

When someone hurts your feelings, do you bring it up to them? Do you remember all the mistakes your husband has made? **Love does not hold grudges and will hardly even notice when others do you wrong**.

Do you secretly or even openly gloat when an enemy of yours gets their due? Do you rejoice when others excel, especially in the things of Christ? **Love is never glad about injustice, but rejoices whenever truth wins out**.

Are you loyal to your marriage, to your children, to your friendships, to the leaders in your church? If you love someone, **you will be loyal to them** **no matter what the cost**. **You will always believe in them** **always expect the best of them**, and **always stand your ground in defending them**.

Tradition tells us that the aged old apostle, in bidding farewell to his congregation before he died, admonished them to love one another, love one another, love one another. “But we want something new,” they said, “Give us a new commandment!” John replied, “brethren, I write no new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you have had from the beginning…that you should love one another.”