

## FAQ: Core Themes from "1 John Lesson 29"

Date: July 30, 2025

### 1. What is the core message about love in the provided text?

- Love is both an “old commandment” and a “new commandment,” redefined and exemplified by Jesus Christ.
- It’s not just about loving God—it’s about receiving His love and extending it to others.
- This love is described as a “way of life” and a defining trait of a true Christian.
- If God truly governs our hearts, our lives will naturally reflect love for others.

### 2. How does the text describe the absence of love?

- The absence of love is described as “darkness” that has “blinded his eyes.”
- Those who hate their brothers—whether through disdain or indifference—are in darkness and do not know where they are going.
- Such individuals are “groping around” and prone to “stumbling into sin.”
- This lack of love indicates they are outside God’s kingdom, in contrast to God’s nature as light with no darkness.

### 3. What makes the “new commandment” to love different from the old one?

- Though the command to love has always been part of the law (e.g., Levitical Law, Ten Commandments), Jesus gave it a new depth.
- The “newness” is in how Jesus demonstrated love—laying down His life, serving others (symbolized by washing even His disciples’ “filthy feet”), and patiently providing for their needs despite their shortcomings.
- This sacrificial, humble, and selfless love is what Christians are now called to embody.

### 4. Why is love considered a “test” of being a Christian?

- Love is presented as the ultimate test and testimony of a Christian.
- Jesus said, “By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” (John 13:35, NKJV)
- This means both the individual and others can identify a true Christian by their love.
- The text affirms: “If you don’t have love, you don’t have a testimony,” and this love is foundational to the credibility of the gospel.

### 5. What are the three categories of spiritual growth mentioned, and what do they represent?

- The three categories:
  - Little Children: Those whose sins are forgiven and who know the Father.
  - Young Men: Strong in faith, have the Word of God abiding in them, and have overcome the wicked one.<sup>1</sup>
  - Fathers: Those who have “known Him who is from the beginning.”

- These stages highlight a spiritual progression: from initial salvation to maturity in Christ.

## **6. What is the ultimate "goal" or "prize" of spiritual growth?**

- The ultimate goal is Christlikeness—to “be like Christ.”
- As Paul wrote, “I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 3:14, NKJV)
- The “upward call” implies continual growth and movement toward reflecting Christ.
- The final destination is perfection, as “there’s only one thing allowed in heaven, and that’s perfection.”

## **7. How does the concept of "sanctification" relate to spiritual growth?**

- Sanctification is described as synonymous with spiritual growth and includes three aspects:
  - Positional Sanctification: Instant upon salvation—believers are set apart from sin, clothed in Christ’s righteousness, and have a new standing before God.
  - Progressive Sanctification: The daily process of becoming more like Christ—separating from sin and walking in obedience.
  - Ultimate Sanctification: The future state of eternal perfection—free from the very presence of sin.

## **8. Does spiritual growth affect a believer's standing before God or God’s love for them?**

- No. The text emphasizes:
  - “Spiritual growth has nothing to do with your standing before God in Christ.”
  - Once a person believes in Jesus, their position before God is settled and eternally secure.
  - Likewise, spiritual growth does not influence God’s love. His love is constant and unconditional.

### **Greek Word Referenced**

<sup>1</sup> Wicked one – From the Greek word πονηρός (ponēros, pronounced po-nay-ROSS): Refers to “the evil one,” typically understood as Satan or the embodiment of evil. This word appears in 1 John 2:13–14, where John praises “young men” for overcoming the wicked one.