

1. John's affection and love for those he writes to is clear. He writes to us to warn us about false teachers. He does not want us to sin. When we do struggle with sin, Jesus Christ has lived for us a righteous life and He advocates to the Father His righteous life for all who believe in Him. He has also propitiated, or taken the punishment, for the sins of all who believe in Him from every nation in the world.
2. All Christians will keep Christ's commandments. This is how they know that they know Jesus. The false teachers that John is warning about teach that the true Christian does not need to keep Christ's commandments. John tells us that those who say they know Christ but do not keep His commandments are liars. There is no truth in these false teachers' false gospel.
3. Anyone who loves Jesus will keep His commandments. The reason that the believer can keep Christ's commandments is that He will send them the Holy Spirit. The world cannot obey His commandments because they have nothing to do with the Holy Spirit, who dwells in the heart of Christians.
4. The true Christian is able to keep Christ's Word as the love of God grows in them, being perfected over time. The work of the Spirit imparts His righteousness to us, sanctifying us over time. The false teachers of a counterfeit Christian life teach that believers will not grow in obedience to Word of God and that obedience is not a fruit of the Christian life.
5. The way in which a Christian knows that they are in Christ is by His work in us to cause us to walk in the same way in which He did. True Christians will grow to follow Jesus' commands, reflecting His obedience to the Word of God. There is no salvation without the changing power of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life. These false teachers teach otherwise.
6. Nothing that John said should be ultimately new to Christians. The commandment to love one another was taught by God from the beginning of Creation. Jesus taught that His disciples would love one another. The false teachers of a counterfeit Christian life taught that it was not necessary to love other Christians.
7. The Christian who loves Christ will show their love for Him by loving other Christians. They will lay down their life for other Christians. The false teachers of a counterfeit Christian life teach that there is no need for real Christian fellowship in the Christian life. They taught that having a spiritual relationship with Christ does not require having physically present relationships with other Christians.
8. The commandment to love was new because previously there was no inner work of the Spirit in the heart of a believer. The work of Christ defeats darkness in the Christian heart. If someone says they have love in their heart, yet hates others by not laying down their life in fellowship with others in the church, they are still in darkness. The false teachers taught that there was no physical fellowship necessary for the Christian.
9. Those who love the Church abide in Jesus Christ by not causing stumbling. Those who show no desire to lay down their lives for Christians in the Church are not Christians at all. False teachers were saying true physical fellowship with the Church is unimportant in the Christian life because spiritual salvation comes separately from physical fellowship. This directly contradicts the teaching Jesus and the Apostles.
10. The Christian is commanded not to love the world. John says that anyone who truly loves the world does not have the love of the Father. The false teachers taught that a Christian can have fellowship with the world, be involved with sinful practices, and still be saved. They said that spiritual salvation can be separated from physical obedience to God.
11. All the sin that is in the world must be avoided by the true Christian. The false teachers taught that fleshly desires, covetous looking, along with many forms of pride, are acceptable for a Christian. But the Apostle John warns that all these things do not come from the work of God in the heart of a true Christian.

12. John warns that the world is passing away and that the sinful desires are not part of the Christian life. Only those who seek to do the will of God from His Word will ultimately abide forever in eternal life. The false teaching that there is a separation between spiritual salvation and physical obedience leads to a counterfeit Christian life that does not provide evidence of true faith in Jesus Christ.

(Application on other side...)

Application

1. The false teachers that the Apostle John was warning about believed in a distinction between spiritual salvation and physical obedience. They taught that obedience to Christ's commandments and love for other believers in the fellowship of the Church were both unnecessary as evidence of true faith in Jesus. Furthermore, love for the world and sinful desires were taught as acceptable in a true Christian's life. All these teachings are directly in contradiction to the teachings of Jesus and the Apostles. They result in a different gospel, which cannot save. Do not believe the message of the counterfeit Christian life.
2. There are many teachers even today who teach that someone can be a real Christian without the sanctifying work of the Spirit in their life. Do not just simply reject their message, but also protect yourself, your family, your friends, your church, and others by not having anything to do with these false teachers. Avoid them!

Matthew 7:15-20 - ¹⁵“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. ¹⁶You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? ¹⁷So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. ¹⁹Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.

1 John 2:1-11 - ² My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. ² He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. ³ And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. ⁴ Whoever says “I know him” but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, ⁵ but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: ⁶ whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked. ⁷ Beloved, I am writing you no new commandment, but an old commandment that you had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word that you have heard. ⁸ At the same time, it is a new commandment that I am writing to you, which is true in him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining. ⁹ Whoever says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in darkness. ¹⁰ Whoever loves his brother abides in the light, and in him there is no cause for stumbling. ¹¹ But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

1 John 2:18-19 - ¹⁸ Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour. ¹⁹ They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us.

John 14:15-17 - ¹⁵ “If you love me, you will keep my commandments. ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, ¹⁷ even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

John 15:12-14 - ¹² “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command you.

1 John 2:15-17 - ¹⁵ Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. ¹⁷ And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.

2 John 9-11 - ⁹Everyone who goes on ahead and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God. Whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. ¹⁰If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house or give him any greeting, ¹¹for whoever greets him takes part in his wicked works.

Romans 16:17 - ¹⁷I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them.