

# **Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion**

**Date** : 18 October 2020

**Sermon Title** : Is It Real?

**Speaker** : Rev Eddie Ho

**Text** : 1 John 2:3-13

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Looks can be deceiving. Some things can look like the real stuff but we will not know if it is real until we have tested it. It is the same with COVID-19. Someone infected with the coronavirus may be asymptomatic and it can only be detected through a swab test. This is true with friendships too. People can be nice to you in good times but true friendship will be revealed when tested by a crisis where only true friends will stick around. Faith and salvation in Jesus Christ too can be tested because many may talk, act and pray as a real Christian, but Jesus says in Matthew 7:22-23 that He would say He never knew them. Even a Christian or pastor preaching, prophesying, driving out demons or healing the sick in Jesus' name can be called evildoers or workers of lawlessness. What type of tests can we use to know we will not fail when we meet Jesus on Judgment Day?

1 John 2 gives us the Assessment Test of Saving Faith:

### **1. Moral Test (1 John 2:3-6) – Test for evil or lawlessness**

- Law = Commandments; Moral Instructions to be obeyed
- Breaking these commandments by disobeying means we are breaking God's law (1 John 2:3) - lawlessness
- God's law are His moral requirements and can be summarized in the Ten Commandments. Jesus listed 6 of these commandments when a young man asked him what he must do to inherit eternal life. (Mark 10:17-19)

Jesus wants us to: love our neighbours, treat others with respect and fairness, keeping our promise to them and be kind to them, especially our parents.

**Moral Test: Most people pass this test most of the time.**

But....this is not enough!

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## **2. The Neighbour Test (1 John 2:7) – Not to be self-centred**

When the young man claimed that he had passed the test of obeying God's commandments (Moral Test), Jesus challenged him further to sell all his possessions and give to the poor. He failed the test and walked away sorrowful. (Mark 10:20-22)

- More than meaning that a real Christian cannot own anything or that he has to literally give everything away to the poor, or that the young man was struggling with serving two masters – money and God, Jesus could be referring to how and why the man was keeping or spending his wealth. Jesus could be telling him to spend his money on his neighbour the way he would spend on himself and keep his money for his neighbour's future the way he is keeping it for himself.
- Jesus sums up God's Moral Law into 2 Commandments:  
(1) Love God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength  
(2) Love your neighbour as yourself  
and He says that this is not a new commandment but an old one (v.7)
- If we do not love our neighbour as ourselves, we are liars and the truth is not in us (1 John 2:4) because we are not doing what Jesus commands. Paul echoes this in 1 Corinthians 13

Jesus wants us to: love our neighbours as ourselves.

**The Neighbour Test: Some people pass this test some of the time.**

Nobody is able to pass these first two tests perfectly!

## **3. The Enemy Test (1 John 2:6, 8-11) – Newness of the command**

In verse 7, John said he was writing about an old commandment and yet in verse 8, he said he was writing them a new commandment. John then explains in verse 9 that it is the newness of the old commandment - the new interpretation of the law by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount. (Matthew 5)

<b>Old Commandment</b>	<b>Newness of the command</b>
Not to commit murder	If hate, it is murder
Not to commit adultery	Not to look lustfully
Love your neighbours	Love your enemies

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- The old commandment expressed in newness by Jesus – love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.
- In John 13, Jesus said to His disciples that they were to love as He had loved them - He died on the Cross not only for the disciples but for His enemies (Romans 5:10).

Jesus wants us to: love our enemies more than ourselves.

**The Enemy Test: All people fail this test all the time.**

## **4. Grace Test (1 John 2:22-23) – Get this right and pass all the other tests**

We need to acknowledge that Jesus is the Christ, God the Son, who loves us and gave His life for us while we were still His enemies

- Our sins and failings are forgiven on account of Jesus' name (v.12) – this is a giveaway test that helps us pass all the other tests. We only need to repent of our sin and acknowledge Jesus as the Christ, the Lord of our life
- Being one with Jesus makes us one with the Father too because the Father and Jesus are one (v.23)
- Besides subjecting to Jesus' Lordship, we must live as Jesus did – to imitate Jesus, yearn to be like Him and have the mind of Christ (v.6)
- Allow Jesus to work in us so we will be more and more like Him (2 Corinthians 3:18)
- Jesus has given us His Holy Spirit who will prompt us to do something in the appropriate time through divine appointments. Through these grace moments Jesus gives us opportunities to give grace to others. A simple act of grace can bring grace upon grace upon grace in someone else's life.

Jesus wants us to: extend grace and not exercise our rights even when we know we are right because we have received His grace, and grace begets grace.

**Grace Test: Do not fail this test!**

## **CONCLUSION**

May we open our eyes and tune our ears to listen to the Holy Spirit for grace moments so we can be good stewards of the time, resources and talents God has given us. Let us pass the Grace Test and meet Christ in confidence on Judgment Day when He will say to us, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

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As a group, spend some time to share your success and struggle in fulfilling what you/your group had committed to do at the previous meeting.

## **A. Review Sermon Content**

***Purpose: Reflect on one key takeaway.***

Appoint someone to read 1 John 2:3-13 twice, slowly.

1. At the end of the reading, the reader will say, 'This is the Word of the Lord.'

All to respond, "Thanks be to God." Our response reminds us that this is the Word of the Lord. Just as God had spoken to His people in the past, He is still speaking to us even today, right now."

- a.
  - (i) As God's word was read, which verse speaks to you the most?
  - (ii) What is the key takeaway for you from the sermon "Is It Real?"?

- b. How will you align the way you live to your key takeaway?

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## **B. Relate Sermon Content**

***Purpose: Relate with the Truth and Resolve for Transformation.***

- 2a. (i) What do the Moral Test, Neighbour Test and Enemy Test tell you about how God wants us to live?  
(ii) Why does God provide us with a “giveaway” Grace Test?
- 2b. To pass the Grace Test, we only need to repent of our sins and acknowledge Jesus as the Christ, the Lord of our lives. What does this mean?
- 3a. Jesus has given us His Holy Spirit who will prompt us to do something in the appropriate time through divine appointments. Through these grace moments Jesus gives us opportunities to give grace to others.
  - (i) Have you experienced grace moments prompted by the Holy Spirit?
  - (ii) Do you find it challenging to extend grace and not exercise your rights even when you know you are right?
- 3b. What is one thing you need to change in order to:
  - (i) be better tuned to grace moments prompted by the Holy Spirit?
  - (ii) obey the Holy Spirit’s prompting in these grace moments?
- 3c. How can your group members encourage or help you achieve 3b above, for the next week(s) until your next meeting?

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## **C. Testimonies and Prayer**

***Purpose: Give glory to God and seek Him.***

4. Share your testimony if, by God's grace, He has enabled you to pass either the Moral, Neighbour or Enemy Test.

OR

Give thanks to God for how His name was glorified in a recent grace moment in your life.

5. Commit all that have been shared in 3a, 3b and 3c to God, asking for God's grace to enable you to follow through what you and your group have committed to do in the following week(s) until your next meeting. With your accountability partner(s), pray for God's grace to flow through you so there may be grace upon grace upon grace through your life.

As a group, ask the Lord to reveal how you can extend grace to one another and the pre-believers you are reaching out to, as you prepare for "12 Days to Christmas".

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