

25. September 2025
FIRST LETTER OF ST. JOHN
True love for one's brother

1Jn 2:6-11

“Whoever says, ‘I abide in him,’ ought to walk just as he walked. Beloved, I am writing you no new commandment, but an old commandment that you have had from the beginning; the old commandment is the word that you have heard. Yet I am writing you a new commandment that is true in him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining. Whoever says, ‘I am in the light,’ while hating a brother or sister, is still in the darkness. Whoever loves a brother or sister lives in the light, and in such a person there is no cause for stumbling. But whoever hates another believer is in the darkness, walks in the darkness, and does not know the way to go, because the darkness has brought on blindness.”

The Apostle continues to give us simple and clear instructions, because if we want to abide in the Lord, we must ask ourselves whether our way of life conforms to God's will and reflects the life of Christ.

As we saw in the previous meditation, we cannot claim to live in harmony with God unless we keep His commandments. Indeed, our fidelity to His law must be clearly reflected in our lives. In the confusing times we are experiencing, it is necessary to defend the truth both within and outside the Church, each of us following the path the Lord indicates. If we keep in mind that all the confusion afflicting the world today stems from disregard for God's commandments, we will conclude that nothing is more important for Christians than to bear witness—through the way we live—that His Law is holy and that every word of Christ surpasses all earthly goods and human considerations.

With the coming of Jesus, light itself entered the world. While it had already been glimpsed in the words of the prophets who foretold the coming of the Messiah, it is now revealed in all its splendor. Not even John the Baptist was the light, but he bore witness to it: *“He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light”* (Jn 1:8). Only the Son of God is *“the true light, which enlightens everyone”* (Jn 1:9).

It is now up to us to live in this light, and today's passage highlights something essential: in the grace of this light, we are called to practice brotherly love. If we do so, we remain in the light; but if we hate our brother, we remain in darkness.

First and foremost, St. John is undoubtedly referring to the brotherly love that arises from our shared faith in Christ. Our attention is therefore directed toward the Church, where we learn this love and put it into practice within the community of believers.

It is clear that any form of hatred, contempt, mockery, humiliation, or speaking ill of a brother or sister is an assault on love. We should all be aware of this, and it is our task to purify our hearts and root out any darkness within us that could blind us.

So, what should we do when we see a brother sinning? What does fraternal charity require? The Lord Himself gives us the answer: *"If your brother sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If he listens to you, you have regained your brother"* (Mt 18:15). We should also apply this appropriately when the sin is not directed against us personally but affects our brother's life and tarnishes his Christian witness. Undoubtedly, all our actions—especially when it comes to fraternal correction—must be prepared and accompanied by prayer. Let us not forget this!

But how should fraternal love be applied when the ecclesiastical hierarchy causes public scandals and we cannot speak directly with those involved?

In such cases, the first step is to wait and see whether any representatives within the hierarchy denounce these scandals (for example, the public cult of Pachamama in the Vatican, the *Fiducia supplicans* declaration, etc.) and attempt fraternal correction. This would be the preferred course of action.

However, it becomes necessary to warn the faithful when deviations within the hierarchy endanger the faith—which, sadly, is the situation today—and no one steps forward to make the needed public corrections. In such moments, fraternal love—of which our hearts must be full—will compel us to help our spiritual brothers and sisters discern the spirits. This warning should help them continue on their path of following Christ without suffering harm, with God's help. As for those brothers who err, we should pray for them.

Meditation on the reading of the day: <https://en.elijamission.net/2021/09/23/>