

“Love One Another!”

1 John 3:11-24

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Introduction:

In an article I previously wrote titled: “Love Without Hypocrisy” it states:

“Jesus loved us with a sincere love. Everything He did, right down to dying on the cross as a substitute for our wrongs, was motivated by love; real love.

Paul commanded, “Let love be without hypocrisy,” (Rom. 12:9). The church was to model Christ in the way that they loved people. They are to have the purest and most sincere love that would compel people to want to know more about Christ. They are to be pillars of love that the lost, broken and hurt can lean on and find strength.

One thing people can readily pick up on is fakeness. Those that come to us and come to our buildings are looking for something real. They have had enough of the phony stuff. They have dealt with the pretenders of the world and they are not looking for that in us. They are looking for something real. They are looking for something pure. They are looking for somebody to look at them as Christ would and feel nothing but love and compassion for them.

How many times has the Bible described Jesus as being “moved with compassion?” That’s what sincere love does; it moves the heart. It allows one to look beyond what they see to have genuine concern for others. This

is what people are looking for. This is what the church should be displaying. The love of Christ is our greatest asset in drawing people to salvation. After all, wasn't it God who told Jeremiah, "With lovingkindness have I drawn thee," (Jer. 31:3)?

Real love draws people. Fake love pushes them away. If we truly want to be like Christ then love on people sincerely. Don't give them what the world is already giving them; fake love. Give them something genuine. Give them something real. Give them something that will bring them closer to God. Give them real love!" (©Word For Life Says . . .)

With that, John reiterates the important message of loving one another that is to never go out of style in the life of the Christian. This kind of love does more than talk the talk, it walks the walk; giving up of self to follow Jesus and His example.

In verse 10, prior to today's lesson he writes, "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth no righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not of his brother," (1 John 3:10). What is manifested in one's life proves beyond a shadow of a doubt to which we belong.

Our walk gives evidence to our talk just as the fruit coming from our personal trees describe what seed we are planted from. How we treat one another demonstrates to the world who we believe and who we choose to follow. Are we operating in the love of Christ? Do we really love one another as He did? Let's find out.

1 John 3:11-12

11) "For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.

12) Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous."

"The message" John was teaching was not a new message. Love is never a new message but is also a message that needs to be reiterated time and time again,

for the pangs of this world press on people so that only true love can ease its pain.

“Love” is not new for it originates with God Himself. This we know because 1 John 4:8 tells us, “God is love,” and nothing predates God. From the **“beginning”** of their faith they have heard of the love of God; they have heard of the love of Christ in sacrificing all to save as many as possible. This love that John is teaching is just as real now as it was to the original readers of this letter.

With that he states, **“we should love one another.”** This too was not a new thing. For Jesus Himself said, “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another,” (John 13:35). Many look at a lot of other markers to determine if one is in Christ. Much of what they look for is outward symbols to verify their status as a Christian but here we see the inward working of the heart, the love that we show toward one another shows to whom we belong. The true love that we have for one another separates us from those who are characterized as being of the **“wicked one.”**

Our love is to be different. Not superficial and not fake; and, definitely **“not as Cain.”** The word **“not”** is very important in this verse because it directs us away from what isn’t supposed to be done in our lives. **“Not”** can be a form of the word “no” which makes it very clear that nothing of that thing described (here it’s Cain’s character) should be found in us.

Every day each of us are faced with a multitude of choices. From the time we rise in the morning, we have many things that vie for our attention, calling us to follow their direction. Some choices will lead us closer to God, and some choices will divert our attempts at living holy and loving people the way God calls for us to love people.

“Cain” became an example of a choice one was **“not”** to emulate. There are many examples of good and bad characters we can learn from. From the good we learn what we should do. From the bad we learn what **“not”** to do.

“Cain” was filled with **“evil”** works and allowed those choices to fester as an open wound inside of him until he acted out by way of murdering **“his brother.”** The

character that was revealed in him was of the **“wicked one”** manifesting itself in how **“slew he him.”** Obviously, this is in opposition to God and the love He encourages His people to have for one another.

His brother’s works were characterized as **“righteous.”** Evil and righteousness will never be compatible companions. They are and will remain at enmity with one another. When the righteous character exposes the wicked, the wicked retaliate and lash out fostering an environment of hostility toward those who want to do right.

1 John 3:13 “Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.”

Don’t be surprised by the reaction of **“hate”** you receive from the **“world.”** As discussed in previous lessons, the **“world”** is in reference to the way people of this natural world live, operate and make choices. It speaks of the world’s system.

Since the righteous live opposite of that system they are susceptible to suffer persecution just as Abel suffered at the hands of Cain.

Don’t be taken aback at any hostility you feel coming your way because of your stand for Christ. Peter put it like this, “Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s suffering . . .” (1 Peter 4:12-13).

When we receive unexpected trials and tribulations we cannot let them overwhelm us. As hard as it may seem we have to expect that sometimes adverse things will occur when the righteous stick to their faith.

1 John 3:14 “We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.”

In this verse we see one of the world’s greatest opposites: **“death and life.”** How we choose to love and treat others determine which course we follow. Dare I say that how we love or don’t love shows whether or not we are really children of God? The Bible warns us, as previously stated in our introduction, “In this the

children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother,” (1 John 3:10). If we are no longer walking the way of “**death**,” which is the way of the world, than our love should show it; it should show that we are children of God and are walking in the newness of “**life**.”

Look at this sampling of just a few verses expressing the love we should have for one another:

- Romans 12:10 “Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another.”
- 1 John 4:12 “. . . If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.”
- 1 Peter 1:22 “. . . See that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently.”
- 1 John 4:11 “Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.”
- 1 John 2:10 “He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.”

And, there are many, many more verses that show us how important the love we have for one another is. This is not to be taken lightly, nor is it to be based on fickle human emotions. This is supposed to be real, genuine love that expresses what God has already done for us; that we walk the way of “**life**” and not the way of “**death**.”

1 John 3:15 “Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.”

Here, hating is synonymous with death; with being a “**murderer**.” That one’s heart is in contrast to the heart of God who has love and life pouring out from His very being. There is a popular saying that “opposites attract” but it’s not true here. Anything in opposition to God cannot live eternally with Him in heaven.

1 John 3:16 “Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.”

Jesus once taught, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends," (John 15:13). Putting actions behind His words the Bible tells us Jesus purposely laid down His life (John 10:18). He sacrificed everything to bring us everything. What have we laid down **"for the brethren?"** Have we shown the same sacrificial love that Jesus did? His sacrifice showed His love. How are we showing one another that we love them?

The next verse gives us real life examples of how we can show that we have the love of God living on the inside of us.

1 John 3:17 "But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"

Again, there are real distinct markers that determine whether we love God and love people like we say we do. A lot of times we pass by the simple things like providing for a need and try to determine our spirituality on a level not compatible with the Word of God.

Here, we are told that if we have, through our material supplies, time and efforts, an opportunity to fill a need in the life of someone who is lacking, especially **"his brother"** in the faith, then we should do so. In that we are showing the same love God had for us toward our **"brother."**

There is a "charge" that goes out to the "rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; That they *do good works, ready to distribute*, willing to communicate; Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against that time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life," (1 Timothy 6:17-19, emphasis mine). This charge can be filled by anybody. If not through money, than spend time helping and assisting others; through "good works."

Jesus warned us, "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also," (Matthew 6:21). Acts 4 shows us the generosity of the early church in giving to make sure there was none who lacked (Acts 4:34-35). They showed the **"love of**

God” that lived on the inside of them through their outward action of giving to one another.

1 John 3:18 “My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.”

From a previous lesson I wrote:

“Remember the days of “Show and Tell” at school? It was an opportunity for one to not just talk about what they do or have, but to display visible evidence before their classmates of a possession or skill.

Jesus was a “Show and Tell” Savior. He drew many crowds to Himself through the many miracles that He performed: feeding 5,000, healing the sick, raising the dead and so on. People often marveled at what He could do. He did more than just talk the talk or preach and lecture, He demonstrated the power of the Kingdom of God through Himself.

While you and I may not be multiplying a boy’s lunch to feed 5,000, we can through our actions and service toward one another, volunteer to feed some. We may not be raising the dead or healing the sick (although, miracles really do still happen), we can volunteer to comfort and help those around us in need. What this does is it shows that we are more than just talk; rather our faith is manifested in what we do.

Faith is full of action. Faith is alive. Faith is shared through works to testify of its genuineness and sincerity. Faith does more than move mountains. If it is lived out in the lives of the men and women of God, it can move hearts toward salvation!” (© Word For Life Says/ Show Your Faith By Your Works)

Therefore, let your actions speak louder than your words!

1 John 3:19-21

19) “And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.

20) For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.

21) Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God.”

More than ever we see here that what we do and how we love others is a **“heart”** issue. The love we have in our **“hearts”** or in our consciences, through its manifestation, shows that **“we are of the truth;”** it shows to whom we belong and that gives us assurance before God.

If we are living by this truth of love than we don't have to feel condemned. If for some reason or another **“our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.”** God has a perspective that we don't have; He can see the heart of man better than we can see it in ourselves. He already knows all things from the inside out. He already knows if your love and actions are right and pure before Him. Trust Him with that judgment.

Paul refused to be judged by anybody else, even his own self (1 Corinthians 4:4). But he declared, “For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord,” (1 Corinthians 4:5). Paul lived his life according to God's will and he let God be the determiner of his heart and we should do the same. Sometimes our consciences' can get the best of us working in super-sensitive mode, making us feel condemned, but *if* we know we are living like He told us to, let Him be the judge of our hearts.

This gives us **“confidence toward God”** when we know we can approach Him in a heart that is free from condemnation.

1 John 3:22-24

22) “And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.

23) And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.

24) And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us."

Because we live according to His **"commandments;"** because of our belief in Jesus as our Savior and His teaching on loving one another as **"he gave us commandment,"** we can have the same confidence that the previous verse talk of to go before the Lord in prayer and **"whatsoever we ask, we receive of him."**

Jesus once taught, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you," (John 15:7). We must be a people that remain in His word. We can't get caught up with being "tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine," (Ephesians 4:14). We have to have our roots deeply planted in Him that when those adverse winds do come we might stand strong in love.

This keeps our relationship with Him and others in firm standing because we are doing **"those things that are pleasing in his sight."** Through obedience of His word we have made room for Him to abide in us forevermore. We have made room in our hearts to love people as He commands; as He demonstrated with His life.

It's the only way we can successfully do this life for He said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing," (John 15:5). If you want to love like He does, abide. If you want to produce fruit like He does, abide. There is no shortcut or way around it.

Conclusion:

We have a charge to love people like He did. It may be difficult or seem downright impossible at times. In all things, if we take it to the Lord in prayer, He will help us to do what He commands us to do. We can be confident that He will answer these prayers that are according to His will; prayers that spread His love further for His name's sake.

