# “God’s Children LOVE One another”

***(Hate is inconsistent for God’s Children)***

**1 John 3:10-18**

7-14-2019

**** Do you really love your brother?***

**I. Love is a distinguishing trait that separates a believer from a non-believer (v.10)**

**II. Love is a message believers should know about right from the start of their conversion (v.11)**

**III. Love is not envious or jealous of the spiritual success or prosperity of another (v.12-13)**

**IV. Love offers the assurance that one has been transferred from the realm of death to the realm of eternal life (v.14-15)**

**V. Love is not mere talk, but sacrificial action toward others in need (v.16-18)**

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Introduction:

John the "beloved" apostle, continually strums the same tune, in both His Gospel and this Epistle. That oft replayed note is LOVE.

The word "love" is used over and over again in John and I John (51 times as a noun or verb in this epistle alone!).

One characteristic of the Last Days is lovelessness. "The love of many shall wax cold."

"Isn't it amazing that as recently as 200 years ago, a popular edition of the encyclopedia devoted only four lines to the word "atom" and some five pages to "love." Now, 200 years later, the same encyclopedia gives five pages to "atom," while "love" is omitted entirely!" (Hocking, p. 61).

## ** Do you really love your brother?*

## I. Love is a distinguishing trait that separates a believer from a non-believer (v.10)

There are two ways of testing the genuineness of your faith and the reality of your salvation.

1) The moral test – Do you practice righteousness? (v. 4-10a)

2) The social test – Do you love others? (v. 10b-18)

The virtue of doing "righteousness" was described in vv. 4-9, and the virtue of loving others is described in vv. 11-18.

Two distinguishing features separate a true child of God from a child of the devil:

*Obedience to God's Word
*Love for God's children

If anyone who claims to be a Christian is missing these fruits (and both must be present in one's life), he is not a child of God (has never been born again).

## II. Love is a message believers should know about right from the start of their conversion (v.11)

**"From the beginning" -** from the beginning of what? Certainly <u>not</u> from the beginning of their life, for many (if not most) of the people John writes to were pagans prior to conversion to Christ. Agape love was not even part of the secular Greek vocabulary among the lost world.

John is speaking about the beginning of their new life in Christ; from the beginning of their salvation experience, "love" was a fundamental truth they came to know intuitively (upon realizing the love of God for their lost souls) and verbally from the one(s) who discipled them.

Every new convert needs to learn about his responsibility to others in God's family.

"Love" always followed on the heels of "faith" in the life of a believer.

Col. 1:3-4 - We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love *which ye have* to all the saints,

Eph. 1:15-16 - ¶ Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers;

Heb. 10:23-24 - Let us hold fast the profession of *our* faith without wavering; (for he *is* faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

Cp. I Cor. 13:13 - "Faith, hope, love"

Gal. 5:6 - "Faith which worketh by love."

"We should love" (Jn. 13:34-35 - A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.)

How does a new believer learn to love others?

- He has a capacity to love even the unlovely because he has experienced God's unconditional love for him ("while we were yet sinners" - Rom. 5:8) (Love is learned through experience).
- He has the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (who enables and empowers us to bear this fruit - Gal. 5:22) (Love is learned through internal prodding).

- He learns of his obligation to love from Scripture (Love is learned by precept).

## III. Love is not envious or jealous of the spiritual success or prosperity of another (v.12-13)

**v. 12**

**"Cain, who was of that wicked one" -** Cain belonged to Satan; he was, in his spiritual life, a child of the devil. He was a non-believer, as evident by his inferior offering, attitude of hatred, and his murder of his brother.

**"Slew"-** a violent murder (the word was used for butchering animals).

John describes the underlying motive behind Cain's murder of Abel as being bitter envy. He was jealous over the fact that God had accepted Abel and his offering but rejected Cain and his. Rather than doing right so that his offering would be accepted, he let bitterness brew in his heart, which led to cold-blooded murder.

Cain resented Abel's righteousness.

**v. 13**

"Cain was the prototype of the world, which manifests today the ugly qualities he first displayed. The "world" is Cain's posterity." (John Stott, p. 140).

No believer should be shocked or amazed when the lost (motivated by envy and jealousy) express hatred toward him. Jesus said, "If they hated me, they will hate you."

There is not that "family bond" between believer and non-believer. Therefore, there is not that "family dedication."

Many new believers entertain the mistaken notion: "Now that I am saved, a new man, no longer a drunkard, drug addict, prostitute, thief, etc., everybody should like me." Not true! They probably liked you better the old way. Back then you were not an irritating source of conviction to them. Your life did not pose a threat to their ungodliness. You had no light to rebuke their darkness.

## IV. Love offers the assurance that one has been transferred from the realm of death to the realm of eternal life (v.14-15)

**v. 14**

It is fact that a believer crosses over from death to life the moment he believes the Gospel.

John 5:24 - Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

**"Passed from" -** to transfer; to migrate or move from one place to another. The perfect tense indicates that this cross over to life is permanent.

Loving others does not produce your transfer from death to life, but it shows (manifests) that you have already transferred over (by God's grace).

How does one know if he loves the brethren?

When you love someone . . .

--You spend time with them (you attend church, you get involved in the lives of believers)
--You pray for them
--You are kind to them
--You will meet their need
--You are concerned about their well- being
--You have their best interest in mind (love may confront, and love may rebuke, but love never neglects. "Faithful are the wounds of a friend…")

**v. 15**

Hatred is the equivalent of murder, just as unrighteous anger is. (Mt. 5:21 - ¶ Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment)

## V. Love is not mere talk, but sacrificial action toward others in need (v.16-18)

**v. 16**

There is no greater demonstration of love than to sacrifice your life for another (Jn. 15:13 - Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.)

Those who are convinced of God's sacrifice for them, are properly motivated to reciprocate that same love toward others.

People tend to treat others the same way they perceive they have been treated. For example, one who has been forgiven ought to have the capacity to forgive (Eph. 4:32 - "And be ye kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.")

What have you sacrificed for the sake of another believer lately? (How can you say you love when you don't sacrifice time, energy, money, resources, etc., to meet a brother's need? How could you say you would be willing to give your life for someone, when you can't even give of your abundant resources to help him/her?)

**v. 17**

To be aware of someone's need, and to do nothing about it, when you have the means of life to do something, is to reflect a hard, cold heart (void of God's love).

Love does <u>not</u> dwell in the miser (Stott, p. 144).

**v. 18**

John is <u>not</u> saying: You shouldn't tell others you love them (God has told us that He loves us). Rather, he is saying, your love should <u>not</u> be mere talk. Rom. 5:8 - "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.").

It's easier to say, "I love you" than to <u>show</u> it. It's easier to talk about your love for others than to demonstrate it. Mere talk is cheap. We should love in our words, but real love does not stop there. Talk alone is cheap (ILLUS: the "Pineapple Story" in Papua, New Guinea).

**"Deed" -** work (a beneficial action)

What actions can you extend?

--a hug --a helping hand --a phone call or card --a loving rebuke -- prayer on their behalf --meeting a need or extending a favor --babysitting their children so they can go out --helping them move --a ride to and from church etc.

**"Truth" -** genuine, real (not hypocritical love) from pure motives (out of love for God).

To do an act of kindness but to do it for self-recognition or reward is faulty motivation and will not be rewarded by God.

Why do you do what you do?

--Love is <u>from God</u> (v. 17 "love of God" It is not self-originated)
--Love is <u>positive</u> (it's not merely "I don't do anyone harm"; it's "I do others good")
--Love is <u>volitional</u> (a choice)
--Love is <u>visual</u> (can be seen by what it does)
--Love is <u>practical</u> (produces good)
--Love is <u>sacrificial</u> (it gives of itself to benefit one in need)
--Love is <u>personal</u> ("it is easier to be enthusiastic about humanity with a capital "H" than it is to love individual men and women, especially …the unattractive" Stott, p. 143).

Conclusion: I Cor. 13