

# How's Your Love Life?

Lesson for Sunday, March 23, 2025

TEXT: 1 John 3:11-18

## INTRODUCTION:

- ⇒ Start with a class exercise. Put the class into teams and give them a few minutes to look through 1 John and identify the contrasts and comparisons that John uses in his writings. See how many they can find...
  - Walk in darkness/light (1:6-7); say we have no sin/confess our sins (1:8-9); keep God's commands/don't keep (2:3-5); Love the world/love the Father (2:15); They/Us (2:19); Antichrist/Christ (2:22); Deny Christ/Confess Christ (2:23); Confident at Christ's return/ashamed (2:28); Those who commit sin/those that do right (3:4-7); Children of the Devil/God (3:10); hates his brother/loves (3:10ff)...
- ⇒ In today's text, we move into the second part of 1 John and John develops his contrast of hate & love.
  - The theme of 1:5-3:10 is God is light.
  - Now in 3:11-5:12 the theme shifts to God is love. And because God is love, Christians are to love one another.

## BIBLE STUDY:

1. Love one another and do not follow the example of Cain (1 John 3:11-15).
  - a. Last week we wrapped up our lesson in verse 10 where John presents two tests to see if one is a child of God: (1) they do what is right; (2) they love others.
  - b. John now makes an obvious point: there is a clear contrast between the children of God and the children of the Devil, between lovers and haters.
  - c. Vs. 11-13: Love is at the heart of the Gospel.
    - i. This is hardly something new! We are to love one another.
    - ii. Sound familiar? It should! Consider: John 13:34, 15:12, 15:17; Romans 12:10, 13:8; Galatians 5:13; Ephesians 4:1-2; 1 Thess. 3:12, 4:9; Hebrews 10:24; 1 Peter 1:22, 4:8.
    - iii. God thinks that loving others is extremely important! We are to play no favorites and show no biases. If we truly love God, our love for others will be the natural fruit.
    - iv. John contrasts how we should be (loving) with Cain, the first murderer in history. John says that Cain was motivated by his spiritual father which resulted in evil acts.
    - v. To all this John says, "Do not be surprised" (13). It is natural for the world to hate us because the world's father hates us.
  - d. Vs. 14-15: Love provides assurance that we have eternal life.
    - i. Vs. 14: Loving others has numerous benefits and blessings. One is that we know we have been born again and have eternal life.

1. Interestingly, the word “brethren” appears 15 times in 1 John and almost always has in view the family of God.
2. In this text, John is particularly calling our attention to love our brothers and sisters in Christ. This is one of the major values of the local church! It’s the place we get to practice loving others.
- e. John’s point is quite simple: No love = no life. Love and hate are moral and spiritual opposites.
2. Serve one another and follow the example of Christ (1 John 3:16-18).
  - a. Real love, God’s love, is shown as well as spoken. It is tangible and not theoretical.
  - b. Vs. 16: Loving others means dying to self. Just as Jesus laid down His life for us, we must be willing to do the same for others. This is the root of what it means to love others. John is saying, “You want to know what love looks like? Look to the cross!”
  - c. Vs. 17: Loving others always involves giving. Now John gets very practical. Saying “I love you” is the easy part. But are you willing to give something to meet an actual need in someone else’s life?
  - d. Vs. 18: John knows that our hearts ought to control our hands. Love is an action that always expresses itself in good deeds done in the context of truth. We are to love and care for others as we have been cared for and loved by Christ.

#### APPLICATION/DISCUSSION:

- ⇒ Loving others means having open ears, open eyes, and open hands for the hurting. How in tune are we to the needs that are around us?
- ⇒ Why do you think John is concerned with showing love through “this world’s goods” rather than just with spiritual support, encouragement, etc.?
- ⇒ Pray that God will give you seeing eyes and listening ears as you go through the week. Most importantly, that we will be willing to step in and show the love of Christ to others as we love and serve them.

NEXT WEEK’S TEXT: 1 John 3:18-24