

ALL WE NEED IS LOVE / Sunday, April 12, 2015

Unifying Topic: LOVE ONE ANOTHER

Lesson Text

I. The Absence Of Love (1 John 3:11-17)

II. The Practice Of Love (1 John 3:18-22)

III. The Reward Of Love (1 John 3:23-24)

The Main Thought: For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another (1 John 3:11, KJV).

Unifying Principle: People wonder whether life is a random sequence of events or has an ordered purpose. How do believers measure meaning in life? John's letter indicates that the measure of people's lives is calculated by their faith in Christ and their love for one another.

Lesson Aim: To examine John's claim that love is central to the Christian life.

Life Aim: To learn to express unconditional love to others and to know that this love originates in God.

HISTORY:

1. What we are - "sons of God" (v.1)
2. What we shall be - "like him" (v.2)
3. What we should be - "pure" (v.3)

1John 3 Verse 1 tells us who we are—members of God's family. **Verse 2** tells us who we are becoming—reflections of God. **Verse 3** tells us the incentive of God's love—live pure lives. John does not deny that Christians sin. There is the need for deliverance for whoever commits sin, that is, keeps on sinning, for they transgress the law (v.4). The **provision for deliverance:** Christ took away our sins, for He had no sin (v.5). The **proof of deliverance:** abiding in Christ we do not sin and if we sin we have not known Him (v.6). We are not to be deceived about the matter of sin and righteousness (v.7). For the person who keeps on sinning is of the devil, for the devil sinned from the beginning. The Son of God came to earth for this purpose—to destroy the works of the devil (v.8). The **result of deliverance:** whosoever is born of God does not commit sin; for God's seed remains in him and he cannot sin because he is born of God (v.9). Therefore, love reveals one's true nature. It will show that one is either a child of God or of the devil (v.10). God loves us and makes us His children. There is no greater love than the love of God. Why? - Because He loves us, He is bound to show us His love. The world will not know Him unless love is practiced among the brethren.

LESSON:

3:11 For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. John was not teaching something new. Since the beginning of gospel proclamation, love has been the central theme of Christianity. John emphasizes what they heard from the beginning through the apostles: the proclamation that we should love one another.

3:12 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. Love does not persecute the righteous. The extreme case is used to illustrate the point—that of murder. Cain did not love his brother, therefore he was of that wicked one, the devil, and persecuted his brother. Cain committed the very first murder on earth: he killed his own brother Abel. Why? - Because Abel was a believer. Abel believed God; that he was to worship God exactly like God said, by the blood of a sacrificial animal. Cain did not accept such a belief. He felt that if he brought the fruit of his own hands to God, then God would accept him because of his hard work and because he worshipped and gave offerings to God. God accepted Abel's worship and offering, but not Cain's. Therefore, he became jealous

¹ <http://www.family-times.net/commentary/a-clear-description-of-gods-children/>
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-sundayschool.html>

and envious of Abel and killed him.

3:13 Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you. John says don't be surprised; don't wonder, if we love Christ, and the world persecutes us, they hated Christ because they do not know Him. People who live good lives expose and shame those who don't. If we live for God, the world will often hate us because we make them painfully aware of their immoral way of living.

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. Love is the proof that one has passed from death to life. A lack of love indicates that one is spiritually dead; abides in death. Spiritual death speaks of a person who is dead while still lives.

- A person who wastes his life in riotous living is spiritually dead.
- A person who has not partaken of Christ is spiritually dead.
- A person who does not have the spirit of Christ is said to be spiritually dead.
- A person who lives in sin is spiritually dead.
- A person who is alienated from God is said to be spiritually dead.
- A person who sleeps in sin is spiritually dead
- A person who lives in sinful pleasure is dead while he lives.
- A person who does not have the Son of God is dead.
- A person who does great religious works, but does the wrong works is dead.

3:15 Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. Someone who is characterized by hate has never experienced the new birth. Love doesn't hate, so whoever hates his brother is a murderer. Hate is equal to murder. Many people feel that they are acceptable to God and that God will never reject them, yet they have all kinds of negative feelings against others. A person who hates has the very same feelings and spirit that the murderer does—a spirit of anger, bitterness, and contempt. God looks and judges by the heart. Some can camouflage what is in their heart, but not from God. Note: no murderer has eternal life, and the same implications are also for the person who hates his brother.

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. John is saying: by this we know love; we know what real love is. It's from Christ's example in dying for us.

- When we were without strength, totally unable to help ourselves or to save ourselves (Rom.5:6).
- When we were ungodly (Rom.5:6).
- When we were sinners (Rom.5:8).
- When we were enemies of God, rebelling, cursing, neglecting, ignoring, denying, and rejecting God (Rom.5:10).

Despite all this, Jesus Christ died for us; God took our sins and the guilt and placed them upon Jesus, and He paid the judgment for all. Why? - Because He loves us enough to die for us, even when we opposed Him. He has done all this for us. It comes down to what we ought to do. The real test of Christian love is not simply failure to do evil to others, but will you lay down your life for the brethren! The meaning is that saints ought to risk their lives, and expose themselves to dangers, for the sake of their brethren. We prove whether or not we know the love of Christ by our love for others, even for those who do us evil.

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?— *"This world's good"* relates to necessities of <http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-sundayschool.html>

life; livelihood; the means to sustain life. This is not to mean that a person must be rich to be obligated to his brother. It only means that he has the sustenance that his brother needs. However, if we have the bare necessities of life and see a person in need, how can we close our hearts against him and say that God's love dwell in us?

3:18 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. ²One may love in word only, and yet the affectionate words may be quite sincere; and this is a common case. People say kind things which they mean at the moment, but afterwards they do not take the trouble to act kindly. But to love with the tongue only is far worse. This is to say kind things which one does not mean, and which one knows to be unreal. Deeds are needed to complete the kind word; truth is needed to correct the insincere tongue.

3:19 And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him. "*Hereby*" refers to what was said in verse 18. Our deed and truth play a tremendous part in our action of love we demonstrate toward others. We are to practice real love, not just talk about it. When we do that kind of love (love in action), it gives our hearts assurance and confidence coming before God. We are of the truth because others feel our love. We are of the truth because we do what we say when we're going to do—being real disciples under the real Shepherd—belonging to God who is Truth.

3:20 For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. So, if our heart (our conscience), condemns us, we don't have that assurance and confidence to come before Him, for His greatness is greater than our hearts. And we want to please God, for He knows all things about us, and will correct our behavior. He knows how to deliver us from guilt and condemnation and He knows how to remove all condemnation from our hearts. How? By love! - By loving us so much that He would give His only begotten Son to die for us.

3:21 Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. If our conscience is clear, then we really have that confidence to come toward God; having nothing in our way. Our hearts are full of assurance and confidence knowing that all things are well with us and God. There is no more condemnation or guilt. We know that we are forgiven and cleansed through the blood of Jesus.

3:22 And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. The people needed to be assured. This lets us know that when we keep God's commandments, and do what pleases the Father, whatever we ask; whatever we pray according to his Will, we receive of God (see the stipulation; the condition?—obeying His Commandments—doing what pleases God). God knows what pleases Him. He cannot reward our unfaithfulness nor our disobedience. If a child disobeys his father, he displeases his father. The same is true with God.

3:23 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. If a person wants a clean heart, he must do these two things in this verse:

1. First, he must believe on the name of God's Son Jesus Christ. What does it mean to believe on the name? A person's name stands for what he is; the kind of person he is; and the kind of things he does. Therefore, to believe on the name of Jesus Christ means to believe in all that He stands for and in all that He is. Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Promised Savior and Messiah of the world!
 - a. He is the Son of God who has come to earth to reveal God.
 - b. He is the great advocate and sacrifice for man and his sins.

² http://biblehub.com/1_john/3-18.htm
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-sundayschool.html>

Believing on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ is the only way a person can ever have a clean heart before God.

2. Second, he must love all others. This is God's commandment to us.

3:24 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. The person who keeps God's commandments (believing in His Name and loves others) dwells in God and God in him.

- We dwell in God: This means that we take up residence in God, live and walk in Him, live and move and have our being in Him. It means we make our home in Him.
- God dwells in us: This means that He takes up residence in us, lives and moves, and has His being within us. It means that God makes a home in our hearts.

How do we know God dwells in us? - By the Holy Spirit!— "*we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.*" The Holy Spirit of God seals and guarantees us, gives us absolute assurance. He lives in us, talks to us, shares with us, leads and guides us, disciplines us, convicts and convinces us. He is our constant and permanent companion. He never leaves us nor forsakes us. He is always infusing us with the assurance and confidence of God with His presence and power.

SUMMARY:

The message heard from the beginning was of love; love one another (**v.11**). The example given was of Cain who was wicked and slew his brother Abel. Cain's works were evil but his brother Abel's was righteous (**v.12**). Even though you are to love one another, don't be surprised if the world hates you (**v.13**). If we love other Christians it proves that we have been delivered from hell and given eternal life. But a person who doesn't have love for others is headed for eternal death (**v.14**). Anyone who hates his Christian brother is really a murderer; a murderer does not have eternal life within (**v.15**).

³Christ left an example for us as He willingly laid down His life for us (**v.16**). This means serving with no thought of receiving anything in return. The test of Christian love is not in great testimonies about love, but in quietly helping a brother who is in need (**vv.17-18**). If we do not even help a brother, it is not likely we would ever "*lay down our lives for the brethren.*"

Love of the brethren is an indication that one is "*of the truth*", just as it was an indication that one had passed from death to life (**v.19; v.14**). If our own hearts condemn us, God knows it, for He's greater and knows all things (**v.20**). And if we don't have condemning hearts our conscience is clear and we are able to come before God with confidence (**v.21**). Then whatever we ask in prayer, we'll receive, because we keep God's commandments and do the things that please Him (**v.22**). He gives us the commandment: believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another (**v.23**). So as we keep His commandments, we dwell in Him, and He in us. He does this by the gift of His Holy Spirit He has given to abide in us (**v.24**).

³ <http://www.family-times.net/commentary/love-is-an-action-not-a-feeling/>
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-sundayschool.html>