

# So That You May Know

## An Expository Study of the Epistle of **1 John**

### Chapter 14- The Second Line **1John 3:11-18**

#### 129. Distinguishing Between Love and Hate- Part 13

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WAOY Friday/Wednesday 12/28/07- 01/02/08

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We're continuing our verse by verse "journey" through the Epistle of **1John**, and today I want to continue to look at what John taught about "The Distinction Between Love and Hate". So, let's read **1John 3:11-18** again together:

**11** For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another;

**12** not as Cain, *who* was of the evil one and slew his brother. And for what reason did he slay him? Because his deeds were evil, and his brother's were righteous.

**13** Do not be surprised, brethren, if the world hates you.

**14** We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death.

**15** Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

**16** We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

**17** But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?

**18** Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.

Now over the last several broadcasts- we have been looking very closely at verses 14 & 15 of this passage- and today I want us to read those verses again:

**14** We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death.

**15 Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.**

Now we have been discussing just how we are to manifest this great love toward one another and refrain from descending into a place where we no longer care about each other by looking at a forgotten but very scriptural concept called Church Discipline.

As we discussed last time, Church Discipline was instituted by no other than Jesus Christ Himself and is spelled out for us to examine in **Matthew 18**.

Church Discipline is based upon the Biblical concept that saved people not only belong to the Lord- but that saved people belong to each other as well. It is based upon the concept that my love for you and your love for me doesn't stop when the Church service is over- but extends all throughout the day; the week; and goes with us in every area of life.

In our modern culture that promotes individualism as a virtue- Church Discipline and the notion that we are all joined together and are accountable to each other is looked at today as being wrong, strange, weird, unloving and in some cases- this concept is even called unchristian- even though Christ Himself initiated it.

As we discussed last time, it is not a manifestation of love, dear friends, to simply watch another brother or sister descend into sin and not at least try to stop them. That is not a manifestation of selfless love- but is a manifestation of you and me getting to a place where we simply do not care enough about each other- which is what John was talking about in this passage.

I completely understand that it is far easier to just turn your head and pretend that you don't see- but Jesus said that the Christian Church cannot and will not operate like the lost pagan world. In the Church- there is love. In the Church there is mercy and restoration and forgiveness and longsuffering and an undying effort to bear one another's burdens.

It is not a Christian concept, beloved to think that we are free to interpret Scripture anyway that we are free to live anyway that we chose and to be unattached and unaccountable to each other. Even though many today think that those concepts are good or even desired-

you simply cannot find those concepts anywhere in Scripture. That is the way the lost pagan world operates- but not the Church.

Jesus Christ is the Lord of the Church and as the Lord- He is to have the preeminence in all things done in and by the Church and those who are part of it. And the one single way that we know what Jesus wants done in His Church is to follow those things that are clearly laid out for us in Scripture. The issue of brotherly love and Church Discipline is no exception.

In **Matthew 18**, the Lord of the Church spelled out for us in red letters what is to be done when a saved person falls into sin. This is a four step process that is called Church Discipline. Jesus said that if we sincerely love each other- this is one of the ways that we will manifest that love.

In our example- we are dealing with a brother who has fallen into the sin of adultery. This brother has abandoned his wife and ash moved out and is living with his girlfriend in an apartment.

We love this man and believe that he is saved has fallen into sin- so just exactly what are we to do about this? The world says that we are to do nothing- that this is none of our business and that at best all we can or should do is pray for them.

This method is based upon several premises. First, in order to accept this method- we must believe that marriage is a private and not a public matter. Secondly, we must buy into the notion that nobody has the right to tell anybody else how to live. Third, we must also believe that being a Christian has nothing to do with how we live or how we conduct our lives. Fourth- we must accept that the individual members of the Church have no bearing on the corporate testimony of the Church as a whole. And fifthly- we must also believe that we are lone rangers and that we are not responsible for each other and that we are not accountable to each other.

I hope that I don't have to tell you that none of what I just said is true- but in fact the Bible teaches just the opposite of each one of these assumptions.

Marriage is a public- not a private matter and the success or failure of a marriage affects everybody both in and out of the Church. As the Creator and Owner of the Universe- God does have the right to tell everybody how to live and God has made His Will about how we are to live our lives crystal clear and inspired 40 men, who lived on our

different continents over a 1500 year time frame to pen down exactly how God views marriage and sin and righteousness. And those who lead in the Church have not only the right but they have the responsibility to shepherd the sheep of that flock and to guard their souls and they are accountable to God for their lives.

And being saved does indeed mean something and how you live and what you believe and how you conduct your life has everything to do with whether or not you are a Christian. Because Salvation is so much more than simply walking down an aisle or praying a prayer or getting baptized or speaking in tongues- but because Salvation is the supernatural and miraculous transformation of the human nature from being Adamic to being divine- then if you are saved –you will have a radical and visible change in your life.

And because it is also true that the corporate witness that the Church has in the community is directly tied to how the members of that Church live- and because it is also true that not only are we responsible for each other- but we are accountable to each other- because all of that is true- then you can easily see that since all of this is true- then Church Discipline as outlined by Jesus is the only game in town when a brother in Christ falls into sin.

So in our example- a brother in the Lord has fallen into sin. What do we do? We have looked at the red letter words of Jesus Christ found in Matthew 18, and we have gone to that brother and he has rejected our humble pleas to repent and to go back to his wife. We then found out that Jesus said that we are to take one or two witnesses with us to confront him again in love and brokenness.

Again, this brother has refused to do what he knows is right. We then obeyed our Lord and brought it to the attention of the Church. Now he has still not repented and still is living in rebellion and in violation of his marriage covenant. What now?

Again, we must turn to the Lord of the Church to receive His Wise Counsel. Lets' read the last part of **Matthew 18:17b**:

**... and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.**

Three times this man has been lovingly and humbly confronted. Three times he has rejected the godly counsel of those who genuinely

love him and are guarding his soul. Three times he has remained steadfast in his sin. All the while he is refusing to repent- the Holy Spirit is constantly dealing with his heart. If he refuses to repent at this point- Jesus Christ says that we are to look at this man as though he was a heathen and a publican.

Now we need to carefully look at what Jesus is saying here. First of all- the Bible says that this man is to be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. We are to look at this man as being both a heathen and a publican. But as we do this- as we look on this man as being a heathen and a publican – we must remember that he is not a heathen and he is not a publican- he is a covenant brother who has fallen into sin.

The only reason that we are to look on him as being those two things is because he is in sin and he will not repent. By looking at this man and treating this man as though he was a heathen and a publican- the hope is still there that he will repent. So even though we are commanded by the red letters words of Jesus Christ to look on this man as being both a heathen and a publican- we must be careful to always leave the door opened and we are to leave the light on; and we are to constantly go to the window to see if we can see this prodigal coming over the hill way off in the distance and that maybe after one, two, three, or even fifteen years of being in the hog pen- he will come to his senses and cry out to God and repent and come home.

Jesus' choice of words here is interesting. Notice that Jesus didn't say that this man is actually a heathen- but that we are to look at him as being a heathen.

Now just what was a heathen to Jesus? We cannot say that a heathen is someone who is a sinner because we are all sinners. No, a heathen to Jesus is someone who doesn't understand the ways of God. A heathen to Jesus is a non-Jew- a barbarian; an unlearned and ignorant person who does not know the ways of God.

For this man to continue to live in sin- knowing that it is sin and refusing to repent proves that he doesn't know the ways of God and we are to treat this man as an heathen as though he is ignorant of the ways of God- even though in reality he does know. Again, the goal here is that this man will repent; that the weight of the guilt of his sin will force him to his knees.

Now notice that Jesus also termed this man as being a publican. A publican in the days of Jesus was tax collector- a man who betrayed his own people for personal gain. A tax collector collected taxes of the Jews to give to the Romans- and was the most despised man in all of Israel. Again, we must be careful here because even though tax collectors were despised- Jesus chose one of them- Matthew- to be His disciple.

Jesus did not fellowship with heathens; the people of God did not entertain tax collectors. These people had knowingly betrayed the people of God and were agents of the enemy. So in this case- the believer who refuses to repent and who has gone through all three of the phases and is still in his sin is not to have any social friendship with the people of the Church. Their actions toward him is not a reflection of their anger- but a reflection of their brokenness over his sin and his refusal to repent. Of course the remedy is for him to repent and come home.

Well, I have to stop right here, but please join me on the next broadcast as we continue our journey through the Epistle of **1John**. May God help us all.

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