

Subject: *Straight Talk about Loving Others*

Scripture: *1 John 3:11-24*

John introduces this passage in verse 10, by showing us the difference between children of God and children of the devil. God's children do what is right and they love others. The devil's children live in sin and hate others. It's as simple as that.

1. The command to love others (vs. 11, 22-23)

The "message" (same as in 1:5) is only found twice in the NT and it means to sum up a truth that is supremely important.

- **Matthew 22:36-40** ³⁶ *Master, which is the great commandment in the law?* ³⁷ *Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.* ³⁸ *This is the first and great commandment.* ³⁹ *And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.* ⁴⁰ *On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.*
- **John 13:34-35** ³⁴ *A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.* ³⁵ *By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.* What this world needs is not a new definition of Christian love, but a new demonstration of Christian love.
- **2 John 1:5** *And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another.*
- **Galatians 5:13-15** ¹³ *For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.* ¹⁴ *For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.* ¹⁵ *But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.* There is something worse than a dog-eat-dog world and that is a dog-eat-dog church.

2. The contrast to loving others (vs. 12-13, 15, 17)

Children of God love one another, but children of the devil are like Cain, who killed (slaughtered, butchered) his brother. Why? Because his works (sacrifices) were evil (rejected) and his brother's righteous (accepted). See Genesis 4:1-9.

Children of God are marked by love. Children of the devil are marked by murder, hatred, and indifference. Cain asked God, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

There is another contrast, and that is between the children of God and the world (vs. 13). Don't be shocked or surprised if the world hates you. The spirit of Cain is not dead. ***John 17:14*** *I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.*

3. The capacity to love others (vs. 14, 24)

God's children have the capacity to love because we have passed from death unto life. That describes the new birth in salvation. Love is one of the birthmarks of a believer (4:7-8). We are partakers of the divine nature. Love for others is not natural; it is supernatural (we are born from above). See Titus 3:3-5.

- **Romans 5:5** *And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.*

- **Galatians 5:22** *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,*
- **1 Thessalonians 4:9** *But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.*
- **1 Peter 1:22** *Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:*

4. The confirmation of loving others (vs. 16-18)

The proof or evidence that we love others is seen in what we do to meet their needs. Jesus met our greatest need by loving us enough to die for us on the cross (vs. 16). Christ's love for others was the exact opposite of Cain's self-love. Cain loved himself and sacrificed his own brother. But Christ loved us and sacrificed Himself.

- **Romans 5:8** *But God commendeth (demonstrated) his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

Christ's death was unique in that only He could die for sins, but His death was also an example for us to follow. **Philippians 2:4-5** ⁴*Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.* ⁵*Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.*

We prove or confirm our love for others by doing what we can to meet basic needs. It's not in the spectacular things, but in everyday things. Love is proven not by what we say but what we do (vs. 18). In that regard it is just like faith. Faith without works is dead. True faith is seen in action and known by what it does.

When we love others we have assurance before God that we have been saved and we belong to Him (vs. 19-21, 24). We have the outer witness of loving others by what we do and we have the inner witness of assuring our hearts, and the Holy Spirit gives us that assurance.