

**EPISTLE OF 1 JOHN**  
**LOVE FOR THE BRETHREN**  
**1 JOHN 3:10c-18**

**EPISTLE OF 1 JOHN**  
**LOVE FOR THE BRETHREN**  
**1 JOHN 3:10c-18**

**Introduction**

Last time we saw in *verses 5-10* of this Chapter how that our abiding in Christ and practicing righteousness is a proof of our being a Child of God and if one is not practicing righteousness, but rather practicing and living in sin, that is proof that they are a child of the devil!

*Verse 10* transitions us into our topic for this evening—our love for the brethren. Look at *verse 10* again. John says here that **this is another way that the children of God are manifest as well as the children of the devil! Those who do not love the brethren are not of God!**

**Read verses 11-18**

These verses teach that we know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. (*Vs 14*) **So, love of the brethren is another proof that we are saved...that we are the children of God!**

**I. WE HAVE BEEN TAUGHT FROM THE BEGINNING TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER! (Vs 11)**  
**Having taught that the children of God are characterized by righteousness and freedom from the practice of sin, John now adds this additional characteristic— Children of God should love each other!**

*Verse 11 declares that love is one of the primary or beginning messages of Christianity. “For this is the message which ye have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.”*

*“The message”* (Cf. 1:5) denotes **the heart and substance of the Christian’s basic and indispensable duty.** This *message* had been heard from the beginning of their Christian experience. **The message is “that we should love one another.”**

There is no new message given here, just the message that they had heard from the beginning of their life in Christ! We are to love one another.

This message begins with our Christian experience and continues through out our Christian pilgrimage.

This command to love one another originates in Jesus Himself and so it is a foundational teaching of Christianity. (*John. 13:34f; 15:12*)

The word **“love”** here is translated from the Greek word which refers to *divine love*, which is **self-sacrificial love.** This *love* is produced in the heart of the yielded saint by the Holy Spirit.

**The Gospel is based upon three loves:**

**GOD’S LOVE FOR US!** The love of God came to us in the person and work of Jesus Christ! God’s greatest expression of His love for us is seen at Calvary! (*4:9-10*)

**OUR LOVE FOR HIM!** After we believe the Gospel and are saved, our love for Him flows from His great love for us! (*4:19*)

**OUR LOVE FOR OTHERS!** When we believed the Gospel, God’s Divine nature through His Holy Spirit began to dwell in us! As we were taught to love others, that love should flow from our love for Him and wanting to live in obedience to His commandments! (*4:11*)

**II. WHAT WE ARE NOT TO BE! (Vs 12)**

Before telling us precisely what love is, we are first told what it is not or rather what we are not to be in verse 12.

Cain killing his brother Abel is the classic example of where the loss of brotherly love can lead. The first murder was when Cain killed his brother Abel! (*Gen. 4:1-8*) In slaying his brother, Cain proved that he was of the evil one! Remember what Jesus said about the devil in *John 8:44* *Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.*

**EPISTLE OF 1 JOHN**  
**LOVE FOR THE BRETHREN**  
**1 JOHN 3:10c-18**

Because Cain's works were evil and unacceptable to God and those of Abel were righteous and acceptable to God, Cain became jealous. This resentment festered until it became hatred and then ended in murder.

Murder is in the heart before it is in the hand. It came out of his character and attitude. Therefore Scripture warns us against even having the wrong attitude toward others. Hatred has no place in the Believer's heart, neither toward another Believer or any other person. The only thing a Christian should hate is sin!

**III. WHY LOVE OF THE BRETHREN IS NEEDED! (Vs 13)**  
**Our love for each other is needed and necessary because the world hates the righteous!**

People who are morally upright and live in the light of God's love actually **expose the evil of this world!** The unrighteous then become **painfully aware that their deeds and their life are unacceptable,** but most will not come to Jesus and repent and be changed.

*John 3:19-20 19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. 20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd.*

Instead they try to **bring down** those living in righteousness!  
We see it right now in a major way in our day and time! (LGBTQ)

We shouldn't be shocked when the world despises us because our life makes them painfully aware of their immoral way of living! They hate what is good instead of fleeing from evil!

Satan controls people through their raging anger, sometimes causing them to murder, sometimes causing them to murder reputations and to speak lies. How horrible to live on the same level as Satan.

**EPISTLE OF 1 JOHN**  
**LOVE FOR THE BRETHREN**  
**1 JOHN 3:10c-18**

*I heard a story about a hunter taking refuge in a cave during a lightning storm. While he waited for the storm to end, he decided to investigate the cave a little so he turned on his flashlight. When he did he discovered he was sharing the cave with an assortment of spiders, lizards, snakes, and bats! Then he decided the lightning storm wasn't so bad after all!*

The unsaved world only sees how it is living when a Christian shines the light of Christ upon their hateful attitudes and the lies fostered by that old serpent Satan and his cohorts!

But since they live in darkness, **they try to cover up their true nature with attacks on the light of Christ they see in Believers! Our light shining makes them uncomfortable! So they want us to go away and not shine the light in their direction! They want to be left to their darkness!**

Sadly, if they don't repent and come to the light, they will eventually be cast into outer darkness along Satan to be separated from God and His people forever.

Why is love of the Brethren needed? Because we're going to catch enough grief from this lost world we live in! We don't need it from our Brethren too!

**IV. TESTING THE REALITY OF OUR SALVATION! (Vs 14)**  
**Verse 14 gives us a way to test the reality of our Christianity.**

Those who have been born again by the spirit of God have passed from death unto life! Jesus said:

*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.***

**EPISTLE OF 1 JOHN**  
**LOVE FOR THE BRETHREN**  
**1 JOHN 3:10c-18**

The words translated “*hath*” and “*is passed*” there are in the perfect tense which indicate a **permanent abiding result because of a past action!** When we believed on Jesus as our Lord and Savior we passed into a new abode, and we live and abide there.

**The definitive sign, the proof, that we have made this eternal passage, from death into life, is our love for the brethren.**

The natural state of man is selfishness! **To love others is the proof that the natural, the old state, has been abandoned.** If we have the state or position of **life**, we will have the activity or disposition of **love**.

If love is not present, then you remain in your original state, abode or condition, which is death. He who does not love is still within the realm of the death culture.

**V. HOW HATE RELATES TO MURDER! (Vs 15)**

*Verse 15* testifies that hatred of some other believer is the moral equivalent of murder.

Hatred of a brother is tantamount to murder. Hatred is the wish that the other person was no longer here. The presence of murderous hatred is an indication that one does not belong to the family of God.

You may be thinking, yes I have hated but I have never murdered anyone. But Christianity begins in the heart, outward compliance alone is not sufficient.

*A visitor at THE ZOO was chatting with the keeper of the lion house. "I have a cat at home," said the visitor, "and your lions act just like my cat. Look at them sleeping so peacefully! It seems a shame that you have to put those beautiful creatures behind bars." "My friend," the keeper laughed, "these may look like your cat, but their disposition is radically different. There's murder in their hearts. You'd better be glad the bars are there."*

**EPISTLE OF 1 JOHN**  
**LOVE FOR THE BRETHREN**  
**1 JOHN 3:10c-18**

The only reason some people have never actually murdered anyone is because of the "bars" that have been put up: the fear of arrest, the penalties of the law, and the possibility of death or retribution. The question of guilt is not so much what did you do but what did you want to do.

Hatred that is continually nurtured yields A BITTER FRUIT in the heart and life of the one who harbors it!  
*Hebrews 12:14-15 14 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: 15 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;*

We should never allow our minds to become fertile soil for the seeds of hatred. James gave wise counsel when he said, in *James 1:19-20* “*Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: 20 For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.*”

Let's not forget that “*whoever hateth his brother is a murderer.*” How important it is, therefore, never to nurture hatred's bitter fruit!

**VI. SHOWING LOVE OR BEING INDIFFERENT! 16-18.**

**The first part of *Verse 16* reveals the nature of God's love toward us —It was a SACRIFICIAL ACTION!**

The second part of *Verse 16* calls for us to have the same kind of love towards the brethren!

**The test of Christian love is not simply failure to do evil to others. Love also involves doing them good. Christian love is both positive and negative.**

Notice that John defines love as the laying down of one's life for others. *John 15:13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.*

**EPISTLE OF 1 JOHN**  
**LOVE FOR THE BRETHREN**  
**1 JOHN 3:10c-18**

Love is a readiness to do good for other people as needed...it is a preparedness to give up one's life or part of one's life so that others may live!

In other words, the love of Christ goes far BEYOND FEELINGS and much deeper than words. Feelings will often play a part in love, but they are never the whole picture.

We were not saved by Christ's feelings for us. We were rescued by His freely giving himself both to suffer and die for our sin!

Christ's love was not a passive love...it was not just tender affection...it was not just sympathy! He did for us what we could not do for ourselves!

By laying down His life for us, Jesus showed us that real love is not just a feeling, it is an action. It produces selfless sacrificial service. Christ did not simply talk about love, He proved it. God's love is full of blood, sweat, cries of anguish, and tears! He suffered for you!

Self-preservation is a law of physical life, but self-sacrifice is the way of spiritual life.

Jesus said that the greatest act of love is giving one's life for others. God's love produces self-sacrifice. Christ gave His life as a sacrifice on the cross to save others.

Jesus illustrated the matter of loving one's neighbor with the story of the Good Samaritan! (**Luke 10:25-27**)

A lawyer wanted to talk in the abstract. "*Who is my neighbor?*" While Jesus focused in on one man in need and one man who sacrificed to help that man in need!

*Galatians 6:10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.*

**EPISTLE OF 1 JOHN**  
**LOVE FOR THE BRETHREN**  
**1 JOHN 3:10c-18**

Rather than looking at love as a feeling, we should look at it as actions!

**Verses 17 and 18 show us how we can lay down our lives for others.**

It is done by helping those who are in need.

**Verse 17** calls Christians to generous material acts of kindness to a brother or sister in need.

**Verse 18 is a fitting thought to concluded this lesson on love!**

Christian love is more than just **loving "in word"** which means *to simply talk with or even reason with someone about their need!*

Christian love is more than just **loving "in tongue"** which means *to tell someone with words that you love them!*

**Christian love means loving in deed and truth!**

To **"love in deed"** means to actually do something tangible about meeting someone's need. To **"love in truth"** means *to genuinely love a person with the heart and not just the tongue. Genuine love is practical, visible and active. It comes with concrete actions.*

**Conclusion**

**So, how is your love for the brethren?**

How easy it is to talk sentimentally about love as an intangible thing! But it's much more difficult to put it into practice in the trying situations of real life.

This is the way we can test if we love:

Is your love tangible in deed or is it still abstract or in word? Try loving in deed and in compassion. It is the test of real love.