

Lesson 5

Small Group Discussion

1 John 3:11-24



Context of the Chapter

Recommended song for worship:

So Will I - Benjamin Hastings



We have now covered the first half of the book of 1 John. We can see that there has been a pattern of the Apostle John emphasizing the love of God and its connection to a transformed life. The Apostle John has also been reminding the church of their constant need for Christ Who is able and willing to help in our time of trouble. After some black and white statements made about obedience and our identity, the chapter shifts focus to the importance of genuine love and what it is rooted in.

Hatred, anger, and even murder are rooted in comparison, offense, and sin. We cannot follow Christ and be people who practice comparison, offense, and sin. We must commit ourselves to love as Christians, why? Because Christ has loved us! Jesus states that he who has been forgiven much, loves much. The key to having a forgiving and loving heart is to be connected to our own need for forgiveness from Jesus. The Apostle John describes what genuine love looks like and the everlasting fruit it produces.

Questions/Sermon Study

1 John 3:11 • We Must Love!

Love has been the central message of the Gospel since it was proclaimed by Christ and carried on by His apostles. Loving others is not an optional behavior for a disciple of Jesus, but rather a by-product of our new nature in Christ as we are born again.

1. The following cross-references show us the importance of love and God's expectation for the believer to have a loving and forgiving heart.
 - **1 Corinthians 13:1-7** • *Without love we cannot please God*
 - **John 13:34-35** • *Love is how we show the world we are His disciples*
 - **Matthew 18:21-35** • *Love is how we should we have been forgiven*
2. Is there any area or relationship in your life that you need to forgive or to have your heart empowered by God to love?

1 John 3:12-15 • Loving Good and Hating Evil

The Apostle John uses the story of Cain and Able to further explain love. The root of anger and hatred is not emotion, but rather it is sin. The Bible is clear that evil hates what is good just as what is truly good hates what is evil. It is a war, and if we are living in sin we will become jaded to what is good, and living a life of love will be impossible. What do the following passages indicate about this battle between good and evil?



3. **Matthew 10:24-25** • *They called Jesus a demon; how much more will we be ridiculed as we live a life of love as He did.*
4. **John 3:19-21** • *The darkness hates the light.*

John draws another hard line in saying that no murderers will enter the kingdom of Heaven. This word for “hate” in the Greek is a verb tense that means “*in the process of with no indication of being completed.*” What this means is that the person “murdering” or “hating” is doing so habitually or they may not be continually sinning in these areas but have embraced and justified their actions of doing so in the past. The Scripture is telling us that it is impossible to do so and at the same time be born again of God. The Christian may struggle with sin, even hate, but they will also run to Christ for strength and forgiveness.

5. Do you find similarities in what John is said here and what Jesus said in **Matthew 5:21-26**?
6. Do you view hatred or anger as a serious offense to God and a gateway for Satan? Or do you tend to justify anger?

It is clear that the world and Christians are in as much opposition to each other as light and dark or hatred and love. Therefore, Jesus warns us: do not be taken off guard when the world hates you.

7. How should we respond to persecution or hatred for standing on the truth and love of Christ according to **John 15:18-27**?

1 John 3:16-18 • True Love

The Apostle John goes on to explain to us what true love is, and it is defined by the love of Jesus. Jesus did not love us in thought and word only, but He loved us by laying down His life for us. He also did this while we were still sinners! We are called to do the same, to unconditionally love a lost world just like Christ has unconditionally loved us. **Romans 5:6-11**.

8. We can use the phrase “love” a lot. **James 2:14-26** gives us a similar picture of “love without works is dead,” so also, “faith without works is dead.” In this context, ask the question: “Do I really love people?”

1 John 3:19-24 • Assurance

The Apostle John wraps up chapter 3 by continuing the theme of assurance. How are we assured before God? By obeying His commands. However, the Scripture also points out in verse 20 that even when we have failed, God is greater than our hearts. We can trust in the finished work of Christ when we are at our lowest, and God will pick us up.

Obedying God does not only give us confidence and an effective witness, it also connects us to the heart of God in prayer. Oftentimes a sign that we are being disobedient or we are living in sin is that our prayer life begins to dwindle. We see in this Scripture that as we obey God, He changes our hearts, gives us confidence, and promises that He will answer and hear our prayers. Of course, this must be in alignment with His will, but that is exactly what obedience does, it aligns us with His will.

9. Read **John 15:1-8** • Do you sense the Holy Spirit’s work in your life to obey God? Why or why not?
10. Do you have a desire to pray?
11. Do you feel as if you know how to have an effective prayer life?

- **Galatians 5:22-23** • Fruit of the Spirit
- **Matthew 6:9-13** • in “this manner” pray!
 - Acknowledge God for who He is
 - Submission to His plan and will
 - Asking for our daily needs and giving them to God, this can include praying for others and their needs.
 - Seek forgiveness from our sins
 - Seek the power to forgive those who have sinned against us
 - Ask for the power to overcome our sin 2

Discipleship Focus & Challenge

At Mitchell Berean, we are a church on mission to raise up disciple-makers who share the Gospel where we live, work and play.

A disciple's heart posture is to be a lifelong follower, student, example, and teacher of Jesus Christ.

Luke 9:23 - Follower

John 15:1-8 - Student

John 13:34-35 - Example

Matthew 28:18-20 - Teacher

Fall Campaign Challenge #5: Be an Example of Christ-like Love!

1 John 3:11-24 emphasizes the importance of real love. Real love is sacrificial and must be practiced with those who are the hardest to love. This is what Jesus did, He came to love the unlovable like you and me. **John 13:34-35** tells us that loving one another is how we show the world we are His disciples. Think of one person in the church or who is a believer that is hard for you to love. Pray about something sacrificial you can do for them. Before you do this act for them, pray for them on your own for at least three days. Think of one more person in your life who does not know God that is hard for you to love and do the same thing: pray about something sacrificial you can do for them. Then, before you do it, pray for them for at least three days.

Memorize: 1 John 4:7-8

“Dear friends, let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God.

Anyone who loves is a child of God and knows God.

But anyone who does not love does not know God, for God is love.”