

1 John 3: 11 - 24 (New International Version)

¹⁰ ...This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not God's child, nor is anyone who does not love their brother and sister.

¹¹ For this is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another.

¹² Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own actions were evil and his brother's were righteous. ¹³ Do not be surprised, my brothers and sisters, ^b if the world hates you. ¹⁴ We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love each other. Anyone who does not love remains in death.

¹⁵ Anyone who hates a brother or sister is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life residing in him.

¹⁶ This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. ¹⁷ If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person?

¹⁸ Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.

¹⁹ This is how we know that we belong to the truth and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence: ²⁰ If our hearts condemn us, we know that God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. ²¹ Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God ²² and receive from him anything we ask, because we keep his commands and do what pleases him. ²³ And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us. ²⁴ The one who keeps God's commands lives in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us.

Footnotes:

- a. [1 John 3:2](#) Or *when it is made known*
- b. [1 John 3:13](#) The Greek word for *brothers and sisters* (*adelphoi*) refers here to believers, both men and women, as part of God's family; also in verse 16.

OASIS: Living Deep: 1 John 3: 11-24

Preface: Welcome to our I John “Living Deep” Bible studies, which are published twice a month, at the start of each LIFE Community week. These studies are available in the Sunday morning OASIS course or on the GC “Sermon” webpage by the following Monday. This set of 8 studies proceeds sequentially through the entire book of I John. These studies complement our fall message series but are not sermon-centered. We hope you will get great transformational benefit from both.

Possible starter question: When you think of the command to “love one another,” what are some of the factors or realities that make doing that hard to do?

Transitional comment: Guess what today’s passage is all about? No surprise—it’s about love! Let’s see how this passage about love deepens our understanding and improves our activity.

Let’s listen as several people read our passage aloud (3:11-24), beginning with two transitional verses from our last study. (3 people since 3 paragraphs or 1 person for the whole text.)

(Pray for the Holy Spirit to lead your study, if you haven’t already prayed.)

Read and Overview: Now take several minutes by yourself to study this passage. Look for repeated words and ideas. Note some of the key contrasts.

O What are a few of the repeated words and ideas you saw? What key contrasts did you spot? (3-5 min.)

First Section (v. 3:10-3:15):

O In what ways does v. 11 connect with the preceding v. 10?

(n.b. In reality, the whole section we are studying today is built on 3: 1-10. It just might take too much time to review that in entirety. Hopefully, the transitional sentence will be sufficient. However, do realize that today’s section is built on the foundation of the “great love the Father has lavished on us...”)

What is the central concept of this “topic sentence” in v. 11?

O What are the two problems that John raises (v. 12 -13) that sometimes inhibit our willingness to love one another?

I What issues or concerns do you think John is suggesting that underlies each?

A Which of these do you feel are more problematic to our fellowship or your life? Why?

A what other difficulties or problems block our capacity to love one another?

O What assurances does John want for the Christians to whom he is writing (vs. 14-15)?

I Why do you think John uses so many contrasts in these two verses?

Second Section (v. 16-18):

O What does John explain about real love?

I What insights into the meaning of “lay (laid) down” one’s life does John provide? How might John want the recipients of his letter to live out this?

A Grace Chapel is historically a pretty generous congregation. Any recent examples come to mind? (*i.e. GAW Partners; Flood Relief in Pakistan, Benevolence Fund*)

A How about on a more personal level—how has God been prodding you to be generous and practical toward others in recent months? In humility, share an example.

Third Section (v. 19-24):

O What are several of the primary points that John is making in this paragraph? (*n.b. Some of John's comments in this paragraph are not necessarily easy to understand. So it is important to grasp the major points before wrestling with the more confusing material. Affirm these points.*)

O What do you observe about “our hearts” in vs. 19-21? What do you learn about God?

I How do you interpret what John is saying about our inner lives?

O What do you observe about God's commands in vs. 22-24? And what do you learn about the kind of response that God wants from his children? (*You might even take a moment to identify/locate the Trinity in these verses.*)

O What new insights (new to this section, but not to the letter of I John) does John include in the final sentences of this paragraph, vs. 24?

Prayer together: Pray...

- ❖ that each of our lives would be so deeply marked by the love of God.
- ❖ that during a season when it is easy to be influenced by our culture and self-preoccupation, that our lives would be marked by compassionate, generous and practical acts of love and kindness.

Text notes (you can access biblical texts via www.Biblegateway.com)

- a. BIG idea: Because we have been loved by God, we can love and must love one another!
- b. Key verse/idea: I John 3: 18: “Dear children, let us love...with actions and in truth.”
- c. KEY: O = Observation; I = Interpretation; A = Application (or C = Challenge)

Advice to study leaders:

- d. Complement your OIA questions with “process questions” (what else? What more? What do others of you see/think?).
- e. Determine the core questions you'll ask (know which ones to skip if pressed for time).
- f. Always reword questions in words that are comfortable for you (and, if the question doesn't make sense to you, then discard it.) You want to “own” each question.
- g. When you ask questions, give people ample time to think and respond. How long do you wait? Take your time; don't rush people but encourage their participation. And avoid answering your own questions!
- h. Timing/pacing: allocate your time and move forward gently, with a steady pace.
- i. Application: Pace the study to conclude with “difference making” application.
- j. Secondary texts—use other texts very sparingly, even if they are relevant. Otherwise, other texts will push you more into the “teacher role,” rather than that of facilitator. It also can cause some people to feel distracted or de-powered.
- k. If you are utilizing this “on-line” study and not part of the OASIS course, I recommend that you get the 1-volume commentary entitled New Bible Commentary, Revised (21st Century Edition, IVP). It is well worth the \$40.