

## ALL WE NEED IS LOVE! (Scripture: 1 John 3:10-13)

Introduction:

Do we really love God?

Is love the chief characteristic of our lives?

Do we love one another?

Love shows us whether or not we love God. God is love. Therefore, if we love God, we are bound to love one another. In fact, since God is love, it is absolutely impossible to love God and not love one another. The greatest proof of all that we love God is the mark of love. If people clearly see that we love one another, then we love God. But if we have grudges and hold feelings against anyone else, this is clear proof that we do not love God. Let us confirm these thoughts through the following passages.

*1 John 3:10.*

*10 In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother.*

Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God. Sin separates man from God. If someone lives in sin day in and day out, then there is a good possibility that person is not born of God, and he becomes part of Satan's family. They may have been baptized, given themselves to Christ through altar call. Yet, they may live in sin. Are they really saved? We shall know them by their fruits! They may not be the children of God, and they are most likely children of the devil. But yet, we may not have to make that judgement of their positions. At times, people may have backslid like a prodigal son, and may live a sinful life. We must pray for them, and extend our hands to lift them up from their miry clay, and try to stir their first love for Christ.

A man's attitudes are invisible, but their results are visible: 'By their fruits ye shall know them' We shall know that we are Christians by our love.

John defines righteousness as love. The person who does not do righteousness is the person who does not love his brother. Righteousness is love, and unrighteousness is failing to love. Love always produces righteous acts. If we have love, we have indeed righteousness.

*1 John 3:11.*

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

From the beginning' as in 1 John 2:7 : Love was one of the very first things conveyed to them from their beginning. Jerome tells us that during John's last years 'Little children, love one another' was the one exhortation which, after he had become too old to preach, he never ceased to give. "It is the Lord's command," he said; "and if this is done, it is enough." 'Love one another' addressed to Christians must primarily mean the love of Christians to fellow-Christians; and this shows what 'loving his brother' must mean. But

this love goes to non-Christians and enemies also. Remember, we ought to love everyone. By our love we will be known as Christians.

A church must be judged by their love for others. It is very easy to run a church with superfluous hi, bye love. But such love will be so shallow. There was a person who attended a popular church for more than 20 years. But when his parent died, none of the members of that church came for the funeral. Our church has cared for many people and I am proud of it. There are times we may have dropped the ball, but most of the time, this church was loving, it stepped out and touched those people who needed help! God demands a loving, intimate church.

What commandment is it from the beginning? Is it the commandment Jesus gave: Love one another as I have loved you? Or the Old Testament commandment: love your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength, and love your neighbor as yourself? I believe, the old commandment refers to the Torah, love your neighbor as yourself! But the new commandment Jesus brought was not just loving God and God's people, but to love our enemies also. Loving the unlovable also! Loving not only the good, but the bad, and ugly too. Loving not only righteous, but the sinners also. Loving every soul is a mandate. There was ignorance of loving only those who love us. But Jesus brought better understanding of loving our enemies also and thereby shedding light of real love, which is our new commandment! He said, Love your enemies also that you may be the children of your Father who is in heaven! As Christ loved His enemies also, we must love everyone. If we do not love, we do not know God! Jesus says in *John 13:34,35, by this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love to one another.* When we have love, we pass from the ugly darkness of hatred to light.

1 John 3:12 12not as Cain *who* was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous.

Why did Cain murder Abel? Because God accepted Abel's offerings? Why was it that God accepted only Abel's offering and not Cain's offering? Because Cain offered his offering for the sake of offering, not with love and devotion for God, and not sacrificially. He did not have any repentance for his sins also. If he had, he would have come with a contrite heart and offered blood sacrifice like Abel did. Even after the rejection, Cain could have examined himself, humbled himself, and come back to God with a better sacrifice. But instead of repenting, he became jealous, and became enraged, and murdered Abel. Instead of spilling a lamb's blood, he spilt his innocent brother's blood. Cain's works were evil because he walked in the way of works of the flesh: hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath. Anger that becomes uncontrollable will lead to bloody hatred.

*1 John 3:13-15.*

*13 Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you.*

*14 We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love [c]his brother abides in death.*

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

The world is like Cain. It always points to the way of fleshly walk:

*Gal. 5:19-21*

*19. adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness,*

*20. idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies,*

*21. envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries.*

When we move away from these kind of sinful life style, the world will hate us because we think and act differently.

We also know that we have the eternal life because we love the brethren. Love is not the cause of our passing over into life; it is the proof that we passed from death to life. Jesus Christ is the one who saves us from death and gives us life. But once He has done this, we love our brothers. And we can know whether or not we have passed from death to life by our love! If we love our brothers, all of them, then we have been saved from death, and we have eternal life.

I may have to add here after studying the words of Jesus carefully. We not only love our brothers, but we would love our enemies also. Loving is not just feelings. Loving is actually making a conscious decision to bless the other person in various ways. We think, move, and act to bless the other person. Almost every sermon in this church, we emphasize this self-giving love for one another, forgiveness, forbearance of overlooking others' trespasses! We all seem to remain indifferent to that message week after week. Then we complain that we don't get much from the message and we are not growing. How will you grow if you don't practice love and live selfishly? Christian message is very simple: love one another as I have loved you! Loving is not an option for the Christians! For some reason we think, it is an option - we can love whom we want, when we want, and how we want? That is not the Christian love. Christian love is meant for all people, and it is an unconditional love. It is not just feelings for the other person, it demands working love, and active love. If a person does not relate to you, you must take conscious effort to break that barrier every day. Love requires a lot of effort, wisdom, genuine concern and care for that person. We strive to go closer to that person, and not run away. It is easy to run away. But it is very hard to approach difficult people to love. But still we must constantly try our part. Love is not an option in our lives. It is a must.

He that does not love in this manner abides in death. Whoever hates his brother abides in death and he is a murderer and such person will not have eternal life in Him. Hate is equal to murder. Hate is same as murder. That is exactly what Jesus Christ said.

*Mathew 5:21,22.*

*21 "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.'*

*22 But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother [e]without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire.*

Anger, bitterness, and contempt are just as serious in God's eyes as murder. Why? Because the person who hates has the very same feelings and spirit that the murderer does- a spirit of anger, bitterness, and contempt. The murderer reacts differently, more violently, but the heart of both the hater and the murderer is the same. And God looks and judges by the heart.

Conclusion: I'll let the Word of God summarize this topic in a nut shell!

*I John 4:20, 21*

*20. If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, [d]how can he love God whom he has not seen?*

*21. And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.*

What a powerful verse. It should be an important memory verse for all of us.

We cannot come near God without loving others.

If we reject people, God will reject us.

We have absolutely no excuse not to love everyone!

Beloved, let us love one another, and care for one another as a loving church.

Let us grow in love, and that will be your true spiritual growth!

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