



# Loving One Another

1 JOHN

# The Difficulty of Studying 1 John

- ▶ We are accustomed to abstract, linear, logical reasoning.
- ▶ 1 John has a cyclical style.
- ▶ So coming up with an outline of the epistle is challenging.

My Suggestion: Be aware of three basic movements in the epistle.

- ▶ Incarnation (1:1-4)
- ▶ ***Fellowship (1:5-2:28)***
- ▶ ***Sonship (2:29-4:6)***
- ▶ ***Bringing Things Together (4:7-5:12)***
- ▶ Certainties (5:13-21)

# The Passages in 1 John about Love

- ▶ 2:9-11

- ▶ In Fellowship section

- ▶ 3:11-24

- ▶ In Sonship section

- ▶ 4:7-21

- ▶ At the beginning of the Bringing Things Together section

# Fellowship (1:5-2:28)

- ▶ Ethical Test of Fellowship (1:5-2:11)
  - ▶ Moral Likeness to God and Christ (1:5-7)
  - ▶ Confession of Sin (1:8-2:2)
  - ▶ Obedience and Love (2:3-11)\*\*\*
- ▶ Messages to 3 Groups in the Church (2:12-17)
- ▶ Doctrinal Test of Fellowship: One's View of Christ (2:18-28)

# Loving your brother: The Mark of Being in Fellowship with God (2:9-11)

- ▶ *“Whoever says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in darkness. Whoever loves his brother abides in the light, and in him there is no cause for stumbling. But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.”*

# Loving Your Fellow Believer: The Mark of Being in Fellowship (2:9-11)

- ▶ The one who says that he is in the light, but continually hates his brother (v. 9a)
  - ▶ This person is a professing believer.
  - ▶ But he continually hates a fellow believer.
- ▶ This person is not in fellowship with God (v. 9b),
  - ▶ “Still”: Implies that he has never been in fellowship with God.

# Loving Your Fellow Believer: The Mark of Being in Fellowship (2:9-11)

- ▶ The one who loves one's brother is in fellowship with God (v. 10)
  - ▶ Hatred is like an internal "stumbling block" which can lead to disastrous spiritual falls.
  - ▶ These potential disasters are avoided by the one who loves his brother.



# Loving Your Fellow Believer: The Mark of Being in Fellowship (2:9-11)

- ▶ The person who hates a believer is not in fellowship with God (v. 11).
  - ▶ He is in the state of spiritual blindness.
  - ▶ His behavior shows that he has no fellowship with God.
  - ▶ He has lost all sense of spiritual direction.

# Sonship (2:29-4:6)

- ▶ Ethical Test of Sonship (2:29-3:24)
  - ▶ Righteousness (2:29-3:10a)
  - ▶ Love (3:10b-24)\*\*\*
- ▶ Doctrinal Test of Sonship : One's View of Christ (4:1-6)

# Loving Your Fellow Believer: A Mark of Being a Child of God (3:10b-24)

- ▶ *“This is the message you have heard from the beginning: We should love one another”* (v. 11).
  - ▶ John 13:34-35
  - ▶ *“The beginning”*: Jesus Christ’s ministry

# Loving Your Fellow Believer: A Mark of Being a Child of God (3:10b-24)

- ▶ Seen negatively in the hatred of Cain (vv. 12-15)
  - ▶ He belonged to Satan (v. 12a)
  - ▶ He murdered Abel (v. 12b):
    - ▶ Because his actions were evil;
    - ▶ His brother's actions were righteous.

# Loving Your Fellow Believer: A Mark of Being a Child of God (3:10b-24)

- ▶ Seen negatively in the hatred of Cain (vv. 12-15)
  - ▶ Cain is like the “world” (of unbelievers).
  - ▶ The lives of unbelievers are often characterized by hatred towards believers.

# Loving Your Fellow Believer: A Mark of Being a Child of God (3:10b-24)

- ▶ Seen negatively in the hatred of Cain (vv. 12-15)
  - ▶ Love for one another is a mark of being a child of God (v. 14).

# Loving Your Fellow Believer: A Mark of Being a Child of God (3:10b-24)

- ▶ Seen negatively in the hatred of Cain (vv. 12-15)
  - ▶ Continual hatred for fellow believers is a sign that a person is not a believer (v. 15).
    - ▶ Hatred is the inward disposition.
    - ▶ Murder is the outward action which expresses hatred.
    - ▶ Jesus taught that both are sinful (Matthew 5:21-26).

# Loving Your Fellow Believer: A Mark of Being a Child of God (3:10b-24)

- ▶ Seen positively in the love of our Lord Jesus (vv. 16-18)
  - ▶ The example (v. 16a)
    - ▶ Jesus gave His life for us.



# Loving Your Fellow Believer: A Mark of Being a Child of God (3:10b-24)

- ▶ Seen positively in the love of our Lord Jesus (vv. 16-18)
  - ▶ How love should be expressed (vv. 16b-18)
    - ▶ Giving up our lives (v. 16b)
    - ▶ Giving our possessions (v. 17)
    - ▶ Love must be active (v. 18).

# Loving Your Fellow Believer: A Mark of Being a Child of God (3:10b-24)

- ▶ The assurance that love brings (vv. 19-20)
  - ▶ Through showing love to one another we gain assurance that we belong to the truth (v. 19a).

# Loving Your Fellow Believer: A Mark of Being a Child of God (3:10b-24)

- ▶ The assurance that love brings (vv. 19-20)
  - ▶ But because Christ has set such a high standard for love, we deeply feel our own inadequacy and failure (vv. 19b-20a).

# Loving Your Fellow Believer: A Mark of Being a Child of God (3:10b-24)

- ▶ The assurance that love brings (vv. 19-20)
  - ▶ But if a person is showing practical acts of love, it reminds him that an omniscient God, in spite of his weakness, is aware of our commitment to the truth (v. 20b).
  - ▶ John 21:17

# Loving Your Fellow Believer: A Mark of Being a Child of God (3:10b-24)

- ▶ The relationship that love brings (vv. 21-24)
  - ▶ Assurance of the relationship (vv. 21-22)
    - ▶ Result: An effective prayer life (22a)
    - ▶ Reason: Obedience (22b)

# Loving Your Fellow Believer: A Mark of Being a Child of God (3:10b-24)

- ▶ Obedience fostering the relationship (vv. 23-24a)
  - ▶ 2 Commands (v. 23)
    - ▶ Faith in Christ
    - ▶ Love for one another
  - ▶ Result: A relationship with Christ (v. 24a)

# Loving Your Fellow Believer: A Mark of Being a Child of God (3:10b-24)

- ▶ Agent for the relationship (v. 24b)
  - ▶ The Holy Spirit

# Take-aways

## ▶ Fellowship

- ▶ A person who continually hates another believer is not in fellowship with God, possibly never has been in fellowship with God.
- ▶ When we love our fellow believers, it shows that we are in fellowship with God.



# Take-aways

## ▶ Sonship

- ▶ Hatred is a characteristic of unbelievers and the world.
- ▶ Love for one another is a characteristic of sonship.
- ▶ The Lord Jesus set the standard for what love is.

# Take-aways

- ▶ Love must be more than words; it must be active.
- ▶ When we love one another, we gain assurance that we are God's children.

# Take-aways

- ▶ When we love one another, we have an effective prayer life.
- ▶ The Holy Spirit within us is working to make us loving people.

# Bringing All Things Together (4:7-5:12)

- ▶ The Source of Love (4:7-16)
- ▶ The Fruit of Love (4:17-21)
- ▶ Loving and Obeying God and Loving Your Fellow Believer (5:1-5)
- ▶ Our View of Christ (5:6-12)

# Bringing All Things Together (4:7-5:12)

- ▶ The word “love” is found 43x in 1 John.
- ▶ It is used 32x in this short section.

# The Source of Love (4:7-16)

- ▶ “We should love one another” (v. 7)
  - ▶ God is the source of love (v. 7a).
  - ▶ Love for one another is the mark of the new birth (v. 7b; 3:11-24).
  - ▶ Love for one another is the mark of one being in fellowship with God (v. 7c; 2:9-11).

# The Source of Love (4:7-16)

- ▶ The one who doesn't love is not in fellowship with God (v. 8):
  - ▶ Because God is love

# The Source of Love (4:7-16)

- ▶ God was the first to demonstrate love (vv. 9-10)
  - ▶ He sent His Son (v. 9).
  - ▶ He sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sin (v. 10).



# The Source of Love (4:7-16)

- ▶ The presence of God is displayed in the lives of believers who love one another (vv. 11-12).
  - ▶ No one has seen God (v. 12a).

# The Source of Love (4:7-16)

- ▶ God's love reaches its full expression when we love fellow Christians (v. 12b).
  - ▶ The invisible God is seen in those who love, because God lives in them.

# The Source of Love (4:7-16)

- ▶ The love which God has for us (vv. 13-16)
  - ▶ God has given us His Spirit (v. 13).
  - ▶ God has sent His Son to be the Savior (v. 14).

# The Source of Love (4:7-16)

- ▶ When we acknowledge that Jesus is God's Son (vv. 15-16):
  - ▶ We appropriate God's presence.
  - ▶ We experience His love.

# The Fruit of Love (4:17-21)

- ▶ Confidence in facing the future judgment (v. 17)
- ▶ No fear (v. 18)
- ▶ Love for God and love for fellow believer are mutually inclusive (vv. 19-21)

# Take-aways from 1 John 4:7-21

- ▶ Love comes from God.
- ▶ God showed His love by sending His Son to be a sacrifice for our sin.

# Take-aways from 1 John 4:7-21

- ▶ The presence of God is seen in the love which believers have for one another.
- ▶ A person begins to experience love and begins to feel the presence of God in his life through acknowledging that Jesus is the Son of God.

# Take-aways from 1 John 4:7-21

- ▶ Our love for one another bolsters our confidence in the future.
- ▶ Our love for God and one another takes away our fear.
- ▶ Love for God and love for one another go together.



# Questions for Discussion

- ▶ Think back to the time before you were a believer. With respect to love (for God and for fellow believers) how has your life changed?
- ▶ Remembering that no one is perfect, what are some challenges that you still face in loving God? In loving other Christians?