

The First Epistle of John

(Week 32 – 1John 3:11-18 – Part 1)

I. REVIEW:

A. 1John 3:5-10

1. Humanity is divided into two camps:
 - a. Children of God
 - i. Who walk in the way of Jesus and not of the world
 - ii. They express love for others, especially the brethren
 - b. Children of Satan
 - i. Who walk in disobedience to Christ
 - ii. They do not express love towards the brethren

II. TO LOVE SOMEBODY: Part 1

A. There was a Reader's Digest article called "Humble Pie" by Gloria Melville

1. In this article, Ms. Melville wrote of a woman at her church, who always snubbed her, suddenly giving her a big hug before the start of services.
2. Later on, Ms. Melville realized why the woman hugged her:
 - a. At the end of the service, the minister said: *"Your assignment is the same as last week: I want you to go and love somebody you just can't stand!"*

B. Love is not merely a hug

1. If love was merely a hug, we all would excel in love!
2. Love is more challenging because it requires putting others ahead of you
3. And we must constantly be reminded that as children of God, we are identified by God's love in us.
4. And since love is of God and God is love (1John 4:7-8), only He can produce this love within those who live surrendered lives unto Christ.
5. When God's love is shown among His children, then the world stands up and takes notice!
6. Also, God's love is like a light; it exposes all that is fake around it, including those who are masquerading themselves as "children of God"
 - a. John wrote earlier that when love is shown towards one another, then it separates the children of God from the children of the devil.
 - i. 1John 3:10 ESV, "By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother."
7. Not only does the love of God set us apart from the people of the world, it initiates their hatred towards us!
 - a. Why? Because it exposes them for what they really are.
 - b. This is why we get persecuted because they hate the Christ who lives and loves in and through our lives.

C. Another Litmus Test

1. John is now entering another litmus test of the true disciple:
 - a. In 1John 2:28-3:10, he addressed the test of obedience to Christ
 - b. But now, in 1John 3:11-18, he is going to address the social test of loving one another

D. John starts off by saying:

1. 1John 3:11 (ESV), “*For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another*”
 - a. He is reminding the disciples of Jesus’ command to love one another (John 13:34-35)
2. Then he defines love by using the contrast:
 - a. He uses Cain as an example of what not to be (vs. 12)
 - b. Then he says do not be surprised that the world hates you (vs. 13)
 - i. He reiterates what Jesus said in John 15:18-19:

“If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. (19) If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you” (John 15:18-19 ESV)
 - ii. **Question: Why did John tell them not to be surprised if the world hates them?**
 1. Our tendency is to fall into the mode of thinking that the world will accept us as Christ’s disciples.
 2. Our tendency is to expect the world to treat us with fairness, consideration and kindness all the time.
 3. Our tendency is to think the world will understand our Christian lifestyle and convictions.
3. John later on points out the ultimate example of love by pointing at Christ’s death for us (1John 3:16)
 - a. In this example, we can define love as follows:
 - i. **Love: A self-sacrificing, caring commitment that shows itself in seeking the highest good of the one loved**
 1. Jesus sacrificed Himself for us because He was seeking our highest good, that is, that we may share in His glory through the gospel (cf. 2Thess. 2:14)
 - b. Hatred is the contrast of love and can be defined as follows:
 - i. **Hate: a selfish, insensitive attitude that shows itself in disregarding the good of others as it seeks its own interests.**
 - ii. Unlike love, which, at its core, is about putting others before you, hatred, at its core, is about putting yourself above others
 - iii. Hatred says:
 1. “*I’ll help you if it helps me or if it’s not too much of a hassle. But if it comes down to you or me, I’m looking out for me!*”
 - This reminds me of Templeton, the rat, in Charlotte’s web, who thinks of himself only.
 2. When we understand hatred in this manner, we can see that it characterizes the world!
 - The world is driven by self-interest
 - The idea of sacrificing self for the good of others, especially for wrongdoers, is crazy!
 - **Objection:** Some may say, “Well, there are unbelievers, like soldiers, who give their lives for their fellow comrades or parents who have

sacrificed their lives to save their children from a speeding car!”

- a. Response: Is there one unbeliever in the world that would ever sacrifice their life for an enemy? Jesus did! (cf. Romans 5:7-8, 10)**

Next week we will get into verses 2f in more detail.