

**1-2 John**  
**Love One Another**  
**Focal Verses: 1<sup>st</sup> John 3:11:24<sup>1</sup>**

**Aim for Change**

By the end of the lesson, we will: **EXAMINE** John’s message about loving one another; **AFFIRM** the fundamental discipleship principle of love for God and others; and **EXPRESS** unconditional love to others.

**In Focus**

Katrina held a part-time job at the hair salon after school, sweeping the floor and stocking shelves. Her goal was to save enough money to purchase a smartphone. Every morning on her way to school, she would look up at the digital billboard admiring the cell phone ad. When Katrina finally saved enough money to purchase a smartphone, she could hardly contain her excitement. Yet something deep inside told her to postpone purchasing it, so she waited. Later that month, the students chose Washington, D.C., as their annual class trip, and every student signed up to go. She overheard some mean girls gossiping about how Tiana could not attend the trip because her father was in jail again and her family could not afford to send her. When Katrina heard about Tiana’s “predicament, and how heartbroken she was, Katrina was moved with compassion and immediately knew what to do with the extra money. With joy and without hesitation, she gave the money she had saved for her first smartphone to her friend. With tears in her eyes, Tiana gladly accepted Katrina’s unexpected gift and together they traveled with the class to Washington, D.C. They said it was the greatest trip ever.

***Christians should give sacrificially to those in need. In this lesson, we will learn love is more than mere words; it involves taking action.***

**Keep In Mind**

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<sup>1</sup> Excerpt From Precepts for Living® Dr. Vince L., Bantu

*For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning: that we should love one another. (1st John 3:11 KJV)*

## **Lesson Text**

### **1<sup>st</sup> John 3:11:24**

11 For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning: that we should love one another.

**12 Be not as Cain, who was of that wicked one and slew his brother. And why did he slay him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.**

13 Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.

**14 We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.**

15 Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer, and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

**16 Hereby we perceive the love of God: because He laid down His life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.**

17 But whoso hath this world's goods and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up the compassion of his heart from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

**18 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth.**

19 And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him.

**20 For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart and knoweth all things.**

21 Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then we have confidence toward God.

**22 And whatsoever we ask we receive of Him, because we keep His commandment and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.**

23 And this is His commandment: that we should believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment.

**24 And he that keepeth His commandments dwelleth in Him, and He in him. And hereby we know that He abideth in us: by the Spirit which He hath given us.**

### **The People, Places and Times**

**Cain:** The eldest son of Adam and Eve, Cain murdered his brother Abel. Cain became the tiller of the soil while his brother was a keeper of sheep. Both brought a sacrifice to the Lord (Genesis 4:3–4). Abel acted in faith by bringing a sacrifice more suitable than Cain (Hebrews 11:4). The latter’s rage burned out of control against God’s rejection. In retaliation, he slaughtered his brother, whose gift was accepted (Genesis 4:5–8). The Lord confronted Cain with his guilt, judged him, and marked him, sending him out of the land of Nod, east of Eden. When he protested his chastisement exceeded his ability to stand under it and feared someone would kill him, the Lord promised to take sevenfold vengeance on anyone who dared to kill him (vv. 9–16).

**Commandment:** In previous books of the Bible, specifically the Gospels, our Lord had charged His disciples to love their enemies (Matthew 5:43–45) and love their neighbors as themselves (Luke 10:25–37). The “new commandment” required Christians love each other (John 15:12, 17). “This did not overrule the other two love commandments. Jesus’ command to love those within the church was initiated to create persuasive evidence for those outside the church. It would provide them discernible proof (1) that His followers were Christ-like in their love toward one another, (2) the foundation for vigorous human community could be found in Christ, and (3) by extension, Jesus’ declaration about Himself in concert with the miracles He accomplished were really true (John 13:35, 17:20–23, 21:24–25).”

### **Background**

This letter was written to members of the churches in Asia Minor. The epistle served as a reminder to the children of God to love one another. The devil is the originator of sin and has sinned from the beginning of time. Those who belong to Satan reveal their essential nature by living lawless lives. This lawlessness is clearly seen in the blatant disregard for human life. John restated that Jesus laid the foundation on how we should treat one another. When Jesus died on the Cross, He demonstrated the greatest, truest, and most unselfish kind of love. His death validated love is more than mere words; it must be followed by actions. When we say we love someone, our actions should prove our declaration. Displaying love for one another is evidence we belong to God. Children of God should live to please the Lord in accordance with His commandments. To show indifference to the needs of others is in complete contradiction to the teachings of Christ.

In Jesus' day, many assumed by obeying the commandments, they could show themselves worthy of God's blessings (Galatians 3:2). However, Jesus made it very clear that love was a natural result of God's blessing, not a precondition for it. The commandment to love is an expression of how Christ's disciples should act. The disciples were commanded to love in the same sense branches were "commanded" to bear fruit (cf. John 15:4)."

### **In Depth**

**1. Operating in Love (1 John 3:11–20)** Caring for others in accordance to God's will usually means doing the opposite of what is favorable in the eyes of the world. Some may retaliate against our good works, especially if our deeds glorify and illuminate the righteousness of Christ. Showing love toward another person should be prompted by genuine sincerity. In these Scriptures, Cain's reaction to God's rejection is murderous intent. It is difficult to fathom how one act of rejection could spur such violence against another. One might assume these feelings of hatred and jealousy were dormant in Cain's heart, and God's rejection was the final straw. An unchecked attitude of anger, jealousy, and hatred can harden the heart, making it implacable. Our harsh words may not result in a person's death; however, words and actions can assassinate someone's character and destroy self-esteem.

The Holy Spirit is a filtering system that checks the contents of our hearts and purifies us through the Word of God. Real love is an attribute of God, seen magnificently in the life of Christ. When we lay down our lives for someone else, it means we serve expecting God to reward us. Love is action, not just words. Those of us who can give generously to support the needs of others ought to do so with an honest heart, not grudgingly or expecting favors in return. Our actions indicate our connection and affiliation to Christ.

Demonstrating a life of generosity in our church, communities, homes, and workplaces lets others know we belong to Him. There are times when we will fall short of God's expectations. Fear and uncertainty can hinder our ability to lovingly serve others; we may feel guilty and unworthy. This kind of condemnation is not from God. The Lord understands our apprehension. When we earnestly ask God to check our motives, we will discern the difference between godly and ungodly intentions."

**2. Motivated by Love (vv. 21–24)** When our actions are motivated by love, we can approach God in boldness and confidence. Pure intentions glorify and please God, and a clean heart gives room for His love to flourish. When genuine love occupies our hearts, Christians express prayers that encompass both personal and community needs. These kinds of prayers include fellow Christians, our nation, the church, and the less fortunate. God answers prayers from hearts willing to see the fulfillment of His Word in both private and public arenas.

The love commandment requires we believe in the name of Jesus and acknowledge that He is the Son of God, our Savior and Lord. This commandment also requires we love each other, especially those in the body of Christ. This commandment also states, we remain in fellowship with God, which means staying connected to Him through personal devotion, meditating on the Word, and in prayer. This also includes staying connected with other Christians. Sometimes we are tempted to "do church" via the Internet; however, fellowship cannot be accomplished via satellite. "We need to affirm one another through physical human sight and touch! Sometimes a person's smile and embrace can make a world of difference in someone's life."

When the Spirit of God radiates through our lives, we feel something exploding inside us. The living and breathing Spirit ignites us with joy and energizes the desire to love. Love is contagious! When we obey God's commandments and live in intimate fellowship with Jesus, others will witness a change and ask what fuels our joy. There is no greater witness to the saved and unsaved than expressing the love of God!

### **Liberating Lesson**

Tragedy dominates media attention. The more horrific the crime, the more news coverage it receives. With this kind of media frenzy, wickedness appears to have taken an exalted position in our society, leaving many to question the true value of love. It is no “wonder so many of us feel love is trivial and irrelevant. Yet, this lesson tells us no matter what goes on in the world, we are commanded to love one another.

### **Application for Activation**

Love is a basic human desire and the evidence that we belong to the body of Christ. Love is more than a word; it is a repeated commandment from the Creator: Love one another. How can you express love? Make a list of things you can do in your church and community. Volunteer and serve today

### **Closing Prayer**

**Week of 11 August 2024**

**Daily Bible Readings**



**Monday:** Ephesians 4-6

**Tuesday:** Philippians 1-4

**Wednesday:** Colossians 1-4

**Thursday:** 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 1-5

**Friday:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians 1-3

**Saturday:** 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 1-6

**Sunday:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 1-4