



for May 10 sermon

# I John 3:11-24

## GUIDELINE SPOTLIGHT - NO FIXING

Try to hear what people are sharing without trying to fix them. If they want your advice, they will ask for it. You may want to take time later to ask if you may offer some advice.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 John 3:11-15 Why does John use the story of Cain and Abel to illustrate his point about love? According to verse 15, how does John define murder in the heart of a believer? ***Cain's murder started with envy and a "dark" heart. John is showing that there is no middle ground: we are either walking in the life-giving love of Christ or the death-dealing spirit of the world (envy, hatred, or indifference).***
- 1 John 3:16-18 We often think of love as a feeling. How does John define love in verse 16? What "test" does he give in verse 17 to see if the love of God truly dwells in us? ***Love is an act of the will, not just an emotion. Jesus "laid down his life" as a literal sacrifice. John challenges us: if we have the world's goods (time, money, attention) and see a brother in need but close our hearts, the love of God isn't "abiding" in us.***
- 1 John 3:18 Last week, we each named someone who was difficult to love. Thinking through this past week, did your love for them look more like "words and speech" or "actions and truth"? ***Give people space to be honest about their failures. Remind them that we aren't looking for perfection, but for the "practice" of moving toward them.***
- Follow-up: What was the biggest internal barrier (pride, fear, busyness) that kept you from loving them well this week? How well do you think you handled it? What do you

think God would want you to differently?

- John 3:19-22 When our hearts “condemn us” for our lack of love or our hidden sins, what truth does John tell us to rest in (v. 20)? How does “knowing that God is greater than our hearts” give us the confidence to keep following Him? ***This is the Gospel pivot. Our assurance doesn't come from our perfect track record of loving others; it comes from belonging to the Truth. God knows everything, including our struggles, and He still calls us His own.***
- 1 John 3:23-24 What are the two parts of God's command in verse 23? How does believing in the name of Jesus provide the fuel for loving one another? ***You can't do the second half without the first. If you don't believe in the great, sacrificial love Jesus has for you, you will never have the resources to sacrificially love others. Vulnerability Tip: Share a specific tangible way you can love the person you've been struggling with this week. Does it mean buying them lunch? Giving them a phone call? Helping them with a task?***

## PRAYER

- Read verse 14. Thank God for the ways you have seen Jesus in your partner this week. Pray that the Word would remain in them so they don't drift back into indifference or hatred.
- If your partner expresses a sense of guilt or “condemnation” during the check-in, pray for the Spirit's comfort.
- Identify one physical, tangible action you will take this week for the person you are working to love