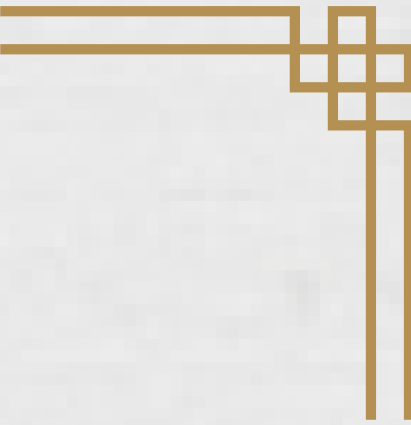
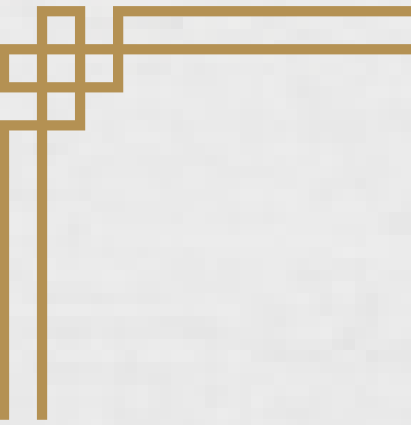
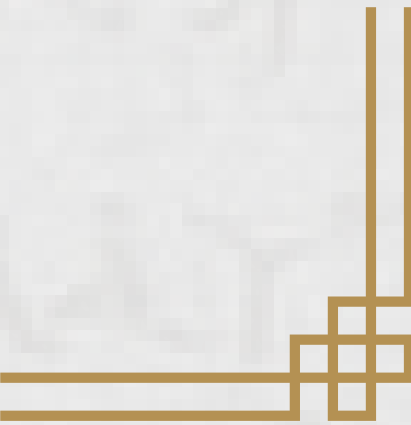
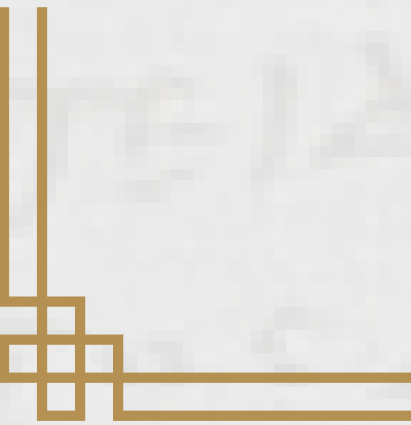




1 John

An Exegetical Series

1 John 3:11-18: Love In Action



Summary of 1 John 2:28-3:10

- Because I hope in Christ → I desire purity
 - Because I encounter sin → I submit to God rather than rebel against him
 - Because I submit to God → I order my life according to his revealed righteousness
- ➔ The inward transformation of the one born of God becomes externally visible in a life increasingly ordered according to God's righteousness—most especially in love for God's people

The Three Mark's of 1 John 2:28-3:10

1. Willful, active, and delightful purification of oneself, modeled after Christ — “I belong to God, Christ is coming, I will be made like him—therefore I pursue holiness now”
2. Willful, continual submission to God's authority in Christ when we do mess up and sin — “I belong to God, yet I still encounter sin; therefore, I do not run from God but rather I run back to him”
3. Willful, continual orientation of God's standard of doing what is right — “I belong to God, therefore, I love what he loves and live according to his revealed commands of righteous living

A Final Word on These “Marks”

- Understand these three “marks” as a sort of spiritual litmus test —not the end in themselves, but means by which we can *discern* the reality of God’s transforming work within us
- These marks are not boxes to check in order to prove ourselves to God. Rather, they are evidence that God, in Christ, has cleansed us from sin, has reconciled us to Himself, and has given us new life
- Therefore, do not merely ask, “Do I do these things?” Instead, ask: “Is there a steady, faithful pattern of life increasingly marked by these characteristics?”

Opening Questions

- If you had to define Christian love without using the word “love,” how would you describe it?
- Can a person “hate” someone without ever wishing them physical harm? What might that look like?

John's Flow of Thought

- Context — The Theme of Love Expanded
 - a. Remember that we ended our last lesson with John's statement regarding the visible traits of who is born of God and who is, in essence, born of the Devil: (1) doing what is right, and (2) hating/loving brothers and sisters
 - b. The church split of the antichrists fits well within this framework; while there is much that they do which shows they are not born of God, it is their lack of love which chiefly demonstrates their condition

John's Flow of Thought

- The Theme of Love Expanded in Three Movements:
 - a. The Example of Hate in Action → 3:11-14
 - b. The Eternal Consequence of Hate/Love → 3:15
 - c. The Example of Love in Action → 3:16-18
- Here, we will utilize what Christian Theologians have referred to as “**The Absolute Ethical Antithesis**” — The word used to describe the great *ethical divide* that exists between the Christian and the non-Christian

Hate in Action

Cain as the “Archetype” of Anomia/Lawlessness (3:11-14)

- First, there is a clear teaching we all receive as Christians even from the beginning of our conversion: Love! We are to love as Christ!
- Second, the best universal example of hatred all Christians would be familiar with (especially in the 1st century) is the example of Cain:
 - ▶ Let's go to Genesis 4:1-8

Hate in Action

Cain as the “Archetype” of Anomia/Lawlessness (3:11-14)

- Cain demonstrates the expression and heart disposition of hatred for God and those born of God in this way:
 - a. A disdain for God and his commands (Gen 4:3)
 - b. A resentment of God’s people (Gen 4:5)
 - c. A justification of sinful action (Gen 4:6-8)
- ➔ Cain, as a negative example, is the embodiment of “anomia” or sin as lawlessness!

Hate in Action

Cain as the “Archetype” of Anomia/Lawlessness (3:11-14)

- Cain’s Example is Shared With Those of the World (1 John 3:13-14)
 - ▶ The world — and in context, those who separated from the church in 1 John! — disdains God’s commands, resents Christians, and justifies their sin, even if it is murder
 - ▶ This anomia condition of those who are “the world” is captured well in John 3:18-21

Hate in Action

Cain as the “Archetype” of Anomia/Lawlessness (3:11-14)

- Cain’s Example is Shared With Those of the World (1 John 3:13-14)
 - ▶ We should not, then, be surprised when the world hates us! It is the nature of their anomia/lawlessness
 - ▶ The true Christian, born of God and remaining in God, will not hate brothers and sisters, unlike those born of the Devil who have not “crossed the divide,” as it were — *what is hate, in this context, though?*

Hate in Action

Cain as the “Archetype” of Anomia/Lawlessness (3:11-14)

- Hate is not just physical murder, it is also:
 - ▶ Pressuring christians to live contrary to their profession of faith (1 John 1:6, 8, 10)
 - ▶ Pressuring or even teaching Christians to love the world and the things in the world (1 John 2:15-17)
 - ▶ Pressuring Christians into false views of Christ (1 John 2:22-23)

Hate in Action

Cain as the “Archetype” of Anomia/Lawlessness (3:11-14)

- John’s Indictment is stronger in his Gospel (John 8:44)

“44 You are of your father the devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he tells a lie, he speaks from his own nature, because he is a liar and the father of lies.”

- ➔ The non-Christian embodies the very characteristics of the Devil himself — hatred in many forms that longs for death

The Consequence of Hatred

Murder is lawlessness and worthy of God's Justice (3:15)

- The very simple reality is that anyone whose heart and actions invite hatred of the sort John speaks of does not have eternal life—rather:

John 3:36, “...*the wrath of God remains on him*”

- This is not to say that Christians struggle, at times, with “hating” brothers and sisters, but their struggle with sin is not the same as lawlessness! The Christian will recognize their sin, confess it, and turn away from it in obedience

The Example of Love in Action

Jesus Christ as the Archetype of Love (1 John 3:16)

- Jesus' atoning, substitutionary sacrifice is the ultimate example and expression of love, and Christians must model their love after his
 - See John 10:11; 15:12-17
- ➔ There is a dualism here: (1) sacrificial death, if necessary, but also, (2) sacrificial care for the needs of others in a life-sustaining manner both physically (next verse!) and spiritually

The Example of Love in Action

Jesus Christ as the Archetype of Love (1 John 3:17)

- God is the provider of all things for his children—thus, the true Christian, when there is a need among fellow believers, seeks to fulfill their need just as Christ fulfilled our own needs
- The best example of how wide this is stretched in meaning is found most explicitly in Luke's Gospel in the *Parable of the Good Samaritan* (Luke 10:25-37) — Remember, this parable came in the context of an “expert in the law” asking, “Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

The Example of Love in Action

Jesus Christ as the Archetype of Love (1 John 3:17)

- John's point is simple:

- A failure to love brothers and sisters is not doing what you are able to do to meet the *dire* needs of fellow brothers and sisters
- If you see a need and do not desire to fulfill that need, it shows a disdain for God and his commands, a resentment for God's people, and a justification of one's own actions...Anomia/Lawlessness!

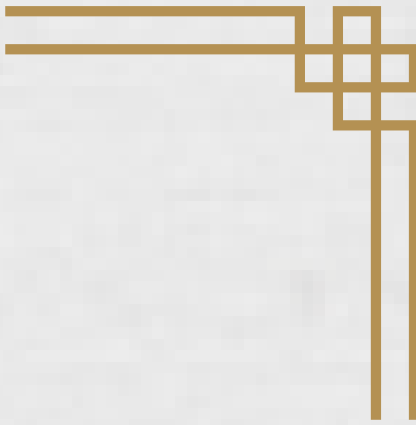
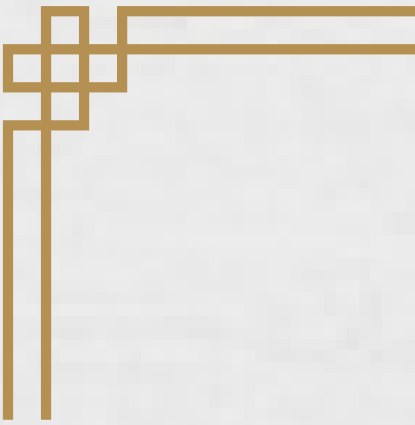
The Example of Love in Action

The Exhortation (1 John 3:18)

- Let's not talk about how much we “love each other” but let's actually demonstrate that love in **action** and in **truth**:
 - ➔ That is, the truth of who Jesus is and what he did for us should motivate our own actions toward each other — submission to truth which leads to action!
 - ➔ Our love should show sacrifice for each other which models the sacrifice Jesus made, not only in giving his life on the cross, but also his convenience and comfort to meet needs

Closing Questions

- Can I genuinely claim to love my brothers and sisters while knowingly disobeying God's commands concerning how I treat them?
- What has God entrusted to you—time, money, possessions, abilities, influence, energy—that could be used to genuinely love someone else?



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