

CAN CHRISTIANS HATE OTHER CHRISTIANS?

1 John 3:14-18

- Truly knowing God is the main theme of John's Gospel and the 3 letters he penned (1, 2, 3rd John).
- Jesus – *"This is eternal life: that they may know You, the only true God, and the One you have sent—Jesus Christ."* (John 17:3)
- The ultimate goal of Christianity is that we may truly know God as we find salvation and redemption in Jesus Christ.
- **Does my life demonstrate that I truly know God and that I am His child?**

TRUE CHRISTIANS LOVE _____ OTHER CHRISTIANS

- *"We know that we have passed from death to life because we love our brothers and sisters. The one who does not love remains in death. 15 Everyone who hates his brother or sister is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life residing in him."* (1 John 3:14-15)
- **Having disdain and hatred towards other Christians is evidence of someone living in darkness rather than the light of Christ.**
- *"The one who says he is in the light but hates his brother or sister is in the darkness until now. 10 The one who loves his brother or sister remains in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him. 11 But the one who hates his brother or sister is in the darkness, walks in the darkness, and doesn't know where he's going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes."* (1 Jn 2:9-11)
- **As Christians we are called to love our brothers and sisters in Christ even when our sinful nature tries to tell us otherwise.**

TRUE CHRISTIANS LOVE THE WAY _____ DEFINES LOVE

- **Loving the way God defines love does not allow for Christians to pick and choose who they will love.**
- *"This is how we have come to know love: He laid down his life for us. We should also lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters."* (1 John 3:16)
- **The ways of this world have distorted what true love is, but we must walk in the love that only emanates from the One who is love...God.**
- *"Dear friends, let us love one another, because love is from God, and everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. 8 The one who does not love does not know God, because God is love."* (1 John 4:7-8)
- **Any attempt at defining love apart from God's design for love will be immeasurably inadequate.**

TRUE CHRISTIANS LOVE WITH COMPASSIONATE _____

- *"If anyone has this world's goods and sees a fellow believer in need but withholds compassion from him—how does God's love reside in him? 18 Little children, let us not love in word or speech, but in action and in truth."* (1 John 3:17-18)
- **"Everything we have is by the grace of God, and to withhold life resources from those in need block His channel of provision for them." – Karen Jobes**
- **Putting biblical love into action demands that we love all people regardless of their nationality, ethnicity, socio-economic status, religious background, or gender.**
- **Our demonstrations of love should be consistent with Gospel truth as taught and demonstrated by Jesus.**

CONNECT GROUP DISCUSSION

Observation:

- According to verses 14-15, what evidence does John give that someone has "passed from death to life"?
- According to verse 16, how does John define genuine love?
- What situation does John describe in verses 17-18?
- Looking at 1 John 3:14-18, what repeated theme stands out about the relationship between loving God and loving other believers?

Understanding

- Why do you think love for other Christians is such an important mark of genuine faith? How does this challenge our culture's tendency to divide over personalities, preferences, politics, race, or secondary issues?
- What are some reasons believers struggle to love one another? How does the Gospel address these barriers?
- How does the world's definition of love differ from God's definition?
- Think about the story of the executive, the brick, and the boy with his brother in the wheelchair. How can we become more attentive to the needs around us before God has to "throw a brick" into our schedules?
- What are some practical ways our Connect Group can demonstrate love beyond simply saying, "I'll pray for you"?
- How does remembering Christ's love for us change the way we view people who are different from us?
- What is one specific step you can take this week to apply this message in your own life?

Loving Outward:

- Who do you need to share the gospel with this week?
- Who do you need to follow-up with regarding the gospel?
- Who are you bringing to church next Sunday?