11/01/2026 I John 3:17–19 – Walking in the Love of God

Text: 1 John 4:7–21 (focus on vv. 17–19) · **Series:** Walking in the Love of God

Sermon in a sentence: God's completed love brings confidence of salvation and casts out fear of judgment.

Context: Hosea showed God's relentless love despite our unfaithfulness. Now the question is *so what?* We know we should love others, but we are not good at it. John gives the foundation.

I. The Completed Love of God — "By this is love perfected with us" (v. 17)

1. What is "this"? John's roadmap through the chapter:
    a. v. 8 — God is love
    b. v. 9 — Christmas: God's love made manifest through Jesus
    c. v. 10 — Easter: Jesus' death pays for our sins and removes God's wrath
    d. vv. 12–16 — This God of love abides in us
2. The secret to loving better is not trying harder. It starts with seeing God pour His perfected love into us (in us, v. 12; with us, v. 17).

II. Confidence of Salvation — "so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment" (v. 17)

1. Evangelism Explosion's question: "If you died tonight, do you know you would go to heaven? Why?"
2. If God abides in us, we can know with certainty. Jesus died for us, and the Spirit applied this truth to us.
3. A recurring theme for John: John 20:31; 1 John 3:1–2 ("we are God's children now")
4. Humble, reverent, dependent — but real — confidence
5. Illustration: Pastor's mom, relieved that the moment had come to meet Jesus

III. Casts Out Fear of Judgment — "perfect love casts out fear" (v. 18)

1. Not a promise that we will never fear everyday things
2. It is the fear of reaching judgment day without "enough credits" to our name
3. Our confidence rests on Christ's righteousness, not our works
4. Illustration: Hospice patient in Clepper whose fear became gratitude for grace

IV. So What? — "We love because He first loved us" (v. 19)

1. Not merely transactional ("God loved me, so I should love")
2. A challenge: struggling to love someone? Consider how God has loved you.
3. At the Lord's Table, pray: "God, reveal more of Your perfect love in me."
4. Henri Nouwen, *Life of the Beloved*: Taken, Blessed, Broken, Given. The more we know we are taken and blessed, the more confident we become, and the better we love.