



# SUNDAY MORNING

## AT BETHANY BAPTIST CHURCH

**Title:** Authentic Love

**Passage:** 1 John 3:10-24

**Speaker:** Associate Pastor David Wood

**Introduction:** Sometimes the most unexpected sources can reflect the deepest truths. Two messy, loud, and persistent dogs have become a surprising illustration of authentic love—one that isn't based on perfection, behavior, or conditions. Despite being ignored, restricted, or scolded, they continue to show joy, loyalty, and forgiveness without hesitation. This kind of love offers a glimpse into the kind of enduring, unconditional love described in 1 John 3—the kind of love God calls His people to live out daily.

### I. Authentic Love is Unconditional (Verses 10-15)

#### A. Unchanged by Time

God's command hasn't changed since the beginning of the world. It won't change today.

Variables may change in our relationships, which cause us to change our responses, but our heart of love should remain the same.

#### B. Unchanged by Emotions

Sometimes we justify our actions because of how we are feeling.

Christ didn't wait for you to get all cleaned up before He started caring for you!



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C. Unchanged by Others

Sometimes we justify our actions because of how others act towards us.

*"Unforgiveness is like drinking poison and hoping the other person dies." - Unknown*

*"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." (Ephesians 4:31-32)*

## **II. Authentic Love is Sacrificial (Verses 16-18)**

A. Giving is Exemplified

Jesus didn't just say He loved us—He proved it by laying down His life. He endured betrayal, mockery, beating, the cross, and the wrath of God not because we were lovable, but because love compelled Him to act.

B. Giving is Expected

1. It is Reasonable - Look at what's been done for you.

If Jesus gave everything for us, then it's not unreasonable for God to ask us to give sacrificially for others.

2. It is Rational - Look at how God's blessed you.

Authentic love isn't blind or stingy. It's awake, aware, and generous.

3. It is Real - It's more than just good intentions and words.

It's not about sounding spiritual, it's about living sacrificial.



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### **III. Authentic Love is Powerful (Verses 19-24)**

#### **A. It Produces Unshakeable Confidence**

Love in action becomes one of the greatest evidences that we are walking in truth. It assures our hearts. Even when our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts. He sees beyond our feelings to the faith and fruit He's producing in us.

#### **B. It Produces Impactful Prayer**

When you're living out real love and you're seeking to obey God's Word, it opens the line of communication with heaven.

Love clears the static in our spiritual connection and gives power to our prayer life.

#### **C. It Produces Resilient Consistency**

A life rooted in belief and overflowing with love stays in fellowship with God. And when you abide in Him, His Spirit affirms it within you—that you are His, and He is yours.

**Conclusion:** This week in your home, your workplace and in your relationships, choose to be the one who shows up with grace, who loves without conditions, and who reflects the heart of Jesus even when it's hard. That kind of love doesn't just change others — it transforms you too.

