

Loving as God's Children

**How should we love as children of God?
¿Cómo deberíamos amar como hijos de Dios?**

1. Let's love like _____.

Amemos como _____.

1 John 3:16 (1 Juan 3:16)

John 15:12-13 (Juan 15:12-13)

2. Let's love with _____.

Amemos con _____.

1 John 3:17-18 (1 Juan 3:17-18)

James 2:14-17 (Santiago 2:14-17)

3. Let's love with the _____.

Amemos con la _____.

1 John 3:19-20 (1 Juan 3:19-20)

Ephesians 4:14-15 (Efesios 4:14-15)

4. Let's love with _____.

Amemos con _____.

1 John 3:23 (1 Juan 3:23)

John 13:34-35 (Juan 13:34-35)



Life Group Discussion Questions

Week 7: March 29 – April 5

Scripture: 1 John 3:11-24

The book of First John tells us what it means to be children of God. In fact, this is a major theme in chapters 3, 4, and 5. 1 John 3:1 tells us that we are God's children because of His great love for us. And 1 John 3:11-24 tells us how the children of God are to love one another. Jesus said that our love for one another is the main way that all people will know that we are His disciples (John 13:35). In our world today, many Christian families and churches are divided because of a lack of love for one another. Now more than ever, we need to demonstrate what it means to be the children of God by our love for one another.

Read 1 John 3:11-24

1. What message have we heard from the beginning? (3:11; see also 2:7, 24; 2 John 1:5-6)

John Stott writes,

The gospel does not change. The truth about the person of Jesus Christ and about Christian conduct is unalterable. In both doctrine and ethics we must go right back to the beginning and enquire what the apostles originally taught and their first converts both had (2:7, *eichete*, aorist) and heard (2:24 and 3:11, *ēkousate*, another aorist). An essential part of that message was that we should love one another (cf. 3:23; 4:7; 11-12; 2 John 5; John 13:34; 15:12, 17). (Stott, 141)

2. According to verse 12, why did Cain murder his brother?

3. Why should we not be surprised if the world hates us? (3:13; see also John 15:18-19)

Stott notes,

Cain was the prototype of the world, which still manifests the ugly qualities he first displayed. The 'world' is Cain's posterity; so we are not to be surprised if the world hates us. It is only to be expected that the wicked should continue to regard and treat the righteous as Cain regarded and treated his righteous brother Abel. (Stott, 142)

4. How can we know that we have passed from death to life? (3:14)
5. What does verse 15 say about the one who hates his brother?
6. How do we know what love is? (3:16)
7. What question did the author ask his readers in verse 17?

Morris Womack observes,

John now illustrates the extent to which our love should reach. It is a demanding requirement! In our day (especially in highly developed nations like America) most of us have far more than we actually need to sustain ourselves. John demands that we lay down part of that which we have to give to a needy brother. This is how *κοινωνία* (*koinōnia*, “fellowship, oneness”) should work in our lives. (Womack, 92)

8. How did John tell us to love in verse 18?

Robert Yarbrough notes,

There is a stark contradiction between the Scroogelike portrait that John paints, on the one hand... and Christ’s selfless example that taught love, on the other hand. Love has profound theological underpinnings and a sublime exemplar in Christ. But God has sent love forth to be taken up, not admired at a distance. The first test of gospel profession is the practical expression of love toward fellow believers in proximity. Absent this, the claim to know and have God’s love is a sham. In an e-mail, internet, and global age, the number of believers in proximity lends even more sting to John’s barb than it carried in the first century. (Yarbrough, 205)

9. How can we know that we belong to the truth? (3:18-20)
10. How is God described in verse 20?
11. According to this passage, how can we have confidence before God? (3:21-22)
12. What commands did John bring to our attention in verse 23?
13. How do we know that God lives in us? (3:24)

Womack comments,

One of John's favorite phrases (and certainly, one of Paul's) is "in him" [1 John 2:6, 28; 3:6]. Both of these apostles use this to describe the relationship that we have with Jesus. We are "in him" and he is "in us," as we can see from the first part of this verse. It sounds like this is not possible, for how can I be "in him" and he be "in me" at the same time? This is another way of saying that if we have the proper relationship with Jesus, then we have a common identity. This language reminds us of John's use of such terms as "abide in him" [John 15:5], the union and fellowship that we share with Jesus. We are told in John's Gospel that "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him and we will come to him and make our home with him. He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me" (John 14:23-24). John insists that obedience to the commandments of God is the condition for having communion with him. (Womack, 95)

14. Why is it so important for Christians to love one another?
15. Are you better at communicating words of love or actions of love to the people in your life? Why?
16. Why is it important to show love with both our actions and the truth?
17. Why is it helpful to remember that God is greater than our hearts and that He knows everything?
18. What gives you the confidence to pray and believe that God will listen and answer your prayer?
19. What will you do this week simply because you want to please God?
20. How will you put your love into action this week?

Sources cited:

Stott, John. *The Letters of John*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2009.
Womack, Morris. *1, 2, & 3 John*. Joplin, MO: College Press, 1998.
Yarbrough, Robert. *1-3 John*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008.