

1 John - Love and Hate

Icebreaker: would you say you are more of a free spirit or planned personality? How might/has that caused conflict in your relationships? If married, did you marry your opposite or the same?

This is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another. (1 John 3:11)

Worldly hate is driven by...

- **The enemy of faith** – “Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother...” (1 John 3:12a)
- **The absence of faith** – “And why did he murder him? Because his own actions were evil and his brother’s were righteous. Do not be surprised, my brothers, if the world hates you.” (1 John 3:12b-13)

By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was commended as a righteous man, when God spoke well of his offerings. (Heb. 11:4a)

How have you seen a “lack of faith” cause problems in your life or in the lives around you?

Godly love is defined by...

- **The sacrifice of Jesus** – “This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down His life for us.” (1 John 3:16a)
- **The selflessness of His people** – “And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?” (1 John 3:16b-17)

🔗 **Biblical love is a verb, not just a noun** – “Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.” (1 John 3:18) - Who do you sacrifice for beyond your spouse and children? Who demonstrates the same towards you? Describe some actions (verb) that demonstrate love to you personally that far outweigh just words (spouses and friends, take good notes).

When we fail at love...

- **Choose facts over feelings** – “This then is how we know that we belong to the truth, and how we set our hearts at rest in His presence whenever our hearts condemn us. For God is greater than our hearts, and He knows everything.” (1 John 3:19-20)
- **Choose prayer over pride** – “Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God and receive from Him anything we ask, because we obey His commands and do what pleases Him.” (1 John 3:21-22)

Do you tend to choose more feelings and pride than facts or prayer? Which of the two bullets above is hardest to implement in your life? What would it take to implement them starting today?

And this is His command: to believe in the name of His Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as He commanded us. Those who obey His commands live in Him, and He in them. And this is how we know that He lives in us: We know it by the Spirit He gave us. (1 John 3:23-24)

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Lets practice prayer! Take a time to pray about the hardest part of this sermon and study for you.
Allow God in to work on those tough areas in which it is hard to love. Remember 1 John 3:11.