

Deep Practice Discipleship Guide

1 John 3:11–17 – “Love One Another”

1. SHARE – Reflection on Last Week’s Practice

Begin your group time by inviting everyone to share:

- What practice or commitment did you make last week?
- How did it go? What did you notice?
- What challenged you? What encouraged you?
- What did you learn about God, about yourself, or about others?

Encourage brief but honest sharing—this is where deep practice begins.

2. LEARN – Sermon Summary & Teaching Outline

HOOK – “What We Already Know... But Often Forget”

John reminds us of something not new, not trendy, not cutting-edge:

“Love one another.”

Some things are life-changing not because they’re new, but because we’ve forgotten to practice them.

HEAD – The Teaching

1. This Message Is Not New but Foundational (v. 11)

- John repeats what believers already know because the issue isn’t knowledge—it’s obedience.
- Jesus renews the old command (John 13:34; 1 John 2:7–8).
- Most spiritual problems aren’t solved by something *new*, but by returning to what God always intended.

Illustration: Like restarting a frozen phone—simple, not innovative, but it restores the device to its design.

Teaching Point:

The deepest work of God happens when we return to the basics and actually practice them.

2. The Negative Example: “We Must Not Be Like Cain” (vv. 12–13)

- Cain’s issue wasn’t his offering—it was his heart.
- God warned Cain, but pride shut the door.
- Cain murdered Abel because Abel’s righteousness exposed his darkness.
- Don’t be surprised when the world reacts to righteousness with hostility.

Teaching Point:

The world often responds to righteousness the same way Cain responded to Abel.

3. Cain or Christ: Two Ways of Living (vv. 14–17)

John gives a clear contrast:

The Way of Cain

- Takes life
- Lives in spiritual death
- Closes the heart to need

The Way of Jesus

- Gives life
- Lays down His life (v. 16)
- Opens His heart to those in need (v. 17)

Illustration – The Two Plants:

Early seedlings of an apple tree and poisonous water-hemlock can look nearly identical. But as they grow, the fruit—or poison—reveals their nature. So it is with people: **the pattern of a life reveals the root of the life.**

HEART – “This is How We Know Love” (v. 16)

- Love is not defined by emotion or sentiment but by the cross.
- Jesus loved by giving His life.
- Christian love seeks another's good, holiness, and flourishing—often at personal cost.

Heart Appeal:

Jesus did not love us in theory. He loved us in blood.

So our love must move beyond emotion into sacrificial action.

HANDS – Practicing Christlike Love (v. 17)

Be grateful

- Reflect this week on the gift of Jesus' sacrificial love.
- Practice intentional thanksgiving.

Be generous

- Gratitude leads to open-handed living.
- Generosity isn't only financial—
 - Encourage someone
 - Give time
 - Offer grace
 - Meet a practical need

3. DISCUSS – Bloom's Taxonomy-Based Questions

Remember & Understand

1. What is the "message from the beginning" John highlights in this passage?
2. Why does John bring up Cain as an example?

Apply

3. In what ways can we drift from the basic command to love one another?
4. How does the cross reshape the way we define and practice love?

Analyze

5. Compare the “way of Cain” and the “way of Christ.”
 - Where do you see these patterns in the world—and in your own life?
6. In what ways does righteous living sometimes expose others’ insecurity or sin?

Evaluate

7. Why do you think love requires sacrifice?
8. What makes it difficult to open our hearts to people in need?

Create

9. If you could design one concrete expression of Christlike love for your workplace, school, neighborhood, or family, what would it be?
 10. What would it look like for our church community to more fully embody the “way of Christ” in this passage?
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4. TELL – Storying Exercise

Scripture Story: The Good Samaritan

Luke 10:25–37

1. **Read the story aloud** as a group.
2. **Turn your Bibles over** or close them.
3. **Retell the story** in your own words—either as a group or one person at a time.
 - What happened?
 - Who were the main characters?
 - What choices did they make?
4. **Fill in any details** the group may have missed.

Storying Discussion Questions

1. Which character in the story best reflects the “way of Cain”? Why?
2. Which character best reflects the “way of Christ”?
3. What motivated the Samaritan’s actions?

4. How does the story challenge the idea that love is sentiment rather than costly service?
 5. What connections do you see between this story and 1 John 3:11–17?
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5. LIVE – Deep Practice Commitment for the Week

Take 2–3 minutes in silence.

Write down one specific, concrete action you will take this week to practice Christlike love.

Examples:

- Encourage a coworker who's struggling
- Give time to someone who feels overlooked
- Offer forgiveness to someone who hurt you
- Help someone financially
- Express gratitude to someone who has impacted your life

Make your commitment: one action, one person, one week.

Next week, the group will begin by reflecting on how you practiced this commitment.