



**Building Bridges and Tearing Down Walls**  
1 John 3:11-18

**We build bridges and tear down walls (love like Jesus) when our ears are opened.**

Verse 11:

**Text Message:**

- Here John refers to what he heard from Jesus decades prior: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." John 13:34-35
- This commandment became a regular message in the church.
- We too need to hear this message regularly because:
  - 1) Love can be lost in the busyness of the church (Rev. 2:4).
  - 2) Loving one another was the premier message of both Jesus (John 13) and the apostles (1 Corinthians 13).
- We love like Jesus when our ears are opened to listen with playful curiosity rather than predetermined criticism: Let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger. James 1:19
- Doesn't the very opposite of this describe our world today?
- *Who will love like Jesus if His followers do not?*

**We build bridges and tear down walls (love like Jesus) when our hearts are opened.**

Verses 12-15:

**Text Message:**

- Why mention the Cain and Abel story? It seems a little bit of overkill (no pun intended!)...
- The Cain and Abel story becomes most appropriate to the church loving one another because:
  - 1) It is an "insider" story.
  - 2) It is a story with a religious context and background.
  - 3) It demonstrates that: worship – love = 0.
- Cain first closed his heart to his brother Abel, then to God.
- Paul spoke of opening his heart to the Corinthian church: We have spoken freely to you, Corinthians; our heart is wide open. 2 Corinthians 6:11.
- **A simple action point:** Follow up on the thought, "I wonder how \_\_\_\_\_ is doing?"

**We build bridges and tear down walls (love like Jesus) when our hands are opened.**

Verses 16-18:

**Text Message:**

- Many memorize John 3:16, but what about 1 John 3:16?
- Notice the flow of John's instructions in Verses 16-18 and how intensely practical he gets in Verse 17.
- This is why we as a church do things like: Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes (information available)! Support orphanages and pastors in Southeast India. Deacon's Fund giving/projects.
- So, thank you for your support of these!
- May we be Jesus-people who build bridges and tear down walls, loving like Jesus with open ears, open hearts, and open hands!