

# Joyful Life Bible Studies

## I John 3:11-18

Lesson 15

### FIRST DAY: Review and Overview

1. Review I John 3:1-10. One of the wonderful expressions of God's love which has *been bestowed upon us* is that we are *called the children (sons) of God*. What comes to your mind when you dwell on this incredible privilege?
  - a. How does knowing you are *a child of God* affect the way you live?
  - b. One day we shall see the Lord Jesus Christ *face to face*. We shall gaze upon (*behold*) Him and He shall gaze upon us. What do you want that experience to be like?
    - 1.) How are you *purifying* your life as a result of this *hope* (confident expectation)?
      - a. The *children of God* cannot practice a lifestyle of sin. Those who are *children of the devil* cannot practice a lifestyle of righteousness. What makes this amazing difference?
2. John continues his contrast of the *children of God* with the *children of the devil*. He returns to *the message we have heard from the beginning*; the command to *love one another*. The expression of love through deeds reveals those who are truly children of God, for God's agape love cannot be manifested without the residing power of the Holy Spirit. Read I John 3:11-18 and note the key thoughts of this paragraph division.
3. I John 3:11 begins with the commandment that *we should love one another*. Last week we *beheld the love that God has bestowed upon us*. Now, we are reminded of the necessity to express that same love to others. Before you begin this study, *behold the manner of love the Father has bestowed upon you*. Proclaim in a prayer your appreciation for that love and your desire to walk in that love as you interact with others. Ask God to reveal to you practical ways that you can express love to your brothers and sisters in Christ.

*Now you can have real love for everyone because your souls have been cleansed from selfishness and hatred when you trusted Christ to save you; so see to it that you really do love each other warmly, with all your hearts.*

*I Peter 1:22 TLB*

©1994 Calvary Chapel Joyful Life Women's Ministry-3800 South Fairview Rd., Santa Ana, CA 92704 Printed in the USA

**SECOND DAY:**

Read I John 3:11, 12

1. We have studied in I John 2:7-11 and I John 3:10 the importance of living in the message we have *heard from the beginning* and we will study it again as we continue to examine this wonderful book of I John. What is *the message that we have heard from the beginning?*  
v. 11
  - a. We have learned from I John 3:9 that *God's seed in us* enables us to walk righteously and enables us to love one another. One might ask, "If this is true, then why does John keep commanding us to love? Shouldn't this *love for one another* just come naturally?" Why do you think that we must be reminded to *love one another*?
  - b. *God's seed in us* gives us the will and the power to love (Philippians 2:13), but we must take the action. John encourages us to cultivate the seed within us and inspires us to live life in conformity with our new nature. Share how we do this.
  - c. Tradition tells us that when John was at a very old age, he was often asked to give a word in various churches. His message was always the same, *My little children, love one another*. Why do you think this was so very important to John?
2. In I John 3:12 John tells us how we are *not* to love. Who does he use as an example?
  - a. Read Genesis 4:1-12 and summarize the account of Cain and Abel.

1.) What does Hebrews 11:4 tell us about Abel's offering?

2.) Scripture does not specifically tell us why God rejected Cain's offering. God must have given Cain and Abel some instructions regarding this offering. Since faith is a response to a revelation of God, Abel apparently responded to what God had told him; Cain apparently did not. Cain, like many today, seemed to try to reach God according to his own way. I John 3:12 instructs us not to be like Cain. Complete the following chart by contrasting Cain's motives and actions as you see them in Genesis 4:5-11 and I John 3:12 with the love John commands in I John 3:11 using I Corinthians 13:4-6:

Cain	I Corinthians 12:4-6

(a.) How is Cain an example of how not to love?

3. *Cain was of the wicked one: and his works were evil.* John 3:12 John reminds us that a believer will not react like Cain. Those of the *wicked one* walk in self-love while those who walk in righteousness walk in love for others and have pure motives. Describe what you think the progression of Cain's thoughts were that led to murder.

\_\_\_\_\_ → \_\_\_\_\_ → \_\_\_\_\_ → \_\_\_\_\_ → murder

- a. The believer is not exempt from impure thoughts but has been given the resources to stop this progression. Underline from the following verse our part in reacting to the temptation to sin:

*If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you not well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it.* Genesis 4:7 NASB

- 1.) Explain how we master sin. If possible, use scriptures to support your answer.

**THIRD DAY:**

Read I John 3:13,14

1. According to I John 3:13 what did John tell the believers?
- a. *Marvel not, (do not think it so unusual, do not be surprised) ... if the world hate you.* John had just pointed out the fact that Cain hated Abel, his brother. Now he reminds us that we are not to think it strange if the world hates us in the same manner. According to the following scriptures why does *the world hate* believers:
- 1.) Matthew 24:9
- 2.) John 15:18, 19
2. God's children who walk in righteousness convict and shame *the world*. If we love with God's love the world will often hate us, because we make them painfully aware of their self-serving way of living. God's love, unlike all other forms of love is *other* centered rather than *self* centered. How do the following scriptures describe God's love in action:
- a. Romans 12: 10
- b. Galatians 5:13b
- c. Colossians 3:13
- 1.) How would applying these verses to our lives display the difference between us and those *of the world*?
- 2.) Consider the following questions:  
What is the difference between the love of believers and the world's love?  
Are we different in the ways that we withhold love?  
Or are we different only in the ways that we express it?  
What does the world specifically see in Christians that it does not see in itself?  
What does the world see in you?  
Share your response to one of these questions.

3. Jesus, in His prayer to the Father (John 17) in behalf of all believers, acknowledges the hatred that the world has for us. He expresses His desire *that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them*. Why is this so important? John 17:21b

4. How do we know that *we have passed from death unto life*? I John 3:14

a. What do the following scriptures say about this incredible transition:

1.) John 5:24

2.) Colossians 1:13

5. Often, we allow for gray areas between love and not loving (hate). We settle for being somewhere in the middle and justify our actions (or lack of them) because we are not actually intending them ill will. Where would you place yourself on the following scale as far as your reaction toward others:

love.....hate

However, John does not leave us any gray area. He describes love and hate in very black and white terms. Those who *love are of God* and those who *hate are of the devil*. He does not even use the word *hate* in I John 3:14b. He uses the phrase *loveth not* (does not express God's love). John would draw his scale like this:

love | hate

a. If you used John's scale to classify your reactions (or lack, of them), how would this change your life?

**FOURTH DAY:** Read I John 3:15,16

1. From I John 3:15 write the one word that describes a person who *hateth his brother*.

a. What does I John 3:15b say about *murderers* (those who hate)?

b. The verb *hateth* is *in* the present tense indicating a continual choosing to hate. A Christian may have occasional incidents of anger or hatred, but because these would cause a believer to be out of fellowship with the Lord, the believer will be miserable in that state and will choose to flee from those reactions. What actions are we to take when we find ourselves dealing with anger or hatred toward another according to the following scriptures:

1.) Psalm 37:8

2.) II Corinthians 10:4) 5

3.) Add others if you wish

2. I John is a book of contrasts. I John 3:15, 16 pronounce the supreme contrast. Cain's hatred and jealousy resulted in murder; Christ's love resulted in self-sacrifice. In distinguishing from those who *murder*, how does I John 3:16 describe the truest expression of *love*?
  - a. *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.* John 15:13 How is this the ultimate proof of God's love?
  
3. What example should we be following in the expression of our love? I John 3:16c

*The self-sacrifice of Christ is not just a revelation of love to be admired;  
it is an example to copy. – John Stott*

- a. Secular history observes the behavior of Christians by stating, *Behold, how they love one another, they are ready to die for one another.* Eusebius says of Christians, *in a time of plague they visited one another, and not only hazarded their lives, but actually lost them in their zeal to preserve the lives of others.* The act of *laying down our lives*, not only describes a willingness to die for another, it can be expressed in several ways. What are some practical ways that we can *lay down our lives* for one another as an expression of God's love?
  - 1.) What are some of the things that hinder us from *laying down our lives for the brethren*?
    - (a.) What can we do to overcome these things?
  
  - 2.) In addition to the sacrifice of His life on the cross, in what other ways did Jesus lay down His life? Philippians 2:7

*Oh, how He loves you and me! Oh, how He loves you and me!  
He gave His life, what more could He do?  
Oh, how He loves you. Oh, how He loves me,  
Oh, how He loves you and me!*

*Kurt Kaiser*

*But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

**FIFTH DAY:**

Read I John 3:17, 18

1. Write I John 3:17 phrase by phrase.

a. Describe the phrase *shutteth up his bowels of compassion* in your own words.

1.) From Proverbs 21:13 what are the consequences of *stopping our ears at the cry of the poor*?

2.) What does God promise to those who care for the poor? Isaiah 58:(7) 8, 9a

b. Define who John is speaking to by filling in the blanks of I John 3:17a:

*But whoso* \_\_\_\_\_ *and* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ . ...

1.) John is describing those who have the necessities of life such as food, clothing, and shelter. *Seeth*, is not referring to a hasty glance, but means to deliberately contemplate, to be made aware of. Take a moment to ask God to search your heart. Has He made you aware of someone in need? If He has, how will you respond?

*So then while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men,  
and especially to those who are of the household faith.*

*Galatians 6:10 NASB*

2. What is John's question regarding those who *shut up their bowels of compassion*?  
I John 3:17c

a. What does James 2:14-17 add to this?

3. *My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.* I  
John 3:18 Explain the difference between loving in *word* and loving in *deed*?

a. Romans 12:10, 13 specifies how we are to treat one another. Read this portion of scripture and note the areas that have spoken to your heart about your behavior towards others. Use another version if you have one.

*But if someone who is supposed to be a Christian has money enough to live well,  
and sees a brother in need, and won't help him – how can God's love be within him?*

*I John 3:17 TLB*

**SIXTH DAY:**

Review I John 3:11-18

1. I John is a book of assurance. What have you learned from I John 3:11 -18 that would assure you that you *have passed from death unto life*?
2. I John is also a book of contrasts. How is the love of a believer different from the love of *the world*?
3. What is the ultimate expression of love?
  - a. In what ways might we be asked to *lay down our lives* (not only for those outside our home, but also for our spouses and children)?

Personal: Is God calling you to *lay down your life* in a specific area in your home? How will you respond?

4. Share a time you had a need and God used a brother or sister to meet that need?
5. It is easy to profess love. What are some common excuses that we use for not expressing our love through deeds?
  - b. Which of the above excuses are legitimate?
    - 1.) Which ones are you going to stop using?

6. How are you going to apply what you have learned through your study this week?

7. Diligently commit your desire to change unto the Lord. Ask Him to reveal to you ways that you can love others. Ask Him to make love and hate black and white to you; and cause you to choose love. Be prepared to share next week the difference this has made both in your life and in the lives of others around you.

*Love one another for love is of God,  
He who loves is born of God, and knows God.  
He who does not love does not know God,  
For God is love – God is love.  
Love bears all things, believes all things.  
Love hopes all things, endures all things.*

*J. Detweiller*