

# 1 John 1-5

The book of 1 John was written by the apostle John as an encouragement to believers about God's great love for us and how, as believers, we are called to love one another. He also warns against hating fellow believers.

*"And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us."*

1 John 3:23 ESV

*"Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us."*

1 John 4:8-12 ESV

*"We love because he first loved us. Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister."*

1 John 4:19-21 NIV

With social media we have the ability to take in and see a multitude of current events. Happy, sad, exciting, tragic...its all there and all available to us at any time of day. This means that we are also able to witness people's lives...their families, their daily activities, their beliefs, and even their sins.

All of this information being right there in our hands makes it incredibly easy to unknowingly form opinions and judgements about people and situations that we have no involvement in. In recent events, all platforms of social media have been flooded with varied opinions, judgements and even justifications for a horrific event occurring to a brother and family in Christ, coming from non-Christians and Christians alike. As believers, we are not of this world, so we already know what to expect from the world against a fellow believer, but it can be a complete shock to see a fellow brother or sister have a worldly reaction against their brother in Christ.

We must always be on guard that the enemy can and will use a tool like social media to cause chaos between brothers and sisters in Christ. He will use it to cause us to stumble. He will use it to bring us closer to the darkness.

*"Whoever says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in darkness. Whoever loves his brother abides in the light, and in him there is no cause for stumbling. But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes."*

1 John 2:9-11 ESV

It is vital to remember that even as believers we all still fall short of the glory of Christ. No brother or sister in Christ is perfect, and we can disagree with them, but we must always love them as God has commanded us. And that can be from a distance and with boundaries if necessary, but we must always be careful to not allow the enemy to get a foothold and place hate in our hearts and cause us to "walk in the darkness". We love and we give love, because of His great, sacrificial love for us. Despite any differences we may or may not have, as believers, we are united because of our love and faith in Jesus Christ, and we must protect and reflect that unity in a broken, divided world.

*"By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth."*

1 John 3:16-18 ESV