

FIRST JOHN 3:11-24

Big Point: The ultimate mark of a true child of God is love. Jesus made known to us what love really is, and he is our ultimate model of how to demonstrate love.

Love – The message from the very beginning (vv. 11-14)

- Just as God's hidden, divine attributes are clearly on display, to show love to one another is an obvious evidence of the nature of God and his design for humanity. The example of Cain demonstrates how sin so immediately corrupted humanity.

Jesus is our ultimate model (vv. 15-20)

- Jesus is our one example and standard for love. We are to emulate him in all things as we are being conformed to his likeness and character. The Christian is not to aspire to bold acts of emulation, however, but rather to die to self each day. "Love means a readiness to do anything for other people" ^{Marshall}. Look at the money in your pocket, the resources within your stewardship and the need presented in front of you. Act in love in these things. *The most important person in Jesus' ministry was the person right in front of him.*

The work that God requires (vv. 21-24)

- It seems the test of our right standing before God begins having already failed. Your heart condemns you. But that is a good place to start, because that is where the Gospel begins, with our unworthiness. How great a truth of God's love and compassion is that He is greater than our own heart and he is transforming our lives despite our own heart. God sees what He is doing in us better than we ever will.

1 John 3:11-24 Christian Standard Bible (CSB)

Love in Action

¹¹ For this is the message you have heard from the beginning: We should love one another, ¹² unlike Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his deeds were evil, and his brother's were righteous.

¹³ Do not be surprised, brothers and sisters, if the world hates you. ¹⁴ We know that we have passed from death to life because we love our brothers and sisters. The one who does not love remains in death. ¹⁵ Everyone who hates his brother or sister is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life residing in him. ¹⁶ This is how we have come to know love: He laid down his life for us. We should also lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. ¹⁷ If anyone has this world's goods and sees a fellow believer^[a] in need but withholds compassion from him—how does God's love reside in him? ¹⁸ Little children, let us not love in word or speech, but in action and in truth.

¹⁹ This is how we will know that we belong to the truth and will reassure our hearts before him ²⁰ whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows all things.

²¹ Dear friends, if our hearts don't condemn us, we have confidence before God ²² and receive whatever we ask from him because we keep his commands and do what is pleasing in his sight. ²³ Now this is his command: that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another as he commanded us. ²⁴ The one who keeps his commands remains in him, and he in him. And the way we know that he remains in us is from the Spirit he has given us.