

I John 3:11-24 - The Gospel's Demand of Love

EMC Wednesday Night Bible Study - 7-31-19

The Social Test of Real Life in Christ: Love - 3:11-18 (read)

V. 11 - "this is the message which you have heard from the beginning"

- Secessionists: new, private enlightenment will save
- John: old, public revelation has saved
- 2:24 - be steadfast in _____ truth. Here - be steadfast in _____ truth (3:23; 4:7; 11-12; II John 5; cf. John 13:34; 15:12, 17)

Spelling Out the Command Negatively (vv. 12-13)

V. 12 - negative example of Cain's hatred that was "of" the evil one (cf. Gen. 4:1-8; Heb. 11:4; Jude 11)

- Not _____ his gift, but _____ his greater righteousness (cf. John 3:19-20; Eph. 5:7-14)
- Righteousness _____ violence/hatred from unrighteousness

V. 13 - The world = Cain's _____

- It does not love because it "abides in death" (v. 14)
- "Don't be surprised" echoes I Peter 4:12ff.

Spelling Out the Command Positively (vv. 14-18)

V. 14 - dramatic pronoun shift: "we know" - the world may hate, but we "_____"

- Not love/hatred in the abstract. The church = _____ of love/hatred

V. 15 proves his point from v. 14

- The absence of love/presence of hatred = evidence of spiritual _____
- The presence of love/absence of hatred = evidence of spiritual _____

V. 16a - Love is revealed in the "(laying) down" of one's life

- Starks contrasts of how Christ's command is to be negatively and positively understood

V. 16b - Christ's love is not just a revelation to be admired, but an _____ to copy

- It is both _____ and _____
- The evidence of mutual abiding is _____ - _____ love
 - V. 17 - Even in the little things
 - Seeing need + having the resources to help = inescapable responsibility
 - Life does not dwell in the murderer (v. 15).
 - Love does not dwell in the _____ (v. 17).
- Love is the willingness to surrender that which has value for our own life in order to enrich the life of another.
- You prove your love for the world every time you love someone in the world.

V. 18 - John's application and plea

- True love is not sentiment or verbal expression, but concrete _____

Summary:

Hatred	Love
Characterizes the world	Characterizes the church
Prototype is Cain	Prototype is Christ
Originates from the devil	Originates in God
Issues in murder	Issues in self-sacrifice
Evidence of spiritual death	Evidence of eternal life

Assurance and the Condemning Heart (vv. 19-24)

V. 19 - "by this"—i.e. the abiding love of God in our lives—we "will know" something

- V. 20 - The heart needs reassurance
 - For just accusations: the _____ edict of God (I John 1:9)
 - For unjust accusations: the _____ - _____ edict of God
 - The witness of his Spirit's voice and fruit (vv. 23-24; cf. 4:7)
 - Law: "There are actual things we can point to—not things we have professed or felt or imagined or intended, but things that we have done."

Vv. 21-22 - the blessings of the uncondemning heart

- V. 21 - _____ before God (cf. Heb. 4:16)
- V. 22a - "whatever we ask we _____ from him" (cf. Matt. 7:7-8)
 - V. 22b - Obedient living is the indispensable _____, not the meritorious cause, of answered prayer
 - In context:
 - Prayer must be according to his _____ (5:14; cf. Ps. 37:4; John 15:7)
 - Prayer must be in Christ's _____ (John 16:23-24) and for God's _____ (Jas. 4:2-3)
 - Prayer must come from a cleansed (Ps. 66:18; Prov. 15:29; Isa. 59:1-2; Jas. 5:16), forgiven, and forgiving (Mark 11:25) _____
 - Prayer must come from one who believes God's _____ (Matt. 21:22; Mark 11:24; cf. Jas. 1:5-7) and obeys God's commands (v. 22).

Summary

- No one can claim to live in Christ and Christ in him unless obedient to 3 fundamental commands: Belief in Christ, moral righteousness, and love for brothers
- Life in Christ ≠ mystical experience alone. It indispensably includes the confession of Jesus Christ as the Son of God and a life of holiness and love.
- We know we are real Christians when the Spirit's voice is subjectively witnessed in our hearts and fruits objectively manifest in our lives
- Our hearts can be at rest before God and enjoy mutual abiding communion