

## **PRACTICAL LOVE**

1. Text: I John 3:11-18
2. Here is a section of Scripture dealing with the greatest attribute we can have as humans: Love.
3. The passage is packed with insights into the nature of love. Let's explore them.

### **I. The Call To Love (Verse 11)**

1. "From the beginning" of their new life in Christ, they heard, "we should love one another."
2. This bedrock concept should be one of our "first principles."
3. See John 13:34-35 I command you to love one another, by this all will know my disciples.

### **II. The Contrast To Love (Verses 12-13)**

1. Cain is introduced. Because he was of the evil one influencing him he murdered his brother.
2. Why? His works were evil; Abel's were righteous. See Genesis 4:4-8. Cain brutally slaughtered his brother. We, instead, must love our brethren.
3. Don't marvel if world hates you. Lord promised in John 15:17-19. This means even more that we love one another.

### **III. The Crossing To Love (Verse 14)**

1. We know we have passed or crossed over from death to life (spiritual death to life. See John 5:24; Ephesians 2:1,5)
2. How do we know we've crossed? We love the brethren.
3. If we don't love one another we're really still spiritually dead.

### **IV. The Condemnation Of Not Loving (Verse 15)**

1. John boldly says it's an either/or decision. If you don't love, in spirit you're a murderer. (See Matthew 5:21-22) A hater is a would-be murderer with restraints. Back to Cain.
2. Indifference is no option. Either love or hate. Hate robs us of eternal life.

### **V. The True Character Of Love (Verse 16)**

1. Love's true character? John instead of explaining, gives an example.
2. By this we know love: He (Christ) laid down His life for us. Cain's hatred led to murder; Christ's love to self-sacrifice. Life is precious.
3. Love should benefit the beloved. Example of jumping in water.
4. Our challenge: to lay down our lives for the brethren as Christ did for us.

### **VI. The Consequences Of Love (Verse 17)**

1. If we can help our brother and close our hearts (source of deep emotions), how does God's love abide in us?
2. Love causes response. Not mere emotion, feeling.

### **VII. The Characteristics Of Love (Verse 18)**

1. Love's traits are not just in word (message) or tongue (communication vehicle) orally. Tied closely. Talk is cheap.
2. Love in deed or action and truth or reality. It's real and practical, down to earth.

Conclusion:

**A Sermon preached by Monte Ginnings  
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