

This Is Love

1st John

Okay, then --- they will know you belong to Christ because of the love you have for one another.

***'A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.'* John 13:34-35**

Let's do the history. The books, 1st - 3rd John were written by John the disciple. We originally did the history with the four gospels handout. So we will not cover John's history again --- instead we will focus on content.

However, we should note that 1st John, as well as 2nd and 3rd John, were written from Ephesus. John made Jerusalem his headquarters until the death of Jesus' mother. Then after the persecution, Ephesus and the surrounding region became the center for Christian activity. John did all of his writing from there.

Polycarp, Papias and Ignatius were all John's disciples who all became bishops to Smyrna, Heiropolis and Antioch --- a powerful ministry, I would say.

At any rate, to the lesson...

I have always said 1st John chapters 3 and 4 are the love chapters. In 5 chapters John uses the word "love" 46 times! Wow.

Today will be a more practical and spiritual, rather than theological, study.

So, what is love.....

How often do we absolutely put others first ---- in thought, emotion, and action?

- A. We are thinking about the other person, what they need, what they are saying etc.
- B. Our feelings are in line with a servant's heart. We are not full of our own needs, so that our feelings are based on just our needs. We also have empathy and compassion, etc...
- C. Our actions, the things we do, reflect this. Our body posture as a result, is engaged and open, not closed. The things we do as a result of our thinking and feelings/emotions, reflect a service to the other..... a servant's heart

Now this is love.

They will know you by your love.

If you want Christ's character --- love --- you will be a servant to ALL.

1. Tell me what it looks like to serve another in thought, emotion and action?

1st John 1:1-4 --- John's purpose

1st John 1:9 --- a Promise

1st John chapter 3

2. What stands out to you in this chapter?

1st John 3:16-24

3. What does it mean "*if our heart condemns us*"?

1st John chapter 4

4. Why is fear so often mixed in with love?

5. The way you treat people is the single easiest way to improve your relations with God. Why?

Let's pray our hearts will convict us regularly and we will love others better.

Next, we will study both 2nd John and 3rd John together.