

Theme: Christians must walk in authentic brotherly love, following the example of Christ in their actions, which produces assurance before God.

## I. Shades of Grey In A Black and White World

- A. Our culture currently loves to “reboot” stories
- B. Often we try to make bad guys seem misunderstood
- C. We also try to make good guys seem very flawed
- D. Sometimes this complexity is ok - but sometimes not
- E. Sometimes “complexity” is a cover for my sin
- F. There is a place for clear lines so we know what we should do
- G. John draws clear lines in our text today

## II. The Necessity of Authentic Love

- A. The message and the command - love  
This is [the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another...](#)<sup>23</sup> And [this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us.](#) 1 John 3:11,23
  - 1. Forms an inclusion (bookend) around whole section
  - 2. The message of Jesus - love on another
  - 3. The command: love one another
  - 4. Command tied with Gospel - believe in Jesus, love

## B. The other option - hate

Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own actions were evil and his brother's were righteous. <sup>13</sup> Do not be surprised, my brothers, if the world hates you. <sup>14</sup> We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death. <sup>15</sup> Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life in him. 1 John 3:12–15

- 1. Don't be like Cain - the murderer
- 2. Cain hated because his actions were evil and Abel's were righteous. Righteousness does not need to hate.
- 3. Hatred is the way of the world, not Christ
- 4. Hatred and murder are the way of the devil  
You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning.... John 8:44
  - a. Both passages - belong to evil one/devil
  - b. Only passages in NT using this word for 'murder'
- 5. But Jesus came to destroy Satan's work!  
He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work. 1 John 3:8

### C. Love is the way of regenerate life

We know that [we have passed from death to life](#), because we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death. <sup>15</sup> Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life in him. 1 John 3:14–15

1. Have passed from death to life - regeneration (past)  
I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me [has eternal life](#) and will not be condemned; [he has crossed over from death to life](#). John 5:24

We know that we have passed from death to life, [because we love our brothers](#). [Anyone who does not love remains in death](#). <sup>15</sup> Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life in him. 1 John 3:14–15

2. Regeneration in past produces life of love in present
3. If there is hate rather than love - still dwell in death
4. Hating instead of love is murder instead of live
5. This is simply not the fruit of regeneration!

## III. Understanding Authentic Love

### A. The example of authentic love - Jesus

This is [how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us](#). And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. 1 John 3:16

1. As always - Jesus is our example!
2. Love - He laid His life down for us
3. Refers to the cross - and also whole Incarnation

### B. The path of authentic love

This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. [And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers](#). 1 John 3:16

1. We are to walk as Jesus did (1 John 2:6)
2. Authentic love acts like Jesus did
3. Authentic love is willing to lay down its life for others
4. Authentic love sacrifices - even when hated and despised

### C. The nature of authentic love - action!

If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? <sup>18</sup> Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. 1 John 3:17–18

1. John shows sacrificial love in action!
2. Authentic love is not just emotion or words
3. Authentic love produces concrete actions
4. John specifically speaks of helping poor Christians
5. But love is by nature giving, sharing, sacrificing
6. So this has implications for how I treat my spouse, children, neighbor, coworker

## IV. The Assurance of Authentic Love

- A. A continuing reflection on Jesus' words in John 8:44  
You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies. John 8:44
1. Common ideas of belonging to devil, murder, truth
  2. These Jews thought they knew God but were deceived
  3. Like Satan they hated Jesus and His people
  4. But how do we have confidence we are in truth?

### B. The problem of a condemning heart

1. Condemning or assured are key idea  
This then is how we know that we belong to the truth, and how we **set our hearts at rest** in his presence <sup>20</sup> whenever our hearts **condemn** us. For God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. <sup>21</sup> Dear friends, if our hearts do not **condemn** us, we have **confidence** before God 1 John 3:19–21
  - a. Gnostics said Christians were not part of the "truth"
  - b. Many struggled with a condemning heart
  - c. John wants them to be assured and at peace

### 2. Assurance by the Gospel

Dear friends, **if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God** <sup>22</sup> and receive from him anything we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him. <sup>23</sup> **And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us.** <sup>24</sup> Those who obey his commands live in him, and he in them. 1 John 3:21–24

- a. Instead of condemnation we can have confidence
- b. We overcome condemning heart by the Gospel
- c. Those who believe in Jesus are in God
- d. Pharisees did not believe - that is why they were of the Devil
- e. And loving the brothers gives assurance as well
- f. It shows we are part of God's people

## V. Applying the Authentic Word

### A. Have I embraced the authentic Gospel?

1. Everyone longs to know they are accepted by God
2. We try many ways to silence a condemning heart
3. But assurance comes from the Gospel of Jesus
4. Here is love - He died for us!
5. Have you believed and embraced the Gospel?
6. If you truly have, your heart can be at peace!
7. In Christ, we are accepted by God!

B. Am I walking in authentic love to other believers?

1. This is the natural fruit of regeneration
2. I need the community of God's people
3. But walking with others requires sacrificial love
4. How am I showing sacrificial love for God's people?
5. Is it seen in my time?
6. Is it seen in my finances?
7. Is it seen in my words about other believers?
8. Is it seen in my actions towards them?

C. The Table of Authentic love

1. At this Table we see true love - Christ laid down His life for us!
2. But we also see authentic love for Church  
Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ? <sup>17</sup> Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf. 1 Corinthians 10:16–17
3. Come to the Table of Authentic Love

**Authentic Brotherly Love**

1 John 3:11-24

July 12, 2015

Communion

1 Thessalonians 3:12-13

Teaching keywords: love, fellowship, confidence

May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you. <sup>13</sup> May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones. 1 Thessalonians 3:12–13

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<sup>16</sup> This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. <sup>17</sup> If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? <sup>18</sup> Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. <sup>19</sup> This then is how we know that we belong to the truth, and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence <sup>20</sup> whenever our hearts condemn us. For God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything.

<sup>21</sup> Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God <sup>22</sup> and receive from him anything we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him. <sup>23</sup> And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us. <sup>24</sup> Those who obey his commands live in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us. 1 John 3:11–24