



Gospel of Grace  
FELLOWSHIP

**1 John 3:11-12**

**We Must Not Fail to Love**

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**The Centrality of Christian Love**

**1 John 3:11 (LEB)**  
For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning: that we should love one another,

- “Message” is *aggelia* (used only here and 1Jn 1:5)
- To love is a message and a command (1Jn 3:23)
- This was Jesus’ command (John 13:34, 35)
- To love the Christian brothers is to abide in the light (1Jn 2:10)
- From the beginning here means from Jesus Himself

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**Cain: Failed to Love**

**1 John 3:12a (LEB)**  
not as Cain, who was of the evil one and violently murdered his brother.

- John gives a negative example from OT
- Cain is “from the evil one”; John’s absolute categories
- “violently murdered” is literally “slaughtered”
- The Cain and Abel narrative illustrates the failure to love one’s brother

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### Evil Doers Hate the Good

**1 John 3:12b (LEB)**

And for what reason did he violently murder him? Because his deeds were evil and the deeds of his brother were righteous.

- Abel is not mentioned by name to emphasize the importance of brotherhood
- Cain resented that God accepted Abel
- Envy is a root sin in the NT (Rom. 1:29)
- “for what reason?”—John is interested in motive
- Evil works are from the evil one

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### Implications and Applications

- Christian love precludes envy
- We must abide in God to abide in love
- We must learn from the Cain & Abel narrative

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### Christian Love Precludes Envy

**1 Peter 1:22 (NASB)**

Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart,

**1 Peter 2:1 (NASB)**

Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander,

- “obedience to the truth” references conversion
- These vices will always harm the body of Christ and show unwillingness to obey God and love

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### Abide in God's Love

**1 John 4:16 (NASB)**

We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

- God's love is expressed (lit) "in" believers (Rom. 5:5)
- "meno\_" (abide) is found three times in this verse
- Know and believed are both in the perfect tense as they are in John 6:69
- This is true of those who confess Christ (1 Jn 4:15)

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### The Lesson From Cain and Abel

**Hebrews 11:4 (ESV)**

By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, through which he was commended as righteous, God commending him by accepting his gifts. And through his faith, though he died, he still speaks.

- It was Abel's faith that God commended
- Cain was unwilling to respond in faith to God's call

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