



Gospel of Grace
FELLOWSHIP

1 John 3:16-18

Christ's Action Defines Love

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Text From LEB With Annotations

1 John 3:16
We have come to know love by this: that **he** (lit. 'that One') laid down his **life** (lit. 'soul') on **behalf** (*huper*) of us, and we ought to lay down our lives ('souls') on behalf of the brothers.

1 John 3:17
But whoever has the world's **material possessions** (*bios*) and **observes his brother** (a particular case) in need and shuts his **heart** (lit. 'bowels') against him, how does the love of God **reside** (*meno_*) in him?

1 John 3:18
Little children, let us not (hortatory subjunctive) love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.

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The Objective Ground of Love

1 John 3:16a (LEB)
We have come to know love by this: that he laid down his life on behalf of us,...

- 'By this' shows that Christ's laid down life defines Christian love
- We know love by an objective, historical event, not mystical feelings or human sentimentality
- Jesus died for us and continually cares for us
- We are safe in Christ (John 10:9-11)

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Our Obligation to Love

1John 3:16b (LEB)
and we ought to **lay down our lives** on behalf of the brothers.

- This implies self-sacrificial love for God's flock
- "The brothers" means committed Christians
- Our laid down lives cannot be substitutionary
- Christian love is defined by the cross and empowered by the Holy Spirit
- Ephesians 5:2 references the same idea

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God's Love Motivates Meeting Needs

1John 3:17 (LEB)
But whoever has the world's material possessions and observes his brother in need and shuts his heart against him, how does the love of God reside in him?

- This is about direct observation of a fellow Christian in need
- To 'close the bowels' means an attitude of indifference
- When we are like Cain rather than like Jesus we are not abiding in love

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Take Action to Practice Love

1John 3:18 (LEB)
Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.

- "Little children" shows John's great affection for the church
- Truth is important and points forward to the next section about assurance
- Taking loving action for the brethren shows that we are of the realm of truth

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Implications and Applications

- God's love is intentional and revealed in objective history
- We should take tangible, loving action
- We should live so that we can care for one another and display Christian love

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6

God Took Action to Truly Love

John 10:18 (NASB)

'No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father.'

- God's plan is eternal (1Peter 1:19, 20)
- God loved and sent His Son (John 3:16)
- Christ laid down His life for sinners and God's love is demonstrated (Romans 5:6-8)

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7

Tangible Expressions of Love

Hebrews 10:24-25 (NASB)

and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but **encouraging one another**; and all the more as you see the **day drawing near**.

- All these commands to love assume we are in fellowship with other Christians
- Everything about the idea of the "body of Christ" implies that we gather together and live out our Christian lives in relationship with each other

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8



Live Productive Lives

1Thessalonians 4:11, 12 (NASB)
and to **make it your ambition** to lead a quiet life and attend to your own business and work with your hands, just as we commanded you, so that you will behave properly toward outsiders and not be in any need.

- This will enable us to take care of others (Ephesians 4:28; Romans 12:13)
- Paul taught Christians to work, be productive, and thus be a good testimony

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LAWLESSNESS	ABIDING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •1Jn 3:4 (practices lawlessness) •1Jn 3:6 (sins and does not know Him) •1Jn 3:8 (practices sin, of the devil) •1Jn 3:10 (Children of the devil, no righteousness) •1Jn 3:12 (Cain, of the evil one, evil deeds) •1Jn 3:15 (hates his brother, murderer, no eternal life) •1Jn 3:17 (closed heart, no love within) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •1Jn 2:28, 29 (abides, practices righteousness, born of Him) •1Jn 3:1,2 (children of God, world does not know us, shall be like Him) •1Jn 3:3 (hope, purifies himself) •1Jn 3:6a (those abiding do not sin) •1Jn 3:7 (practices righteousness) •1Jn 3:9 (does not practice sin, born of God, His seed abides) •1Jn 3:10 (children of God, righteous) •1Jn 3:13 (the world hates us) •1Jn 3:14 (passed from death to life) •1Jn 3:16, 18 (lay down life, love)

Apostasy
1Jn 2:19

Conversion
1Jn 3:14

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