



AUTO-SERMON TRANSCRIPT

How have you loved a brother or sister in Christ this past week?

Love Your Neighbor, 3 of 7, April 21st, 2024

"Loving each other well helps us love our neighbors like Jesus."

1 John 3:8-18 by Ryan Gagnon (@RyGagnon)

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[Music]

Jeff Jeff was at a hundred and now he's at nap time. I like it. Okay, so yeah, it's it's a little bit different, right? It's tough to introduce your neighbors to meet and follow Jesus when our energy levels are really low low,

right? It's hard, but we're called by God to do that in the great commandment the great commission I should say that we're called to introduce our neighbors to meet and follow Jesus,

but there's all of this stuff going on There's a million checklists and four Who thinks they have the most calendars in the room? Pastor Michael,

how many calendars do you have? He wasn't supposed to be here today. He's got eight calendars. Okay. In fairness,

I don't know that we should clap for that. Yeah. So, we're called to introduce our neighbors to meet and follow Jesus. And then,

like, we come to church on a Sunday, and and the whole idea behind a worship gathering is to be encouraged, right? We wanna learn more about Jesus and we wanna take what we learn here and then go into our neighborhoods,

go into our workplaces and be fired up about what God is doing and wanna share that with other people. So our prayer today is that this particular time that we're gonna spend right now is gonna be really encouraging.

We're gonna learn about love in one another. another. We're gonna talk a lot about love. I'm gonna say love so many times that you'll probably start to go, okay, love, we get it, right, we're gonna talk about love a lot.

The big idea that we're gonna discuss is that loving each other well helps us to love our neighbors like Jesus does, makes sense? So if we in this group,

this church body, love each other. other well, right? If we lift each other up, if we care for one another well, it helps equip us to meet and to introduce our neighbors to meet and follow Jesus.

That should be an encouraging thing, but sometimes it's not. Sometimes we fail, sometimes we frustrate one another. Sometimes we get mad. We're gonna talk about that. We're gonna talk about our roles in each other's lives and what God has for us.

Yes. You guys fired up? Come on. Come on. Sharma, give me a number. Where are we at now? Okay.

All right. We'll take it. We'll take it. So, clearly, we're going to need Jesus. So, we're going to jump into the disciples prayer. Now, it's our custom to pray this prayer before we jump into Scripture every Sunday.

But over and over and over again. this is not a magic spell. This is just the way that Jesus teaches us how we should pray. So we invite you to pray along.

The words are up on the screen and we'll do that out loud now. Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come,

your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us the strength to pray. our daily bread. Forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors.

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever, amen. So we're gonna be,

like we said in 1 John chapter three, verse 11 through verse 18. 18. Let's read that now. "For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning that we should love one another.

We should not be like Cain who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brothers righteous.

Do not be surprised by brothers, that the world hates you. We know that we have passed out of death into life because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death.

Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. In verse 16, "By this we know love,

that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need,

yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or talk, but in deed and truth." So.

So, John has been teaching about love and what love is and what love means. And we've been studying this over the past two weeks about loving our neighbors, but we always wanna start kind of in a simple place,

right? So, what is love? Love is like a feeling, right? I love you. You know, I picture, like when love pops into my head,

I don't know, you can tell, you know, I'm like a nice person. kid because you know that the Aladdin magic carpet ride thing Anybody that's what pops into my head Aladdin and Jasmine riding and it's like you know that that's that's what pops into my head When I think of love,

but that's not at all the way God teaches love God teaches that love is seeing a need meeting that need and expecting nothing in return return.



Love is an action. Love isn't a feeling in the biblical sense. That's not what God would have us think about. When we talk about loving one another,

it's not, oh, when I see him, I get so (laughs) it's being connected enough to someone to realize when they're hurting and then caring enough to do something about it.

Sometimes doing something about it's praying. In fact, a lot of the times it's that. But that's what love is. Love is step one. If we don't get step one, we can't do anything else.

So if there's guys that are following along in the app, this is your first answer if you want to take notes. Love is step one. If we don't have love, we have nothing. So how did Paul,

oh no, how did Paul? I got Paul in my head. Oh, how did Paul? John start it out? For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning that we should love one another In the book of Matthew Jesus is asked.

What's the greatest commandment? He says to love the Lord your God with all your heart mind and spirit, right? And then he also says there's a second commandment, which is like it, which is love your as your It's a big one It's it's really big.

And he says that that's how we're supposed to see others. We're supposed to see others' needs and put others' needs before ours, but I don't wanna. I really don't wanna.

Over and over and over again, I'm really good at rationalizing into what's most important for me, and I can even make it sound good sometimes. Is that you? You? It's hard.

But if we don't have love, we miss step one. It's not a heart. It's not that. Now you can have feelings and feelings are important and God made feelings and don't mishear me.

Feelings are a big deal but that's not what we're talking about. Loving one another is seeing a need, meeting a need. need, expecting nothing in, return.

So now that we have a framework about where we're going, let's continue in verses 12 through 13. John says we should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one,

and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brothers righteous. Do not be surprised, brothers. brothers, that the world hates you.

John goes to a story that they all know. Cain enables a story that most of them would be familiar with that, right? Many of us in this room are familiar with it, but if you're not, let's just kind of retrace it.

This is from Genesis chapter 4. A couple of things that you want to know. Cain and Abel both offered a sacrifice to the world. God. God had regard for Abel's sacrifice, he accepted it, but Cain's sacrifice, he didn't. Now we learn in Hebrews chapter 11 that Abel's sacrifice was done by faith and that's why God accepted it.

So Abel was faith, remember that's another buzzword, but faith is God goggles. It's seeing the world the way that God says it is. is." So Abel was seeing the world the way God says it is,



and he gave that offering in faith, and that's why God accepted it, but Cain did not, and God didn't accept it. But there's something really interesting that happens after that.

If you go back to Genesis four, Cain has a conversation with God. And in that conversation, God says to him, "If you will do well." well, you will be accepted." But if you don't, sin is crouching at your door, and it's looking to control you.

That's the thing I didn't remember from Sunday school. God in the conversation with Cain saw his heart, saw what was real, there,

jealousy, anger, frustration, not quite understanding how he was getting it wrong, and God met with him and spoke to him and explained to him,

"You're off, and if you would do well, if you would follow me, you will be accepted." Cain's response is brutal.

He has this meeting with God. He's confronted by the truth of God's word He's confronted by the God of the universe and his response is to fall more into his frustration More into his anger more into his hatred and he kills his brother He takes his anger and his frustration from God That was pointed here and takes it out on able So why does John share this now?

Why do they care about Cain and Abel? Well the end of the next verse is "Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you." The church that he was writing to was a bunch of little house churches.

This is around the year 80. They've already gone through a major persecution over a couple thousand some say Christians have already been killed. Peter and John are gone or Peter and Paul are gone so John's are gone.

to a church that's hurting a church that they may know someone who's been killed and he points out that from the beginning we can see how someone confronted when the truth of God they respond in violence they respond with hate and anger in their heart because when the world is confronted by the truth,

it can respond in violence. But notice that the issue is the heart. And he's talking to the church. He's talking to them about how they would interact.

Jesus says that when we have anger in our heart, we've all got anger. sinned. We have this idea in our heads that, "Well,

well, I didn't hit them. I didn't yell. I didn't lose my mind. I didn't punch a wall." But Jesus says that the anger and the hatred that you have in your heart,

you've already sinned. Being confronted by God's truth and God's word about how our hearts really are,

our response should be to realize how much more we need Jesus. Because we understand that this ain't us. We can't win on our own.

It is all about what Jesus has done. Jealousy is all about God's truth and God's word. hatred, and anger blocks love. It blocks it out because sometimes we can push this stuff so far down and we can make ourselves think that it's not a thing,



but all the while that resentment that's there, it's not just the feeling you have towards the other person. It's the fact that you can't love them. How can you love someone?

How can you see them? How do you see that they have a need? And then meet that need expecting nothing in return when in your heart it's broken towards them. This is who he's writing to.

He's writing to a church that is seeing all of this. The world hates them and he's talking about how they interact with one another. And then seeing the world the way that God says it is. is. For us church,

we need to be thinking on a couple of different planes here. Are we dealing with our own frustrations if we have any towards a fellow member of the body? And how are we feeling about our neighbors?

The very people God called us to reach. How's our heart towards them? Is it a heart like Jesus? Or is it a heart like Cain? And we're shoving down frustration.

It doesn't end well We all got to see this a couple of days ago, right? Oh, I don't see anybody like holding their eyes. So I think everybody did okay But what what happened?

What is this? Eclipse, okay, so what actually happened? Yeah exactly exactly. She's like, "Wow, I looked up and it was gone." So it blocked the sun.

The moon moved and the sun was kind of gone for a while. Is that crazy? The anger and the hatred that we have blocks love. It makes it to where it doesn't work the way it's supposed to.

And that's what John is saying to them. them. So for us, we know how the world can respond in anger and hatred, but we're not called to be like the world.

We're called to be like the savior who saved us. And how did Jesus respond to hate? He said, "Turn the other cheek." He said, "I'm here." He allowed himself to be killed so that he could save.

That's the God we serve. serve. But John doesn't stop there. He continues in verse 14. "We know that we have passed out of death into life because we love the brothers.

Whoever does not love abides in death. Whoever hates his brother is a murderer. And you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him." So John then moves into how do you know whether or not not you're a member of the family?

How do you have assurance that you have salvation? And one of the ways he says is that you love the body. Is that weird? Does that seem strange to anybody?

Maybe it's just me. It seems strange that like that would be a way that we would know that we are one of Jesus's in that the fact that we love the body that he is has called us to be with.

So think about this for a second. He's writing to churches, who are again our house churches, small bodies full of the people of the time and we have the highest of the high in terms of the economy and social status and then we have the lowest of the low and they're all meeting in the same place they're having meals together and they're working together.

You love the body, the church body, people that you would never love without Jesus. How cool is that? Salvation Assurance comes from the love of the body if you're continuing taking notes.

Unlikely friends. I'd like to think that in the illustration. I'm the pug and Pastor Michaels the chicken, but I don't know man,

oh It doesn't stop there though John can take in verses 16 and 17. By this we know love,

that he laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need,

yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? So John now moves, moves. how we know that we're a member of the family,

how do we know that we are locked in with God, to how do we even know what love is? How do we know it? Like we talked about it in the beginning, we gave the biblical definition,

but then he points to how we know love. Jesus saw the need for salvation, a broken creation who was sinful and focused on what we wanted.

He came down from heaven, there was a virgin birth, led a sinless life, allowed himself to be killed on a cross, rose from the dead after three days,

then spent time with us telling us more about what we needed to know, ascended to heaven saying that he will return, and he will return. Jesus is the epitome of love.

He's the example. So John is saying to them, now church, going through all that you're going through, how hard it is when you need an example about what love is,

do not forget the God who saved you. So for us Maybe we're not going through the same persecutions that they were in fact,

we're not but it's been a rough couple years It's been been pretty hard out there And it doesn't seem like it's getting any better in a world that's full of chaos and fear and angst and there's a lot of canes out there.

But hopefully this is encouraging. We were once a cane too. The God of the universe saved us and He calls us to be a part of the work He's doing in saving them.

How do we do that as a church body? How do we see a need and meet a need expecting nothing in return? Well, it kind of worked out perfectly that we have a really cool example that happened yesterday.

So the ladies, you have Sharma, you have Melissa, and you have Sarah, and they were looking at like how do we do that? And their idea was a heart sale. Does that seem weird?

Maybe it's only me. That sounded, I was like, okay, you are still alright? "what's that gonna look like?" But what they did in that yard sale was they saw a need in the community. Hey,

let's get everybody to donate everything they can so that we can offer goods at little to no cost to the neighborhood to meet a need in the neighborhood expecting



nothing in return to meet our neighbors and introduce them to meet and follow Jesus.

That was the whole point. We weren't trying to raise money on purses. Right? I saw a lady with eight purses. She bought eight purses and she says she's coming next week.

Her name's Gail. Pray for her. It was exciting. But that's an example of what we're talking about. I don't share to like, you know, to how it's about what God is doing.

Seeing the epitome of love in Jesus, that Jesus, seeing what he did in going out into the community, meeting with the sick, meeting with the hurt,

meeting with the angry, looking the cane in the face and saying, "Jesus loves you." That's what he's called us to. It's hard.

It's scary. but if we love each other well, if we care for one another well, we'll follow him better,

and that's what this is about. John's talking to this small groups of churches not knowing that God would use it to talk to a small church in the woods in 2024.

2024. When we feel disconnected or just blah or frustrated, Jesus is the example that we look to. It's not a president,

it's not a principal at a school, it's not an athlete, it's none of that. It's Jesus. He's the only one that can bear the weight of those expectations on purpose.

So it's four. We're supposed to be able to look to Jesus and go, "How did he do that?" interact with his community? Therefore, how is he calling me to interact with my community? That's how we know love.

But he doesn't stop there. Final verse, verse 18. Little children, let us not love in word or talk, but in deed and truth.

John challenges them to love an action We talked about what love is at the beginning and we've talked about it a lot, but to love an action So think for a moment about how you're loving How action -packed is your follow or is your walk with Christ because it?

should be pretty action -packed. Now I know when I hear action -packed, I think of like a Marvel movie that they were good like five years ago, but they're not good anymore, but they were cool. That's what pops into my head,

right? But action is doing. Action is seeing someone, seeing that there's a need in doing something, following Jesus's action -packed.

Think about your past week. How action -packed was it? Are you following God are you listening to Jesus and what he would have you do or? Was it Tuesday at 2 and your eyes were dropping?

How well are we as a body? Encouraging one another Throughout the week to do what God's called us to do. How well are we loving one another? John challenges us to not just talk.

Talk is cheap, the world's got plenty of that. There's plenty of talk going around. We're being called by Jesus to be one that we can be counted on in our community.

Because we can't, I'm sure you're picking up on this. There's so little that people can count on right now There's so little What what isn't falling apart?

There's so little but we can count on Jesus and Jesus calls us to be those that can be counted on in our community Because of him not because of us.

We don't got it figured out. He's the one who does it But we interject with each other all all throughout the week and we encourage each other to be someone that can be counted on because the person who doesn't know Jesus sees that and goes something's different and because something's different their interest is peaked and Jesus invites them into a relationship with him and one of the ways that he does that is

pointing out that sin is at the door. It's looking to control you It's right there Following Jesus is full of actions that have eternal significance Eternal significance And we get to do it together It's not just one one,

it's all of us. That's what God has called us to. It's so exciting that I'm crying. So finishing this up,

loving each other well helps us, oh man, I just gotta breathe. Loving each other well helps us love our neighbors like Jesus.

Remember, Cain was full of jealousy, anger, and hatred. Jesus is full of mercy, grace, peace, and love. Our call is to go from Cain to Jesus.

Cain was warned, and in his warning, he responded in anger that led to violence, not just of the heart, but physical violence. Jesus is full of love.

Jesus was called to give up his life and it led to sacrifice and salvation for all of creation. We all were once a came and I got good news,

I got bad news. Bad news is the sin problem, the truth. can't solve We can't do it.

The good news is the God who saved us equipped us in ascending us out. Can he can solve the sin problem What we can do is follow We can do what the Holy Spirit is directing us to do speak to who we're supposed to be speaking to pray for who we're supposed to be praying to for and talk to each other throughout the week about what's going on to encourage one another.

More good news is something that we read earlier is that Jesus said that they'll know that you're the disciples of me by the way you love one another.

So the way that we love each other, the way that we are loving one another is one of the ways that God reveals himself to our neighborhood How cool is that?

How scary is that if we're holding back resentments and frustrations and anger? It's it's it's real. It's a big deal We can love each other well and that will help us to invite our neighbors to meet and follow them got some questions to think through this week.

How have you loved a brother or sister in Christ this past week? What's holding you back from being more active and caring for others? On a scale of 1 to 10,

how action-packed is your walk with Christ? And do you want that number to be higher? Father in Heaven, you're so good Lord.

Thank you for your son and sending him and thank you for his obedience. Thank you that we get to worship you today Lord, I just cannot pray that enough. The world is scary and there are people that are afraid and are hurting and don't understand that you are the answer.

equip us Lord charge us shove us out our front doors if that's what it takes Lord to show them who you are you are worthy to be praised you are the author of salvation Lord,

please if there's someone in the sound of my voice that does not know you That it's not taking that step to acknowledge that sin is at their door It's controlling them and The only way to break free of it is the full payment of you Make it so above clear to them who you are Lord.

Shake them if you have to. I know that's what she did with me. You are so good Lord. So in Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

[Music]