

John's Concerns for Christians, Pt. 3

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[0 : 00] Well, I appreciate that song. Makes me feel like I should just get on my knees singing stuff like that.

Hope you're not just regurgitating words out of your mouth that they're on the page, but they mean something to you. Because that time, it was maybe 25 minutes of your Wednesday, which was 25 minutes of your week.

You had the opportunity to just sing something back to him and give him something that he's not getting anywhere else, and you had a chance to do that.

So I hope you took part of it. I hope you take it serious. It's not just a thing. It's not a time filler. And if you just stand there and mumble or if you just stand there and stare, you're missing out, and then God's missing out.

And what are you doing? Amen. So anyway, that's what that song does. All right, get your Bibles open then, please, to 1 John and get to chapter 1.

[1 : 05] We took a week off of this. We went two weeks in this epistle of 1 John. And we're going to pick it back up where we were and noticing what I was calling some concerns, some of John's concerns for believers, for Christians.

Because I see John writes about some things that it just seems like nobody else writes about. John's different. There's no doubt about it. And I don't think he's weird. I think even though he says things that I don't understand, and he definitely stands out and apart from other Bible writers, I think John probably is clued into something a little more than I am, and maybe even a little deeper.

And as I've stated and tried to convey, if you missed the first two messages, John's the one that's called the disciple whom Jesus loved. He's called the beloved disciple.

John's the one that was leaning on Jesus' breasts. The breast, the night of the, what was that called? The Last Supper. John had an intimate fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ unlike any other.

Peter didn't approach to Jesus Christ to ask him a question. Yeah, the apostle Peter, he didn't approach him. He said, John, ask him who it is. And John just turned with his head on the breast of Jesus Christ and said, Lord, who is it?

[2 : 27] And John was, he was tight with the Lord Jesus Christ. And so when John writes, when John, he reminds, he's reminded of things that he learned from the ministry of Christ, from spending one-on-one time with him.

And then he pours some things into this epistle of five chapters that is undoubtedly things that are important and things that he's got concerns. And so we saw in the first message that John was concerned about your fellowship.

And in John chapter 1, he mentions fellowship more in that one chapter than most, than you'll find in any other book of the Bible. John's concerned about your fellowship. And then we looked the last time that John was concerned about your relationship with the truth.

And we saw that in this epistle, he says over and over again, if we say this or if we say that or he that saith, but it's not lining up with the truth, then there's a problem.

And he was concerned that our professions line up with the truth, that our walk or our concept of ourselves or of the Christian life is in line with the truth.

[3 : 36] Who cares if you think it's right? If it's not true, then you need to get yourself right. And John was concerned about it. John wrote all over this thing about the truth and having it abide in you.

And so now I want to show us, I want to look now thirdly this week at John's third concern here in his epistle is your relationship with the brethren. He writes a lot about it.

It's something that John's concerned about. And so notice in chapter 1, I'll just review here showing you something and then we'll go back to his gospel. In 1 John chapter 1, he says in verse 1, that which was from the beginning which we have heard.

He talks about some other things. In verse 3 he says, that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you. In verse 5, this then is the message which we have heard of him and declare unto you.

And so John has some things that he's learned. And I've already showed you a few times going back to his gospel, things that he recorded Jesus Christ saying and then he's repeating them and he's declaring them unto believers.

[4 : 40] Now come back to John's gospel. And we'll be back in this epistle if you want to keep your place. But come back to John's gospel in chapter 13. John's gospel in chapter 13.

And out of that relationship and communion and things perhaps that no one else picked up on. When you read this gospel of John, it's a fantastic gospel.

We're studying Matthew and we're seeing so much Jewish doctrine, kingdom doctrine, but John doesn't write about that. John spends almost half of his epistle on the very last week of Jesus Christ's life.

And the things that he said leading up to his death and burial and resurrection. Here we are in chapter 13. This is the last week of his life, the last night.

And he's got a lot to say, stuff that Matthew, Mark, Luke don't even touch. But John's got a different perspective and he's got something else to say. And so here in John 13, nearing the end of Christ's life, the Lord institutes a new commandment.

[6 : 11] Something he calls a new commandment. He's not stressing the kingdom doctrine anymore. He's not showing these healings and things that he's done already in the past. He's kind of transitioning and shifting to something else.

And John is careful to record a lot of this. In John 13, notice with me, verses 34 and 35. And 35, John says, or Christ is speaking. He says, a new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. A new commandment. I'm not talking about the things I spent the last three and a half years talking about and teaching you and training you and preparing you for.

This is something new. Right here and right now, Jesus Christ was concerned about something with his disciples. And John got it. Look at chapter 15.

John chapter 15. And we'll read from verses 9 down to 13. Jesus Christ speaking that same night, As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you.

[7 : 27] Continue ye in my love. Now I wonder if when he says this stuff, if the disciples are like, what? Continue ye in my love? The words he's using are just a slight difference from before.

Talking about in my love. Continue ye in my love. I loved you. Now I want you to love one another the way I loved you. And now you continue in my love. He says in verse 10, If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love.

Even as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. These things have I written unto you that my joy might remain in you. Pause. Did you catch that in 1 John chapter 1 ever?

These things write we unto you that your joy may be full. John repeats the words of Christ here. That my joy might remain in you and that your joy might be full.

He's just repeating the exact words Jesus said. Verse 12, This is my commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

[8 : 32] Look at verse 17. He says again, These things I command you, that ye love one another. Now turn to chapter 17. Again, again this same night. And this time, Christ is praying to the Father and John overhears and John is probably right beside him listening to the Lord Jesus Christ praying and talking to his Father.

And come to the end of this chapter, chapter 17 and verse 23. And Christ says, It says, Notice the end.

That the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them and I in them. Now earlier he's talking about continuing in my love and abiding in his love and the way I loved you, you're going to love one another.

And here he says that statement, As thou hast loved me, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them. It may be in them. I wonder what John thought when he heard that.

This is not, this is God's love. This is not a father loves his children or a husband loves his wife or a human relationship. This is something new and something different. This is God's love being inside a man or a woman and then being sent out or offered toward other believers.

[10:27] This is not just, I really like you, we really get along, me and you are friends, we're close. This isn't David and Jonathan in the Old Testament saying that the love of him passed the love of women.

They were just that tight and close, like-minded. This is something different. This is God inside of you. I in them, Jesus said. This is love.

This is something that John picked up on. I wonder that night as John considered this, this fruit, as he said in chapter 15, that comes out of abiding in the vine. I wonder if John thought to himself, is it in me?

This love that he's talking about, this new commandment that he's talking about, is this in me?

Something about this stuck with John because John writes about it.

Now come back to his epistle in 1 John and find chapter 3 now. Something about this and all this talk stuck with John.

[11:29] John wondered, is that love in me? If so, is it displayed toward others? Do others see it? Do others know it? No other Bible writer, no Bible author writes about love more than John.

They don't even come close. Peter mentions it, Paul mentions it, but John, he just, he buries it into you. Why?

Why, John? Why are you so obsessed with this? Why? I think I know why. I think because he spent so much time with Christ, he's got the mind of Christ. He's going to tell us something deeper than what's on the surface.

He's going to give us more than the others give us. There's some things he's concerned about. It comes out in his writings and we better take heed to it. And this time, he's concerned about your relationship with the brethren.

John writes about love. Let's look here at a few things from this epistle and I'll say, first of all, we notice the foundation for loving the brethren or the basis by which we love the brethren.

[12:35] Look at 1 John 3 and it's in verse 16. Hereby perceive we the love of God because he laid down his life for us.

Then John concludes, we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. I don't know if I would have said that if I was writing about God's love, how God laid his life down for me.

But John remembered what Jesus Christ said. And John concludes by saying, we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. We ought to love the same way that God loved us.

Look at chapter 4 and verse number 9. 1 John 4 verse 9. In this was manifested the love of God toward us because that God sent his only begotten son into the world that we might live through him.

Herein is love, not that we love God but that he loved us and sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, here's John's conclusion again.

[13:39] We ought also to love one another. If God so loved us, the Bible said, Paul said in Romans 5 that God commendeth his love toward us and that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

You consider that concept and what John's going to get to, his case he's building, that God looked upon wicked sinners and he wasn't satisfied just condemning them to hell so he did something about it.

He displayed a great love wherewith he loved us and laying down his life. He gave his only begotten son and if God would do that for sinners, John's conclusion is we ought also to love one another.

The basis or the foundation for loving the brethren is absolutely Calvary. It's what God displayed in his love for us. Keep your place but look back at Ephesians chapter 4.

Ephesians chapter 4. Well, the brethren are unkind.

[14:54] Well, they're rude. Well, they say mean things or they've hurt me or we don't get along or you can come up with lists but let's go to the scripture and consider why John's so concerned about your relationship with the brethren.

Ephesians 4 and verse 32. I'll back up to verse 31. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and evil speaking be put away from you with all malice.

You think he's talking about the way you feel toward the world? No. Verse 32. And be ye kind one to another tender hearted forgiving one another and what's the basis for this?

Even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. That's real. That's the same concept that John has here. And look at this goes further. Look at chapter 5 in verse 25.

Husbands, love your wives to what extent? To what extent? Even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it.

[16:02] Now, considering the sacrifice of Christ, what you've been forgiven of, the way Christ or God has loved you, as John says, if he loved us, then we ought to love the brethren.

Considering the love was unconditional from God toward us, considering he wasn't doing it with qualifiers, if you promise you'll be good to me, if you promise you'll do right, if you promise you won't turn your back, God didn't put any qualifiers in there for his love wherewith he loved you.

and he gave his son regardless of whether you love him back. He gave you his son to pay for your sins regardless of what you pledge to him, what you give to him, how you turn out in the long run.

It was unconditional. And God says the same thing for husbands loving their wives. He says the same thing for loving the brethren. It's to be unconditional.

Considering the sacrifice of God toward ungodly sinners, we don't have any grounds to behold things against one another and to say, well, you said that against me.

[17:13] Did God love you that way? No. But they did this to me. Did God love you that way? No. So you know what? You don't have any grounds to hold things against the brethren or to say, well, not until they confess their sin to me, not until they get it right with me, I won't forgive them.

God says, forgiving one another even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. You know, there's times in my relationship with my wife that she thinks she's right and I think I'm right.

Somebody tell me you know what I'm talking about. And those are times where we're at odds with one another whatever the thing is, big or small, stupid, it doesn't matter what it is, we don't agree.

And in those times, in my heart, I think I'm right, she's wrong. And the Lord says, husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it.

And the Lord shows me, you need to love her even if you think she's wrong. Even if she is wrong, which is to her unlikely and maybe very unlikely.

[18:23] I can't help it. God shows me you're to love her. Did I forgive you of your trespasses against me? Then you overlook this in her or whatever if you think you're so for.

God put that verse on my heart enough times that I understand it. And when we don't get along, that comes to mind that I'm going to love her even if I think she's wrong.

Same thing with your kids. You love them. Even when they do things that you don't agree with.

Even if they say things you don't agree with that's still inside. You love them. And God's calling us to love the brethren the way that he loved us.

The basis, the foundation for your love is Calvary. It's God's love for you. And then you build on that foundation.

So let's go back to 1 John chapter number 4. In 1 John chapter number 4 I want to show you then the motivation for loving the brethren.

[19:31] Something a little bit different here. 1 John chapter 4 Now that we understand God has loved us unconditionally. He's forgiven us of all things.

I can't hold things against people no matter what or how big they are because it doesn't compare to what God has forgiven me of. So I don't have the right to live this life pretending that I can hold it against him and hold it against her and stand over here and I'm right you're wrong.

I don't get that right in this life. I'm told to love the brethren. And now the motivation chapter 4 verse 19 the Bible says we love him because he first loved us.

So because of Calvary we love him. It's reciprocated. Our love for him now appears because we realize what he did. Now look down at verse 21.

And this commandment have we from him that he who loveth God love his brother also. So first in the motivation for loving your brethren is that you because you love God.

[20:38] He says if you love God then you love your brother. Why do you love God? Well because of Calvary. Because he first loved us. and gave us out. My motivation for loving my brethren is number one because I love God.

I love him. I want to do what he says. I want to please him. If I didn't love him I could easily just ignore or not feel guilt if I'm at odds with my brother.

Loving God it should come naturally now. now that you're part of his family. To love the brethren. To care for the people that God cares about. Because we're in Christ and we're all members of the same body.

I've told Samuel my son over the years here and there just when when things would come up or even just in playful conversation but I've still said it to him several times that I said Samuel if you ever see your sisters getting picked on if you ever see some boy messing with them I don't care what it is if it's some boy that's fooling around with them or doing something inappropriate or even just I said you see it happen you take care of it.

If I'm not there you handle it. You step in and you make sure that your sisters are taken care of. Now for the most part the biggest problem they have in their life is their brother.

[22 : 04] So this isn't really working 100% but that's the idea anyway and I expect him to do it too because it would surely displease me if he didn't care for his brothers or sisters and God looks down and sees brethren and he has the same thought and John's concerned about your relationship with the brethren enough so that he has to write about it multiple times in this short epistle to make sure we understand here our motivation for loving the brethren is because we love God.

You want to please God well then love the brethren love the ones that he loves in this world and care for the ones that he cares for. I had a friend in high school he was at the time we were just not super close but we became closer over years and I didn't really know about it too much but he had a little thing for my sister who was younger than me and I didn't care for it really at all it wasn't anything serious that I knew of but something happened there and it went south and she made a comment that my brother's going to beat you up and I didn't know about it I was oblivious to this conversation I was oblivious to them even breaking up or whatever took place but I did notice that he was avoiding me and so for about two or three days in school this guy who was on the basketball team with me and we saw each other but he was just kind of standoffish and I really didn't pick it up at first but then I did notice it and somebody said to me oh he thinks you're mad at him he thinks you're going to beat him up

I was like why well because he and your sister aren't getting along I was like oh so I had to go tell him I was like look I don't as long as you're fine I'm fine I don't care about that and we got it but you know what it was a natural thought for him that if I did something or me and his sister are at odds that he's going to have her side it was a natural thought for him that I've got to watch out for him now because he's going to be out to get me if she's saying things about you know that stuff goes on all the time he assumed that her brother was going to get involved because blood's thicker than water it is a natural thought and it ought to be a natural thought with the family of God this family ought to look out for each other one of your motivations for loving the brethren is because you love God and so you love the family of God and that's pleasing to him another motivation look at the verse again verse 21 I tell you what we'll go back to chapter 3 first chapter 3 verse 23 and this is his commandment that we should believe on the name of his son

Jesus Christ and love one another notice as he gave us commandment now come to chapter 4 again in verse 21 and this there's the word again commandment have we from him this is a command that he who loveth God love his brother also this is commanded from Jesus Christ back we read in chapter 13 of John's gospel here it's stated again twice in this epistle this is something that God commands to you and I to love the brethren the motivation for loving the brethren ought to be one because you love God but secondly because he commands you to and that is your obedience to Christ ought to motivate you to love the brethren to desire to obey Jesus Christ that ought to motivate me to humble myself and do what he wants me to do to love the brethren not because they're nice to me not because we get along all the time but because I realize I'm commanded to biblically commanded to love the ones that God loves and he takes it serious chapter 5 continues the thought he says whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God and everyone that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him by this we know that we love the children of God when we love God and keep his commandments there they are right after another this is love of God that we keep his commandments so your obedience to Christ as well as your love for God ought to be the motivation for you to love the brethren and that's it it should be natural to you in the new man now not all the brethren want to be loved and I realize that

some brethren just some brethren just want to be martyrs all the time or some of the brethren just want to be victims they want to cause a problem they want everybody to complain about them they want to leave and then talk about them all because see what they did to me

[27 : 02] I know people are like that people like attention people like drama you can't get around that you can't force them to do right you can't force the brethren to respond in the spirit you can't force them to walk in the light but that's not what we're talking about is them loving you I'm not talking about them doing right I'm talking about you loving them not because they're good to you but because you love God and because you obey Jesus Christ his commandments you can try to love them and can't make them love you back but what you can do is be innocent you can be innocent in the situation now thirdly let's look at the demonstration of loving the brethren come back to chapter 3 in verse 18 the demonstration of loving the brethren chapter 3 in verse 18 he says my little children let us not love in word neither in tongue but in deed and in truth that's an action that he's calling for a demonstration of loving the brethren this is something that you do it's something you show you exhibit it it's revealed it's not in word or tongue it's not a big powerful weighty speech that everybody claps and says oh he's wonderful he's so caring that's not the speech it's not by tongue it's not saying

I love you I love you because those are words words are cheap all men are liars but to love in deed to demonstrate it is what you're called to do don't say I'll pray for you do it pray for him do it and then come back and say hey I've been praying for you prove it talk is cheap and there's enough of that now how can you demonstrate or when John gives then fourthly this is an illustration of loving the brethren right here in this chapter look the two verses before or one verse before chapter three verse 17 he says but whoso hath this world's good and seeth his brother have need and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him question how dwelleth the love of God in him the answer is it doesn't but this is an illustration of loving the brethren the parameters of this particular illustration is one you have the ability to help your brother he says whoso hath this world's good so you have something that your brother doesn't have this is only one illustration of demonstrating loving the brethren the parameters are you have the ability to help and then secondly you see that your brother has need it says whoso hath this world's good and seeth his brother have need now he gives you the wrong response to that by shutting up his bowels of compassion from him obviously the love doesn't dwell in him but it's supposed to so this illustration is you have the ability to help and you see someone that has the need so what do you do you're supposed to act or demonstrate love for the brethren this is not looking for a tax write off for your business not something that could benefit you at all the bible says that charity seeketh not her own look at philippians quickly you can keep your place but go with philippians chapter number four is it four or two philippians two this is god bringing somebody your way that has a need and you making yourself available to be used of god and you have your eyes open to see the need but sadly not everybody is looking to the needs of others before we read this look at chapter 2 verse number 20 and 21 paul says for i have no man like-minded who will naturally care for your state for all seek their own not the things which are jesus christ now back to chapter 2 verse 1 philippians 2 verse 1 if there be any if there be therefore any consolation in christ if any comfort of love if any fellowship of the spirit if any bowels and mercies fulfill ye my joy that you be like-minded having the same love being of one accord of one mind let nothing be done through strife or vain glory but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves and here's the verse 4 look not every man on his own things but every man on the things of others and so this fits the parameters john's putting forth of his illustration if you have and you see a brother that has a need then he tells you act upon it love them indeed not just in word

I'll pray for you brother when you have the ability to help them again this is only one illustration of one way to display your love for the brethren we're just one deed now come back to 1st john in chapter number 2 this time and we'll wrap this up there was the foundation for loving the brethren and that's a good foundation what god has done for your soul on calvary we saw the motivation for loving the brethren is your love for god that you want to please him your obedience to jesus christ and his commandments we saw here the demonstration how it's you're called to demonstrate it outwardly a deed in action and he gives an illustration even now finally here john is concerned he's concerned about the brethren he's concerned about your relationship with the brethren because although all these things we've looked at are there and it's open to you still believers give john a reason to have concerns still they they don't love the brethren and they think they're right and look

at what he says about it look at first john two verse nine through eleven he that saith he is in the light and hateth his brother is in darkness even until now he that loveth his brother abideth in the light and there's none occasion of stumbling in him but he that hateth his brother is in darkness and walketh in darkness and knoweth not whither he goeth because that darkness hath blinded his eyes so according to john if we're not walking in the light and if we're not loving our brethren we're walking in darkness and in chapter one if we say we're walking in the light but walk in darkness we lie and do not the truth and then we're not having fellowship with god according to chapter one and so we're out of fellowship with god when we don't love the brethren and we're walking in darkness and we don't know whither we're going which way we're going we're blinded the darkness hath blinded his eyes now those are a lot of things to say and they're all one upon another building against somebody the bottom line is they're deceived they're deceived about themselves and their own sin by saying hey I'm

I'm in the light but if he's not loving his brother he's not in the light if his relationship with the brethren is wrong he's not in fellowship with god like he claims to be and he doesn't know it he knoweth not whither he goeth because that darkness hath blinded his eyes but he's still saying in verse nine I'm in the light I'm walking in the light this man is deceived he's deceived and it's his deceitful heart when he's supposed to be loving the brethren now I'm going to skip through some things and just get to the end here of an illustration of this in my own life where John wants us to open our eyes and realize we're the ones in darkness darkness when we say you don't know what she said to me you don't know what he did to me we're the ones in darkness when we're deceived there's a man that

I knew I knew him pretty much most of my life growing up and as I was an adult and then involved in the ministry at the church he was a guy that always kind of just rubbed me the wrong way just because he was always he wasn't disrespectful so to speak but he always kind of just never really I can't explain it maybe you understand just by me saying that and I was always nice to him as nice as I could be because I inside I just didn't like the guy he was arrogant he always talked about himself all the time no matter what I did or what anyone did for that matter he had a better answer a better solution and he let everybody know it and it's just like you'd say something and then you just have to listen to him talk and after a while it's just the way he was and the way a lot of folks perceived him and it just grated on me but I had to love the brethren I had to have the right response I couldn't be a jerk to him and say get over yourself he was my elder by 15 20 years and growing up knowing him I didn't have the authority or the guts to like tell him how it is and it wouldn't have been right if I did and so

[37 : 17] I thought that I'm doing right I thought I'm walking in the light by not rebuking this man by putting up with him all the time by letting him say his stuff and letting him do it his way all the time all the time all the time letting him even just be who he was very carnal very childish very selfish and it felt like I could see right through him and I'm just more spiritual than he was and it's obvious and therefore you're such a baby and you need to grow up in the Lord but I have to do the right thing so I'm in the light I know it and there's one time I'm standing I can take you to the spot I'm standing it would take us a while to get there but I can take you there and I was standing there and he was in the room and at the time my pastor was there I was the assistant pastor and the pastor was standing there and this guy's doing what he always does he's just talking and

I'm sitting there thinking this is hilarious I'm thinking I know what the pastor's thinking he's thinking the same thing I'm thinking this guy doesn't ever shut up about himself this guy's so fool of himself and he's so just wrong half the time and he really and he thinks he's and I just felt like I know the pastor and we've had conversations about things before I just know he's thinking the same thing I'm thinking and I just kind of chuckling inside as he said more and more just kind of to me just stupid things making himself look dumber and the guy at the time had had a recent surgery and he just he wasn't very mobile at the time and his shoe was untied and while I'm standing there just listening almost inside just laughing thinking wait till he leaves I'm gonna look at him roll my eyes right just that moment the pastor was like hey your shoes untied he got down on his knees and tied his shoes for him he said there you go and I'm standing there and it was like the Lord just said and said that's how you love the brethren

I swear I remember that moment I could take it I felt like turned around just falling down right there and saying God I think I'm walking in the light I think there's no darkness he's the one with the problem and the Lord showed me that's not how you love the brethren that's not what this is he

