

February 26, 2023

The Bridge Bible Fellowship

Pastor Paul S. Brown

John 3:10b-24

“Social Test #2: “We’ll Know We Are Christians By Our Love” – Part 3

- I. Prologue [Introduction] – 1:1-4
- II. Tests of Genuine Fellowship: Cycle (Spiral) #1 – 1:5-2:27 – [Moral; Social; Doctrinal tests]
- III. **Tests of Genuine Fellowship: Cycle (Spiral) #2 – 2:28-4:6**
 - A. The Moral Test – 2:28-3:10 – Family Resemblance
 - B. **The Social Test – 3:10b-24 – Family Resemblance**
 - 1. **Obvious Family Resemblance (10b-12)**
 - 2. **Shocking Family Resemblance (13-16)**
 - a. **Hatred vs. Love (13)**
 - b. **Death vs. Life (14)**
 - c. **Kill Others vs Die to Self (15-16)**
 - 3. _____ Family Resemblance (17-18)

So what?

Discussion & Application:

1. Why is the death of Jesus on the cross the epitome of love? (See John 10:10-18; 15:13) We often hear about someone who sacrifices their life to save someone else (police, firemen, soldiers, parents). What makes Jesus' love for us different? (See Rom. 5:6-10) What does it mean to "lay down our lives for the brethren?" How far should we be willing to go?
2. 1 John 3:17-18 is an argument "from the greater to the lesser" (love = "die for someone" down to "meet a basic need"). How does this help you understand the love of God? What biblical evidence do we have of God's love extending to caring for and meeting our basic needs? What stories do you have of God meeting your needs?
3. Use a concordance and find verses about God (Father or Son) having compassion (see Gen. 19:16; Dt. 30:3; 2 Kings 13:23; Neh. 1:11; 9:9-32; Ps. 51:1; 72:13; 103:13; Is. 49:15; Mt. 14:14; 20:34; Mk. 6:34 to get started). Note what that compassion caused Him to do.
4. Why did God give us the capacity to have compassion? What is the opposite of compassion?
5. The Bible records stories of people who had compassion compared to people who did not, to reveal their true heart (i.e., Mt. 25:31-46). With that in mind, read "The Prodigal Son" in Lk. 15 to see the contrast between the father and the older brother. Who does the older brother represent (see Lk. 15:1-2). Why didn't he have compassion on his younger brother? What did he not understand about God's love? Read the story of "The Rich Man and Lazarus" in Lk. 16. What did the rich man lack toward Lazarus? Why didn't he help? What excuses might he have come up with as to why he allowed him to starve to death? What did it ultimately reveal about his relationship with God?
6. John says that if a true believer has "the world's goods" and sees a brother in need, they should meet that need. But as wealthy as we are in the U.S. (compared to most of the world), we have limitations. How do we **prioritize** which needs we will meet? (See Gal. 6:6-10; 1 Tim. 5:3-8; James 1:27)
7. What is your current practice when you see someone begging on the street? Why? How does that demonstrate the compassion and active love of God?
8. The point of 1 John 3:17-18 is that true believers don't just say that they love someone, but they demonstrate genuine love in practical ways. Is John implying we shouldn't say that we love one another? How important is it to hear from other believers that they love you? What is your current practice when it comes to saying "I love you" to family, friends, or fellow believers?
9. Make a **comprehensive list** of practical ways you could meet the needs of fellow believers. Email it to Pastor Paul (paul@bridgebible.church). Then begin doing those things joyfully.
10. Do you have assurance of salvation? Is it obvious that you are a child of God by the way you love His children? What practical things have you done in the past 30 days to demonstrate that you prioritize sacrificially giving to other believers? How might you love fellow Christians before you go home today? Who specifically might you voluntarily, sacrificially, practically, and joyfully love this week?
11. **Memorize 1 John 3:11-18.**

[Answers to blank: *Practical*]