

## Loving Your Brother

Scripture text: I John 3:14, 4:7-8

### About the Text:

- 1) The book of first John has two themes.
  - 2) The first is the fact that God is light (1 John 1:5).
  - 3) The second is the fact that God is love (1 John 4:8).
  - 4) When we read the book of John, we learn that love is not just some theoretical concept, but a very practical element of the Christian life.
  - 5) There are actions to show our love one to another.
  - 6) There are also actions that impede our love for one another.
  - 7) It is this second class of actions that I wish to discuss today.
- We impede ourselves from loving our brother when...

### **I. WE PUT A STUMBLINGBLOCK BEFORE OUR BROTHER.**

#### 1. 1 John 2:10, 11

- 1) John tells us that loving our brother means we don't put a stumbling block before our brother.
- 2) If we put a stumbling block before our brother, then John says, we hate our brother.

#### 2. Balaam was condemned for putting an occasion of stumbling before the children of Israel. Revelation 2:14

#### 3. Notice Phil. 1:9, 10

- 1) Paul prayed that their love would abound.
- 2) With the results that they would
  - a. Approve the things that are excellent.
  - b. Be sincere.
  - c. Be void of offense. Greek scholars say this word means not causing others to stumble. (Robertson, Word Pictures).

#### 4. Paul recognized that we don't desire our brother's salvation when we put an offense before them. 1 Corinthians 10:32, 33

### **II. WE SERVE SELF INSTEAD OF OUR BROTHER**

#### 1. Philippians 2:1-4

- 1) Paul desires that he joy be fulfilled and that the brethren love one another.
- 2) This means nothing is to be done through strife or vainglory.
- 3) It means that each esteems others better than self.
- 4) It means that we don't look to self first.

#### 2. Selfishness is the first step toward hating our brother. 1 John 3:11, 12

1) John tells us that Cain slew Abel because of jealousy.

2) Jealousy has its roots in selfishness.

3. John speaks about a very selfless kind of love in 1 John 3:16-18

1) God's love for us is our first and foremost example of what true love really is.

2) If God was selfless in giving his only Son for our sins, then we should be selfless in relationship to loving our brethren as well.

3) This means laying down our life for other brothers.

4) This means giving to our brothers what they need in this life.

5) The love of God does not dwell in a selfish brother.

### **III. WE BITE AND DEVOUR OUR BROTHER.**

1. Galatians 3:13-15

1) We are to, by love, serve (enslave ourselves) to one another.

2) Loving our neighbor at least includes loving our brother.

3) In contrast to love, there is biting and devouring.

a. These words are only used once.

b. In secular Greek they were used to describe wild animals fighting with each other.

2. 1 Corinthians 3:3 "For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?"

1) Where envying, strife, and divisions exist among brothers, that is carnality.

2) Those who love carnality, do not love their brothers.

3. James 3:14-18

1) Bitter envyings is devilish wisdom.

2) Envy and strife only results in confusion and evil works.

3) One cannot be part of such and love his brother.

### **IV. WE SPEAK EVIL TO OR OF OUR BROTHERS.**

1. Ephesians 4:31-5:2

1) Walking in love means that we don't speak evil of our brother.

2) It is certainly possible for us to tell the strict truth, yet speak evil of our brother.

3) That's why when we speak the truth we are also supposed to do it in love, practicing kindness, gentleness, meekness, gentleheartedness, and forgiveness.

2. We are to speak the truth in love one toward another. "But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:" (Eph. 4:15).

1) We cannot lie to our brother and expect others to believe that we love him. "Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;" (Col. 3:9).

2) Ephesians 4:25 “Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.”

3. There are many things that we ought to think about first before speaking evil of our brother. Paul gives us an extensive list in Romans 12:9-18

1. We impede ourselves from loving our brother when...

- 1) We put a stumbling block before our brother.
- 2) We serve self instead of our brother.
- 3) We bite and devour our brother.
- 4) We speak evil to or of our brother.

2. Invitation

- 1) If you are a Christian but have fallen away
  - a. Have you been loving your brother by letting sin back into your life?
  - b. Don't put stumbling blocks before your brothers.
- 2) If you are not a Christian this morning...
  - a. You need to become a brother today through the New Birth.
  - b. You can then begin to love your brother as you ought.
  - c. Heed the plan that it has for man's salvation today!

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