

Title: The Proof of Conversion

Text: I John 3:11-24

Would you open your Bibles, please, to I John chapter 3..I John 3....
 In our study of this great book on the DOCTRINE OF ASSURANCE, we are looking,
 now, at the believers POSITIONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD. We can have, dear
 friends, a personal relationship with Almighty God.....WOW!!! And this
 relationship is possible because of the death ^{and Resurrection} of Jesus on the cross for our
 sins. NOW, what hinders our relationship with God?....Sin and its control,
in our lives. We looked at this last Sunday. If you missed that message,
 you ought to get the tape. It is available for your study.

(2B) Now, today, I want to come to the evidence of Conversion which makes this
relationship with God so wonderful. The evidence of conversion.

I John chapter 3 beginning with Vs 11.....(READ Vs 11-18)

PRAYER

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Salvation is a wonderful thing in a person's life. Your decision to
 accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour is the greatest decision that
 you could ever make. To receive Jesus is to have Life and life more abundant.
 It is to experience the power and love of Almighty God, himself...

But, how do you know that you have been saved? How do you know that *you*
really do have this personal relationship with God?
~~the Holy Spirit dwells within you?~~ How do you know that you are really a
 member of God's family? HOW DO YOU KNOW ALL OF THAT? (2B) WHAT IS THE
EVIDENCE THAT I HAVE REALLY BEEN BORN OF GOD?

(1C) There is one primary evidence spoken of by John in these verses. It is stated in Vs 11. Vs 11 is our basic principle ~~which~~ "For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning."

In other words, the message is not new. We have always had it. It was the message of the O.T.. And Christ gave authority to it and demonstrated it through his death and resurrection. Now, here it is: "You shall love the Lord your God with all of your heart, mind, and soul; and thy neighbor as thyself." Over in John chapter 13 verse 35 Jesus said: "by this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love one for another."

There is something very important that we should all understand. All of the verbs in I John, almost without exception, are referring to your pattern of life..a habit of life...Not, just to one individual act. So, when John talks about loving one another, he is talking about this as a habit of life. ^{vs 11} This is the message that we should love one another daily, as a habit of life. *That is an basic principle or evidence* (Do you understand)

And there are only two categories according to John. (1) There are those who are in Christ, who are walking continually in the light, who are loving their brothers, who are having fellowship one with another; and (2) there are those who are walking in darkness as a habit of life. You see, there are only two camps...Believers....and non-believers....And John illustrates this point by habits of life. By patterns -- by manners of living....So, in these last few verses of chapter 3, John is dealing with the issue that loving one another is the one primary evidence both to the world and to you that you have been truly born of God...TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER.... *That is the evidence of conversion*

(2C) Then in Vs 12-15, John talks about the absence of that love. Why is it, dear friends, that ~~we~~ ^{people} don't love one another like ~~we~~ ^{they} should? WHY? Vs 12 gives us the SOURCE of the problem. John says, "not as Cain who was of the evil one ~~or the wicked one~~...."

The "of" is "out-off" by way of source....The source of the problem as to why people have a hard time in loving one another as a habit of life is seen in the life of Cain. ~~Cain~~ ^{Cain} becomes an example of one who choose to do the will of ~~Satan~~ ^{Satan}. He is an example of one who belonged to the family of Satan.

Look back at Vs 10: "By this the children of God and the Chrildren of the devil are obvious; any one who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother."

So, you are either in the family of God or you are in the family of the devil. And Cain is an example of one who is "out-off" the wicked one. The source of the problem ^{is} to why people do not love as a habit of life is because of a family relationship. They belong to the wrong family. You cannot as a habit of life love one another unless you belong to the family of God.

not The word used here by John for "love" is a word having its source "in God." We, as human being, do not have the ability to love this way. This love is the love that is concerned about another person's well being with absoluly no thought of personnal gain. It is a self-sacrifing love completely non-selfish. To love somebody in order to give with no thought, motive, desire, to receive. And the Bible says that because of man's sin nature he cannot love in that manner. It is impossible. The ability to love in that ~~that~~ manner comes only from God. It is "out-off" the very nature of God, himself. God is love and love is of God. Love is a result of the Holy Spirit ~~operating~~ ^{operating} in your life.

And so the point is this: The reason people don't love one another as a habit of life in this way, is because of a family relationship.

^{Now} And ~~my~~ friend, if you have never come to know Christ ~~as~~ ^{as} the resurrected living Lord and to accept Him into your life, you have never been born of the Spirit of God, you have never had a spiritual birth, I want ;you to know, that according to the Bible, you are a member of Santan's family.

Non-christian

The Question

We are born that way. A ~~person~~ ask ~~me~~ ~~the~~ ~~other~~ ~~day~~: "if we do such, and such will we be condemned?" I answered, "NO"...we are condemned already." Romans 8 tells us that "he that believeth not, is condemned already." You see, ~~we are~~ ^{UN Believer -} already under the condemnation of God. The wrath of God is abiding on ~~us~~ ^{him}. And that is why we have a hard time loving one another as a habit of life because we are trying to love with human love. You see, the problem is with me. Something is wrong. I am in the wrong family. And I need to get into ^{By Way of Position} the right family. How do I do that? By accepting Jesus Christ as my Lord and Saviour. God knows we can never love one another as he meant for us to love. So, he sent His Son and if we receive Him, God gives us the ability through the Holy Spirit to love one another as a habit of life....

(20) Now, as to scope of this problem. It is presented in the next three verses. **(UE)** First of all, in Vs 13: "Do not marvel, brethren, if the world hates you."

You know, one of the things that is very discouraging to a christian is that when a person becomes a christian he goes back to work and expects to find an enthusaistic response. And there usually isn't any. "Marvel not that the world, as a habit of life, hates you."Why?....Because they are in a different family ~~then~~ you are. They belong to Satan's family. And many christians get discouraged because they can't understand why they are not liked. Well, the problem is that they are in the wrong family. Don't be surprised if a non-believer doesn't like you. After all, your values are different, *or so they should be.*

However, as one person siad, "let's don't give anyone a reason for not liking us because of our disposition; but rather, dislike should come from the non-believer because of our position in Jesus Christ." If people dislike you because you are a christian, well, that is their problem. But it they dislike you because you have a bad disposition, you had better check your attitude.

The absence of love. And the scope of this problem in reference to the world, "Marvel not that the world hates you."

(2E) Secondly, in Vs 14, we notice the scope of this problem in reference to death... Vs 14: "We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death."

What does Death mean?...Death is separation. And there are three kinds. (1) There is physical separation; (2) there is spiritual separation; and (3) there is eternal separation. Spiritual death means that you are physical alive but you are spiritually separated from God. (I am sure we are all familiar with physical death. Eternal death is the permanent condition of spiritual death, after physical death occurs. You will be eternally separated from God.

^{So} Now, please notice what John is saying. The one who does not love his brother as a habit of life is abiding by way of position in the whole principle of death. He is separated from God. You know why you don't love? Because we are separated from God. God is love and this love comes out-off himself.

(3E) Third, concerning the scope of this problem, ^{Notice} Vs 15 in reference to our brother: "every one who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him."

Mañ, you talk about the scope of this problem. Some of us will read this very lightly and we will leave this service and hate our brothers ^{and} and not ^{believe} know how God looks at it. He says it is as though we had committed murder.

And also, it is related to eternal life. Notice that last phrase: "no murderer has eternal life abiding in him." If, as a habit of life, we are not loving our brother, but we are hating him, the Bible says we do not have eternal life. The evidence of conversion is, as a habit of life, loving one another,

(30) Now, beginning at Vs 16, ~~he~~ ^{John} describes this love by acts. THE ACTS OF LOVE, OR THE CHARACTERISTICS OF LOVE. WHAT ARE THEY? - 2017

(19) Well, first of all, we see the example of Christ in Vs 16. "We know love by this, that he laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."

I would like you to notice a very important word in this Verse. It is the word "life." This is not the normal word for physical life. It is not the word for "body." It has no reference what so ever to physical death. I have often read this verse as meaning that Christ died on the ~~the~~ cross for me; therefore I should be willing to die for my brother. I THINK THAT IS TRUE. BUT THAT IS NOT THE MAIN POINT IN THIS VERSE. I was very surprise to learn (this ~~is not~~ ^{is} ~~not~~ ^{Greek}) that in the original language this is the word for "SOUL," referring to one's "personality." ~~And in this verse,~~ ~~is one of the most important concepts I have ever got ahold of.~~ In Vs 16 John is saying here is how one can understand God's love. HERE IS HOW - "we know love by this, that HE LAID DOWN HIS ~~his~~ PERSON FOR US, AND WE OUGHT TO LAY DOWN OUR PERSON FOR THE BRETHERN."

OK WHAT DOES THAT MEAN? Would you turn to Philippians chapter 2. The book of Philippians chapter 2 - to add some understanding to ~~the~~ the concept of God's love. How can I understand God's love by the fact that Christ laid down his soul - his person - his personality - for ~~me~~ ^{us}. How?

READ PHIL. 2:3-8 Read

Now, come back to Vs 7. "He emptied Himself" Literal it read "He laid aside His ^{authority} ~~privileges~~." Let me give you a modern, personal example of what this phrase means.

When I went to Vietnam, I went as a Captain - an officer in the U.S. Army. My rank set me apart as a ~~leader~~ military leader. All officers would ware their rank in the security of Base Camp. However, when we went into battle all rank, insigns and symobles of ~~com~~ and authority were removed, and the commanding officer would become like the other men. WHY?

For two reasons. (1) We identified with those we were fighting with and (2) we didn't want to get shot. A sniper would always attempt to shoot the officer first.

That is what this phrase "He emptied himself" means. Jesus pulled the rank of authority off himself and became like ~~one of us~~ each one of us. The point is that God, the Son, left the glories of heaven and all that was his and became MAN. He emptied Himself of all of His divine rights and privileges. He laid them aside, voluntarily, WHY? FOR US. Because he had to die on the cross. He had to take our place as man. HE HAD TO PAY FOR YOUR SINS AND FOR MINE. And I John 3¹⁶ says: "We know ^{His name} love by this, that He laid down His PERSON, HIS PERSONALITY, for us."

The best illustration that I can think of-- and I think of it often every time I see an ANT. Someone pointed it out to be once and I have never been able to forget it. Every time I see ~~an~~ ^{an} ant or an ant hill I am reminded of the incarnation. I look at those ants and I say: "if I wanted to communicate to those ant, how could I do it?" "What would be the best method?" WELL, I WOULD BECOME AN ANT. (phrase)

What a fall that would be. What a let down, What a drop from MAN DOWN TO THE ANT, just so that I could communicate with them. BOY, ^A fellow would have to really love an ant to do that.YOU SEE

"God so loved the world that gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

The infinite God who fills the Universe, ~~one~~ who we couldn't possible understand, knew our problem and became man. He confined himself, voluntary, in the form of a human being named, Jesus of Nazareth. God evaded human life with himself so that he could commicated with us.

"We know love by this, that He laid down, laid aside, his person, he was God, and he laid aside all his rights, and privileges. ~~any~~ ^{Max}

~~of which he drew back the curtain and revealed more of himself.~~

~~For example, before Peter, and John, I~~

ant

you'dna

Now, on many occasions Jesus did draw back the curtain and reveal more of himself. For example: before James, Peter, and John, Jesus transfigured himself. And they beheld his glory. The very glory and majesty of God.

But, he willingly laid that glory aside so that he could become man. And here is the point: Coming back to I John... I John 3:16 is telling us that if you really want to understand what love is all about, then remember what Jesus did for us. He laid down his soul...his personality in our behalf. "and so we ought to lay down our personality for the brethren."

How can we say we really love one another, that we understand the power of the resurrection, when we remain so self-centered and selfish?

*John 3:16
Love*

Love...we know love by this....By the example of Jesus Christ....

(20)

Now, let's come to Vs 17 and notice some practical ^{examples} expression of love.

"But whoever has the world's goods, and beholds his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him."

You know, this is getting pretty close to home, isn't it? It is something you must face. And I must face this coming week. This world is getting so selfish and isolated from one another that no one really cares anymore.....Love one another....

John is saying that if your want a practical ^{examples} expression of what I am talking about then the next time you see someone in need, help him in a tangible, definite way.

The obvious teaching in Vs 18 is: "little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and in truth."

ad ~~John is saying that the only way we can love is the way~~

How?
Ep # 5:18

My christian friend, we can talk about love, (here in this service,) we can say alot about it one to another, and say "I love you" to one another. "I thank the world of you." "I will do anything for you." And then when a person is in need and no body helps him - --HOW DOES THE LOVE OF GOD DWELL WITHIN US.....We are loving only by lip service and not by deed. We say we do^f but we done. ^{To} And my I remaind those who really desire to help others, JESUS SAID "LET NOT YOUR RIGHT HAND ~~DO~~ KNOW WHAT YOUR LEFT HAND IS DOING." "a" And if you do this ~~in~~ in order to be seen of men, you have your reward, but you get ^{Non} ~~now~~ from me."

So, it isn't that we go out this week and find someone in need and say, "Hay, I want to help you." "Why." "Because I want to show the love of God." "No..... ^{we should do} ~~It wouldn't be so bad to do~~ things so that nobody will know who is doing it. I know you don't get the Praise or the income tax ~~dedu~~ deduction. BUT THE LOVE OF GOD IS BEING UNDERSTOOD AND APPLIED. When you see your brother in need, are you going to help him? Everyone of us will face this, no doubt, with someone this coming week. ~~Have we lived so much for self, is our security so much a thing with us that we cannot give of ourselves to others because we think we cannot afford it?~~ Jesus said "if you give a cup of water in my name, ~~truly~~ I say to you he shall not lose his rewrd."(Matt 10:42). No matter what the attitude might be, no matter how you might be treated, If you see your brother in need, then HELP HIM. That is a practical ^{example} expression of this kind of love that gives without thought of receiving. ~~To give to somebody that doesn't like you. who doesn't care about you, is being in the love of God.~~

How do I know that? Because in the book of Peter, when Peter is painting a picture of this, he is talking about Christ who gave his life for us and we ^{should} walk in His steps, and he said that when Christ was hated he returned no hatred. Think of Christ, himself, who gave his life for us. When he saw the mockery, the spiting at the cross ^{Did He say:} ~~said:~~ "Well, if that is the way you feel about it, I am not going to die."

We laugh about that. Yet, everyone of us are like that. We say with our lips, but we have no practical expression. Listen to the word of God. Many of us will listen to this passage of scripture, but it will go in one ear and out the other, and we will not consider how important the words ^{of Jesus} ~~are~~.

I wonder just these verse - verses 17 and 18, will mean to us this week.

Think about it, Pray about it, Ask God to show you what his will is.

(3D) Then finally, in these last ~~few~~ ^{***} verses, 19-24, we HAVE THE ASSURANCE OF LOVE. If you are really, as a habit of life, loving one another, WHAT TREMENDOUS ASSURANCE IS OURS. And in these verse I found 4 things ~~explaining~~ explaining the assurance of love.

(1) One, we will have peace in our hearts. Oh, that is a thrilling thing to have. PEACE IN YOUR HEARTS. If you are really loving one another, and you have this love in your hearts, which comes from God, produced by the Holy Spirit, WE HAVE PEACE IN OUR HEARTS.

Vs 19 "We shall know by this." By what? By loving one another and showing it in a definite way. "We shall know by this that we are of the truth, and shall assure our heart before him."

Vs 20 "in whatever our heart condemns us." Remember this, "God is greater than our heart, and knows all things." "Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God."

You know, I meet so many people all the time -- who do not have the Assurance of Peace. Trouble hearts -- hearts that condemn them -- they are not sure if they are saved -- they don't know if they have ever come to Christ - they live on the roller coaster of their feelings -- ASSURANCE. PEACE IN OUR HEARTS. HOW IS IT WITH YOU TODAY? DO YOU HAVE THAT PEACE. LOVE ^{will} BRING THAT ASSURANCE. THAT IS WHAT GOD IS SAYING.

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(2) And then in Vs 22, I see a second result of this Assurance of love. AND THAT IS POWER IN PRAYER. He writes "Whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight." *Notice The Conditions for answered prayer.*

The one chief ^{NIT} ~~law~~ commandment which summarizes the whole law, according to Christ, IS LOVING ONE ANOTHER. By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, Jesus said, if you love one another.

POWER IN PRAYER. Because of the assurance of love. "Whatever we ask we receive from Him, because." WHY? ^{Because} We are practicing as a habit of life His commandments.

Like a child responding to a Father's love.

(3) Then, I notice a third result of this assurance of love, at the end of verse 22 and going into verse 23, and that is: PLEASURE TO GOD. ~~And by the way that is one of the reasons why God created us.~~

Notice what it says: "And do the things that are pleasing in His sight. And this is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ."

If you have never believed on His Son, the first Act in bringing pleasure to God, of fulfilling His primary intention in creating all people, IS TO BELIEVE HIS SON, JESUS CHRIST. ACCEPT HIM TODAY, AS YOUR LORD AND SAVIOUR.

But, then secondly, notice Vs 23: "and love one another, just as He commanded us." When we love one another, you see, we are bringing back pleasure to God. It is the result of this love ^{vs} It brings pleasure to God. God is pleased. He is happy. And that is why we were created, to bring pleasure, and honor, and praise, and adoration, and fellowship to God.

(4E) And then finally, the fourth result, Vs 24, is THE PERSUASION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. Notice vs 24: "And the one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And we know by this that He abides in us, ^{How} by the Spirit which he has given us."

Now, why is this so? Because ~~my~~ ^{inherent} friends, we have already learned that when you accept Christ, the Holy Spirit comes and indwells you. This love that we have been talking about, is a fruit, a product, of the Holy Spirit - Gal 5:22 says that the fruit of the Holy Spirit IS LOVE. It is this love that comes out-off the nature of God. And we ~~do not~~ ^{Oh, We have human Love - But} have this love inherit in human nature. ^{Not God-Love}

And in Romans chapter 5 it says that the Holy Spirit will shed abroad in our hearts this love. HOW DO WE KNOW THAT WE ARE IN CHRIST? HOW DO WE KNOW THAT HE ABIDES IN US? BY THE SPIRIT WHICH HE HAS GIVEN US. In other words, BY THE PERSUASION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. ^{And His fruit is Love}

Loving one another. How can you love one another? ~~How can I love one another?~~ How can we even do a practical expression of this- like vs 17 says? ~~HOW CAN WE DO THIS WITHOUT LOVE? YOU CANNOT.~~ You cannot ~~do a habit of life~~ ^{without your heart}

~~BUT HOW WILL I BE ABLE TO DO THIS? ONLY BY THE HOLY SPIRIT. I can only love as the Holy Spirit of God produces that love in me.~~

If you are not a christian, today, my ^{encouragement} ~~exhortation~~ to you is that YOU MUST BELIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, TO HAVE EVEN THE ABILITY TO LOVE IN THIS WAY. You must accept Christ, in what he has already done for you. And then you will receive eternal life and complete forgiveness and the personal presence of the Holy Spirit. Thus, the ability to have this love.

~~I~~ you are a

And if you are a christian, today, my ^{encouragement} ~~exhortation~~ to you and to me, is this: THE SPIRIT OF GOD HAS THIS LOVE, HE INDWELLS US, ~~Then how~~

~~need I come to the place where vs 17 and others are operative in my life, where love is a daily practical expression, IT IS ALL RELATED TO THE MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.~~ ^{How} *Let's us The Brothers*

And Paul tells us in Ephesians 5:18: "To be filled, ^{meaning} to be controlled, with the Holy Spirit of God."phase

And I believe there is only one decision that every christian must make in relation to that. Romans 6:13 and Romand 12:1-and 2 where the Bible admonishes us to yield the members of our body as instruments of ~~of~~ of righteousness unto God. A recognition on the part of a believer that God must control his life.

So many christians have come to know Christ, and even make many kinds of decision to dedicated themselves to God, without ever recognizing the soveriety of God over ~~them~~ ^{them}; that the Holy Spirit of God must pcess and control my life.....I must say: "Lord, my hands eur your hands. My feet your feet. O, God, I want you to control me. I want this love. I want peace. I want ~~all this~~ ^{the} fruit of the Holy Spirit. - Love

And you know: God is ready to produce it, in your life and in mine. He is ready. BUT HE CAN NOT PRODUCE THROUGH AN UNYIELDING ~~body~~ ^{will}. And unyielding ~~body~~ ^{will} that is now an instrument of SIN instead of instruments of righteousness.

Christians don't go through that struggle. Some of you are in it right now. You know what I am talking about. There is a war going on inside. And you are refusing to let go. DON'T DO IT ANY MORE. LET GOD HAVE HIS WAY.

LET US CLOSE WITH PRAYER