Gospel Community Study Questions

1 John 3:11–24 | Love One Another

Key Passage

1 John 3:11–24
Additional passage: Genesis 4:1–7

Big Idea

One of the clearest evidences that we know Jesus is that we love one another from the heart through the power of the gospel.

Overview of the Passage

In this section of 1 John, the apostle John returns again to a central theme of his letter: Christians are called to love one another. John's letter often circles back to the same ideas because these truths are easy for believers to forget but essential for the life of the church. For John, love is not merely a feeling or kind words—it is a reflection of the transforming work of the gospel in a believer's heart.

John contrasts two ways of living by pointing to the story of Cain in Genesis 4. Cain's hatred and anger revealed a heart that was far from God. In contrast, followers of Jesus are marked by sacrificial love for others. Hatred and ongoing resentment toward others reveal a deeper heart issue that the gospel is meant to transform.

The ultimate example of love is Jesus Himself. Verse 16 reminds us that Jesus laid down His life for us, and this becomes the model for how Christians love one another. Because we have received this kind of love from Christ, we are called to express it in practical ways—caring for the needs of others and loving not only with words but with actions and truth.

John concludes the passage by reminding believers that confidence before God grows as we trust in Jesus and obey His commands. God's command is simple but profound: believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another. Faith in Christ and love for others are inseparable marks of genuine Christian life.

Read and Recap

Read 1 John 3:11–24 together. What stands out to you in this passage? What does John want believers to remember about love and the Christian life?

Discuss

- Why do you think John repeats the command to love one another so often in this letter?
- How does the story of Cain help us understand the connection between our hearts and our actions?
- What does it look like in everyday life to love others 'in deed and in truth' rather than only with words?
- Verse 16 says Jesus laid down His life for us. How does the gospel shape the way we love others?
- Where might God be inviting you to risk loving someone more sacrificially this week?

Close & Pray

Read 1 John 3:16 again together. Spend time praying that God would shape our hearts to reflect the love of Christ, help us resist sin in our hearts, and grow our church in genuine love for one another.

Next Week

Next week we will continue in 1 John 4.