

1 John 3:17-18
4-10-24 Chris Young

1 John 3:17

But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?

But whoever has this world's goods

This world goods refers to income, livelihood, means of life.

The general meaning of this verse is in connection with the previous verse, **1 John 3:16** **“By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.”** If we are willing to lay down our lives for others, we ought to be willing to make reasonably smaller sacrifices which are needed to help them. This is the test of love, helping those in need with what we have been given.

And sees his brother in need (lack, necessity)

John had been saying all along to “love one another”. One way to love others was in helping brothers and sisters in need. John was addressing the fact that there were those who were hoarding their abundant resources. They had more than enough to meet their own needs, they observed the needs of others but deliberately chose to ignore it. They had shut their hearts (inward affections) to the one in need. Not helping others when one is able to do so shows a lack of love.

Proverbs 19:17 **He who has pity on the poor lends to the Lord, and He will pay back what he has given.**

Luke 3:11 **He answered and said to them, “He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise.”**

James 2:16 **If one of you tells him, “Go in peace; stay warm and well fed,” but does not provide for his physical needs, what good is that?**

What are some excuses we give to not help someone in need?

Something to ponder: Do I shut my heart to those in need when I have the resources to help them?

As a believers, should we have concerns for the needs of others? Why?

Galatians 6:10 **Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those Who are of the household of faith.**

1 Timothy 6:17-18 **Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share.**

What are some ways we can help others that do not require money?

We are loved and cared for by the One who knows what we need! He will always be faithful to provide all we need according to His purposes. We have received many blessings both physically and spiritually! Every believer should be willing to help another. One day, we may be the ones in need. Using our blessings to meet another's needs glorifies and pleases God.

2 Corinthians 9:8 And God is able to make all grace overflow to you, so that, always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed.

2 Corinthians 8:14 But by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may supply their lack, that their abundance also may supply your lack--that there may be equality.

Hebrews 13:16 But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

Does the means in which we use what God has given us show our character? In what way?

Something to ponder: All my blessings are given by God. Will I use them in ways that have eternal significance?

And shuts up his heart from him

The bowels, or upper viscera, embracing the heart, and the region of the chest generally, are in the Scriptures represented as the seat of mercy, piety, compassion, because when the mind feels compassion it is that part which is affected. Barnes NT Commentary

Our heart is the seat of compassion. The place where our heart strings pull at us, and we realize someone is in need. Lack of compassion is "slamming the door" of one's heart to another in need. It does not matter if they have asked of us or not. If we see one in need we are to help them.

Deuteronomy 15:7-8 "If there is among you a poor man of your brethren, within any of the gates in your land which the Lord your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart nor shut your hand from your poor brother, but you shall open your hand wide to him and willingly lend him sufficient for his need, whatever he needs.

James 2:14-16 What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?

Something to ponder: As He helps us, may we always be ready and willing to help others.

How does the love of God abide in him?

How is the love of God reflexed in a selfish and uncaring attitude? If one does not have sympathy or compassion (empathy, care, kindness) in their heart for those in need and are unwilling to help them, they have no evidence that the love of God dwells in them. Hate and God's love can never join together.

Abiding in the love of God means keeping His commandments. Jesus instructs us to abide in His love by keeping His commandments. We cannot abide in the love of Christ passively or by feeling affection toward Him. We must love our brothers and sisters, and not hate them, to abide in the love of God. We must also show compassion to those in need. We must note that although our obedience to Christ is necessary for abiding in His love, His love for us is not ultimately grounded in our obedience. After all, “we love because he first loved us” (1 John 4:19) and even in our obedience we depend on His love and should be thankful for how it urges us on to serve Him.

Ligoneer Ministries “Abiding in the Love of Christ”

Can we say we love God, but hate those who bear His image?

1 John 4:20 If someone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?

Matthew 25:35-36, 44-45 For I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’ “Then they also will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?’ Then He will answer them, saying, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.’

Who is the perfect example of God’s love?

Jesus is the standard of God’s perfect love. His death on the cross offers the most powerful evidence of love, “in deed and in truth.” His offering of love was giving up His life for those who did not love Him, that they may have eternal life. Jesus willingly endured suffering, mocking, and death from those who He came to save.

Luke 19:10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.

Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Jesus’ life was a life of self-sacrifice and servanthood. His sacrifice on our behalf should affect the way we treat others. It is what motivates us to help and serve others. His love was love in action, and this is the life that He has called His children to live, a life of self-sacrifice and servanthood.

Mark 10:45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.

Luke 22:27 For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves.

Philippians 2:6-7 Who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.

1 John 3:18

My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.

My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue

We know we have true love for others when we fulfill God's command of loving one another. Loving others is one of the many ways we put our faith into action. We demonstrate this love by a willingness to make sacrifices to help them. It is not only pitying one in need, but helping them because of God's love for us. True sincere love does not come by what we say, but in doing. It is not just talking about it and having no intention of doing anything to help them with their need. We are to show them the proof. It is being faithful and following through with what we say we are going to do. As the saying goes, "actions speak louder than words." This love is opening your heart not only with words, but with deeds, whether it is noticed or not.

Romans 12:9 Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good.

Ephesians 5:1-2 Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.

Has anyone told you they were going to do something for you and then never did? What crossed your mind when they did not follow through?

Something to ponder: Am I faithful with my promises of helping and serving others?

But in deed

Deed: (to work); toil (as an effort or occupation); doing, labor.

Did you notice, this word deed is not sitting back, watching, and doing nothing? It is love in action by relieving them according to their need and our ability to provide for their need. It shows the sincerity of our love for others by our actions and that our professed love is real.

John 14:21 "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."

Galatians 5:13 For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.

How have you experienced love in action by someone within Valley Bible Church?

Something to ponder: Do I make myself available to help those who are in need?

And in truth

This truth represents that which is opposed to falsehood. The meaning is not only ethical truth but truth in all its fullness and scope as embodied in Christ. Truth is not defined by our own standards; it is determined by the Source of truth Himself. Jesus was the perfect expression of the truth.

John 14: 6 Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

Ephesians 4:21 If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus.

This truth is not only verbal, but sincerity and integrity of character. The New Strong's Concordance

To love in deed and in truth is a supernatural love that comes from God, and can only be exhibited in the life of a born-again believer who is walking in Spirit and truth. Without Christ's love dwelling within us, we cannot love in deed and in truth. It is the work of the Holy Spirit dwelling within our hearts that we are equipped to love not with empty words, but with genuine acts of kindness and compassion. John reminds us that our love toward others is to be sincere. This love flows from a pure heart, not hypocritical or empty professions, but in truth.

Proverbs 12:17 He who speaks truth declares righteousness, but a false witness, deceit.

Ephesians 4:15 But, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

Ephesians 4:24 Therefore, putting away lying, “Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,” for we are members of one another.

1 Peter 1:22 Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart.

What is the difference between loving in tongue and loving in spirit and in truth?

Let us not love in word, that is, in word only, but in deed, and in truth. As if he had said, “Let our deeds speak the truth of our love; sincere love is fruitful; true affection will put forth itself into action; it doth not rest at the tongue's end, but will be seen at the finger's end, rendering us laborious in works and offices of friendship; as faith, so love without works is dead; and as faith is justified by works, so is our love also. William Burkitt NT Commentary

Something to ponder: Loving in deed and truth shows others that our professed love is sincere and real.