

A Portrait of Love

I John 3:11-15

1. The Three Tests: John implies that there are three tests that help to determine whether or not we know God:

- **The Moral test – behavior (2:4)**
- **The Social test – brotherhood/sisterhood (2:9)**
- **The Doctrinal test – belief (2:22, 23)**

2. The Social Test: “Agape” 3:11-15

A. The Command of Love (v.11)

- **the necessity of a command**
- **an old command: John wishes to establish continuity with former teachings and commands as opposed to the “new” teachings of the heretics**
- **Christ’s commands to love:**
 - “God” – Matthew 22:37**
 - “Neighbor” – Matthew 22:39**
 - “Enemy” – Matthew 5:43,44**
 - “One Another” – John 13:34**

B. The Contradiction of love (vv. 12, 13)

- **The example of Cain (see Genesis 4:1-8) Cain's actions show the opposite of love:**

Hatred cannot celebrate the success of another

Hatred resents the other (the brother)

Hatred destroys the other

- **Cain represents the world which "hates" the children of God**

C. The Confirmation of love: Love or hatred of the brother/sister shows our true colors (vv. 14, 15)

- **Evidence of "passing from death to life" – love is the test – Love demonstrates the reality of the new life (see John 13:35)**

Why is love the supreme test?

- **Evidence of possessing eternal life - to affirm life demonstrates that I have "life"; to destroy it is evidence that I do not have it**

"Hate and murder" – see Matthew 5:22