

Faith Talk - July 12, 2026

Sermon: July 12, 2026

Series: 1 John- Life in the Light and Love of God

Sermon: Love One Another

Scripture: 1 John 3:12

For this is the message you have heard from the beginning: We should love one another.

Sermon Summary

From the very beginning, the message of the Christian life has been simple: love one another. But in a fallen world, that turns out to be one of the hardest things we do. John grounds this call in the story of Cain and Abel, the first and most devastating failure of brotherly love in human history. Cain's hatred toward Abel wasn't random; it grew from an unregenerate heart, envy over Abel's righteousness, and a refusal to heed God's warning that sin was crouching at the door.

The world hates Christians for the same reason Cain hated Abel, not because we are doing something wrong, but because a life lived in the light of God convicts those living in darkness.

John draws a sharp contrast: hate and murder belong to the death experience of those separated from God, while love and forgiveness belong to the life experience of those in fellowship with Him.

The measuring stick for what love truly looks like is not our feelings or intentions; it is the gospel of Jesus Christ. Just as God proved His love by sending His Son to die for us while we were still sinners, we are called to lay down our lives for one another. In everyday life, that rarely means physical death; it means having the compassion to share what God has already given us — our time, our resources, our spiritual gifts — with those around us who are in need.

Love that only exists in words is not the love John is describing. The love God calls us to is love in action and in truth, the kind that makes it obvious we are living in fellowship with Him.

Discussion Questions

Conversations with Adults

- John says the world hates Christians for the same reason Cain hated Abel: our righteousness falsely condemns rather than graciously convicts those who don't know God (John 3:19-20). How does that reframe the way we think about conflict or rejection from people outside the faith?
- Think about a time when loving someone in your church or family cost you something: time, comfort, pride, money. What made it hard, and what made it worth it? (1 John 3:16 as the application of John 3:16)
- John says we already have the love God is asking us to give; we've already received it from Him (compassion, finances, spiritual gifts, time, ability, etc.). What do you think gets in the way of that love and compassion actually flowing outward toward others in practical, everyday ways?

Conversations with Students

1. John says the world hates Christians for the same reason Cain hated Abel: our righteousness falsely condemns rather than graciously convicts those who don't know God (John 3:19-20). How does that reframe the way we think about conflict or rejection from friends or other students outside the faith?
2. John says hating another believer puts us in the same category as someone living separated from God. Does that change how seriously you take conflict, grudges, unforgiveness, acting mean, or giving someone the cold shoulder within your friend group or youth group?
3. What's one specific way you could show love and compassion to someone this week, not just by saying something kind, but by actually doing something loving? (1 John 3:16 as the application of John 3:16)

Conversations with Kids

1. Cain and Abel were brothers, but Cain let jealousy turn into something really ugly. Have you ever felt jealous of a friend or sibling? What did you do with that feeling?
2. John says we can tell we've moved from being mean to being compassionate when we love each other. What does loving someone in action look like, as opposed to just saying you love them? (1 John 3:16 as the application of John 3:16)
3. God gave His Son for us while we were still doing wrong things. If God loves like that, what's one way our family can love someone who might not deserve it this week?

Closing Prayer

Father, thank You that You didn't wait until we had it together to love us; You proved Your love while we were still sinners by giving Your Son for us. That love is the most powerful thing in the universe, and You've placed it inside of us.

We ask You to surface it, to make us aware of the places where envy, fear, or hurt have quietly turned into walls between us and others, and to give us the courage and humility to tear those walls down. Show us one specific person to love this week, and show us exactly how to do it, not in words alone, but in action and in truth.

We commit to living as people whose love makes it obvious whose family we belong to. In Jesus' name, Amen.