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## Series: Looking Toward the Harvest

# Love In Action

### 1 John 3:11-18 (NIV)

*This is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another. <sup>12</sup>Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own actions were evil and his brother's were righteous. <sup>13</sup>Do not be surprised, my brothers, if the world hates you. <sup>14</sup>We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death. <sup>15</sup>Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life in him.*

*<sup>16</sup>This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. <sup>17</sup>If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? <sup>18</sup>Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.*

### 1. OUR MOTIVATION FOR MINISTRY IS LOVE.

v. 11 "...We should love one another."

- Regardless of what we do in ministry for others, our love should drive us.

*Matthew 10:42 (NIV)- And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward."*

- God wants to use us to be His hands to touch others through our ministry to them.
- Ministry given in genuine love to others is the mark of a disciple.

*John 13:34-35 (NIV) - "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. <sup>35</sup>By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."*

*1 John 4:7 (NIV) - Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.*

### 2. WHEN WE LOVE OTHERS, SOMETIMES THAT LOVE IS NOT RETURNED.

v. 13 "Do not be surprised, my brothers, if the world hates you."

- The command to love is so clear, we cannot worry about whether or not it is deserved or returned.

*John 15:17 (NIV) - This is my command: Love each other.*

*Luke 6:35 (NIV) - But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked.*

- We do not minister to others to receive their approval, but rather to receive God's.

*Galatians 1:10 (NIV) - Am I now trying to win the approval of men, or of God? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Christ.*

- We must operate on God's economy rather than the world's economy.

### 3. GENUINE LOVE GOES BEYOND WORDS AND MOVES US TO ACTION.

v. 18 "Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth."

- Genuine love demands action.

*Romans 2:13 (MsgB) - Merely hearing God's law is a waste of your time if you don't do what he commands. Doing, not hearing, is what makes the difference with God.*

- Genuine love requires sacrifice.

*vv. 16-17 "This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? "*

*1 Corinthians 13:3 (NIV) - If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.*

- Genuine love emulates Jesus.

*John 15:12-13 (NIV) - My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. <sup>13</sup>Greater love has no one than this that he lay down his life for his friends.*

**Genuine love expressed in ministry to others demands that we take action, and by that action we become the hands of God to touch a world longing to feel that God really cares for them.**