

This Is Love

1 John 3:16-18

I. Love is Sacrifice (1 John 3:16,17).

A. Our Model of Love: Jesus Christ laid down His life for us (3:16a).

1. *Lay down* – Agape Love is **Voluntary** (John 10:18).
2. *His life* – Agape love is **Sacrificial** (Romans 5:8).
3. *For us* – Agape love is **Unconditional** and **Undeserved** (Romans 5:6).

B. Evidence that we have Christ's Love: Willingness to give voluntarily and sacrificially to fellow-believers (3:16b).

C. Evidence that we lack Christ's Love: Unwillingness to give to a believer in need (3:17).

1. *Closes his heart* – We can measure our love by whether we really care or not.
2. *Abiding in Him* – If we don't have compassion to help people physically, God's love is not abiding in us.
3. *Brother in need* – How do we know if we should help another believer financially?

Tough Questions about giving money or things to others

- Who should be helped? Is this a real need? Will I make the person more dependent – and actually hurt them by helping?
- How should we help? Does the person need help financially or help managing money? Am I willing to invest time and be bold enough to coach/advise or just give money?
- Am I willing to risk giving to someone and being wrong occasionally?
- Am I just excusing my lack of compassion?

II. Love is action (1 John 3:18).

– Talk is cheap, but commitment is rare.

- Do we say, "I love you," with few actions that back it up?
- Do we have many good intentions, but few real plans?