

The Path of Love

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I. Introduction.

A. Text: I John 3:11-18.

B. Theme: maintaining love.

II. The origin of love is the conversion of a Christian.

A. The possibility of loving others can only happen when one is a Christian.

B. Non-Christians love, but it is a different kind of love than the Christian's love that is significant enough to make the difference between life and death.

C. Love prior to Christianity is self-centered love.

1. It goes in the wrong direction.

2. We really love the projection of ourselves in others. (Matthew 5-7)

D. The evidence of this conversion is the life that has been imparted.

E. This kind of love loves the difficult.

F. If we do not love, we remain in death.

III. Love must start with fellow Christians.

A. This is because it is most difficult to love those who are close to us.

B. The test is whether a person can love one who is near to him.

IV. The essence of true love is laying down the life and giving up of self-interests. It will manifest itself in deed and not in word only.

Application questions:

1. Who has been an outstanding picture of love for you in your own life? How have they shown it?

2. How would you respond to a nonbeliever who says that it is intolerant to say that only a Christian can love? Explain.

3. How have you found it difficult to love others in the church? How does knowing the origin of God's love in a person help him or her love the difficult?
