

1. Connect to Community
2. Build Community
3. Protect Community

Community (Fellowship) is the setting aside of personal interest and desires and the joining with one another for the common purpose of honoring Jesus Christ.

1 John 3:1-3 *Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. ² Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. ³ And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.*

Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us!

1 John 3:4-9 *Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness. ⁵ And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin. ⁶ Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him. ⁷ Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. ⁸ He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. ⁹ Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.*

Lawlessness is willful rejection and active disobedience against God's commands. There is a huge difference between yielding to sin due to personal weakness versus a deliberate choosing of sin due to rebellion against God.

1 John 3:10-17 *In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother. ¹¹ For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another, ¹² not as Cain who was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous. ¹³ Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you. ¹⁴ We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death. ¹⁵ Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. ¹⁶ By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. ¹⁷ But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?*

It matters to God how I respond to the needs of those who make up spiritual community.

God met our need of rescue in Jesus Christ. When we see those within our spiritual community with real needs, we are to help them sacrificially.

“**Hatred**” in my heart may *not* be an issue in man’s courtroom, but it is in God’s.

Unresolved anger leads to bitterness, which leads to hatred!

***Ephesians 4:26-27** “Be angry, and do not sin”: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, ²⁷ nor give place to the devil.*

***1 John 3:18-21** My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. ¹⁹ And by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him. ²⁰ For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. ²¹ Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God.*

***1 John 3:22-24** And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. ²³ And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment. ²⁴ Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.*

This chapter closes with the intimacy of the believer with God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. Such an understanding builds hope within our heart and assurance within our mind and a submissive spirit within our will!

Gaining a basic grasp on the **love of the Father** creates within us a desire not to sin more, but a desire to **seek God’s will** and (1) Connect to Community (2) Build Community and (3) Protect Community.

Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us!

My Notes: What truth(s) did the Holy Spirit impress upon my heart from today's sermon?

My Assignment for this Week:

1. Evaluate if I am Connecting to Community the way God would desire?
 - A. What does my faithfulness to Community look like?
 - B. Who am I sharing Community with and what does that look like?

Example:

- Encourage a brother or sister in Christ through a visit, call, card, prayer, etc.)
 - Give of my time and money to help a real need of someone in my faith community.
2. Read **1 John** place special attention on **Chapter 4** to prepare for the 10.15.17 sermon.
 3. Review this Study Guide and **share one thing** you learned with at **least one other person**.