

John's Love Letters

August 3, 2025

Welcome to the Beamsville Church of Christ Online Ministry. This week's message is titled John's Love Letters. Thank you to Amy, Dave, Aisha, and Don for being involved in the service. The scripture reading is John 1, 1-4. Happy birthday this week to Sherry and to Helen.

Scripture Reading

John 1:1-4

"In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through Him all things were made, without Him nothing was made that has been made. In Him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind."

Sermon

Morning everyone. Thank you very much for being with us today. John is preeminent in the New Testament. He writes the gospel of John. He writes first, second, and third John, and he also writes the revelation. And the theme of first, second, and third John is to walk in the light of the gospel. Meaning that if we claim to have fellowship with Jesus, yet we don't walk in the light, our life is overwhelmed with darkness and sin, that's not what Jesus wants. The positive side is to walk in the light as he is in the light. The way Jesus wants us to live. Someone would say, well, how? Well, it's fairly obvious and quite easy to deal with it, is love.

The greatest commandment of all is love. But there's also with that containing joy and peace and patience and kindness and goodness and faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. That's a long list, but hopefully as we continue to grow in the name of Jesus, these things will be just natural for us. Our faith is to remember that Jesus is the righteous one. He is and always will be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. To this very day.

And then John says, and he's reminding us, that he's not writing anything new. Rather he says it's an old command. That the true light is already shining. That Jesus is showing us the way, the truth, and the life. So even though we may be able to quote it, it's trying to bring that into us so it becomes natural.

So John reminds us not to love everything in the world, particularly the sins and temptations that are in the world. And then he says this, "I'm writing to you," which I think also means us, "to remind us that the word of God lives in us." And that's what Jesus wants us to know and to do. The person who lives doing the will of God, and these words are precious, lives forever. Now those aren't my words. These are the words of Jesus. None of these words are really my words. These are the words of Jesus. And John, of course.

So he writes these words. How great is the Father that he's lavished on us, that we should be called children of God. Even he said, "This is amazing." And we know, and this is also amazing. And we know that when Jesus appears, we, each one of us, will be like him, and we will see him as he is. Have you ever imagined that? And we don't have to imagine it. It will be a reality.

Anyone who doesn't do the will of God is breaking that command. And this is his command. To believe in the name of his son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another, as he has commanded us. And this is how he knows that Jesus lives in us. We know it by the Holy Spirit that he's given us. And this is how you could recognize the Holy Spirit of God. Everyone that acknowledged that Jesus has come in the flesh. That's how we know. So, dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God.

Some of us remember the song by the Beatles. Love, love, love, over and over and over again. Let us love one another, because that love comes from God into us. And everyone who loves has been born of God because God is love. And so you think when our babies were born, we fell in love with the babies before the baby was born. And then the baby's born. Oh, we love this baby. We're gonna nourish this baby. We're gonna take care of this baby. Yes, there'll be sleepless nights. Yes, there'll be difficulties. But we will love this baby. And then in childhood. And then in teens. Good luck. And then, and then, and then, and then. It's this concept of this is what Jesus wants us to be. Anyone who believes in the Son of God is born of God. And who is it that overcomes the world? The one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God. So he might say, well, okay, but John, you're repeating yourself. Yeah. Over and over and over and over again. Yeah, huh? Yeah. Because sometimes we forget.

And then John concludes with these words. "We know that the Son of God has come "and has given us understanding "that Jesus is the Christ. "He is the true God and he is eternal life. "Some day we will see the face of God." Can you imagine?

And then John writes a very, very brief chapter. Not really a chapter at all, only 13 verses. He says this. "Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father "and from Jesus Christ the Father's Son "will be with us in truth and life and love." I pray that brings comfort for all of us. Those weren't my words. That's the word of the Lord. I pray that this brings comfort for all of us. Does it bring comfort to you? I hope you do.

Then he says, "Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father "and from Jesus Christ the Father's Son "will be with us forever." Excuse me, he repeats this. And that is a promise. And Jesus never backs down on a promise. And then John says, "I ask that we love one another." And so we sort of say, "Okay, but John, "you keep saying the thing over and over "and over and over again." Uh-huh, uh-huh. So that we will remember if we get off course and we'll remember what John said. We wanna walk in his commands. If anyone comes and does not bring this teaching of love, don't even open up your house to him. And then he concludes, "I wanna talk to you." And this is so cool. "I wanna talk to you face to face "that the joy that we have from the Lord is complete."

How wonderful it will be when we have time. How many times at the end of the day have we said, "I didn't get all these things done. "I just didn't have enough time." But there will come a day. Well, there will be time. Time to sit with Father God and talk. Time to be with our loved ones who have passed that we'll see again. There's life after death and there's life after life after death. We will be with our loved ones again. That is a homecoming. I can picture this in my way, maybe in yours. I can picture my father, wonderful minister for many, many years. I can picture my mom, a woman of great love and laughter. I can picture my uncles, Murray Hammond and very others people. I can imagine that we're all standing around in heaven just talking to one another and Jesus comes

along and we talk together. It's not imagination. It's not imagination. Scripture is telling us that we will be together.

So then he writes, be careful. In this world today where people who want to say that they're faithful are really not, he said there's great comfort in faith, but be careful. He said, I wrote to the church but a person by the name of Diotrephes who loves to be first in all things will have nothing to do with us. Well, that's not who we want to be. So if I come to you, I'm gonna have to call attention to what he's doing, gossiping maliciously and all these things about us and not satisfied with that, he refuses to welcome the brothers in Christ. He wants to put them out of the church. We don't want anyone to be put out of the church. We want to welcome everyone to come to the church. May that never happen. So we look at things that aren't quite there yet but will be with the promise that John is saying. We want people to come to the church. We want to grow in love. It's not a place for bosses, but it's a place for caring and authentic welcome, spiritual teaching and friends, people helping one another.

And there's this very brief book called Jude. Now Jude is not Judas, different names, Jude, not Judas. Jude calls us to persevere. In fact, he says, "Dear friends, remember what the apostles "of our Lord Jesus Christ foretold. "They said to you in the last times, "there will be scoffers "who will follow their ungodly desires. "These are people who divide you "and we never want to be divided.

"So with this promise and this encouragement, "but you dear friends, build yourselves up "in your most holy faith "and pray in the Holy Spirit." Now what does that mean? Well, when we pray, we pray to God the Father, we pray to Jesus, we pray to the Spirit. The Holy Spirit was with God always from the very beginning, God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. Never be afraid of God's Holy Spirit. But your dear friends, build yourselves up in the Holy Spirit.

And then he says, "God's love has waited for us, "for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ "to bring you," meaning us, "eternal life." He's waiting for us. Isn't that amazing? He's waiting for us.

Many of us remember when our babies weren't born. We're asking all kinds of questions. Will it be a boy? Will it be a girl? Will it be a boy? Will it be a girl? Back then it was different, then you can usually choose it now. Girl, we weren't sure. What's gonna happen is we just didn't know, we just didn't know, but we couldn't wait. And when the baby came, it didn't matter, boy or girl. We were so grateful. This baby, this brand new child coming into our life. And as Christians, that's the same way. Brand new children of God coming into the world over and over and over again. All of us here today are God's child.

And so after these brief books, we come to the conclusion, which isn't a conclusion at all. Revelation is the last book in the Bible, but it never ends. It's interesting that the word hallelujah, I thought was all throughout the Bible. John writes in the Revelation, and he's the one that talks about hallelujah. And how many times has it used in the Bible? Four times. And it's used all in the Revelation. So is John the writer? Probably the youngest of the apostles writes some of the greatest scriptures in the entire Bible. And I love these words. "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth. "I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem," this is so interesting, "coming down out of heaven from God, "prepared as a bride, "beautifully dressed for her husband. "And I heard a loud voice," boy, it must be loud. "I heard a loud voice saying these words, "now the dwelling of God is with us." And he will live with us. He lives in us. And with us. Even right now.

And then he says, "He will wipe every tear from their eyes. "There will be no more death. "There'll be no more mourning. "There'll be no more crying. "Ah, there will be no more pain. "For the old order of things has passed away." And God, who is seated on the throne, is saying, "Listen to me." And if God says, "Listen to me," we're gonna listen. He says, "I am making everything new." I am. God's saying, "I will, I am making everything new." And then he said, "Write this down "because these words are trustworthy." The angels showed John the apostle, the water of life and the healing for all the nations. Oh, then Jesus said, "Yes, I will be coming soon.

"Come Lord Jesus. "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ "be with all of God's people."

See, the book of Genesis is the beginning of all things. Of all things. Genesis, the beginning of all things. Revelation, new beginnings of all things.

Somehow the psalmist got it. Long before. Because he says this, "Sing to the Lord a new song "for he has done marvelous things." It is incredible all that God has done for us with the promise that we lean upon where God says, "I will never leave you." "I will never forsake you." "I am with you always." "Always." Then in Isaiah, "Behold, I will create," this is way back in the Old Testament, "I will create new heavens and a new earth. "The former things will not be remembered, "nor will they come to mind, "but be glad and rejoice forever "in what I will create, "for I will create Israel to be a delight "and its people a joy. "I will rejoice and take delight in my people, "and the sound of weeping and crying "will never be heard of again." Psalm 51, "Restore to me "the joy of your salvation."

And Jesus must remain in heaven until the time comes for God to restore everything that he has promised long ago. And then with Paul, he says, "We know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus "from the dead will also raise us."

How many of us believe that Jesus was raised from the dead? Yeah. So if we believe that, how many of us would believe that we also will be raised? That's exactly what he says. We will be raised. And the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you in his presence. All this is for our benefit, I guess so, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people caused thanksgiving to overflow by the glory of God.

I've been rambling on, so I'll finish. John 17, Jesus looked toward heaven. So when Jesus was on the earth, he looked toward heaven, and he prayed. Here's his prayer. "Father, the time has come. "Glorify your son, that your son may glorify you. "For you granted him authority over all people "that he might give eternal life "to all those who have given them." Now this is eternal life, that they may know that you are the only true God and Jesus Christ whom I have sent. I brought you glory on the earth by completing the work you gave me to do. And Jesus still works in us and lives in us. How wonderful it is. God promises all of these blessings. Amen.

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