

## 10.19.22 – A Weekly Word for Covenant Church

**Title:** “Love One Another...With Actions and in Truth”

**Scripture Reading:** [1 John 3:11-24](#); [John 13](#); [James 2:14-26](#)

**Reflection:** Pastor Henry

One of the phrases in our section of 1 John for this week caught my attention. It is found in 1 John 3:18. In this verse John says this: “<sup>18</sup> Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.” (NIV)

After reading this verse a few times, I wondered, what does it mean to love “...with actions and in truth?”

To help us who follow Jesus figure this out and what this phrase means, let’s take a look at this phrase in a few other translations and see how it is translated there.

- “<sup>18</sup> Dear children, let’s not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions.” (NLT)
- “<sup>18</sup> My dear children, let’s not just talk about love; let’s practice real love. This is the only way we’ll know we’re living truly, living in God’s reality. (The Message)
- “<sup>18</sup> Little children, let us love not in word or speech but in deed and truth.” (NRSV)
- “<sup>18</sup> Dear children, don’t just talk about love. Put your love into action. Then it will truly be love. (NIRV)
- “<sup>18</sup> My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue only, but in deed and in truth.” (RGT)

As you read these different translations of 1 John 3:18, what do you notice?

One of the things that I noticed is that love is not just a thought or a feeling. Love is also an action. And it seems that John wants to remind us that love involves thoughts, feelings, AND actions. Love is something we do. The love we have in our hearts and heads motivates us to also act. Love propels us to act. These actions of love are what help us, and others, know that we are loved.

Take the love of Jesus for example. How do we know that Jesus loves us? John says, “<sup>16</sup> This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us.” We know that Jesus loves us because he laid his life down for us. Jesus willingness to lay down his life; to empty himself of status and privilege (see [Philippians 2](#)); to talk with, be with, eat with, and heal all kinds of different people; and ultimately die on the cross for the sins of all people; all of these actions demonstrate, show, and prove to us the great love of God.

Isn’t the same true of our love for others? Isn’t the same true for the love we receive from others? Is not the love we give to others and the love we received from others demonstrated, shown, and proved through actions and deeds?

Some of us might be familiar with Gary Chapman’s book entitled “The Five Love Languages.” In his book, Chapman highlights 5 different love languages that we use to both show and receive love: physical touch, acts of service, giving/receiving gifts, words of affirmation, and quality time. Each of these love languages allows us to

demonstrate, show, and prove the love we have within us for those around us by what we say AND they allow us to show the truth of our love by what we do.

As you think about the people you will interact with this week at home, work, and school, how can you love them with actions and in truth?

**Prayer:**

God, you call us to love one another not only with words or speech but also with actions and in truth. Spirit of God, open our eyes and hearts to see opportunities around us to put love into action in the days to come. AMEN.

**Action Item for Day/Week:**

Each day we have multiple opportunities to heed John's command for us to "love one another" with actions and in truth. Our missional practice for this month, The 10 Second Rule, seeks to help us keep our eyes, ears, and hearts open to opportunities the Spirit of God prompts us with each day to love those around us.

During the month of October, as we continue to explore 1 John and the call "...to live as Jesus lived" (1 John 2:6), you are encouraged to practice the 10-Second Rule as you go about your day. What is the 10-Second Rule? Clare De Graaf in his book entitled [The 10-Second Rule](#) defines The 10-Second Rule this way: "Just do the next thing you're reasonably certain Jesus wants you to do...and commit to doing it immediately—in the next 10 seconds—before you change your mind!" When you feel the prompting of the Holy Spirit to do something...do it. Pay attention to and keep a record of what happens on account of your obedience. Review this record at the end of the month.

**Songs for today:**

[Christian Hearts in Love United](#)

[Love One Another](#)