



**Unnatural Love**

John's letters are unique because of the timing. John has **outlived** all the apostles and most of the first eyewitness of Jesus and His resurrection.

He is writing to a church that has **not seen or experienced** the events of the Gospels or the book of Acts (90AD)

## Themes of 1st John

Jesus is **real** (2nd Generation)

Jesus is **true** (Gnosticism)

1 John 3:4-10

**Live** righteously

**Practice** righteous living (do the right thing)

**Love** other believers

**Practice** loving other believers  
(regardless of preferences)

## Why People Hate: The Science Behind Why We Love to Hate, Vaneesa Van Edwards

Have you ever heard the cliché, "no bond is stronger than two people who **hate** the same person?" It turns out there is actually some truth to that statement.

Research has found that people form stronger bonds when they are able to talk about their **dislike toward someone** else than when they both have positive feelings toward someone

## Why People Hate: The Science Behind Why We Love to Hate, Vaneesa Van Edwards

When you are struggling, whether it's problems at work, low self-esteem, conflicts in your relationships, etc., it feels much better to funnel your negative energy into blaming someone else than to confront your own role in your problems. A lot of people join **hate groups** because it allows them to funnel the blame for all of their problems into another group of people while being supported by a group of people who share their beliefs and make them feel like they belong

## Why People Hate: The Science Behind Why We Love to Hate, Vaneesa Van Edwards

Humans desire structure and certainty in their social lives. To establish that, people naturally divide into **in-groups** (social circles where everyone feel like they belong with one another) and **out-groups** (people who exist outside of social circles and are typically not welcomed into them). When people declare their dislike for others, it helps people understand the boundaries between **social circles**

We used to bond over common likes

Our nature has consequences; **eventually we act the way we really are**. To love the brothers and sisters in the believing community demonstrates that we belong to God; to reject the brothers and sisters demonstrates that we don't really belong to God. [C. Hawley](#)

John continually provides **external tests** to verify **internal** transformation

But those who obey God's word truly show how completely they **love** him. [2:5](#)

This old commandment—to **love** one another—is the same message you heard before. [2:7](#)

Anyone who **loves** a fellow believer is living in the light [2:10](#)

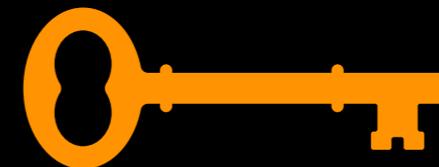
Do not **love** this world [2:15](#)

See how very much our Father **loves** us, for he calls us his children [3:1](#)

Anyone who does not live righteously and does not **love** other believers does not belong to God. [3:10](#)

1 John 3:11-24

Dear children, let's not merely **say** that we love each other; let us **show** the truth by our **actions**. [1 John 3:18](#)



You will note a familiar pattern in John's epistle, one of handling various **contrasts**. We have already heard him speak about light and darkness, death and life, truth and error, God and the devil; now he ties together these twin themes, **love and hate**. He presents them exactly as they occur in life; not in watertight compartments, isolated from each other, but **intertwined** together. [Ray Stedman](#)

These first century Christians were encountering some hatred from the non-Christian world around them; John, however, is interested in what they are encountering **from each other**.

**Claudius (41-54)**: "since the Jews were continually making disturbances at the instigations of Chrestus, he [Claudius] expelled them from Rome. . . ." So writes the Roman historian Suetonius about events in Rome around 52.

**Nero (54-68)**: Savage madman in whose reign Peter and Paul were martyred

**Domitian (81-96)**: For [Domitian] even insisted upon being regarded as a god and took vast pride in being called "master" and "god." These titles were used not merely in speech but also in written documents.

But as the believers rapidly multiplied, there were rumblings of **discontent**. The Greek-speaking believers complained about the Hebrew-speaking believers [Acts 6:1](#)

He (Paul) debated with some Greek-speaking Jews, but they tried to **murder** him. [Acts 9:29](#)

Paul and Barnabas **disagreed** with them, arguing vehemently [Acts 15:2](#)

John is not writing his letter in a **vacuum**, the world is all around him. He is aware the **difficulty** of what he is asking

He told us to change our reactions from what comes naturally to the **unnatural**. No one in that time would expect someone to respond with love to hate and persecution. It's hard enough to love those inside our families and our neighbourhoods. [Jean Risley](#)

To say something is **unnatural** is another way of saying it is **supernatural**

Some Christians feel like their mission is to point out the problems of other Christians or the church without providing solutions

John lays out the problem, there are **untransformed** believers in their midst. And these believers contribute to the cause of the **enemy** rather than Christ.

But the greater problem is that these believers have **fooled** themselves into thinking they are **transformed**

## Dead Love 11-15

We must not be like **Cain**... vs 11

If we love our brothers and sisters who are believers, it proves that we have passed from death to life. But a person who has no love is still **dead**. Vs 14

Anyone who hates another brother or sister is really a **murderer** at heart. Vs 15

## Dead Love 11-15

"Why are you so angry?" the Lord asked Cain. "Why do you look so dejected? You will be accepted if you do what is right. But if you refuse to do what is right, then watch out! Sin is **crouching** at the door, eager to **control** you. But you must **subdue** it and be its **master**." [Genesis 4:6](#)

John uses the Cain account to describe how love/hate dichotomy works. Central to this is a **choice**

## Dead Love 11-15

John equates a **love-less** Christianity as someone who is a **murderer** (the root being anger/hate)

John sees a **love-less** Christianity as **dead faith** because this individual can not master the **first law of transformation**, loving a family member

## Confirmed Love 16-19

We know what **real** love is because Jesus gave up his life for us. So we also ought to **give up our lives** for our brothers and sisters. [Vs 16](#)



Our **actions** will **show** that we belong to the truth [Vs 19](#)

## Confirmed Love 16-19

**Sacrificial love** is the foundation for **authentic** love because if you are willing to give your life for someone, then the 'annoying' differences seem **minuscule**

Be an **example** to all believers in what you say, in the way you live, **in your love**, your faith, and your purity. [1 Timothy 4:11b](#)

## Confirmed Love 16-19

We need to understand that according to the Bible, love is not just a feeling or emotion but something that **works itself out in action**. Love is not less than what we feel, but it is certainly **more**. Aren't you glad that Jesus did not only feel love for you but that he ultimately **acted in love for you**? His feelings would not have done us much good! The ultimate measure of love is not what you feel for others but what you do for them. [Tim Challies](#)

## Bold (Honest) Love 20-24

Even if we feel **guilty**, God is greater than our feelings [Vs 20](#)

if we don't feel **guilty**, we can come to God with bold confidence [Vs 21](#)

Those who obey God's commandments remain in **fellowship** with him, and he with them. [Vs 24](#)

## Bold (Honest) Love 20-24

Why does John equate **dishonest** love with guilt?

False guilt has nothing to do with what's true and accurate, nor is it related to true repentance. Rather, it is usually the **fear** of disapproval in disguise, [Paul Coughlin](#)

A **superficial faith** feels guilty because it knows the **disconnect** if faith and action, but worse, the **enemy** knows this too

## Bold (Honest) Love 20-24

let us go right into the presence of God with sincere hearts **fully** trusting him. For our **guilty consciences** have been sprinkled with Christ's blood to make us **clean**, and our bodies have been washed with pure water. [Hebrews 10:22](#)

How is this possible? It's not the size of the **sin**, but the **depth** of relationship

**How to Love People You Don't Like**  
**Humility must be our founding principle**

but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. [Philippians 2:8](#)

**Loving Doesn't Mean Agreeing With Behaviour**

but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. [Romans 5:8](#)

**If it was easy then everyone would be doing it**

If you love only those who love you, why should you get credit for that? Even sinners love those who love them! [Luke 6:32](#)

Supplemental  
Christianity

YOU  
ARE  
HERE

**Beginning Christianity**-believing in Jesus, His **claims** and His **personhood**

**Baby Christianity**-loving your **family**

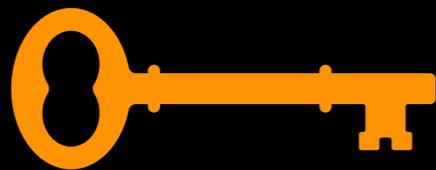
**Toddler Christianity**-adopting the **beliefs** and **behaviour** of said family

**Youth Christianity**-contributing to the life of the **Body of Christ**

**Young Adult Christianity**-discipling **another**

**Mature Christianity**-loving your **enemies**

Dear children, let's not merely **say** that we love each other; let us **show** the truth by our **actions**. [1 John 3:18](#)



Our **behaviour** will justify or invalidate our **beliefs**

If you **love** me, obey my commandments. [John 14:15](#)

It's not the size of the **sin**, but the **depth** of relationship

**text2give**

226-909-0014



**eTransfer**

info@uccwaterloo.ca

(auto deposit)