

**October 25**

**Scriptures:** Read 1 John 4

**Key Verse:** “And He has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother.” (1 John 4:21)

### **Overview**

It was John, in his gospel, who gave us those immortal words of Jesus, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son...” (John 3:16). Now, in this chapter he says, “This is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins” (v.10). “God is love”, says John (v.16b), and He loved us long before we loved Him (v.19). And because God loves us, “we also ought to love one another” (v. 11).

How do we love one another? Not “with words or tongue but with actions and in truth”, says John (3:18). Love, simply understood, means to seek the best for neighbour and for God. That, of course, implies more than mere verbalizing — it implies action. Love, ultimately, is something you do. This linkage between love for God and love for neighbour was obviously an issue for John. He says, “Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates his brother is still in the darkness. Whoever loves his brother lives in the light and there is nothing in him to make him stumble. But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness; he does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded him” (1:9-11).

This message is perfectly consistent with the call of the Old Testament prophets to righteousness and justice. Righteousness meant proper relationship with God. Justice meant proper relationship with neighbour.

Even Jesus stressed it. We’re to meet God’s expectations of us by loving Him, loving neighbour, and even self, with all our “heart... soul... mind... and strength” (Mark 12:28-31).

### **Prayer**

Father God, we ask for Your great grace to truly love others. We know that we cannot love You any more than the one we find most difficult to love. Pour Your Spirit upon us and into us today and make us more like Jesus.