

## Loving God by Loving His Family

1 John 4:20-5:2

- I. We love God by loving His other children (4:20-5:1).
- A. We don't love God who we cannot see if we don't love our brother who we can see (4:20-21).
- B. Everyone who believes in Christ is my "brother" whom I must love (5:1).
- I cannot choose which Christians I am going love.

### Excuses for Not Loving my "brother"

- *Not my type* – Socially undesirable, image at stake
- *No tolerance for their weakness/sin* – Lack of grace
- *I was hurt* – Offense, history, lack of forgiveness
- *Uncomfortable, Different* – Culture/race/accent
- *I'm shy* – Unwilling to be unselfishly courageous
- *No Time* – Selfish
- *I like my friends* – Peer pressure, what others think of me

- II. We love our spiritual siblings by loving and obeying God (5:2).
- It's not just "my own business" how I live as a believer. I truly influence others by how much I love and obey God.

### My life affects other believers

#### The Body/The Building

- (Ephesians 2:21) "In him (Christ) the **whole building** is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord." (See also 1 Corinthians 12:12-31 – the Body)

#### The Stumbling Block Principle

- (1 Corinthians 8:9) "Be careful, however, that the exercise of your freedom does not become a stumbling block to the weak."