

A BIT MORE ABOUT THE EPISTLES OF JOHN (1,2 AND 3 JOHN)

The two most difficult things to get straight in life are love and God. More often than not, the mess people make of their lives can be traced to failure or stupidity or meanness in one or both of these areas.

The basic and biblical Christian conviction is that the two subjects are intricately related. If we want to deal with God the right way, we must learn to love the right way. If we want to love the right way, we must deal with God the right way. God and love cannot be separated

John's three letters provide wonderfully explicit direction in how this works. Jesus the Messiah is the focus: Jesus provides the full and true understanding of God; Jesus shows us the mature working out of love. In Jesus, God and love are linked accurately, intricately and indissolubly.

But there are always people around who don't want to be pinned down to the God that Jesus reveals, to the love that Jesus reveals. They want to make up their own idea of God, make up their own style of love. John was pastor to a church (probably churches) disrupted by some of these people. In his letters we see him re-establishing the original and organic unity God and the love that comes into focus and becomes available to us in Jesus Christ.

Summary from 'The Message' Bible (Eugene H Peterson)