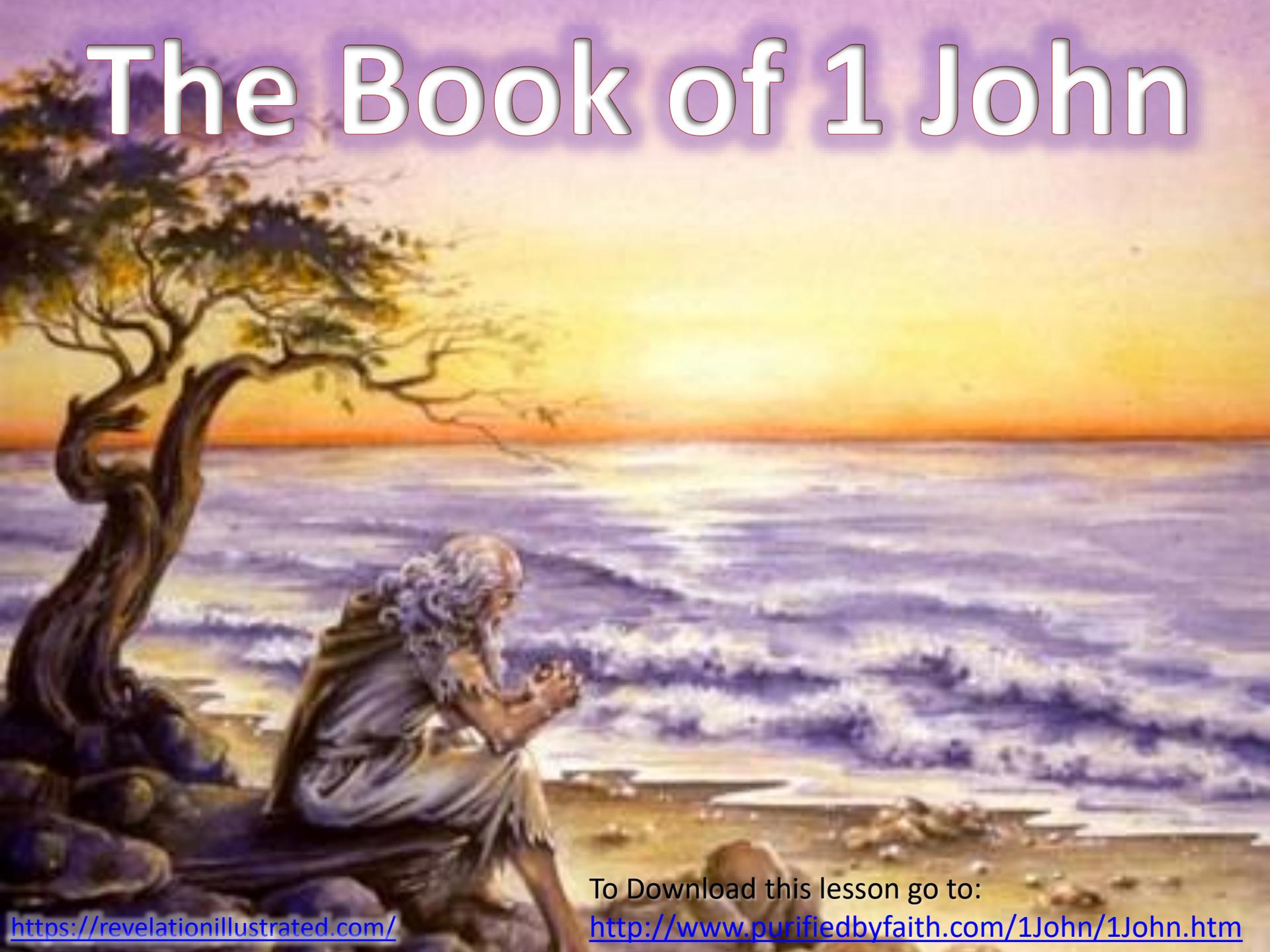


The Book of 1 John



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Outline of 1 John

- 1:1-4 - *Prologue: John Introduces the Major Theme of the Letter - FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD*
- 1:5-2:28 - *The First Presentation of the Three Tests of FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD: RIGHTEOUSNESS, LOVE and BELIEF in Jesus*
- 2:29-4:6 - *The Second Presentation of the Three Tests of FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD: RIGHTEOUSNESS, LOVE and BELIEF in Jesus*
- 4:7-5:21 - *The Third Presentation of the Three Tests of FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD: RIGHTEOUSNESS, LOVE and BELIEF in Jesus*

2:29-4:6

*The Second Presentation of the Three Tests of
DIVINE SONSHIP: RIGHTEOUSNESS, LOVE
and BELIEF in Jesus*

- 2:29-3:10a - *Divine Sonship* tested by **RIGHTEOUSNESS**
 - God is righteous therefore everyone who “*does what is right*” is “*born of Him*” (2:29)
 - The present status and future hope of the “*children of God*” (3:1-3)
 - Divine Sonship is utterly contrary to all sin (3:4-10a)
- 3:10b-24a - *Divine Sonship* tested by **LOVE**
 - Anyone who does not obey the command to “*love one another*” is not a child of God (3:10b-11)
 - Cain as the model of murder and hate - whose example is followed by the world (3:12-15)
 - Christ as the model of love – whose example we must follow in order to have confidence in our relationship with God (3:16-24a)
- 3:24b-4:6 - *Divine Sonship* tested by **BELIEF** in the Spirit’s Message

1 John 3:10b-11

Anyone who does not obey the command to “love one another” is not a child of God

¹⁰ whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother. ¹¹ For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.

*At this point, without introducing a new sentence, John makes a transition from the subject of **righteousness** to that of **love**.*
(Burdick, p.259)

¹⁰ *whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.* ¹¹ *For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.*

1 John 3:10b-11

As in his *first* presentation of the love test (1 John 2:7-17) , John focuses on our duty to love ***other Christians***. This is not to say that our love for outsiders is not important. But for the sake of this test, in contrast to the Gnostic false teachers, John focuses on our love for ***one another***.

¹⁰ *whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.* ¹¹ *For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.*

1 John 3:10b-11

In contrast to the Gnostic teaching which was a comparatively late arrival, the command to love was part of the original authoritative message that came from Christ Himself.

(Burdick, p. 260-261):

- John 15:12-13 – *This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.*¹³ *Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.*

*¹⁰ whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.*¹¹ *For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.*

1 John 3:10b-11

The gospel does not change. The truth about the person of Christ and about Christian conduct is unalterable. In both doctrine and ethics we must go back to the beginning and inquire what the apostles originally taught and their first converts both had and heard. (Stott, p. 139)

¹⁰ *whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.* ¹¹ *For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.*

1 John 3:10b-11

2:29-4:6

*The Second Presentation of the Three Tests of
DIVINE SONSHIP: RIGHTEOUSNESS, LOVE
and BELIEF in Jesus*

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1 John 3:12-15

Cain as the Model of Murder and Hate - Whose Example is Followed by the World

¹² We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous. ¹³ Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you. ¹⁴ We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death. ¹⁵ Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

1 John 3:12-15

**Cain as the Model of
Murder and Hate – Whose
Example is Followed by the
World**

High Level Overview

Having exhorted his readers to mutual love, John, by way of contrast, gives **two negative examples**:

- Cain

¹² *We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous.* ¹³ *Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you.* ¹⁴ *We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death.* ¹⁵ *Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him*

(1 John 3:12-15)

Having exhorted his readers to mutual love, John, by way of contrast, gives ***two negative examples***:

- Cain
- The World

¹² *We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous.* ¹³ *Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you.* ¹⁴ *We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death.* ¹⁵ *Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him*

(1 John 3:12-15)

John then gives the love test –

- ***First*** with ***Positive*** Results:
 - The ***Conclusion***: We have passed from death to life
 - The ***Criterion***: We love the brothers

¹² *We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous.* ¹³ *Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you.* ¹⁴ *We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers.* *Whoever does not love abides in death.* ¹⁵ *Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him*

(1 John 3:12-15)

John then gives the love test –

- *First* with *Positive* Results:
 - The *Conclusion*: We have passed from death to life
 - The *Criterion*: We love the brothers
- *Then* with *Negative* Results:
 - The *Criterion*: He does *not* love
 - The *Conclusion*: He remains dead
 - The *Explanation*: To hate is murder, and no murderer has eternal life

¹² *We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous.* ¹³ *Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you.* ¹⁴ *We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death.* ¹⁵ *Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him*

(1 John 3:12-15)

In verse 12, John begins by exhorting his readers **not** to be like Cain. It's interesting to note that Cain is the **only** Old Testament character **explicitly** mentioned in this letter.

¹² We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous. ¹³ Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you. ¹⁴ We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death. ¹⁵ Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

1 John 3:12-15

- [Cain's] hatred originated in the devil, that wicked one, and issued in murder. (Stott, p.139-140)
- Cain, in the murder of his brother, fulfilled the proverb, "Like father, like son". His attitude was hatred and his act was murder. (Burdick, p.262)

¹² *We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous.* ¹³ *Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you.* ¹⁴ *We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death.* ¹⁵ *Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.*

1 John 3:12-15

“murdered” σφάζω *sphazo*

- **Strong's Data:**
 - To slay, slaughter, butcher
 - To put to death by violence
- **Burdick, p.262 :**
 - The word for “murder” here is a **strong** term that originally meant “to cut the throat”. It had come to refer to **violent** slaughter.
- **Note: Not *all* killing is *murder*:**
 - **Romans 13:3-4** – *For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval,⁴ for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer.*

John then discusses the ***motive*** for Cain's act: Cain murdered his brother because ***his*** deeds were ***evil*** and his brother's were righteous.

¹² *We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous.* ¹³ *Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you.* ¹⁴ *We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death.* ¹⁵ *Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.*

1 John 3:12-15

*It may be inferred from Gen 4:6-7 that Cain's offering was not acceptable because he was an **evildoer** (Kruse, p.133)*

- Genesis 4:6-7a - *The LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted?"*
- Proverbs 15:8 - *The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, but the prayer of the upright is acceptable to him.*

¹² *We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him?*

Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous. ¹³ *Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you.* ¹⁴ *We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death.* ¹⁵ *Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.*

1 John 3:12-15

As far as [the writer of Hebrews] was concerned, what differentiated Abel from Cain was the former's faith and, presumably, the latter's lack of it. (Kruse, p.133)

- Hebrews 11:4 - *By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, through which he was commended as righteous, God commending him by accepting his gifts.*

¹² *We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him?*

Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous. ¹³ *Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you.* ¹⁴ *We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death.* ¹⁵ *Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.*

1 John 3:12-15

*The wicked person **hates** righteousness. It is not that he is **jealous** of the righteous and wishes that he were **like** him. **Instead** it is that the righteousness of the righteous puts the wicked person in a **bad light**.*
(Burdick, p.262)

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1 John 3:12-15

*There is a notable parallel between **Cain**, who hated his brother and murdered him, and the **world** that hates God's people. The **reason** for the hatred is the **same** in each instance – wickedness cannot tolerate the presence of righteousness. (Burdick, p. 264)*

¹² *We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous.* ¹³ *Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you.* ¹⁴ *We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death.* ¹⁵ *Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.*

1 John 3:12-15

The term [world] is here used . . . to designate the people who are enmeshed in the evil world system, who are members of the devil's family.
(Burdick, p.264)

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1 John 3:12-15

*Following the brief digression in 3:13 with its warning that the readers will be objects of the world's hatred, in 3:14 [John] returns to the main theme of 3:11-24, that is, mutual **love** as a mark of true children of God. (Kruse p.135)*

¹² *We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous.* ¹³ *Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you.* ¹⁴ *We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death.* ¹⁵ *Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.*

1 John 3:12-15

we have passed out of death into life...

12 We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous. 13 Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you. 14 We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death. 15 Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

1 John 3:12-15

“we have passed” μεταβαίνω metabaino

- **Strong's Data:**

- To remove
- To depart
- To pass over from one place to another

- **Burdick, p.264:**

- Is used to metaphorically to depict movement from one spiritual sphere, “out of death”, to another spiritual sphere, “into life”.
- The perfect tense indicates that the transfer has already occurred at a point in the past, and, as a result, the sphere of life has already been entered.

Becoming a Christian is nothing less than a resurrection or quickening 'out of' (ek) spiritual death 'into' (eis) eternal life. (Stott, p.141)

- John 5:24 - *Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.*

¹² *We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous.* ¹³ *Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you.* ¹⁴ *We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death.* ¹⁵ *Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.*

1 John 3:12-15

Therefore:

*Love for Christians is evidence that one is saved;
hatred for Christians reveals that one is still lost.*
(Burdick, p.264)

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1 John 3:12-15

*As in previous passages (2:10, 3:10) the **present tense** verb “we love” speaks of the **continuing exercise of love**, a **pattern of life**, not merely a **momentary flash** of affection.*
(Burdick, p.264)

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1 John 3:12-15

We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers

Stott observes (p.141-142):

- Great stress is laid in the NT on love as a preeminent Christian virtue:
 - The first-fruit of the Spirit:
 - **Galatians 5:22** - *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness...*
 - The sign of the reality of faith:
 - **Galatians 5:6** - *For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love.*
 - The greatest of the three abiding Christian graces, which never ends, without which we are nothing:
 - **1 Corinthians 13:2,13** - *And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing...¹³ So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.*

We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers

Stott (continued):

- True Christians, who have passed from death unto life, will:
 - Hunger for Christian fellowship.
 - They will not forsake the assembling of themselves together (Heb 10:25), but will delight to:
 - Meet Together
 - Worship Together
 - Pray Together
 - Talk Together on Spiritual Topics
 - Their personal relationship with each other will be marked by unselfish and caring love.

John follows the **positive** statement of verse 14a with **two negative** statements in verses 14b-15.

¹² *We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous.* ¹³ *Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you.* ¹⁴ *We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death.* ¹⁵ *Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.*

1 John 3:12-15

*John does not say that the one who does not love **dies**, but that he **remains in death**. This means that he existed from birth in the sphere of death, and he continues to stay in that sphere, as opposed to those who love the brothers and have been transferred from death to life.* (Burdick, p.265)

- Ephesians 2:1 - *And you were dead in the trespasses and sins...*

¹² *We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous.* ¹³ *Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you.* ¹⁴ *We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love **abides [= remains]** in death.*

¹⁵ *Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.*

1 John 3:12-15

John puts matters in stark terms. There is no middle ground; not to love is to hate.
(Burdick, p. 265)

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Notice that John echoes Jesus in putting hate/anger on a level with murder:

- Matthew 5:21-22 - *You have heard that it was said to those of old, "You shall not murder; and whoever **murders** will be **liable to judgment**. But I say to you that everyone who is **angry** with his brother will be **liable to judgment**; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire*

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1 John 3:12-15

Hatred is the desire to get rid of someone, whether or not one has the nerve or the occasion to perform the act. (Burdick, p. 265)

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1 John 3:12-15

*The present tense “hates” . . . speaks of continuing action. John does not refer to one who is caught up in a momentary fit of anger toward someone. The one he designates as a murderer is the one who, as a **continuing habit**, hates his brother. (Burdick, p. 265)*

¹² *We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous.* ¹³ *Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you.* ¹⁴ *We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love **abides in death.*** ¹⁵ *Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.*

1 John 3:12-15

- *John does not mean that a person who has committed murder can never be saved afterward. Instead, he says that a saved person, by nature, does not commit murder.*
(Burdick, p. 265)

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1 John 3:12-15

The Love Test

(1 John 3:14-15)

Does he
(habitually)
love his
brother?

Yes

Then he has passed
from (spiritual) death
to (eternal) life.

No

Then he remains
(spiritually) dead.

He, in effect,
habitually hates his
brother

He is (in principle) a
murderer

He does not have
eternal life.

Class Discussion Time



*Class Discussion Time

- Commentator Donald Burdick made the following observation about Cain's motive in murdering his brother:
 - *The wicked person **hates** righteousness. It is not that he is **jealous** of the righteous and wishes that he were **like** him. Instead it is that the righteousness of the righteous puts the wicked person in a **bad light**.*
- Do you think Burdick is correct in his assessment of the motivation of unbelievers in this regard? Have you seen an example of this in people in the world that you have observed?
- Commentator John Stott gave a description of what it looks like for a Christian to love his fellow believers:
 - Hunger for Christian fellowship.
 - They will not forsake the assembling of themselves together (Heb 10:25), but will delight to:
 - Meet Together
 - Worship Together
 - Pray Together
 - Talk Together on Spiritual Topics
 - Their personal relationship with each other will be marked by unselfish and caring love.
- Do you think this is a good description? Do you see these kinds of attitudes manifested in your own heart?