

Loving Our Brother and Our Sister

1 John 3:11-19

February 12, 2017

1 Jn 3:11-21 For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another; 12 not as Cain, who was of the evil one and slew his brother. And for what reason did he slay him? Because his deeds were evil, and his brother's were righteous. 13 Do not be surprised, brethren, if the world hates you. 14 We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who 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. 16 We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. 17 But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? 18 Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth. 19 We will know by this that we are of the truth, and will assure our heart before Him

I. Introduction

It's a solemn fact that most murders take place within families. The very first murder was when Cain killed his brother Abel. And why? Because he was jealous of his brother.

In Christ, this age-old attitude is reversed. Now we are to love our brothers and sisters—not just our natural brothers and sisters, but also the members of our Christian family, the church. Jesus has shown us how to love by laying down his life instead of taking the lives of others.

This kind of loving is intensely practical. It means sharing what we have. It means giving to those in need. It means not just good ideas and holy thoughts, but action! We will show the truth by doing it.

John says that, when we do right, we feel comfortable with God. No doubt there are some sensitive Christians who still worry about the claims of the false teachers, or fear they haven't done enough for God. John assures them that God knows all about their concern—and overrules their fears. (from The Bible Guide; A. Knowles).

II. Word and phrase study of 1Jn 3:11-20

3:11 “the message” = (Gk. *aggelia*) is only used in 1Jn 1:5 and 3:11.

The first refers to doctrine, (what we believe).

1Jn 1:5 This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.

The second refers to ethics, (how we live).

1Jn 3:11 For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another;

John balances these two aspects of Christianity in 1John.

Purity in doctrine - (what we believe).

1Jn 2:20 But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know.

1Jn 2:24 As for you, let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father.

Purity in ethics, (how we live).

1Jn 1:8 If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us.

1Jn 1:10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.

1Jn 3:14 We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death.

“you have heard from the beginning”

(see my notes from 1Jn1:1)

“we should love one another”

Love for one another -the evidence of being a believer

Jn 13:34-35 “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35 “By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

1Jn 3:14 We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren ...

Jesus' commandment

Jn 15:12 "This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you.
(Jn 15:17; 1Jn 3:23; 4:21)

3:12 "Cain"

The first sin recorded in Scripture after the Fall is murder (Gen 4:1-10).

Gen 4:1-10 Now the man had relations with his wife Eve, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain, and she said, "I have gotten a man child with the help of the LORD." 2 Again, she gave birth to his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of flocks, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. 3 So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the LORD of the fruit of the ground. 4 Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and for his offering; 5 but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell. 6 Then the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? 7 "If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it." 8 Cain told Abel his brother. And it came about when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him. 9 Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" And he said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?" 10 He said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to Me from the ground.

In Hebrews 11, the offerings of **Cain and Abel are contrasted** (Heb 11:4).

Heb 11:4 By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous, God testifying about his gifts, and through faith, though he is dead, he still speaks.

Cain's actions reveal the influence of the fall on mankind's heart.

Gen 4:7 "If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it."

Gen 6:5 Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. (Gen 6:11-13)

Our actions are the fruit of our thoughts and attitudes.

Mt 15:18-20 "But the things that proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and those defile the man. 19 " For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders. 20 "These are the things which defile the man; but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile the man." (Mt 15:11; 12:34; Lk 19:22)

"who was of the evil one" (referring to Satan or the devil; used 5 times in this epistle)

1Jn 3:10 By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious:

1Jn 3:12 not as Cain, who was of the evil one and slew his brother. ...

(1Jn 2:13-14; 5:18-19; see also Mt 13:19, 38; Jn 17:15; 2Thes 3:3)

[or] **of evil** (evil comes from the "evil one")

1Jn 3:12 not as Cain, who was of the evil one and slew his brother. And for what reason did he slay him? Because his deeds were evil, and his brother's were righteous. (Mt 5:37; 6:13)

3:13 "Do not be surprised"

In Greek grammar it means to stop an act already in progress.

Don't be shocked if (when it happens) people of the world don't like you.

Do not think it so unusual, or so little to be expected, as to excite astonishment. (from Barnes' Notes)

"if" - [Is a conditional sentence] - is used 20 times in 1Jn

(1Jn 1:6; 1:7; 1:8; 1:9; 1:10; 2:1; 2:3; 2:15; 2:19; 2:24; 2:29; 3:21; 4:11; 4:12; 4:20; 5:9; 5:14; 5:15; 5:16)

"the world hates you"

The world hated Jesus & it will hate His followers.

Jn 15:17-19 "This I command you, that you love one another. 18 "If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you. 19 "If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you. (Jn 17:14; Mt 5:10-11; 2Tim 3:12)

3:14 “We know” - "Know" (knows) is a common theme in 1Jn;

"Know" is used 40 times in the epistle. (1Jn 2:3, 4, 5, 11, 13, 13, 14, 18, 20, 21, 21, 29, 29; 3:1, 1, 2, 5, 6, 14, 15, 16; 3:19, 20, 24; 4:2, 6, 6, 7, 8, 13, 16; 5:2, 13, 15, 15, 18, 19, 20, 20)

Gk. = oida; "to see," is a perfect tense with a present meaning, signifying, primarily, "to have seen or perceived"; hence, "to know, to have knowledge of," [in human "knowledge," to know from observation] (from Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words)

“we have passed out of death into life”

Jn 5:24 “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.

“because we love the brethren”

Love is the major characteristic of the family of God

Jn 15:12 “This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you.

(Jn 13:34-35; 15:17; 2Jn 5; 1Cor 13:4-8; Gal 5:22)

Love is characteristic of God (1Jn 4:7-21).

1 Jn 4:7-12 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8 The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love ...

Love is the result of our relationship with God. Love is not the basis of salvation, but another evidence of it.

“He who does not love abides in death”

As believers continue to abide in love, unbelievers abide in hate. Hate, like love, is an evidence of one's spiritual orientation.

3:15

“Everyone”

The significance of this is that there are no exceptions to what John is saying. There are only two kinds of people, lovers and haters. John sees life in black or white terms, no pastels.

everyone (5X)

1Jn 2:29 ... you know that everyone also who practices righteousness is born of Him.

1Jn 3:3 And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

1Jn 3:4 Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness.

1Jn 3:15 Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; ...

1Jn 4:7 ... for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.

whoever (6X)

1Jn 2:5 but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. ...

1Jn 2:23 Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; ...

1Jn 3:17 But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?

1Jn 4:15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.

1Jn 5:1 Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, ...

1Jn 5:1 ... and whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him.

anyone (5X)

1Jn 2:1 ... And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;

1Jn 2:15 ... If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

1Jn 2:27 ... you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you ...

1Jn 3:10 ... anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, ...

1Jn 5:16 If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, he shall ask and God will for him give life to those who commit sin not leading to death. ...

“everyone who hates his brother is a murderer”

This is an ongoing, settled hatred.

Sin occurs first in the thought life.

Jesus taught that hatred equals murder as lust equals adultery (Mt 5:21-22).

“and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him”

This is not saying someone who commits murder cannot be a Christian. Sin is forgivable, but lifestyle actions reveal the heart. It is saying that one who habitually hates cannot be a Christian. Love and hate are mutually exclusive! Hate takes a life, but love gives its life.

3:16

“We know love by this”

Jesus has shown the ultimate example of what love is like.

Believers are to emulate His example

2Cor 5:14-15 For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; 15 and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.

“He laid down His life for us”

This is referring to Calvary

Jn 15:13 “Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends. (Jn 10:11, 11, 17-18)

“we ought”

Definition: [Gk. = ophelo] means “to owe, to be a debtor, our duty,”

We are bound by Jesus’ example

1Jn 2:6 the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.

1Jn 4:11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

This Greek word is used 36 times in the New Testament in the following ways:

Financial

Mt 18:21-35 Parable of the forgiving King and unforgiving servant

Mt 23:16 “Woe to you, blind guides, who say, ‘Whoever swears by the temple, that is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the temple is obligated.’ (Mt 23:18; Lk 7:41; 16:5-7; Rom 15:27; Ph’m 18)

Rom 13:8 Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; ...

3Jn 8 Therefore we ought to support such men, so that we may be fellow workers with the truth.

Financial to illustrate forgiveness

Mt 18:21-35 Parable of the forgiving King and unforgiving servant

v. 28 “But that slave went out and found one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and he seized him and began to choke him, saying, ‘Pay back what you owe.’

v. 30 “But he was unwilling and went and threw him in prison until he should pay back what was owed.”

v. 34 “And his lord, moved with anger, handed him over to the torturers until he should repay all that was owed him.”

Lk 7:36-50 Jesus forgives the sinful woman who washes His feet with her tears

vs. 40-42 And Jesus answered him, “Simon, I have something to say to you.” And he replied, “Say it, Teacher.” “A moneylender had two debtors: one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. “When they were unable to repay, he graciously forgave them both. So which of them will love him more?”

Forgiveness

Lk 11:4 ‘And forgive us our sins, For we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us.

Luke does not draw a parallel between our forgiving and God’s; he speaks of God’s forgiving sins, of our forgiving “debts,” moral debts. (from Vine’s Expository Dictionary)

Obligation, the duty of a servant/slave

Lk 17:10 “So you too, when you do all the things which are commanded you, say, ‘We are unworthy slaves; we have done only that which we ought to [“it was our duty,” (from Vine’s)] have done.’”

Jn 13:14 “If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet.

Duty of Jesus

Heb 2:17 Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

Duty of the Believer:

Rom 13:8 Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law.

Rom 15:1 Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength and not just please ourselves.

1Cor 7:3 The husband must fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband.

Eph 5:28 So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies.

Heb 5:12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, ...

1Jn 2:6 the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.

1Jn3:16 We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

1Jn4:11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

See (Jn 19:7; Ac 17:29; Rom 15:27; 1Cor 5:10; 7:36; 9:10; 11:7,10; 2Cor 12:11,14; 2Thes 1:3; 2:13; Heb 5:3)

“to lay down our lives for the brethren”

Christ is our example; He laid down His life for us, now we are to lay down our life [if necessary] for one another.

2Cor 5:14-15 For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; 15 and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.

Phil 2:5-7 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, ... (Phil 2:5-11)

Gal 2:20 “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

1Pt 2:21 For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps,

3:17

“But whoever has the world’s goods and sees his brother in need”

Laying down one’s life in v. 16 is now put into the practical help of one another.

Jas 2:15-16 If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and be filled,” and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that?

“and closes his heart against him”

closes = to change on purpose, like to close the door.

heart = is literally “bowels,” the seat of the emotions,

graphic slamming the door of his compassion (from Robertson’s Word Pictures in the New Testament)

3:18

“let us not love with word or with tongue”

Actions speak louder than words

Mt 7:24 “Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock.

Jas 2:14-17 What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but he has no works? Can that faith save him? 15 If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and be filled,” and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that? 17 Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself. (Jas 2:14-26)

“but in deed and truth”

deed - actions

Jas 1:22-25 But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. 23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; 24 for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. 25 But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.

truth - deeds and motives are to be motivated by self-giving love (God's love) and not just be showy deeds that feed the ego of the provider.

3:19

“We will know by this”

Refers to the loving acts previously mentioned, which is the proof, or evidence that we are Christians.

by this (used 12 times in 1Jn)

1Jn 2:3 By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments.

1Jn 2:5 but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him:

1Jn 3:10 By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother.

1Jn 3:16 We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

1Jn 3:19 We will know by this that we are of the truth, and will assure our heart before Him

1Jn 3:24 The one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. We know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.

1Jn 4:2 By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God;

1Jn 4:6 We are from God; he who knows God listens to us; he who is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

1Jn 4:9 By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him.

1Jn 4:13 By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.

1Jn 4:17 By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world.

1Jn 5:2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments.

“that we are of the truth”

That we are not deceived in what we profess to be; that is, that we are true Christians. To be of the truth stands opposed to cherishing false and delusive hopes.(from Barnes' Notes)