

1 John Chapter 3 Continued

1 John 3:13 "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you."

"If the world hate you": History is filled with stories of the persecution of the saints by the world (Heb. 11:36-40). This does not surprise believers because hateful Satan is their father (verse 10).

Jesus warned His followers that they would be despised (John 15:18-25).

It is not a thing to be concerned about, if the world hates you, Christian. They hated Jesus (our Leader), and they will hate us also. The real reason they hate us, is because we remind them of the life they are living.

Their guilt comes before them more, when they are around those who are trying to live right. We are not of the world. We are a separated people. Christians are even spoken of as peculiar. This means peculiar to the world.

Verses 14-15: Death and life here symbolize unbelief and saving faith, respectively. A murderer (one whose heart is full of hate or even destructive apathy), can of course, be forgiven of such sin. But one who is truly forgiven will no longer abide in his murderous nature.

1 John 3:14 "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not [his] brother abideth in death."

"Pass from death unto life, because we love": Becoming a Christian is a resurrection from death to life, and a turning of hate to love (Gal. 5:6, 22). A lack of love indicates that one is spiritually dead. Love is the sure test of whether someone has experienced the new birth or is still in the darkness of spiritual death (2:9, 11).

"Abideth in death": Someone who is characterized by hate has never experienced the new birth.

One of the evident signs of being a Christian is the fact that we love other Christians. Hate and greed rule the worldly people. Love and sharing is of the Christian. Hate brings death. Love brings life.

1 John 3:15 "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him."

"Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer": John presents the second of three characteristics of the devil's children with respect to their lack of love. Hatred is spiritually the same as murder in the eyes of God, i.e., the attitude is equal to the act.

Hate is the seed that leads to murder, as seen in the example of the hatred of Cain for Abel that resulted in murder. Hate leads to murder, so if you do not carry the murder out in reality, you have already committed it in your heart.

Verses 16-17: The standard for our love is God's love in Christ, who died for us. Love that observes need, and does not act to minister to it, is no love at all. Bowels of compassion in modern English would be "heart," proceeding from our inward core of awareness and action.

1 John 3:16 "Hereby perceive we the love [of God], because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down [our] lives for the brethren."

"Hereby perceive we the love of God": With this phrase, John introduces the standard of love that is reflected in genuine Christianity. It becomes the measuring stick for every expression of love (see verse 18).

John presents the third characteristic of Satan's children in terms of their lack of love. Satan's children are marked by indifference toward others' needs (see also verses 12, 15).

"Perceive" goes beyond just seeing. It has with it an understanding. Greater love hath no man, than He lay down His life for His friends. Jesus gave it all, because of His great love for us. His love is God love, which none of us can quite live up to.

"He laid down his life for us": This expression is unique to John (John 10-11, 15, 17, 18; 13:37-38; 15:13), and speaks of divesting oneself of something. Christian love is self-sacrificing and giving. Christ's giving up His life for believers epitomized the true nature of Christian love (John 15:12-13; Phil. 2:5-8; 1 Peter 2:19-23).

"We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren": God calls Christians to that same standard of love for one another as He had for us (see verse 16a).

We can pattern our love after the example He left us. We must learn to love, not because of what we can get out of something, but despite what it might cost us. Unselfish love should be the character of all Christians.

1 John 3:17 "But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels [of compassion] from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"

This is just saying, we should show our love by being compassionate to those who have a need. If someone is hungry, we should feed them. If someone is cold, we should clothe them. If they have no place to sleep, we should furnish them a bed. If we have the love of God within us, we will share with those who have need.

"But whoso hath this world's good ... have need": True love is not limited to supreme sacrifices (verse 16), but shows up in lesser ones. Genuine Christian love expresses itself in sacrificial

giving to other Christians' needs (i.e., his brother"). It is a practical love that finds motivation in helping others (1 Tim. 6:17-19; Heb. 13:16; James 2:14-17).

Where it does not exist, it is questionable that God's love is present. If that is so, it is also questionable whether the person is the Lord's child (verse 14).

1 John 3:18 "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth."

"In word ... in tongue": In tongue refers to mere talk. Claiming to love is not enough. Love is not sentiment, but deeds.

Just talking about helping someone will not help them. We must reach in our pocket and help them, if we can. We must act out what we believe about helping others.

1 John 3:19 "And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him."

"Hereby we know that we are of the truth": A lifestyle of love in action is the demonstrable proof of salvation (see verse 16). John gives three benefits of love for the true Christian. The first benefit is assurance of salvation since love in action is the test of Christian profession (4:7; John 13:34-35).

Cain (in verse 12), was "of that wicked one"; believers are "of the truth. And hereby": John seems to be saying that assurance of salvation comes in part as one reaches out actively in caring for others (proceeding verses).

Truth and God are interchangeable here. We know we will have no regrets, if when we stand before God, we have acted out the faith that we say we have. Our heart will not condemn us, if we know we have done the best we can by everyone.

1 John 3:20 "For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things."

"For if our heart condemn us ... God is greater": God knows those who are truly His (2 Timothy 2:19) and wants to assure His own of their salvation. Although Christians may have insecurities and doubts about their salvation, God does not condemn them (Romans 8:1). Displaying love as a pattern of life is the proof that believers stand un-condemned before God.

In light of John's strict teaching above, he may have felt that some readers might begin to despair. He assures them that, although our feeble attempts to honor God may leave us feeling defeated inside, God is greater than our self-awareness (1 Cor. 4:4), and can justify us even when we would condemn ourselves. He sees not only our actions, which at times are thwarted or misguided, but also the motives and intentions behind them.

Sometimes we feel guilty about not helping someone when we really could not, and should not do it. Sometimes we blame ourselves when there should be no blame placed. We cannot, and should not, help everyone that asks. We should pray and ask God what to do. God knows much better than we do what was right.

“For if our heart condemn us not”: We have confidence toward God if our lives are in line with the standard of Christian living set forth above. John is not saying that whether a person is right or wrong is simply a matter of how he subjectively feels about himself.

That is why John has given so many indicators and commands for Christians to take, not of and assess themselves by. And one of the great results of a life lived in purity before God is a life where there is effective prayer. Right living is an important part of successful praying.

1 John 3:21 "Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, [then] have we confidence toward God."

“Confidence toward God”: Love vanishes self condemnation. When a Christian recognizes in his life the manifestation of love in deeds and actions, it results in confidence about his relationship with God.

This is just saying, we have a clear conscience. The very thing that was never settled, when a person sacrificed for sin in the Old Testament, was that their conscience was never clear. The sin was covered, not done away with.

Jesus abolished our sin, and gave us a clear conscience. If we know in our heart that we have done the right thing, then we can stand before Jesus on judgment day with a clear conscience.

1 John 3:22 "And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight."

The second benefit of love is answered prayer (see verse 19). Since love is the heart of obedience to the law (Matt. 22:37-40; Romans 13:8-10), its presence in a life evidences submission to God which He blesses by answered prayers.

The Scripture above and the following Scripture, lets us know, if we are right with God. He is listening for our prayer and will answer it.

James 5:16 "Confess [your] faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

We are His children, and He will grant us the desires of our heart.

Psalms 37:4 "Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart."

Here is just one more promise to those who belong to Jesus.

John 15:7 "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

To be in right standing with God brings answers to our prayers.

Verses 23-24: These verses again repeat the three features of this epistle, believing, loving, and obeying, which are the major evidences of true salvation. The third benefit of love is the abiding presence and empowering of the Holy Spirit.

1 John 3:23 "And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment."

John has already set forth the importance of true faith in Christ and true love for others. Now he combines the two.

Look with me, in the following Scriptures, and see what believing will get you.

Romans 10:9-10 "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

Everyone who is a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ has been given permission to use His name to pray to the Father. Notice this type of praying in the following verses.

John 14:12-13 "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater [works] than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son."

John 14:14 "If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do [it]."

1 John 3:24 "And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us."

“Dwelleth in him”: See Christ’s words about “abiding” (in John 15:7) below. “He in him” refers to Christ in the believer. The Spirit gives internal assurance to corroborate the external testimony of true faith, active love, and consistent obedience.

Look with me, at the grouping of Scriptures which says this so well.

John 14:23 "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."

John 15:7 "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

John 14:16-17 "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;" "[Even] the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."

1 John Chapter 3 Continued Questions

1. Marvel not, if the world _____.
2. Why do they hate us?
3. Why do we know we have turned from death to life?
4. He that loveth not his brother, abideth in _____.
5. Hate and greed rule the _____ people.
6. Love brings _____.
7. Whosoever hateth his brother is a _____.
8. What does "perceive" mean?
9. Greater love hath no man, than that He lay down His life for _____.
10. _____ love should be the character of all Christians.
11. If someone is hungry, we should _____.
12. Let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in _____ and in _____.
13. What do you think it means?
14. Verse 21 is just saying, we have a clear _____.
15. Why do we receive whatever we ask of Him?
16. What is His commandment to us?
17. What name must we use to pray and get results?
18. If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will _____.

19. Who is the Comforter?