

## God, Whom the World Hates (1 John 3:11-18)

### Summary:

1. He walks in the light as God is in the light, and is the light (1:5-7)
2. He sees his sin, confesses it, and repents of it (1:8-10)
3. He abides in Jesus and walks as He walked (2:1-6)
4. He loves the brethren (2:7-11)
5. He does not love the world (2:15-17)
6. He practices righteousness considering Christ's return (2:28-3:3)
7. He sins less, not sinless (3:4-7)
8. God's seed abides in him, not the devil's (3:8-10)

### 9. The world hates him because of God's righteousness in him (v.11-13)

- John is continuing his train of thought (v.10) by providing practical examples of what the "seed" of God and the "seed" of the devil will look like in action.
- John's message is something they have "heard from the beginning": What is it?
  - John's motto to "love one another" (2:10; 3:10, 11, 14, 4:7-11)
  - Cain's failure to love his brother (Gen.4:1-16)

### What is Genesis 4 about?

- There are two "seeds" from Adam's loins: Cain and Abel (Seth to replace Abel).
- Cain worked the "ground," and Abel was a "keeper" of sheep (v.3).
- Cain would bring *an offering* to the LORD from the fruit of the ground, while Abel brought the *firstborn* and *fat portions* (v.4).
- God was displeased (v.5) with Cain not because the ground was inferior but because he offered without faith (Heb. 11:4) and withheld his best from the LORD.
- Abel's righteousness spurned Cain's anger (v.6-7) at his brother: Abel gave God the best while Cain withheld the best. In unrighteousness, Cain murdered Abel in cold blood.
- When confronted by the LORD, Cain lied (v.9), was unrepentant, sarcastic, and complained of God's judgment on him (v.9-15).
- Cain slayed his brother because his heart was like the devil's (1 Jn. 3:8-10). Cain's murder of his brother Abel was planned and calculated just like the serpent's sin (Gen. 3:1-8). Cain murdered his brother because Abel was righteous, and he was unrighteous.
- John is building on the "seed" of the devil by alluding to the murder of Abel (Gen. 4). Jesus also spoke of the devil being a "murderer from the beginning" without truth (John 8:44).

### The world will hate those who love Jesus Christ (v.13):

- John is aware of the hostility of the fallen world system against truth and warns his brothers and sisters not to be "surprised when the world hates them" (v.13).
- **Hatred**: a transient flare of emotion accompanied by an ongoing, settled attitude that desires to get rid of someone. Whether this person has the nerve or occasion to perform the act is secondary, as the attitude itself is a sin.
- Jesus was hated by the world first (John 7:7) and reminded His disciples in the Upper Room that the world will hate them because it hates Him (Jn. 15:18-20):
  - Paul says he is crucified to the world (Gal. 6:14). James warns that you cannot simultaneously be a friend to God and the world (Jam. 4:4). Peter warns of it when believers share in Christ's sufferings (1 Pet. 4:12-15). John again warns of the dangers of loving the world (1 Jn. 2:15-17), and now he reminds the congregations in Ephesus of what Jesus told him (Jn. 15:18): do not be surprised when the world hates you.
- The world is Satan's and Cain's "posterity," representing the anti-God system: a floating mass of thoughts, opinions, speculations, and impulses that have no substance but constitute a real and effective power that is immoral and spiritually hostile to God.

- The world's hatred of a child of God must assure them that the Spirit of Christ (H.S.) rests on them, providing they are being persecuted for righteousness, rather than punished and chastised for sin.
  - A man is known by his friends and his enemies.
- ### 10. He loves his brother in word and deed (v.14-18)
- John is giving practical application to what he mentioned earlier (1:9-11). They can be assured eternal life (moment of regeneration through eternity) if they love the brethren.
  - This "love," similar to "hate," is in the present tense, which indicates habitual lifestyle and character. This love is concrete and evident, yet does not seek to be noticed by others, desiring only to express itself by doing what is best to benefit those that it loves.
  - By this, "we know" (v.14, 16) love. He (Christ) laid his life down for "us":
    - Sacrifice itself is not intrinsically valuable. It becomes lovely only in the degree to which it meets a need. The greater the need, the greater the glory of sacrifice, providing it meets the need.
    - Cain brought death, while Jesus brought life (Matt. 20:28). Cain murdered a man in unrighteousness, while Jesus gave His life in righteousness.
  - The plan of the ages (Creation, Fall, Redemptive, and Reconciliation) is that God would invite His creation into the bond of love He has always possessed within Himself.
  - Hatred toward a brother is characteristic of the devil, Cain, and those who walk in darkness.
  - Loving the brothers (plural) and loving a brother (singular) is characteristic of someone who is of God's seed (v.9-10) and will consequently be seen in action.
  - We "ought" (v.16) is a moral obligation that will flow naturally from the one who is continually living in awareness of Jesus' sacrifice.
  - John is not commanding us to "love" the brethren whom we "like," but is instead commanding us to love.
  - What is the difference between "liking" a brother and "loving" them?
    - "Liking" the brethren is often tied to personality, maturity, preferences, mannerisms, speech, and actions. It is easiest to "like" and "prefer" those who are most like us. In many ways, "liking" is shallow and superficial. Resentment toward a brother in Christ can emerge when individual preferences are not shared with similar sentiments.
    - "Love," however, penetrates beyond superficial personal preferences to the brother's position in Christ. "Love" must be more intentional than "liking."
    - "Love" overcomes obstacles that "liking" falls short of because "love" prefers to see brothers the way Christ sees them. "Loving" people means that you treat them in word and deed the same way you treat someone you "like."
    - True "love" eclipses the shallowness of personal preferences.
  - The test of Christ's love is that we lay our life down for one another. Since we may never have that privilege, John informs us of how things look in its absence:
  - "If anyone has the world's goods, and sees his brother (singular) in need, and closes his heart, how does God's love abide in him?" (v.17)
    - This "seeing" means to contemplate and understand the context. While the "world's goods" are the necessities of life (food, shelter, and clothing), it can also imply other avenues in which a believer can meet the need of another.
  - Loving in word and deed through truth (v.18) is seen in expression beyond mere sentiments. Deeds are often required to validate the sentiment of love.
  - The test of Christian love is not just a failure to hate but involves doing them good (Gal. 6:10; Heb. 13:1). God's love is not in the murderer (v.15) nor the miser (v. 17). It is not found in the posterity of Satan, Cain, or the world, but in Jesus Christ and those who have His "seed" in them.