

June 16, 2024
1 John 3: 11-13

It is good to be back in house church today. Happy Father's Day

1 John has been a wonderfully diverse book with many different avenues to explore understanding that Jesus is real and He continues to impact us daily not just during His time as deity in flesh

We talked about light and the power of light to drive out darkness and that mankind often prefers darkness and hiding our deeds to being exposed to light.

We looked at the blood of animals and the blood of Jesus that purifies us

Then to what we actually believe and having to live it out.

We talked about getting it right in relationships. On to stages of life and maturity

Talking about antichrists and demystifying and not catastrophizing situations

And understanding that God is not like man and He lavished His love on us calling us children of God – God will not write you a “dear John” letter.

Craig explained how John goes on about being children of God and not knowing the full scope of it and that we need to live holy lives.

Then sin and lawlessness, amnesty and no one who is born of God will continue to sin.

The next major section of this letters theme is to produce assurance that even as the believers “continue in Jesus,” they can know they are children of God.

The “tests” for knowing this is are:

1 Doing what is right (2:29-3:10)

2 Loving one another (3:11-24)

3 Testing the spirits (4:1-6)

Opening Prayer

Today we are moving to the 2nd Test Loving one another (3:11-13)

¹¹ For this is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another. ¹² Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own actions were evil and his brother's were righteous. ¹³ Do not be surprised, my brothers and sisters,^[b] if the world hates you.

The command to love fellow believers was first introduced in 2:9-11

As a test of whether one was walking in light, i.e. had true knowledge of God.

In the first instance it was leveled as a charge against the heretics.

The tone of this is a warning tone – stated negatively

⁹ Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates a brother or sister^[b] is still in the darkness. ¹⁰ Anyone who loves their brother and sister^[c] lives in the light, and there is nothing in them to make them stumble. ¹¹ But anyone who hates a brother or sister is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness. They do not know where they are going, because the darkness has blinded them

Here, in Chapter 3, it is addressed to the community of faith for encouragement and admonition.

11. This is a return to in the “beginning.” Basics that should be understood and followed
The command to “Love one another” has its origin in the nature of God.
Represented in the Trinity; wanting to share the love they had for each other with creation.

I think John’s consistent reference to the “beginning” is interesting, reinforcing that these are not new concepts, but foundational

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

John 1:1-2 In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God, He was with God in the beginning

1 John 1:1 That which was from the beginning – Jesus

In verse 11 John says - Do this – we should love one another

In verse 12 John uses an example of what not to do. **Don’t be like Cain!**

What does that mean? Let’s take a look and find out together.

Genesis 4 Adam^[a] knew his wife Eve, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Cain.^[b] She said, “With the help of the Lord I have brought forth^[c] a man.”² Later she gave birth to his brother Abel. Now Abel kept flocks, and Cain worked the soil.³ In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the Lord.⁴ And Abel also brought an offering—fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The Lord looked with favor on Abel and his offering,⁵ but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast.

⁶ Then the Lord said to Cain, “Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? ⁷ If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it.”

⁸ Now Cain said to his brother Abel, “Let’s go out to the field.”^[d] While they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.

Commentary: Eve’s first recorded words since the fall may have been acknowledging God in bringing forth a son that might hopefully be the fulfillment of the “seed” to crush the head of the serpent and find its fulfillment in this son. Her words, however, can also be read in a less positive light as a boast that just as the Lord had created a man, so now she had created a man, expressing her confidence in her own ability to fulfill the promise of (3:15). The recurring theme of Genesis in the narrative is that of human effort in obtaining a blessing that only God can give.

Trying to work our way to God and create our own way to Him; see any Gnosticism here?

The reason God did not accept Cain’s offering was not because it was not a blood sacrifice. They both made offerings, not sacrifices, there was something else God was not pleased with – not sure what it was.

This has overtones of **Steward My Presence**

Bring what God requires (humility) – then right standing

Widows mite, two doves – not the gift itself, but the attitude and intent of the heart

Approaching with the fear (reverence) of the Lord, proper respect and honor.

Not Ahhhhh! It will be fine.

God is not like Man – It will not be fine. Ask Hophni and Phinehas 1 Samuel 1-4
When we come into God's presence we don't come familiar, but with friendly reverence.
We don't get to be consumers of all the good only, there are rules and God's ways.

The focus is on Cain's two-fold response: Anger against God and against Abel

V6. The Lord asks Cain, "Why are you angry and downcast?"

Then God gave Cain an opportunity to choose the way of the Lord or the way of evil (crouching at your door), it desires to have you.

"Do what is right" or face the consequences of shedding innocent blood and exile from the land.

The Lord gives us this choice as well.

Both in an invitation for salvation and daily as we walk it out.

Cain decided to join the evil one and murdered his brother - A reference back to

1 John 3:8 He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning.

God gave Cain opportunity, If you do what is right, will you not be accepted?

God gives us this opportunity daily – to do what is right and be accepted or not do what is right as sin is crouching at the door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it.

Sin is always crouching at the door. We have to be on our guard and use our free will and triuneness to overcome it's temptations and seduction.

Cain choose POORLY. SO Don't be like Cain

Be like Jesus who is forever sinless, not like the devil who is forever sinful.

V 12 And why did Cain murder Able?

Because Cain's actions were evil, and when given the opportunity to make it right with God, he participated with the devil, and Abel's actions were righteous

Abel was killed even though he did nothing wrong, only what was pleasing to God.

Jesus has very similar conversations with the Pharisees.

This contrast of who will you participate with, and follow in their ways. (free will)

Gospel of John 8: ³⁷ I know that you are Abraham's descendants. Yet you are looking for a way to kill me, because you have no room for my word. ³⁸ I am telling you what I have seen in the Father's presence, and you are doing what you have heard from your father.^[b] ³⁹ "Abraham is our father," they answered. "If you were Abraham's children," said Jesus, "then you would^[c] do what Abraham did. ⁴⁰ As it is, you are looking for a way to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do such things. ⁴¹ You are doing the works of your own father." "We are not illegitimate children," they protested. "The only Father we have is God himself."⁴² Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I have come here from God. I have not come on my own; God sent me. ⁴³ Why is my language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say. ⁴⁴ You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and

the father of lies. ⁴⁵ Yet because I tell the truth, you do not believe me! ⁵⁸ “Very truly I tell you,” Jesus answered, “before Abraham was born, I am!” ⁵⁹ At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds.

Jesus here, calmly states the truth, the reaction is vitriol, murderous threats and actions, causing a scene to try to over shadow and trying to convince of correctness thru acts of hostility.

When we stand for righteousness and address darkness, it brings on spiritual warfare. NOVA next week we go against spiritual things DON'T BE SURPRISED

The One who is forever sinless (full of love) vs. the one who is forever sinful (full of hate)

So did Cain become a child of the devil by killing his brother or was he a child of devil and his evil actions culminated in the killing of his brother?

Righteousness draws hatred from the devil and from his children.

Darkness cannot tolerate light; hatred, love; or greed, sacrifice.

John is establishing these things from the beginning.

When righteousness is exhibited, evil will want to kill it.

Cain and Abel, Jesus and the Jews of His time, John and the Gnostics, it is an ongoing pattern

Light comes into the world and darkness throws a fit.

13. Don't be surprised, my brothers (not little children) if the world hates you.

John is elevating them from little children to brothers – perhaps knowing they are about to experience this 2nd test. – to not be like Cain.

How many times are we like Cain?

Choosing not to humble ourselves and trust in God's ways.

Commentary John does not say the world always hates believers, it did not always hate Jesus.

But whenever the community of Faith acts so as to expose the greed, avarice, and wickedness of the world, it may expect rejections: and if it should go so far as to interfere with its evil practices, as Jesus did in the temple, it may expect suffering and brutal death.

John is reminding us to go back to the beginning.

God vs. Satan – Good vs. Evil – Eve's effort to bring about the “seed” vs God's way in Jesus.

God clearly gave Cain the opportunity the make things right.

If you do what is right, will you not be accepted?

God gives us this opportunity daily – to do what is right and be accepted or not do what is right as sin is crouching at the door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it.

Let us be ever aware of this and choose wisely

Discussion Questions:

Are you aware that sin is “crouching at your door?”

Any reaction to: When light enters the world, darkness “throws a fit”?

Let's pray that we are not like Cain, but respond to God properly.