

1 John 3:11 - 18

Announcements:

- Que video, PC shares a reminder about [building and land](#), asks Aaron a Q, then Aaron shares

Please open to **1 John Chapter 3** (Need a Bible? ...)

- **Two seeds**, **two family trees**. A [family portrait, divided...](#) On one side stands; on the other...

Spirit of Cain; Heart of Christ

- **John's Test** (verse 11)
- **Cain's Knife** (verses 12-15)
- **Christ's Cross** (verses 16-18)

You can't x-ray a soul, but [John's test](#) of a person's heart is by **watching how they love or refuse to love**. ...the proof is not in what we say, but what we do... **John hands the church the X-ray.**

John's Test (verses 11)

Key theme & **headline of the faith**. (and, thereby **a test of assurance**) - Part of: **Great Commission**

V. 11 - For **this is the message** that you **heard from the beginning**...

- **For** - **conjunction word** - back to [verse 10](#) (**children of devil vs God made manifest...**)
- **This is the message** - [Angleia](#) (from [Euangelion](#) = **The Gospel**). Both in **Doctrine & Ethics!**
- **You heard from the beginning** - **Not a new Gospel** (or theme). John is **calling us back** to the OG Gospel **as revealed by Christ and His apostles**. **Core message vs heretics boasting...**
 - [The Gospel does not change](#); **all the way back** to **God's original creation intent**.

V. 11 - That we should **love one another** - John is just **reminding us of the words of Jesus**.

- [John 13:34-35](#) - "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. **By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.**" - But as we'll see, [this truth goes further back](#), **to Genesis**.
- **Love (Agapao)** (**Definition!**) **not feelings or sentiment**, but **sacrificial action** = **present, active**.
- **Love** = **circulatory system of the church**. [Evidence of maturity/belonging is in loving service](#).

So there it is... **The command. The test**. The [rest of the passage](#) gives **two responses** to it.

- **Christ fulfills it**, but **Cain refuses it**. (**meant to be a self-examinatory passage...**)
 - A **positive and negative prototype** for us to follow...
- [Brothers and sisters](#), listen up. **Especially Fathers/Husbands**, set the example. [Lead in this](#).

Cain's Knife (verses 12-15)

First of two examples today.

- John reaches **all the way back to the first two brothers**; [it's the first test of love/hate...](#)
- [Genesis 4](#) = Two brothers. **Cain & Abel**. Two offerings.
 - **Abel** - first born of the **flock** (**God was pleased**)
 - **Cain** - first fruits of the **ground** (**God was not pleased**)
- *We **don't have all the instructions/backstory**, but we know that **Cain's heart** was not right...

- The issue was with Cain's **character**, not his **crop**. (New Testament support...)

The **negative prototype**. (let's consider some details and see why...)

V. 12 - **Not as Cain** who was **of the wicked one** and **murdered his brother**.

- **Murdered his brother** - **Began with Jealousy** (King Saul too) - turns to **resentment**...
- **Murdered** (not the ordinary word for "kill") - **Sphazo** = "to slaughter, butcher" - lit. "to cut the throat." - we **see this in the heart of man**, don't we? Imagine **Cain's social media posts**...
- ...what caused the **religious leaders to demand the death of Christ** (**be careful**, friends!)
- **Rev. 5:11-12** - "Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice: **'Worthy is the Lamb who was slain [sphazo], to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honor and glory and blessing!'**" **Cain slaughtered his brother; Christ was slaughtered for his brothers. Contrast!**

V. 12 - And why did he murder him? Because **his works were evil and his brother's righteous**.

- We get **a small peak behind the curtain**. An **X-Ray of the soul**. **Issue of faith/belonging**.
- **Hebrews 11:4, NLT** - "It was **by faith that Abel brought a more acceptable offering to God than Cain did**. Abel's offering gave evidence that he was a righteous man, and God showed his approval of his gifts. Although Abel is long dead, he still speaks to us by his example of faith."
 - The **outer offerings** were **evidence of** inward heart conditions... **Cain's = not good**.
- **Of the wicked (evil) one = Satan, The Devil, the Dragon, serpent...**
- This is **a deep thread back** to **the Garden and fall of mankind**... (ultimate source of the issue)
- **Gen 3:14-15, NLT** - "Then the Lord God said to the serpent, 'Because you have done this, you are cursed... and I will cause hostility between you and the woman, and **between your offspring and her offspring**. He will strike your head, and you will strike his heel.'"
 - **Two types of seed** in this world. **And they are at war**. **Light vs darkness...**
 - **Which seed are you? Which realm are you living in?**
 - **Cain and Abel is the battle story of humanity** leading **all the way to Golgotha!**
- **Not as Cain** - He is the **first visible seed (offspring) of the serpent**.
- **Jude 1:4, 10-11, NLT** - "...some ungodly people have wormed their way into your churches, saying that God's marvelous grace allows us to live immoral lives. The condemnation of such people was recorded long ago, for they have denied our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ... these people scoff at things they do not understand. Like unthinking animals, they do whatever their instincts tell them, and so they bring about their own destruction. What sorrow awaits them! **For they follow in the footsteps [way] of Cain, who killed his brother**. Like Balaam, they deceive people for money. And like Korah, they perish in their rebellion..."
 - The **way of Cain** is **unbelief, apostasy, and ungodliness**. An **open & defiant sinner**.
 - This is **not the way of the church!** But sadly, **it is the way of the world**...

V. 13 - Do not marvel, my brethren, **if the world hates you**.

- If Cain hated **"righteous" Able**, **the world** will **hate the church** for the same reason.
- **Brethren, Don't be caught off guard or surprised** by it. This **same war still rages** on...
- **Would you agree that there is still a spirit of "Cain" in the world? Jealousy, anger, hatred...**
- **Hates = present, active = a state of hostility**. (cold shoulder at work, left out at school, **MLB**)
- **False assumption in the church**. **If I love everyone in the world, the world will love me back...**
 - **Not necessarily...** That's **not how Cain operates**... (like petting an injured dog...)

Contrasted...

- V. 14 - **We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren.**
- **"We" know** - John gives **a word of assurance the church** in the midst (**includes himself**)
 - **Passed from death to life (metabaino)** = "a decisive, completed crossing; passed over from one place to another..." - **Resurrection!** "Out of and into" - **permanent address change...**
 - You and I, **we used to be Cain**. Don't forget that. But we have been **brought out of the kingdom of darkness and into the kingdom of light**. It's **already happened!**
 - **John 5:24** - "Truly I tell you, anyone who hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not come under judgment but **has passed (metabaino) from death to life**"
 - **The reverse of the natural order!**
 - **Because we love the brethren.** - **Here's the evidence** of how we know. **Fruit reveals the root**
 - You were lost, now found... We're blind, now see... **The Gospel has changed you!**
 - **Are we surprised when the world hates the Brethren? Not at all.**
 - **Surprised when the brethren hate the brethren?** Yes of course. **Something is wrong**

V. 15 - **Whoever hates his brother is a murderer**

- **Whoever/Anyone/Everyone - No exceptions in the church, sorry! (no hallpasses...)**
- **Murderer (anthropoktonos)** = lit. "man-slayer." (only other usage: John 8:44)
- **John 8:44** - "You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. **He was a murderer from the beginning...**" - **you see the source, don't you? Connect the dots.**
- **Goes all the way back, and comes from within...**
- **Matthew 5:21-22, NIV** - "You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'You shall not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.' But I tell you that **anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment...**"
 - **Anger/Hatred** is **murder in "seed" form** (didn't perform the action, **but wanted to...**)
- **The point:** There's a **contrast**. **Cain will do what Cain does**, but the **church does not: must not.**

V. 15 - **You know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.**

- **This needs clarity.** Consider examples like Moses, or David. **Especially Paul! (born again!)**
 - Jesus even **prayed for forgiveness for the ones murdering him...** (Luke 22:34)
- This whole section (**loves/hates**) = **present tense. Settled direction** (**not occasional moments**)
- But **John is not mincing words**. Cain **does not belong** to the family of God.

V. 14 - **He who does not love... abides in death. Abiding = belonging.**

- **Genesis 4:7, CSB** - "If you do what is right, won't you be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, **sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is for you, but you must rule over it.**"

When Cain grows, resist the urge to grow back. Christ has shown us a better way....

- **Cain** raised his hands **against** his brother (**taking life**)
- **Christ** stretched out his hands **for** his brothers... (**giving life**)

*We move now from **a field outside Eden** to **a Hill outside Jerusalem...**

Christ's Cross (verses 16-18)

We saw the **supreme example of hate**, now we see the **supreme example of love!**

- Everyone knows John 3:16, but take note of 1 John 3:16, friends!

V. 16 - **By this we know** love, because **He laid down His life** for us.

- **By this we know** - perfect tense. **Example has already been given** and **we are recipients!**
- **By this. By what?**
- **Because He laid down His life for us.** - **God's definition** of love is **defined at the cross.**
 - By **a real historical event** of **active love** (not mere feelings or sentiment...)
- **He laid down** = Some of **John's favorite language** in his gospel account!
 - John 10:11, ESV - "I am the good shepherd. **The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.**"
- **Aorist, Active, indicative.** - One time, a settled event. **Deliberate and Volitional!**
- John 10:17-18 - "I lay down My life that I may take it again. **No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again...**"
 - The cross was **not a tragedy that happened to**, but **a gift offered by Jesus.**
- **A love that (not takes life), gave life! (and still gives life...)**
- Romans 5:8 - "**God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us...**" There is **no greater demonstration**... Want evidence? **Look to the cross!**

And remember, his is **all culminating to a larger surveying theme** across the Bible...

- Genesis 4:10 - "What have you done? **The voice of your brother's blood cries out to Me from the ground.**"
- Hebrews 12:24, ESV - "...to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood **that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.**"
- **Two brothers were slain.**
 - One cries for **justice**, the other cries for **mercy**
 - Abel's blood **demand payment**. Christ's blood **makes payment**.
 - **Christ's blood speaks a better word!**

Therefore...

V. 16 - **And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.**

- This is the **reasonable response** as one of Christ's followers...
- **Ought to (opheilo) = a debt to owe**
 - **Christ paid our debt of sin** with his life.
 - **Now we owe a debt of service** unto Him.
- John 15:12-13, NLT - "This is my commandment: **Love each other in the same way I have loved you. There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends...**"
- **Men, on Father's Day** - this is the greatest call. (not achievements, material, money, status, fame, position - it's **not about what you accumulate, but what you lay down**. Sacrifice)
- **World says greatness is what you accumulate**; the **cross says love is what you lay down.**
 - **A thousand small servings** (give the best bite, play when out of energy, forgoing hobby)
 - **(I visited a Dad who was in the hospital this last week. Serving his family).**
- **All of it echoes Calvary**
 - **Large scale** = Fire fighters (Tom), military, first responders. Safety team, many others
 - **Small scale** = daily laying down (you may not give your physical life, but list is endless)
 - **I think of VBS this last week (PTO!) (time, resources, comfort, pride)**
- **Ought to lay down our lives** = **present tense. Ongoing way of life!** (love = sacrifice)

- Church, this is **not legalistic moralism**, but **grace driving imitation!** (*modeled/empowered*)

And, now John gets even more **specific** for us.

- *It's not just don't be like Cain (negatively) = not doing bad*
- *But be like Christ (positively) = doing good!*

V. 17 - **But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?**

- Notice the shift from "**brothers**" to "**brother**". **Plural to singular**. *Test gets more challenging.*
- It's easy to be enthusiastic about **humanity with a capital H**. More than it is to love the **individual**. Saying *we love everyone in general may be an excuse to love no one in particular.*
 - Especially those you "*don't want to.*" (**liking vs loving**) (*not everyone "likes" you, either!*)
 - It's **not a matter of preference**, but of **Christian obedience**.
- **But whoever/anyone/everyone - applies to all**
- **Has this world's goods - ability to help (money, time, food, clothes, tangible needs)**
- **Sees his brother in need - God made you aware (even go as far as "looking")**
- **And shuts up his heart from him - that's the opposite of the Good Samaritan**
- **Heart (splanchna) = "bowels, intestines, heart, lung, liver, gut (seat of passion/compassion)"**
 - **Sounds like a bad lunch!**
 - **V. 17. KJV = "shutteth up his bowels of compassion"**
- **How does the love of God abide in him?** - John is arguing = **IT DOES NOT!**
- **Arguing from lesser to greater.** *Christ gave his very life. You can give a cup of cold water.*
 - *Benevolence, mission, outreach, banking, foster care (just this last week - paying rent)*
 - *William Booth, founder of Salvation Army...*
- Oh, and BTW, this **has always been the heart of God.** (*Torah*)
- **Deuteronomy 15:7-8 - "If there is among you a poor man of your brethren, within any of the gates in your land which the Lord your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart nor shut your hand from your poor brother, but you shall open your hand wide to him and willingly lend him sufficient for his need, whatever he needs..."**
- **James gives it an NT flavor...**
- **James 2:15-17. ESV - "If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace, be warmed and filled,' without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead..."**
- **Paul brings it even more seriously...**
- **1 Tim 5:8. ESV - "If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever..." (start at home!)**

John's point: You don't have to **raise a knife to flunk the test**. You just have to **shut the door...**

V. 18 - My **little children**, let us not love in word or in tongue, but **in deed and in truth**.

- **My little children - tender fatherly love (not pounding, but calling)**
- **Let us not love in word or in tongue but in deed and in truth**
- **Words are not bad. They're necessary, They're just insufficient...** (*to display Christ's love*)
- **Talk is cheap!** (*"association of bystanders"*)
- **In truth** - love that **matches reality** (*not pretense or hypocrisy*)

- **Integrity between saying and doing!** (*“that’s cute, now go do something...”*)

Closing:

There’s the family portrait. **Two seeds. Two prototypes.**

- *Which do you follow?*
- *Which does your life evidence?*

GOSPEL - you **cannot manufacture this by trying harder.**

- *We first look to Christ and be found in Him.*
- *The rest follows...*

PRAY - *Numbers 6 - The Blessing!*