

The Necessity of Brotherly Love

Text: [1 John 3:10-15 HCSB](#) This is how God's children--and the Devil's children--are made evident. Whoever does not do what is right is not of God, especially the one who does not love his brother. [11](#) For this is the message you have heard from the beginning: we should love one another, [12](#) unlike Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil, and his brother's were righteous. [13](#) Do not be surprised, brothers, if the world hates you. [14](#) We know that we have passed from death to life because we love our brothers. The one who does not love remains in death. [15](#) Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life residing in him.

Introduction

1. In our previous study ("Sin And The Child Of God"), we saw where John described two different kinds of people...

a. One who continuously practices sin, and is therefore "of the devil"

- [1 John 3:8a HCSB](#) The one who commits sin is of the Devil,

b. One who does not continuously practice sin, and is therefore "born of God,"

- [1 John 3:9 HCSB](#) Everyone who has been born of God does not sin, because His seed remains in him; he is not able to sin, because he has been born of God.

2. John continues to illustrate the contrast between "the children of God" and "the children of the devil" in [1 John 3:10](#), presenting two criteria which distinguish them:

a. Practicing righteousness

b. Practicing brotherly love

3. Both of these "criteria" have already been introduced earlier in this epistle...

a. John enjoined "brotherly love" as necessary to "abiding in the light"

- [1 John 2:9-11 HCSB](#) The one who says he is in the light but hates his brother is in the darkness until now. [10](#) The one who loves his brother remains in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him. [11](#) But the one who hates his brother is in the darkness, walks in the darkness, and doesn't know where he's going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

b. He connected "practicing righteousness" to being "born of Him"

- [1 John 2:29 HCSB](#) If you know that He is righteous, you know this as well: everyone who does what is right has been born of Him.
- [1 John 3:7 HCSB](#) Little children, let no one deceive you! The one who does what is right is righteous, just as He is righteous.

4. It is primarily the subject of "brotherly love" that John expounds upon throughout the rest of this epistle, including that which serves as our text for this study. In these verses, John describes "The Necessity Of Brotherly Love", giving us two main reasons why we MUST love one another. The first of which is...

I. It distinguishes the children of God (10-13)

A. Two things manifest the difference between God's and the Devil's children. (10)

1. The word "manifest" means:

- a. To show or demonstrate plainly; reveal
- b. To be evidence of; prove

2. That which clearly demonstrates the children of God are:
 - a. The practice of righteousness
 - b. The love of the brethren
3. Whereas those who are the children of the devil are clearly revealed when they:
 - a. Do not practice righteousness
 - b. Do not have brotherly love

B. The command to love is “from the beginning” (11)

1. I.e., from the beginning of the gospel, spoken by Jesus Himself
 - **John 13:34-35 HCSB** "I give you a new commandment: love one another. Just as I have loved you, you must also love one another. 35 By this all people will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

2. Note that Jesus also stressed how loving one another would make the children of God (His disciples) "manifest" to the world:

- **John 13:35 HCSB** By this all people will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

C. Expect some conflict between these two “children” (12-13)

1. Just as Cain killed his brother Abel
 - a. He who was of the wicked one killed his brother
 - b. The murder was sparked by the contrast between the works of the two
2. So don't be surprised if the world hates you as well
 - **John 15:18-20 HCSB** "If the world hates you, understand that it hated Me before it hated you. 19 If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own. However, because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of it, the world hates you. 20 Remember the word I spoke to you: 'A slave is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will also keep yours."

When we follow the teachings of Jesus, especially His command to love one another, it soon becomes evident ("manifest") that we are different from those of the world. But that difference sometimes leads to jealousy and its unpleasant consequences. What imperative is there, then, to heed a command that makes us stand out so? Well, as John continues...

II. It signifies a passing from death to life (14-15)

A. It is a mark of true conversion (14a)

1. Certainly brotherly love is not the ONLY indicator
2. Remember that we must also practice righteousness
 - **Galatians 5:22-23 HCSB** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such things there is no law.
3. But love for the brethren is a positive sign that true conversion has occurred

B. Whereas lack of love is an ominous sign (14b-15)

1. That one "abides in death"
2. As we saw earlier, one who hates his brother "is in darkness until now"
 - **1 John 2:9-11 HCSB** The one who says he is in the light but hates his brother is in the darkness until now. 10 The one who loves his brother remains in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him. 11 But the one who hates his brother is in the

darkness, walks in the darkness, and doesn't know where he's going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

3. Indeed, hating one's brother makes one a murderer! (just like Cain)
4. And it should be self-evident that a murderer does not possess eternal life!

C. When Christians do not love their brethren...

1. It MAY be an indication that true conversion never occurred and that they are Christians in name only
2. It MAY be that there was true conversion...
 - a. But the Christian is still a "babe in Christ"
 - **1 Corinthians 3:1-3 HCSB** Brothers, I was not able to speak to you as spiritual people but as people of the flesh, as babies in Christ. **2** I fed you milk, not solid food, because you were not yet able to receive it. In fact, you are still not able, **3** because you are still fleshly. For since there is envy and strife among you, are you not fleshly and living like ordinary people?
 - b. Or the Christian is in rebellion to the Father.
 - **Hebrews 3:12-14 HCSB** Watch out, brothers, so that there won't be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart that departs from the living God. **13** But encourage each other daily, while it is still called **today**, so that none of you is hardened by sin's deception. **14** For we have become companions of the Messiah if we hold firmly until the end the reality that we had at the start.
3. In ANY circumstance, it is not what God desires for us!

Conclusion

1. Two compelling reasons are therefore given by John for why we should love one another:
 - a. It distinguishes the children of God
 - b. It signifies a passing from death to life
2. John will have more to say about love and its value, but may these two reasons compel us to examine our hearts and our attitudes toward our brethren!
 - **Hebrews 13:1 HCSB** Let brotherly love continue.