



1 John 3:11-17

(NASB)

For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another; not as Cain, *who* was of the evil one and slew his brother. And for what reason did he slay him? Because his deeds were evil, and his brother's were righteous.

Do not be surprised, brethren, if the world hates you. We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death. Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?

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Last week I suggested that John is consoling his fellowship over their loss of members to the Gnostics. It looks like they didn't leave quietly. The congregation was receiving scorn and mocking, plus feeling guilty for their not keeping the flock together. (These would be our emotional reactions today, and nothing in the Bible indicates ours are any different from theirs)

He also wants to reassure doubt and uncertainty in their faith with all the various directions groups were splitting off into..

In today's passage he continues by emphasizing God's consistent desire for us is to love one another. The world will condemn and try to discredit our righteous lifestyle just as it has since Cain & Abel.

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11 For this is the gospel message that you have heard from the beginning: that we should love one another,

12 not like Cain who was of the evil one and brutally murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his deeds were evil, but his brother's were righteous.

Why is this Cain & Abel reference inserted here?

- The very next verse describes the world hating Christians.
- Cain's sacrifice was rejected and he hated the righteousness of Abel.
- He listened to the "devil crouching at his door"

13 Therefore do not be surprised, brothers and sisters, if the world hates you.

The world's ways are not God's ways!
Do our ways look like Cain's, or like Abel's?

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Do our ways look like Cain's, or like Abel's?

- When we try to make our sacrifice "acceptable", we are doing what Cain did.
- Also like Cain, when we go on living our lives unrepentant and never follow God's ways, we will never create a sacrifice acceptable to God
- sinfulness hates righteousness
- Cain's solution was to eliminate the better in order to elevate the lesser
- Sacrifice that is inadequate, inappropriate, insincere, is not what God desires
- Man's solution (response, reflex) is to remove the competition
- God requires repentance

13 Therefore do not be surprised, brothers and sisters, if the world hates you.

"If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you.

If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you."

John 15:18

Do we see this as an honor, or as an embarrassment?

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More importantly, how do we respond to hate from the world?

We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death. Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

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14 We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death.

15 Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

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What do you make of this?

Cain is a murderer....acting like Cain is acting like a murderer

The comparison here is with the attempt of Cain to make his sacrifice acceptable

Man cannot make himself righteous

In both Jewish and early Christian writings Cain is a model for those who deliberately disbelieve.

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Failure to repent is deliberate!

16 We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us;
and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

- our position in the Lord is confirmed because of the love we show
- To remain unrepentant is to remain in sin which leads to death
- We continue show the Love of Jesus

Jesus described how the kingdom of God differs from the world. For a sin of omission to lead to the death penalty is drastic overkill to the world. The insignificant in the world's eyes is supremely significant in Gods kingdom. A simple small act of love that comes from the heart is large in the kingdom.

Describe how the Cain and Abel story impacts your understanding of the point John is making.

State his message in your own words.