

**1John 3:1** Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

**1John 3:2** Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he Isaiah

John was overwhelmed with the love of the Father—He loves us so much that He has given us (dirty, rotten sinners saved by grace) a place in His family as His child. We, as believers, are God's children. The world in general doesn't recognize us as such because they never recognized Jesus as the Son of God. The time is coming when we will be recognized as His children. We don't really fully understand this wonderful truth. When Christ comes again, we shall be like Him as children of God and we shall see Him as He is—King of kings and Lord of lords. Then we will fully understand the precious privilege that is ours. Paul supports this truth in the books of Galatians and Romans.

Galatians 4:4-7 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

Romans 8:14-17 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.

**1John 3:3** And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

This verse tells me that because we have this hope (this confident expectation) of His return, we purify ourselves. I think this refers to the fact that those who truly believe He is coming – at any time – will live accordingly. It will make them want to choose the better things, to obey His word. We will make choices that are more Christ-like.

**1John 3:4** Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.

**1John 3:5** And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.

Whoever sins transgresses the law. My understanding is that sin is anything in our life that doesn't measure up to the Divine. It has always existed (since the fall) and the law was given to reveal it. A transgression is willful disobedience to the known law. Christ came to take our sin away. (He came knowing that He

would have to leave His Father in heaven, take on a human form, be rejected by the very ones He came to die for, suffer the humiliation and pain of death on the cross, and worst of all—become our / my sin! He loved us sooooo much—that He came anyway!) Christ is sinless. Because of our position in Him, the Father sees us as pure and sinless as well.

2Corinthians 5:21 For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

**1John 3:6 Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him.**

“sinneth” = The Greek verb in the present tense, as used here, implies ongoing action.” JNT Commentary

No one who believes in Jesus as his Savior will continue living in sin. (How many times has John repeated this truth?) Anyone who continues in sin does not really know the Savior.

Yes, we will all sin, but the believer’s conscience will convict and lead to confession and the desire for forgiveness. The life of a believer testifies to a desire to please God, to his love and gratitude to God.

**1John 3:7 Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.**

**1John 3:8 He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.**

Again, we understand that John is talking to those who are new in the faith or just spiritually immature. Because of the threat of false teachers, John continues to emphasize how you can recognize a true believer. The true believer does (as a general rule, but not with perfection) what is right—striving to imitate Christ. He who does (as a general way of life) what is sinful is of the devil. The devil introduced man to sin in the beginning and has never let up in his quest to get mankind to follow him in sin. The Son of God came to “destroy the works of the devil”—to provide a way for man to be victorious over sin.

**1John 3:9 Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.**

When we are born of God, we have His seed (I believe this refers to the Holy Spirit) in us. You can’t continue in sin with the Spirit at work in you.

**1John 3:10 In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.**

In “this” – the way people live their lives—in righteousness or in sin—is how we identify the children of God and the children of the devil. The child of God will walk in righteousness and will love his brother. The child of the devil will walk selfishly in darkness and wickedness.

**1John 3:11 For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.**

This references back to 2:7. John reminds these believers that from the beginning God/Jesus taught that “we should love one another.”

Matthew 22:37-39 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second *is* like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

**1John 3:12 Not as Cain, *who* was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother’s righteous.**

John warns his readers not to be like Cain who murdered his brother because he chose to let Satan be his master. Cain’s whole motive for murder was his jealousy and the recognition that he didn’t measure up in comparison to Abel (pride and jealousy). Cain’s actions were disobedient and evil, while Abel’s were obedient and righteous.

**1John 3:13 Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.**

He reminds them again not to be surprised if the world hates you. When you are obedient and live righteously, it makes “the world” more aware of how they don’t measure up. They don’t like anything/anyone to put a damper on their “good times,” the pleasures of sin for a season. They don’t want anyone/thing to cause their conscience to prick them.

**1John 3:14 We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not *his* brother abideth in death.**

**1John 3:15 Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.**

One way you can know that you are a believer and destined for eternal life is because you love your brothers, your fellow believers. Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer. (When you hate someone, you’d rather they didn’t exist.) No murderer has eternal life in him.

The truth equating hate with murder was taught by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount.

Matthew 5:21-22 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say

unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

All murderers will spend eternity in the lake of fire.

Revelation 21:8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and *murderers*, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

(This doesn't mean that a murderer – or one who hates his brother – can't repent and be saved.)

**1John 3:16 Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.**

Jesus gave us the best example of love—He laid down His life for us, that we might live. Jesus made it clear that He laid down His life willingly.

John 10:17-18 Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh 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. This commandment have I received of my Father.

We should be willing to do the same for those around us. (I think laying down your life can be denying yourself for the benefit of your brother. Learning to live for others and put their needs before our wants is not easy. We are so naturally self-centered. It is an area I really want to conquer to the point that the Spirit pricks/kicks me immediately when I have the opportunity to give/serve rather than satisfy myself.)

**1John 3:17 But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?**

“bowels” – pity, sympathy, mercy

Now John starts to meddle. If God has blessed us with material possessions and we have no pity or concern for those in need, especially those of the household of faith, how can the love of God be in us?

Galatians 6:10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all *men*, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

I think today's world makes that principle even tougher. I know how quick I am to think with judgment first rather than pity when I see someone who is begging. My first thought is condemning—why aren't you working? There are many jobs

available. Why should I share my hard earned money with you? I would rather my heart be willing to give to someone who may be undeserving rather than withhold from one who may be caught in a sad set of circumstances whether because of poor choices or circumstances beyond his control. Lord, please help me love and see others through your eyes!

**1John 3:18 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.**

**1John 3:19 And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.**

John goes on to tell the believers that they are to love with actions and truth rather than with words. When we love with our actions, we affirm to ourselves and others that we belong to the Father. It is also how we can know peace and rest before the Father.

James 2:15-17 If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be *ye* warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what *doth it* profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

**1John 3:20 For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.**

**1John 3:21 Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, *then* have we confidence toward God.**

“God is greater than our heart and knoweth all things” – Sometimes we get to the point that we beat ourselves up. We’re so aware of our shortcomings, “our hearts condemn us.” Selfless actions can help us recognize that God is working in and through us. God doesn’t have to read our hearts to tell Him about us; HE KNOWS EVERYTHING!

What we think in our hearts, what occupies the place of dominance in our thinking, defines who we are. A “right heart” (a heart that doesn’t condemn us) before the Lord gives us confidence when we approach Him in prayer. When we ask from a right heart, we are assured of receiving what we ask for because we are asking for God’s will to be accomplished.

**1John 3:22 And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.**

The way we live—either in obedience or disobedience, or by doing what we know is pleasing to God rather than what is displeasing—is a reflection of what is happening in our heart. How do we know what is pleasing to God? Through the revelation of His Word and the teaching of the Spirit.

“whatsoever we ask...commandments” – For some reason I have ignored this phrase previously. If we are keeping His commandments, we are reflecting a heart that is in submission to and wants to please Him. With that heart attitude,

we will not ask for things that would go against His will. When we ask according to His will, it is His desire to answer us accordingly. (cf 5:14)

**1John 3:23 And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.**

**1John 3:24 And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.**

To obey His command is to “believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another.” When we are obedient to this command, it is evident in our life. It is an affirmation of our standing in Him to us as well as to others. The Spirit gives us that affirmation (through peace and confidence and through the fruit produced in our lives).

Isaiah 26:3 Thou wilt keep *him* in perfect **peace**, *whose mind is stayed on thee*: because he trusteth in thee.

Galatians 5:5 For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by **faith**.

Galatians 5:22-23 But **the fruit of the Spirit** is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance.....

“dwelleth” = stay, abide, continue, endure, remain