

Series: 1 John
Title: Love Not as Cain
Text: 1 John 3: 11-19
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Genesis 4: 3: And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. 4: And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: 5: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. 6: And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? 7: If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him. 8: And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.

1 John 3: 11: For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. 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. 13: Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.

Title: Love Not as Cain

There are only two kinds of people in the world, only two kinds of religion: children of the devil who trust salvation by the will and works of the sinner and children of God who believe salvation by the grace of God through the works of Christ through faith alone. All men and all religions are summed up in these two: Cain and Abel, works and grace.

Like as these two religions are different so is love that each manifests. True God-given love for brethren is not the sentimental, passion which the religious world speaks about. That love is of depraved man, patterned after man. It is only another religious work of an unregenerate religious man. Love which is of God is unfeigned love given by Christ who creates a new man within the sinner in righteous and true holiness.

John may be contrasting the two since he knew what Christ said. John said of the child of God, "*This is the message ye heard FROM THE BEGINNING, that we should love one another.*" Contrast that with the child of the devil of whom Christ said, "*Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer FROM THE BEGINNING, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him.*" (Jn 8: 44)

Proposition: We learn something about the love that God gives his people by contrasting it with the hatred Cain had for Abel.

HATE IS OF THE DEVIL, LOVE IS OF GOD

1 John 3: 11: For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. 12: Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother.

Cain was a child of the devil, "*of that wicked one.*" Christ said the devil was a "*murderer from the beginning.*" Cain "*slew his brother.*" Why? The devil and his children hate the church because they hate Christ. In Genesis 3:15, the devil and his seed hate the woman, who is the church. The woman's seed is Christ who came through the church.

Genesis 3: 15: And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

Therefore, not being born of the word of God, the child of the devil would kill Christ if possible. But since he cannot, he would kill the believer in whom Christ abides. He does so in his heart. Christ said,

John 8: 37:...Ye seek to kill me because my word hath no place in you...42: Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.

So contrasting Cain's hatred we see where unfeigned love comes from. Cain was of the wicked one therefore he hated Christ and hated his people; the child of God is of God our Father therefore we love Christ and love his people. Cain was born of natural flesh and was under the power of the devil; the child of God is born of God our Father by the Spirit and is under the power of God. The word of God had no place in Cain; the child of God is born of the incorruptible seed, the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.

So the child of God is like Abel. Abel was of God—chosen of God, redeemed of God, born of God—therefore the child of God loves our brethren who are born of God. *“By faith Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain” (Heb 11: 4).* The only way a sinner has faith is to be born of God. He is given faith as a gift of God's grace. That is how a sinner comes to have unfeigned love for Christ and for our brethren.

1 Peter 1: 21: Who by [Christ] do believe in God...22: Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto UNFEIGNED LOVE OF THE BRETHREN, *see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:* 23: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

1 John 5:1: Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth [Christ] that begat, loveth [our brother] also that is begotten of him.

So unfeigned love of brethren comes from being of God the Father, being born of God our Father by the Spirit and being born of the incorruptible seed which is the word of God. When we are born of God, the first Brother we love is Christ Jesus our Lord, the Son of God. And we love all who are begotten of him. Unfeigned love comes from us being all of one.

Ephesians 4: 3: Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4: There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; 5: One Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6: One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

CAIN'S WORKS EVIL, ABEL'S WORKS RIGHTEOUS

1 John 3: 12:...And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.

Cain's own works were evil. He was one who *“doeth not righteousness.”* What did he do?

Genesis 4: 3: And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD.

Cain came before God with the works of his own hands, the fruit of the ground, with no blood. The ground was cursed by God. Cain came with the fruit of the cursed ground. *“Without shedding of blood is no*

remission” of sins (Heb 9: 22). That is how sinners come to God who expect to be accepted by the fruit of their cursed flesh. Cain’s works were evil because Cain did not believe on Christ—that is what one does when one “*doeth not righteousness.*”

Why is it called “*doing not righteousness?*” Remember this from our former messages? Cain transgressed against God the Father and God the Son by not believing on Christ and loving his brethren. Faith in Christ which worketh by the constraint of Christ’s love for us is the commandment of our Lord.

1 John 2: 4: He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

1 John 2: 23: Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father:

2 John 1:9: Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God.

Apart from faith in Christ a sinner is under the curse of the law. If a sinner imagines one work is necessary by his hand then Christ is of no effect unto him. He is a debtor to keep the whole law of God. (Gal 5: 3-4) Therefore, the reprobate who commits the sin of apostacy, also, transgresses the whole law of God. In context, we saw that that is the sin John speaks of—“*the sin unto death.*”

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

Abel’s works were the exact opposite—“*and his brother’s righteous.*” Abel was one John speaks of who “*doeth righteousness.*” What did Abel do?

Genesis 4: 4: And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof.

Abel came to God with the blood of a substitute lamb that had died in his place. This is “*doing righteousness.*” He believed on Christ. Faith is called “*doing righteousness*” because through faith we establish the law of God (Rom 3:31). It is the exact opposite of “*doing not righteousness.*” John makes that plain throughout his epistles.

1 John 2: 4: He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him 5: But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.

1 John 2: 23: Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: *(but) he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.*

2 John 1:9: Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.

Here is where the difference between the child of God and the child of the devil is manifest in their lives. God’s response to their works stirred up Cain’s enmity and made him kill his brother.

Genesis 4: 4...And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: 5: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. 6: And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? 7: If thou doest well, [if thou doest righteousness by believing on Christ] shalt thou not be accepted?

As John declared in 1 John 3,

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

Genesis 4: 7...and if thou doest not well, [doeth not righteousness, believing not on Christ] sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him. 8: And Cain talked with Abel his brother:

I know how the talk between Cain and Abel went. I have had it many times. Cain said something like this, *“So let me get his straight, God chose you and Christ died for you and you were born of God because you are better than me?”* Abel said something along these lines, *“No, Cain, I am a sinner saved by grace. The difference is the free grace of God: God chose whom he would by his grace. Therefore, Christ became my Surety. It is only by being born of the Spirit of God that I came with the blood of a lamb. It is only by the works of God that God can receive me.”* But hearing the love of God toward Abel only stirred up the enmity in Cain’s heart.

Genesis 4: 8...and Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.

Remember, how we saw that the word “Behold” means “knowing?” Read 1 John 3:1, inserting the word knowing.

1 John 3: 1: [Knowing] 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.

The very gospel the child of God knows and delights in is why the child of the devil *“knoweth us not, because it knew him not.”* They know nothing of the love of the Father because they are not of God therefore they do not love Christ.

John 8: 42: Jesus said unto them, IF GOD WERE YOUR FATHER, YE WOULD LOVE ME: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.

But when the child of the devil hears how God’s love is manifested and how it puts all the glory in the hands of Christ and destroys their false refuge, therefore, they hate Christ, hate us and hate our gospel.

1 John 4: 9: In this was MANIFESTED THE LOVE OF GOD TOWARD US, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. 10: Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Love is kindled in our hearts when we hear of the Father’s love manifest in sending his Son to be satisfaction for our sins that he might give us eternal life. But in those who are of the devil enmity is enflamed. As Christ said,

John 5: 42: But I know you, that ye have NOT THE LOVE OF GOD IN YOU. 43: I am come in my Father’s name, and ye receive me not: [I am come to declare his righteousness, to save my people from their sins; since ye have not the love of the Father in you, ye receive me not] if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.

Cain hated Abel because his own works were wicked and Abel’s were righteous. In verse 1, John quoted Christ, but Christ used even stronger words when he said it.

John 15: 18: If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. 19: If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

There is the love of God bestowed on us that the apostate hates—God chose his people. But we love that work because by it Christ drew us out of the world so that we are not of the world.

John 15: 20: Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

There is the love of God bestowed on his people that the reprobate hates. They receive not the love of the truth that they might be saved. But it is that same gospel by which we are born again unto unfeigned love of the brethren.

John 15: 21: But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me. 22: If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin.

There is the love of God bestowed on us that the child of the devil hates. Christ's word exposes their sins, ripping away their disguise. But it is that very word that we love. It makes us see we are guilty so that we take sides with God against our own selves.

John 15: 23: He that hateth me hateth my Father also. 24: If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.

There is the love of loves which the devil and his seed hates the most! Christ did the works none other man did. He fulfilled the law and the prophets for his helpless, sinful people. This declares the very best law-keeping of the self-righteous to be only sin. So they hate it. But it is Christ's work of limited atonement that makes his people the righteousness of God in him and that is the gospel his people love. We put all our trust in the LORD our Righteousness.

John 15: 25: But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.

Unfeigned love is of God. The first message the child of God hears when we are born of God and given spiritual discernment is the message of unfeigned love Christ our elder brother laid down his life for his brethren, God's elect—*"For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another."*

Unfeigned love of brethren is inseparable from holiness: God's love is manifest by Christ laying down his life for us to make us holy and righteous through which he creates in us a new man in righteousness and true holiness, giving us unfeigned love of brethren.

Titus 3: 4...the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, 5: Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; 6: Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; 7 That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Cain was filled with enmity because his own works were evil and his brother's righteous. But same as Christ slew the enmity between Jew and Gentile by fulfilling the law, so too, Christ slew the enmity between all his

people by fulfilling the law for us and making us all righteous in him. Every believer knows we are only sinful worms who owe all our salvation to Christ who made us the righteousness of God. So we are honest with one another and love one another with unfeigned love.

Ephesians 2: 14: For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us*; 15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* making peace; 16: And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: 17: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. 18: For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. 19: Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

We love brethren and cease being hypocritical when we are made honest by God. Christ humbles us by his effectual command teaching us to love one another.

Galatians 6: 1: Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. 2: Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. 3: For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

MARVEL NOT

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

So, believer, knowing what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us that we should be called the sons of God. And knowing that this very love is what the child of the devil hates. Do not be amazed when the world hates you. It hated Christ first and still does.

2 Timothy. 3: 12: Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

The moment the world hears us attribute all our salvation to the will of a holy and sovereign God—our election, redemption, and regeneration—persecution is sure to arise. The more religion a child of the devil has—being destitute of the love, grace, and mercy of God—the greater persecutor that person will be.

AMEN!