

1 John 3:12-13

1-31-24 Chris Young

1 John 3:12

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

We should not be like Cain

Read Genesis 4:1-15

What is Cain infamous for?

Cain is known as the first murderer of his brother, Abel.

Who was of the evil one

Evil: (In effect or influence), extremely wicked, bad, hurtful, disastrous, derelict, vicious, mischief, malice, the devil, or (plural) sinners, lewd, wicked(-ness) *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*

Cain was labeled as the one "who was of the evil one." Why was that? Because Cain's actions imitated and resembled the first wicked one, Satan.

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 and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.

Spiritually speaking, hatred for one's brother was already condemned as Satanic. John contrasts loving one another verses hate. Though one says "he is in the light" but hates his brother is in darkness.

1 John 2:9 He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now.

And murdered his brother

Murder: The act of unlawfully killing a human being with premeditated malice, by a person of sound mind. KJV Bible Dictionary

Cain showed himself to belong to the family of the wicked and evil one when he killed his brother. This does not mean, that Satan literally fathered Cain but that Cain's attitudes and actions originated with Satan.

Genesis 4:8-10 Cain spoke to Abel his brother. And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him. Then the Lord said to Cain, where is Abel your brother?" He said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?" And He said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries out to Me from the ground.

Cain not only murdered his brother, what other sin had he done?

What excuses are given when caught in sin?

Instead of owning our sin, we try and excuse it. We can also fool ourselves into thinking we did not do what they said we did, or we can acknowledge sin, but then reason that it was okay. Our sin is always a choice that we make. Circumstances or people do not cause us to sin; we choose to sin.

Proverbs 28:13 He who covers his sins will not prosper, But whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy.

Something to ponder: When in sin, we should stop, confess, turn from it and make the right choice... one that pleases our loving Lord and Savior.

And why did he murder him?

Murder is the ultimate expression of hate.

Hate: (hatred); to detest (especially to persecute); by extension, to love less:-hate(-ful).Of malicious and unjustifiable feeling towards others. Whether towards the innocent or by mutual animosity.

Strong's Concordance

Cain allowed his flesh: hate, jealousy, anger, pride, envy, and resentment to control his emotions. Because Cain allowed these sinful attitudes to consume his thoughts, he became so angry that he murdered his own brother.

Genesis 4:5 But He (God) did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and the expression on his face fell.

Cain then became very angry with God because God did not respect, “Cain and his offering.” The Hebrew word for respect is defined as: looked away, did not consider. It was at that point that Cain’s attitude changed.

Did Cain have a right to be angry with God? Why not?

Proverbs 21:27 The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination; how much more when he brings it with evil intent.

Did you notice that Cain brought an offering and not a sacrifice like Abel? Cain did not receive the approval of God because his heart and actions were not right with God. Cain rebelled against God’s authority and was basically saying, “I know better than God, my way is better than Your way!” “I am going to do it my way!” Cain in his sin was rejecting and disagreeing with God’s statutes and laws.

Something to ponder: When we ignore God’s statutes it always leads to destruction.

Did Cain have a choice to do good or evil? What did he choose?

Cain’s sinful emotions began in his heart. The choices he made were one sinful choice after another. He was a rebellious man who rejected God’s plan and chose to do evil. His actions are a great example of what we ought not to do!

Proverbs 4:23 Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.

Eternal life springs from an indwelling God; and God cannot dwell in the heart where hatred and malice dwell. *Adam Clarke Commentary*

Something to ponder: Lord, create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Psalm 51:10

Because his own deeds were evil

The word evil is the same word John uses to describe Satan throughout 1 John. Outwardly, Cain was a worshipper of God, however, his actions revealed that inwardly he was a child of the devil. To hate godliness and to hurt the godly is the nature and character of a wicked man. It is evil.

Psalm 37:12 The wicked plots against the just, and gnashes at him with his teeth.

And his brother's righteous

Proverbs 4:18 The path of the righteous is like the morning sun, shining ever brighter till the full light of day.

John uses this contrast to show the difference between attitudes motivated by God, and those motivated by Satan. Abel was a righteous man who pleased God. Abel offered, “*a more excellent sacrifice than Cain.*” His sacrifice was exactly the way God said their sacrifices were to be offered to Him. Abel was obedient to God, believed God, and demonstrated true faith by his actions.

Genesis 4:4 While Abel brought the best portions of the firstborn of his flock. And the Lord looked with favor on Abel and his offering,

Hebrews 11:4 By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was commended as righteous when God gave approval to his gifts. And by faith he still speaks, even though he is dead.

1 John 3:13

Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you.

Do not marvel my brethren

Apparently, some Christians were already experiencing some level of persecution. Some considered this persecution a surprise. John warned them to expect it.

They were to expect no better treatment from unconverted Jews and Gentiles than Abel received from his wicked and cruel brother. This was a lesson to the Church, preparatory to martyrdom. Expect neither justice nor mercy from the men who are enemies of God. They are either full of malice and envy, hateful, hating one another, or they are specious (misleading), hollow, false, and deceitful. *Adam Clarke's Commentary*

If the world hates you

Satan is the “god” of this world who controls the evil world system that hates God and His followers. Jesus predicted the world’s hatred for Christians telling His disciples that they must

expect to be hated by the world. Jesus tells them to remember that the world hated him before it hated them.

John 15:17-21 These things I command you, that you love one another. “If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for My name’s sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me.

History is a reminder of stories of persecution of Christians by the world. The persecution of Christians can be historically traced from the first century of the Christian era to the present. Christian missionaries and converts to Christianity have both been under attack for persecution, some to the point of being martyred for their faith.

Matthew 24:8-14 Then they will deliver you over to be persecuted and killed, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name. At that time many will fall away and will betray and hate one another, and many false prophets will arise and mislead many. Because of the multiplication of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold. But the one who perseveres to the end will be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

John 16:2-3 They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service. And these things they will do to you because they have not known the Father nor Me.

Hebrews 11:36-38 Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented—of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth.

As the world increasingly turns away from God, the hatred of God’s people will increase. It will get much worse as the end times approach. That is why we need one another to strengthen and encourage one another, reminding each other to keep striving towards the goal because we will suffer tribulations, and some will suffer persecution.

Acts 14:22 Strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.

2 Timothy 3:12 Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.

1 Peter 4:16 Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name.

Does it surprise you that the world hates you because of Christ? Why or why not?

Believers do not belong to the world. They are influenced by different principles from those of the world. Believers are motivated by the love of God and holiness, while the world is driven by the love of sin and evil.

John 17:14 I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

Our faith in Jesus Christ and the way we live our lives is offensive to the world, resulting in persecution for righteousness' sake. To endure persecution for righteousness' sake requires faithfulness to God despite pressures or threats.

1 Peter 3:14 But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed. "And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled."

God's Word says, "*Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*" The kingdom of heaven is a valuable treasure in which God as King rules sovereignly. This kingdom is an eternal kingdom where there is victory over sin and evil. Only those who profess Jesus Christ as Lord and willingly surrender to God's standards are part of His kingdom.

Matthew 5:10-12 Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake are blessed (supremely blest; by extension, fortunate, well off: blessed, happy). Is that not an oxymoron? Those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake are happy? The early Christians experienced happiness in Christ despite enduring tribulations and were characterized in this life by joy, hope and peace. As God's children, we have hope! Our hope is Jesus! We are never alone, and He will not leave us! We can find rest in Him as we trust Him to sustain us through trials.

Psalm 94:19 When the cares of my heart are many, your consolations cheer my soul.

Matthew 28:20 And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

John 16:33 "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

1 Peter 4:12-14 Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed. If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.

Blessings will be given to His children, along with rewards they will experience in the kingdom of heaven. This blessedness is a joy and contentment in the assurance of God's blessing, both in the present and in the future. Nothing will be able to steal or take away our joy in His kingdom!

Romans 8:35, 37 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

1 Peter 4:19 Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.

As believers, what can we do for those that persecute us because of righteousness' sake?

We can love and bless those who would accuse, misuse, or abuse us. We can pray that Jesus will work in a mighty way to soften their heart and open their eyes that they may be saved.

Matthew 5:44 But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.

Romans 12:14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.

Mark 16:15 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

1 Timothy 2:4 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, Who would have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth.

Is this easy to do?

No, it is not easy to do!!! The love of Jesus is not conditional on our feelings but in loving others the way He loved. This love is to be given despite our feelings and regardless of people's actions. This too is difficult!

What does it look like to love like Jesus?

To love as Jesus does is blessing others with kindness and love. We show others who Jesus is when we love those who persecute us. When we love like He loves it keeps us from falling into a trap of bitterness, hatred, and seeking revenge. We can love like Jesus when we seek out God's wisdom in His Word.

Luke 6:35 But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil.

1 Peter 3:9 Not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing.

Something to ponder: We cannot pray in love and live in hate and still think we are worshiping God. A.W. Tozer