

“Let us teach the New Testament!”

First Epistle of John

Lesson 7, 1 John 3:11-18

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Introduction

In this seventh of 15 lessons on the New Testament Book of 1 John, we shall deal with these ten topics.

1. 1 John 3:11-18 in the *English Standard Version* (2016)
2. 1 John 3:11-18 SBL *Greek NT* (2010) with English interlinear
3. Greek textual variants in 1 John 3:11-18
4. Parallels between 1 John 3:11-18 and the Gospel of John
5. Analytical outline of 1 John 3:11-18
6. Important vocabulary and historical meanings
7. Greek grammar: second-person, present, negative, plural verbs
8. Teachable points from 1 John 3:11-18
9. An historical Christian doctrine: Life and death
10. Practical applications of 1 John 3:11-18 for Christians

1. The *English Standard Version* text of 1 John 3:11-18

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

¹³ Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you. ¹⁴ We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever 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.

¹⁶ By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. ¹⁷ But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? ¹⁸ Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.

2. Interlinear Greek-English Text of 1 John 3:11-18

¹¹ For this is the message that you-heard from beginning, that we-should-love one another.

¹¹ Ὅτι αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ ἀγγελία ἣν ἠκούσατε ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, ἵνα ἀγαπῶμεν ἀλλήλους·

¹² not as Cain, of the evil-one was and murdered the brother of-him.

¹² οὐ καθὼς Κάϊν ἐκ τοῦ πονηροῦ ἦν καὶ ἔσφαξεν τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ·

And cause what he-murdered him? Because the deeds of-him evil were,
καὶ χάριν τίνος ἔσφαξεν αὐτόν; ὅτι τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ πονηρὰ ἦν,

the and the brother of-him righteous. ¹³ not be-surprised, brothers, since hates you.

τὰ δὲ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ αὐτοῦ δίκαια. ¹³ μὴ θαυμάζετε, ἀδελφοί, εἰ μισεῖ ὑμᾶς

the world ¹⁴ We know that we-have-passed from the death into the life,
ὁ κόσμος. ¹⁴ ἡμεῖς οἶδαμεν ὅτι μεταβεβήκαμεν ἐκ τοῦ θανάτου εἰς τὴν ζωὴν,

because we-love the brothers. The not loving abides in the death.

ὅτι ἀγαπῶμεν τοὺς ἀδελφούς· ὁ μὴ ἀγαπῶν μένει ἐν τῷ θανάτῳ.

¹⁵ Every the hating the brother of-him man-killer is,

¹⁵ πᾶς ὁ μισῶν τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ ἀνθρωποκτόνος ἐστίν,

and you-know that every man-killer not has life eternal in him abiding.

καὶ οἴδατε ὅτι πᾶς ἀνθρωποκτόνος οὐκ ἔχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον ἐν αὐτῷ μένουσαν.

¹⁶ By this we-know the love, that that-one for us the soul of-him put,

¹⁶ ἐν τούτῳ ἐγνώκαμεν τὴν ἀγάπην, ὅτι ἐκεῖνος ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἔθηκεν·

and we ought for the brothers the souls put.

καὶ ἡμεῖς ὀφείλομεν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἀδελφῶν τὰς ψυχὰς θεῖναι.

¹⁷ he but ever has the goods of-the world and sees the brother of-him need having

¹⁷ ὃς δ' ἂν ἔχη τὸν βίον τοῦ κόσμου καὶ θεωρῇ τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ χρεῖαν ἔχοντα

and shuts the bowels of-him from him, how the love of-the God abide in him?

καὶ κλείσῃ τὰ σπλάγχνα αὐτοῦ ἀπ' αὐτοῦ, πῶς ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ θεοῦ μένει ἐν αὐτῷ;

¹⁸ children, not we-should-love in-word nor in-the tongue but in deed and in-truth.

¹⁸ Τεκνία, μὴ ἀγαπῶμεν λόγῳ μηδὲ τῇ γλώσσει ἀλλὰ ἐν ἔργῳ καὶ ἀληθείᾳ.

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3. Manuscript Variants in 1 John 3:11-18

- 3:11** From the 4th century, some manuscripts spell “message” as *epaggelia*, as in 2:25, instead of *aggelia*. Both spellings mean “message”.
- 3:13** From the 4th century, some manuscripts omit “And” from the beginning of the verse, as do many translations.
- 3:14** From the 4th century, some manuscripts read, “our brothers,” instead of “the brothers.”
From the 5th century, some manuscripts insert “his brother” after “does not love.”
- 3:15** From the 4th century, some manuscripts employ an alternative spelling of “his” and of “him.”
- 3:16** From the 6th century, a few manuscripts have “concerning (*peri*) our sins” (as in 2:2), whereas most manuscripts have “for (*huper*) our sins.”
- 3:17** From the 4th century, some manuscripts put an accent mark over “abide,” indicating a (logical) future tense instead of the (actual) present tense.

Download from 1john.currah.download a more complete list of Greek textual variants.

4. Parallels between 1 John 3:11-18 and the Gospel of John

We must love one another 3.11, 23	Love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another 13:34; 15:12
The world hates you 3:13	If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you 15:18 The world has hated them 17:14
Laid down his life for us 3.16	The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep 10:11 Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends 15:13

To explain how “you know that no murderer has eternal life” (3:15), see, “Out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. These are what defile a person.” Matthew 15:19-20

5. Analytical outline for preachers, teachers and groups leaders.

This outline derives from a linguistic discourse analysis rather than from abstract theology or from a need of alliteration. Verse 3: 11 in Greek begins with the word “because,” logically connecting this section (3: 11-18) with the previous two sections (2: 18-29 and 3: 1-10).

Part 2: Our Adversaries 2.18 - 3.18

VII. Those who Hate Christians 3.11-18

A. The example of Cain 3.11-12

1. The Christian message 3.11
 - a. The original commandment
 - b. Love one another
2. Cain his brother 3.12
 - a. His example
 - b. His deeds

B. The world hates Christians

1. We are not surprised 3.13-14
 - a. We are the saved
 - b. We love fellow Christians
2. Haters are murders 3.15

C. The righteous love 3.16-18

1. Jesus' example 3.16
2. Care for the needy 3.17
3. Practical love 3.18

6. Important terms and their historical meanings in 1 John 3:11-18

death θάνατος *thanatos*

of spiritual death, to which one is subject unless one lives out of the power of God's grace... J 8:51. [opposite of life] 5:24; 1J 3:14; Ro 7:10; 8:6.

heart σπλάγχνον *splagchnon*

2 as often in the ancient world, inner body parts served as referents for psychological aspects ... of the seat of the emotions, in our usage a transference is made to the rendering *heart* ... English 'bowels' ... 1J 3:17.

life ψυχή *psyche*

1 life on earth ... **b** the condition of being alive, *earthly life, life* itself ... 1J 3:16.

murderer ἀνθρωποκτόνος *anthrôpoktonos*

murderer, of one who hates his brother 1J 3:15 (cp. Mt 5:21f). Of the devil ... he was a murderer from the beginning, ... the one who brought death into the world by misleading Adam (Wisdom 2:24) J 8:44.

pass μεταβαίνω *metabainô*

2 to change from one state or condition to another state, *pass, pass on* ... move ... J 5:24; 1J 3:14.

Definitions condensed from Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich and Danker, *Greek Lexicon* (2001).
Download from 1john.currah.download a more complete list.

7. Greek grammar of 1 John 3:11-18. The present negative imperative

The second-person plural indicative (statement) and imperative (command) forms of Greek some verbs are spelled the same, and both may occur with or without a subject noun or pronoun. Thus, the Greek θαυμάζετε (*thaumazete*) in 3:13 could translate "you are surprised" or "be surprised".

Therefore, interpreters and translators must discern whether such second-person plural verbs be in the indicative mood or the imperative mood. If such verbs are negatives, then the distinction is clear, for the negative particle with indicatives is *ou* (*ou*) and with imperatives is *μη* (*mé*).

Thus, the verb "not be surprised" (*μη θαυμάζετε, mé thaumazete*) must be a negative imperative. The present tense may also imply a present action that one should stop: "Stop being surprised"!

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Only teach about Greek grammar, if learners are able to understand it and are eager to learn.

8. Teachable points from 1 John 3:11-18

Ask the Holy Spirit to show you teachable ideas and summaries from the passage. For example:

Jesus Christ

1. Has commanded us to love one another 3:11
2. Loved us and gave his life for us 3:16

Three kinds of life

1. Spiritual life (Greek: *zôé*, as in zoology) translated “life” in 3:14
2. Human life (Greek: *psyché* as in psychology) translated “life” in 3:16
3. Material life (Greek: *bios* as in biology) translated “goods” in 3:17

Christian love

1. We obey Jesus’s command to love one another 3:11
2. We love fellow Christians 3:14
3. We know we have eternal life 3:14
4. Jesus loved us and gave his life for us 3:16
5. We should give our life for other Christians 3:16
6. We give material goods to needy Christians 3:17
7. We love by our deeds and by truth 3:18

Those who do not love Christians 3:13

1. Are like Cain who murdered his brother 3:12
2. Are of the evil one 3:12
3. Commit evil deeds 3:12
4. Remain in death 3:14
5. Are murderers 3:15
6. Do not have eternal life in them 3:15
7. Close their heart 3:17
8. Do not have God’s love abiding in them 3:17

Instead of reading or talking about all of these points, have learners form tiny groups. Have each group read a few verses of 1 John 3:11-18, looking for the topic. It is not necessary to find or to report all of the items. After a few minutes, ask someone in each tiny group to tell two or three items that the group members found. Thank all for their cooperation.

9. An historical Christian doctrine: Life and Death

Life and Death. Besides natural life and death of humans, of beasts, of plants and of insects, both the First and the New Testaments employ the terms “life” and “death” for human beings in their spiritual relation to God. Those who worship another deity, or have no faith in the God of the Bible, are spiritually “dead in trespasses and sins,” whilst those who have put their trust in Jesus Christ become spiritually alive, having the Holy Spirit. The spiritually dead will remain separated from God forever, whereas the spiritually alive will enjoy life with God forever.

10. Practical application of 1 John 3:11-18 for Christians

After someone or several have read or recited 1 John 3:11-18 in small gatherings of learners, pose queries such as these:

- What have you learnt from this passage about Jesus?
- What have you learnt from this passage about love?
- What have you learnt from this passage about hatred?

Whilst preaching, teaching or leading, recommend ways in which to apply the passage or put it into practice. For example:

- Review seven basic commandments of Jesus.
- Review Jesus’ commandment for Christians to love one another.
- Ask about current needs that some Christians have and plan together to meet those needs.
- Memorize together Jesus’ new commandment: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”
John 13:34-44

Conclusion

- Download documents for this lesson at 1john.currah.download.
- Read five times 1 John 3:19-24 before you view the next video lesson.
- Please, leave comments or queries, or write to me at the download site. I shall try to reply to you by email or in a video.