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By Dan Maines

## **1 John 3**

### **1 John 3:1**

See how great a love the Father has given us, that we would be called children of God, and in fact we are. For this reason the world does not know us: because it did not know Him.

† God's love is shown in adopting us as His children.

† The world rejects believers because it rejected Christ first.

† Ignatius (Letter to the Magnesians 8) reminded the church

that the world's hatred proves their identity with Christ.

### **1 John 3:2**

Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.

† Transformation into Christ's likeness was the promise of His appearing.

† To see Him is to share His glory.

† Irenaeus (Against Heresies 5.36.1) taught that believers' transformation confirmed the hope John declared.

### **1 John 3:3**

And everyone who has this hope set on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

† Hope in Christ produces holiness, not lawlessness.

† Philo (On the Special Laws 4.133) affirmed that true hope leads to moral purification, aligning with John.

### **1 John 3:4**

Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness.

† Sin is defined as lawlessness, rebellion against God's will.

† Josephus (Wars 4.5.2) described Jerusalem filled with lawlessness before its fall, illustrating John's warning.

### **1 John 3:5**

You know that He appeared in order to take away sins; and in Him there is no sin.

† Christ's mission was to remove sin, and His own sinlessness qualified Him as Savior.

† Isaiah 53:9 had foretold His sinless life.

### **1 John 3:6**

No one who remains in Him sins continually; no one who sins continually has seen Him or knows Him.

† John contrasts abiding in Christ with a lifestyle of sin.

† Sin is incompatible with truly knowing Christ.

### **1 John 3:7**

Little children, make sure no one deceives you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous.

† Righteous conduct proves true righteousness.

† Deceivers denied that conduct mattered, but John insists it is essential.

### **1 John 3:8**

The one who practices sin is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil.

† A lifestyle of sin reveals allegiance to the devil.

† Christ appeared to destroy the devil's works, fulfilling Genesis 3:15.

† Justin Martyr (Dialogue with Trypho 45) declared that Christ defeated the devil's power through His appearing.

### **1 John 3:9**

No one who has been born of God practices sin, because His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin continually, because he has been born of God.

† New birth changes conduct, for God's seed abides in the believer.

† This seed is the word and Spirit, producing new life.

### **1 John 3:10**

By this the children of God and the children of the devil are

obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother and sister.

† Conduct divides God's children from the devil's.

† Love and righteousness are the evidence of true sonship.

### **1 John 3:11**

For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we are to love one another.

† Love is the foundational command, rooted in Christ's teaching.

† Clement of Rome (1 Clement 49) exalted love as the bond of perfection, echoing John.

### **1 John 3:12**

Not as Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And for what reason did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil, but his brother's were righteous.

† Cain is the model of hatred and murder.

† Hatred of the righteous stems from envy and evil deeds.

† Josephus (Antiquities 1.2.1) recounted Cain's jealousy and murder of Abel, confirming John's example.

### **1 John 3:13**

Do not be surprised, brothers and sisters, if the world hates you.

† Hatred from the world is expected for God's children.

† Jesus foretold this in John 15:18-19.

### **1 John 3:14**

We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers and sisters. The one who does not love remains in death.

- † Love is the evidence of spiritual life.
- † Absence of love is evidence of death.

### **1 John 3:15**

Everyone who hates his brother or sister is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life remaining in him.

- † Hatred equals murder in God's eyes.
- † Eternal life cannot abide in the one consumed by hate.

### **1 John 3:16**

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

- † Christ's sacrificial death defines true love.
- † Believers are called to the same sacrificial love.
- † Ignatius (Letter to the Romans 6) urged believers to imitate Christ even unto death.

### **1 John 3:17**

But whoever has worldly goods and sees his brother or sister in need, and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God remain in him?

- † Love must be practical, expressed in generosity.
- † To close one's heart to need is to deny God's love.
- † The Dead Sea Scrolls (Community Rule 1QS 5.2) condemned withholding aid from the needy, paralleling John.

### **1 John 3:18**

Little children, let's not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.

- † Love is shown in actions, not empty words.
- † Clement of Rome (1 Clement 49) likewise exhorted to love in deed and truth.

### **1 John 3:19-20**

We will know by this that we are of the truth, and will set our heart at ease before Him, that if our heart condemns us, that God is greater than our heart, and He knows all things.

† Assurance comes from God's knowledge and mercy, not our own feelings.

† When conscience condemns, God's grace is greater.

### **1 John 3:21-22**

Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God; and whatever we ask, we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight.

† Confidence in prayer flows from obedience.

† God delights to answer those who walk in His ways.

### **1 John 3:23**

This is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as He commanded us.

† Faith in Christ and love for one another sum up God's commandment.

† These are inseparable marks of true believers.

### **1 John 3:24**

The one who keeps His commandments remains in Him, and He in him. We know by this that He remains in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.

† Obedience is the evidence of abiding in Christ.

† The Spirit is the confirming witness of this abiding relationship.

† Eusebius (Ecclesiastical History 3.24) recorded how the Spirit's presence marked early believers, confirming John's

words.

## **How it applies to us today**

† 1 John 3 shows that love and righteousness mark the children of God, while hatred and sin mark the children of the devil.

† Christ's sacrifice defines true love, and our calling is to live out that same love in action.

† Today, in the fulfilled kingdom, we live as God's children, walking in light, truth, and love.

## **† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †**

### **Source Index**

† Josephus, Antiquities 1.2.1 - Cain's jealousy and murder of Abel

† Josephus, Wars 4.5.2 - lawlessness in Jerusalem

† Philo, On the Special Laws 4.133 - hope leads to purity

† Clement of Rome, 1 Clement 49 - love in deed and truth

† Ignatius, Letter to the Magnesians 8 - world's hatred of believers

† Ignatius, Letter to the Romans 6 - imitating Christ in sacrifice

† Irenaeus, Against Heresies 5.36.1 - transformation into Christ's likeness

† Justin Martyr, Dialogue with Trypho 45 - Christ defeated the devil's works

† Dead Sea Scrolls, 1QS 5.2 - aid for the needy commanded

† Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 3.24 - Spirit's presence among believers

† Isaiah 53:9 - prophecy of Christ's sinlessness

† Genesis 3:15 - Christ destroys the devil's works

† John 15:18-19 - the world's hatred foretold

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