



I John 3:11-24

Scripture Memory

I John 1:7

“But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

There are two wondrous results of our walking in the light...First, God's truth and holiness produce unbroken fellowship among His people. As is true of physical light, spiritual light effects true unity between believers just as certainly as darkness separates us from each other. Second, God's truth and holiness produce continual cleaning of our sin by the atoning blood of Jesus Christ.

Ward Andersen, “The Manifestation and Message of God,” in *Focus on I, II, III John*, vol. 27 of *Biblical Viewpoint*, p. 28.

Sunday School Lesson Notes

Key Thoughts

Regarding I John 3:12: *The righteous deeds of Abel evoked Cain's jealousy, intensified a feeling of condemnation within him, and fed a vicious hatred that culminated in murder. As Stott remarks, “Jealousy—hatred—murder is a natural and terrible sequence.” That ancient story conveyed a vital and needed lesson for John's readers who were subjected to the hatred of the antichrists who had gone out from the orthodox believers (2:18-19). It is still true that the believer's righteous character and conduct arouse the world's hatred. And, as in the case of Cain, that hatred is often expressed in vicious and violent action against believers.*

D. Edmond Hiebert, *The Epistles of John: An Expository Commentary* (Greenville: Bob Jones University Press, 1991), 151.

Questions to Consider

As you answer the questions and prepare for Sunday school, carefully read I John 3:10-24.

1. Read I John 3:10-11. If a lack of obedience and love characterize “the children of the devil,” what should be the characteristics of “the children of God?”
2. Before John explains the love that should be the outstanding mark of all believers (3:18-24), he lists the ways in which unbelievers fail to obey this command to love. Instead of being characterized by love, what are these distinguishing marks of “the children of the devil?”
 - 3:12
 - 3:13-15
 - 3:16-18
3. What understanding should believers have from John’s answer to his question in I John 3:12, “And wherefore slew he him?”
4. What test does John give in I John 3:14 to help believers determine if they have indeed been “born again.”
5. Give a brief explanation as to what I John 3:18 means.

6. John identifies three blessings that result when believers practice Christian love. What are they?
 - 3:19-20 (Note especially: 19b)
 - 3:21-22
 - 3:23-24 (Note especially: 24)

Truth to Ponder

Love will not cause the passage to spiritual life but will give evidence of it. Conversely, to be unable to love means that a person is without life from the Father and remains in death.

Glenn W. Barker, “I John” in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), 12:335.

Regarding I John 3:16-17: It is easy for us to talk about “loving the brethren” and to neglect to help a single other believer. Christian love is personal and active. This is what Jesus had in mind in the parable of the good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). A lawyer wanted to talk about an abstract subject: “Who is my neighbor?” But Jesus focused attention on one man in need, and changed the question to “To whom can I be a neighbor?” ...The test of Christian love is not in loud professions about loving the whole church, but in quietly helping a brother who is in need. If we do not even help a brother, it is not likely we would “lay down our lives” for the brethren.”

Warren Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary: New Testament, Volume II* (Colorado Springs: David C. Cook Publishers, 1989), p. 511.