



The Agape

Class 4 • 1st John 3 Part I

• 1st John 3

- 1) Behold, 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.
- 2) Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.
- 3) And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.
- 4) Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.
- 5) And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.
- 6) Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him.
- 7) Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.
- 8) He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.
- 9) Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.
- 10) In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.
- 11) For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.

- Last week we talked about the famous triad of sins...
- the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life
- After class last week, Brian raised an interesting question

- 1st John 2:26

26) These *things* have I written unto you concerning them that **seduce** you.

- Whatever the Judaisers were doing to draw the Brethren away from the Truth was seductive
- Make no mistake - Legalism has a seductive allure
- That sense of feeling that you are in control over your salvation is alluring
- Feeling that with persistence and hard work you can do enough to earn your righteousness
- Feeling that there is a clear, black and white, right and wrong answer to every problem is a very seductive argument
- But, it's also wrong
- John referred to it as "the sin"
- As we move into chapter 3 we are introduced to the opposite of this seductive incorrect way of thinking
- What manner of love is he referring to?
- The Lord's sacrifice of himself - so that we should be called the sons of God
- Again, Kosmos here refers to the Jewish world
- Of course, "the world in general" didn't know Jesus, he didn't live very long, and spent his whole time in an obscure little province
- But the Jewish world had full opportunity to learn about him, and they cast him aside
- Interesting how he doesn't just say that the Jewish world didn't know Christ
- He says that they don't know us, because they didn't know him
- We feel that same way today
- A lot of the world that we live in don't know Christ
- A lot of the people that think they do, actually know the wrong Christ
- They don't really understand us, or what motivates us, because they don't know Christ

- Is the opposite true?
 - If the believers in John's time were "known" by the Jews, then maybe they were not true disciples of Christ?
 - If we are "known" by the world, then are we really followers of Christ
 - We know what we are now:
- 2) Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.
- John is being quite clear about something that is quite vague
 - We don't know what we shall be like, but we know that we shall be like him
 - What does he mean by "we shall see him as he is"?
 - Won't many see him as he is, but not be changed to be like him?
- 3) And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.
- What does he mean?
 - No matter how strong your intentions, you are sure to fall way short of being pure
 - The secret seems to be at the end of the verse - EVEN as he is pure
 - When your thinking is consistently centered on Christ, then you begin to change
- 4) Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.
- Just a little reminder to the Jews... If you still want to live by the Law, you have to realize that any sin you commit transgresses the law
- 5) And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.
- But, if you stay in Christ that has been removed from your life
 - "take away our sins" is an interesting phrase
 - We know that Christ takes away our sins
 - But, if you think about it, Jesus does so in TWO ways:

1) Through his death our sins are forgiven

2) Through his life we see an inspiring influence that leads us away from sin

- John now goes into a set of five verses that are hard to understand

- They are hard to understand in the context of the Judaisers, and even harder outside of that context

- * Remember what “the sin” was that John refers to?

- The rejection of Christ and the return to the law under Judaism

- How could a Jew, who says that they are a believer in Christ, “abide in Christ”, while at the same time adopt a policy of disloyalty to Christ by returning back to the synagogue?

- That is what he refers to in the next verses

6) Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him.

7) Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.

8) He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.

9) Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

10) In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.

- He is telling them that they can tell the true believers by their actions

- Did you notice the Genesis allusions?

a) deceived - Like Eve

b) He that committeth sin is of the Devil - Like Adam & Eve choosing sides

c) the devil sinneth from the beginning - The beginning of creation

d) The Son of God destroys the works of the devil - Heel and Head

e) his seed remaineth in him - Seed of the woman - not the serpent

f) He that loveth not his brother - Cain

g) In verse 12 - it goes even further about Cain

- Applying these verse to ourselves is hard to swallow...

- You have to remember that he is using terms like “sinneth not” in the continual sense
- He is referring to a sinful way of life, not the occasional uncharacteristic lapse
- The words “sinneth” and “committeth” have a sense of abiding and continuing
- Even in Verse 9, one of the hardest to swallow, you have to remember that the verb form is a continuous sense - “he does not go on committing sin”
- It’s hard to distinguish between a lifetime of mistakes and a lifetime of sin, though...
- But, he does give us a little sheep and goats, though:

10) In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.

- What is a clear way to distinguish between the seed of the woman and seed of the serpent?

- He that loveth his brother

- He that AGAPE his brother

- This is the message that we have heard from the time of the Lord’s Supper until now

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

- We definitely should live loving lives with each other

- But, we should break bread one with another as well