



11/11/25

As I think of the story of Cain and Abel, a few things emerge... God's patience and mercy can be poured out even while He practices justice. Also, He knows our hearts and warns us of the dangers of sin in order to help us choose Him and not the sin. And... sin may feel good in the moment, but it never satisfies. With that in mind, I look to 1 John 3 to learn more of God's heart, and how His heart impacts yours and mine.

*Blessings,
Jonna*

1 John 3:1-12 ~

Vs. 1-3 ~ The Greek transliteration says, "Behold what kind of love the Father has given to us..." Check it out! There is reason to worship. What is that reason? He calls us children of God... not just in word, but in truth! Through Jesus, I am a child of God.

The fact that the world won't understand me for my allegiance to the Lord is actually a good thing. It means that I choose to align myself with Him and His word... and Jesus is not of this world. The world didn't understand Him, and if I am truly walking with the Lord, the world won't understand me. Peter says in 1 Peter 4:3-4, "For the time that is past suffices for doing what the Gentiles (the people and philosophies of the world) want to do, living in sensuality, passions, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry. With respect to this they are surprised when you do not join them in the same flood of debauchery, and they malign you." Jesus didn't participate in the things of the world... "the desires of the flesh, the desires of the eyes, and pride of life" (1 John 2:16), and because of that the world hated Him. His pure light exposed their darkness. Because I align with Him, I will reflect His pure light and expose their darkness without even saying a word (Ephesians 5:11-13).

I am God's child even now while I continue to be IN this world, but not OF this world. And what I will be like when He takes me home is only something I can imagine. What must it be like to truly be like Jesus, as I WILL be? What must it be like to have absolutely pure and holy

motives, to do everything from love, to do nothing for my own honor and glory, to love all people, to know fully even as I am fully known? I so look forward to finding out!!!

How will I become so pure like He is pure? By putting all my hope IN HIM... my delighted anticipation... my confident expectation that He is who He says He is, and He does what He says He will do. As the hymn goes, "My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness. I dare not trust the sweetest frame but wholly lean on Jesus' name." O Lord, please make it so!!!

Vs. 4-6 ~ How do I keep my hope set on the Lord so that I will be pure as He is pure? Don't PRACTICE sin. It's not that I won't ever sin, but I make it my choice to not give in to it and practice it. When I actively choose to sin, I actively choose to defiantly rebel against God. I can't be WITH Him and AGAINST Him at the same time.

Jesus did not just come to earth to forgive me of sin. He came to earth to set me FREE from sin, to TAKE AWAY sin. 1 Peter 2:24-25 says, "He himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, that we might DIE to sin and LIVE to righteousness. By His wounds you have been healed. For you WERE straying like sheep but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls." If I am truly abiding in Him... in relationship with Him... I will NOT practice or defiantly continue in sin. The person who says he or she knows the Lord but justifies continuing in sin without remorse doesn't know Him at all. John said in the first chapter of this letter, "If we say we have fellowship with Him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth." O Lord, please expose the sin in my heart so that You can set me free from it! I know that I WILL sin, but when I do, please convict my heart so that I can repent and humble myself before You! Please show me where I am justifying sin and help me to turn from it... and put all my hope in You!

Vs. 7-10 ~ "Little children, let no one deceive you." The Greek transliteration here says, "Let no one lead you astray." How would someone lead me astray? By saying they're speaking the words of God but speaking lies. How do I NOT let them deceive me? I have to pour myself into knowing and living His word! And when I'm not sure what the right thing is, wait on the Lord until He makes it clear.

Someone will lead me astray by telling me that I can practice my FREEDOM rather than RIGHTEOUSNESS. Righteousness is doing what pleases God no matter what, regardless of what the world thinks. If someone says he is of God but makes sin his practice, he is a liar just like the father of lies, the devil.

The devil knows the word of God well enough to know how to recognize those who don't, and to twist God's words in order to destroy us. Let me never be deceived... anything that is not from the truth of God's word IS for my destruction.

Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil. And when the time is right the devil's power to destroy will be over. Until then, Jesus prayed in His last prayer before He went to the cross...

in John 17:15-17, "I do not ask that You take them out of the world, but that You keep (guard and protect) them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth; Your WORD is truth."

If I truly know the Lord I will not continue to defiantly sin against God because God's "seed" abides in me. I have the Spirit of Christ dwelling in me. He leads me into truth. He convicts me of sin and transforms me to be like Jesus... one degree of glory to the next. Even if I try to rebel, it will only be for a time, because the Holy Spirit will not let me go. He will press on my heart and lead me to the truth... and I will repent, not because I don't like the consequences, but because it breaks my heart to grieve Him who gave Himself for me.

Whoever defiantly rebels against God, even if they try to justify it by twisting the word of God, is not of God but literally of the devil. Those are the only two places to be... with the Lord or with the devil. Let me not be deceived into thinking there's another place that is benign. I am either for God or against Him. O Lord, I'm FOR You!

The Lord never speaks of obedience to Him for long before He reminds me that obedience to Him necessarily means that I love my brothers and sisters in Christ... and even my enemies. But let me not ever treat my brothers and sisters in Christ AS my enemies.

Vs. 11-12 ~ From the beginning, from the book of Leviticus when the law was given, the command has been to "love your neighbor as yourself." What did God say to justify this law? "I am the LORD." God is love, and whoever abides in Him will love as He loves.

What is the epitome of NOT loving as God loves? Who is the poster child for this? Cain. Don't be like Cain. He was of his father, the devil, and he murdered Abel. Why? Because his deeds were evil and he resented Abel because his deeds were righteous. He refused to look at his own heart and instead condemned Abel because he resented him. That is not love.

O Lord, instead of making a practice of sin, please help my life to be a practice of love... First love for you and then love for people... even when they don't love me. Let me always remember that YOUR love for me is enough.