

Module 13: 1 John 3:11-18 (Part 2)

1) Observations and Observational Questions that guide Interpretation

- a) Read 1 John 3:11-3:24 for context.
- b) What words do you see as important, either because they are repeated often or they are part of a key teaching in verses 3:11-18? [These words were listed during Part 1 of this Module: love, death, brother, murderer, know.](#)
- c) What title do you suggest for the paragraph starting in verse 3:11? [Here is a suggestion: “Believers love their brothers in deed and truth”.](#)
- d) “Know”
 - i) *Oida*, from the same root as *eidon*
 - (1) To know, to have knowledge of, whether absolutely, as in Divine knowledge, or in the case of human knowledge, to know from observation. (Vine)
 - (2) Expresses the fact, without a relationship between the person knowing and the object known. (Vine)
 - (3) vv 14, 15
 - ii) *Ginosko*
 - (1) To be taking in knowledge, to come to know, recognize, understand, or to understand completely. (Vine)
 - (2) Indicates a relation between the person knowing and the object known. (Vine)
 - (3) v 16
- e) “Death”
 - i) Separation of the soul from the body.
 - ii) Separation of man from God.
 - iii) 6x in 1 John – 3:14 (2x); 5:16 (3x); 5:17
- f) “Life”
 - i) Eternal life in 1 John 3.
 - ii) 13x in 1 John – 1:1; 1:2 (2x); 2:25; 3:14; 3:15; 5:11 (2x); 5:12 (2x); 5:13; 5:16; 5:20
- g) “We know that we have passed out of death into life”
 - i) “We know” from Divine revelation
 - ii) Emphatic – “we know what the world knows not” (A.R. Fausset)
 - iii) Cf. John 5:24. Assurance of this fact
 - iv) “Have passed” (perfect tense) – permanent transfer from one realm into another.
 - v) Definite article with both nouns (death, life): “out of the death into the life”. Highlights the distinctness of the two realms. (Hiebert)
- h) “Brother, brethren”
 - i) 15x in 1 John, 7x in 3:12 (2x), 13, 14, 15, 16, 17
 - ii) Brother – 12 (2x), 15, 17 – all four times is the object of hate or a lack of love.
 - iii) Brethren – 13, 14, 16 – reference to fellow believers (13) and object of love of believers (14, 16).
 - iv) Why does John use both brother and brethren in such ways in this paragraph?

- v) Love of humanity is easy, compared to love for an individual who is uninteresting, exasperating, depraved, and unattractive. Loving everybody in general may be an excuse for loving nobody in particular. (Lewis)
- i) Is there a structure to the multiple thoughts in this paragraph, particularly in verses 14-18? Stott's structure is here:
 - i) Evidence of love – what it proves: life
 - ii) Essence of love – what it is: self-sacrifice
- j) “Love”
 - i) Verb (agapao) numerous times in 1 John, 4x in vv 3:11, 14 (2x), 18
 - ii) Noun (agape) numerous times in 1 John, 2x in vv 3:16, 17
- k) “Murderer”
 - i) Anthropoktonos -- manslayer
 - ii) 3x in NT; John 8:44; 1 John 3:15 (2x)
 - iii) “Murder is in the heart before it is in the hand” (Hobbs)
- l) Why does John switch to “you know” (15) from “we know” (14)? Could it be that he is thinking of someone in particular who fits this category (i.e. is a murderer) and is addressing his comment to this person?
- m) What other observations do you see? (Words, grammar, construction, history, content, etc.)

2) Interpretation

We know, by divine revelation and with a dramatic and emphatic statement, that we have been transferred permanently from the realm of separation from God to the realm of eternal reconciliation and relationship with God. We have assurance of this, because of the evidence of our continual love for fellow believers in Christ. In contrast, the person who does not love on an on-going basis displays that he dwells in separation from God.

Every single person who practices hatred, not of humanity in general, but of specific believers in Christ, is a manslayer in his heart. You know, also by divine revelation, that no such manslayer has eternal relationship with God resident in him.

3) Applications

- a) Are you in the habit of sacrificing yourself for the sake of your fellow believers in Christ? Is this evidence that you are dwelling in the realm of death or the realm of life?
- b) Describe how the truth of being transferred from the realm of death to the realm of life makes a difference in the way you live.
- c) Do you agree with John's black and white assessment that there are only “haters/murderers” and “lovers”?
- d) What other application do you have?