

First John 3:11-18

- This may begin the second major section of this letter.
 - The first, 1:5-3:10 focused on “God is light”
 - “God is love”, is the focus/theme for 3:11-5:12.
 - Notice the parallel verses:
 - 1:5 – “This is the **message** we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that **God is light**, and in him is no darkness at all.”
 - 3:11 – “For this is the **message** that you have heard from the beginning, that **we should love** one another.”
- *pas ho* (“anyone”, “everyone”) only appears once in 3:15. In the previous section it was a focal point.
- This section establishes the third of John’s triad of Christian character presented in this book:
 - Righteousness
 - Avoiding Sin
 - Love for one another

First John 3:11 – “For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.”

3754 [e]	3778 [e]	1510 [e]	3588 [e]	31 [e]	3739 [e]	191 [e]	575 [e]	746 [e]	2443 [e]
hoti	hautē	estin	hē	angelia	hēn	ēkousate	ap’	archēs	hina
11 ὅτι	αὕτη	ἐστὶν	ἡ	ἀγγελία	ἦν	ἠκούσατε	ἀπ’	ἀρχῆς	, ἵνα
For	this	is	the	message	that	you have heard	from	[the] beginning	that
Conj	DPro-NFS	V-PIA-3S	Art-NFS	N-NFS	RelPro-AFS	V-AIA-2P	Prep	N-GFS	Conj

25 [e]	240 [e]
agarōmen	allēlous
ἀγαπῶμεν	ἀλλήλους ;
we should love	one another
V-PSA-1P	RecPro-AMP

1. *hoti* (“because”, “for”) connects this transition of thought with the previous section/verse. This is not an abrupt change, but a building transition.
2. *aggelia* (“message”) same Greek word used in First John 1:5
3. “Beginning” is again the beginning of the Christian message presented by Jesus Christ (or, the beginning of the church, or the beginning of their Christian faith). As used here this is not the beginning as in John 1:1, the beginning of angels (Satan), the beginning of the universe, the beginning of humanity, etc.
4. “we should love one another” is directed at loving the members of the Christian community who stand at odds with the “world” or *kosmos* that will be mentioned in 3:13.

First John 3:12 – “We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous.”

3756 [e]	2531 [e]	2535 [e]	1537 [e]	3588 [e]	4190 [e]	1510 [e]	2532 [e]	4969 [e]	3588 [e]	80 [e]
ou	kathōs	Kain	ek	tou	ponērou	ēn	kai	esphaxen	ton	adelphon
12 οὐ	καθὼς	Καῖν	ἐκ	τοῦ	πονηροῦ	ἦν	, καὶ	ἔσφαξεν	τὸν	ἀδελφὸν
not	as	Cain [who]	of	the	evil [one]	was	and	slew	the	brother
Adv	Adv	N-NMS	Prep	Art-GMS	Adj-GMS	V-IIA-3S	Conj	V-AIA-3S	Art-AMS	N-AMS

846 [e]	2532 [e]	5484 [e]	5101 [e]	4969 [e]	846 [e]	3754 [e]	3588 [e]	2041 [e]	846 [e]	4190 [e]
autou	kai	charin	tinou	esphaxen	auton	hoti	ta	erga	autou	ponēra
αὐτοῦ ;	καὶ	χάριν	τίνοσ	ἔσφαξεν	αὐτόν ?	ὅτι	τὰ	ἔργα	αὐτοῦ	πονηρὰ
of him	and	because of	what	he slayed	him	because	the	works	of him	evil
PPro-GM3S	Conj	Prep	IPro-GNS	V-AIA-3S	PPro-AM3S	Conj	Art-NNP	N-NNP	PPro-GM3S	Adj-NNP

1510 [e]	3588 [e]	1161 [e]	3588 [e]	80 [e]	846 [e]	1342 [e]
ēn	ta	de	tou	adelphou	autou	dikaia
ἦν ;	τὰ	δὲ	τοῦ	ἀδελφοῦ	αὐτοῦ ,	δίκαια .
were	those	moreover	of the	brother	of him	righteous
V-IIA-3S	Art-NNP	Conj	Art-GMS	N-GMS	PPro-GM3S	Adj-NNP

1. If God is love, then the anti-god (Satan) would be anti-love (hate)
2. Cain is used as an example. This is John's only OT example in this book
3. In Genesis 4:7 God speaks to Cain saying, "If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to [is toward] you, but you must rule over it."
 - a. "the evil one" or *tou ponerou*, was working on Cain, desiring to use Cain.
 - b. Cain sided with the Evil One and did the work of the Evil One
 - c. John 8:44, "You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies."
4. "slew the brother of him"...the Greek word *esphaxen* translated "slew" or "murdered" literally means "to cut the throat", and is translated "to butcher", "slay", "murder".
5. John asks a rhetorical question in this verse: "Why did he murder him?" The answer being:
 - a. Cain compared himself to Able and was jealous, envious or convicted. He knew Able was right and he was wrong.
 - i. Jealousy, or unrepented conviction leads to hatred which leads to murder
 - ii. **CONVICTION → HATRED → MURDER**
 - Or,
 - TRUTH → PERSECUTION → MARTYRDOM**
 - iii. Thus, the next verse:

First John 3:13 – “Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you.”

2532 [e]	3361 [e]	2296 [e]	80 [e]	1487 [e]	3404 [e]	4771 [e]	3588 [e]	2889 [e]
kai	Mē	thaumazete	adelphoi	ei	misei	hymas	ho	kosmos
13 [καὶ]	Μὴ	θαυμάζετε	, ἀδελφοί	, εἰ	μισεῖ	ὑμᾶς	ὁ	κόσμος .
and	not	be surprised	brothers	if	hates	you	the	world
Conj	Adv	V-PMA-2P	N-VMP	Conj	V-PIA-3S	Pro-A2P	Art-NMS	N-NMS

1. The verb *thaumazete* meaning “to wonder”, “to marvel” in this form (imperative, voice of command) means John’s readers were confused and wondering, “Why are we being rejected?”
2. John’s answer is do not be amazed that the world (*kosmos*) is not running to you for answers and for help! This is the basic operational procedures in this world.
3. Here is the only place John uses the term “brothers”...he is focusing on their unity in this situation in the *kosmos*. Other verses that support this obvious conclusion are:
 - a. John 15:18-21
 - b. 1 Peter 4:13
4. This first class condition of “if the world hates you” means this is not a possible result, but instead this is a reality, and more, it is a current, ongoing reality that is not going to change.

First John 3:14 – “We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death.”

1473 [e]	1492 [e]	3754 [e]	3327 [e]	1537 [e]	3588 [e]	2288 [e]	1519 [e]	3588 [e]	2222 [e]
hēmeis	oidamen	hoti	metabebēkamen	ek	tou	thanatou	eis	tēn	zōēn
14 ἡμεῖς	οἶδαμεν	ὅτι	μεταβεβήκαμεν	ἐκ	τοῦ	θανάτου	εἰς	τὴν	ζωὴν ,
We	know	that	we have passed	from	-	death	to	-	life
Pro-N1P	V-RIA-1P	Conj	V-RIA-1P	Prep	Art-GMS	N-GMS	Prep	Art-AFS	N-AFS

3754 [e]	25 [e]	3588 [e]	80 [e]	3588 [e]	3361 [e]	25 [e]	3306 [e]	1722 [e]	3588 [e]
hoti	agapōmen	tous	adelphous	ho	mē	agapōn	meni	en	tō
ὅτι	ἀγαπῶμεν	τοὺς	ἀδελφούς	. ὁ	μὴ	ἀγαπῶν	, μένει	ἐν	τῷ
because	we love	[our]	brothers	the [one]	not	loving	abides	in	-
Conj	V-PIA-1P	Art-AMP	N-AMP	Art-NMS	Adv	V-PPA-NMS	V-PIA-3S	Prep	Art-DMS

2288 [e]
 thanatō
 θανάτῳ .
 death
 N-DMS

1. “we” includes John in this
2. “we have passed” from *metabebekamen* means literally “to take steps over,” “to pass over,” “to move from one place to another.”
3. They have stepped out of the sphere of death into the sphere of eternal life

4. The construction is clear that first, we have eternal life, then, second, we have love for the brothers. It is not the other way around. If you have love for the brothers then you get eternal life.

First John 3:15 – “Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.”

3956 [e]	3588 [e]	3404 [e]	3588 [e]	80 [e]	846 [e]	443 [e]	1510 [e]	2532 [e]			
pas	ho	misōn	ton	adelphon	autou	anthrōpoktonos	estin	kai			
15	πᾶς	ὁ	μισῶν	τὸν	ἀδελφὸν	αὐτοῦ	,	ἀνθρωποκτόνος	ἐστίν	;	καὶ
Everyone	-	hating	the	brother	of him	a murderer	is	and			
Adj-NMS	Art-NMS	V-PPA-NMS	Art-AMS	N-AMS	PPro-GM3S	N-NMS	V-PIA-3S	Conj			

1492 [e]	3754 [e]	3956 [e]	443 [e]	3756 [e]	2192 [e]	2222 [e]	166 [e]	1722 [e]	846 [e]	
oidate	hoti	pas	anthrōpoktonos	ouk	echei	zōēn	aiōnion	en	autō	
οἴδατε	ὅτι	πᾶς	ἀνθρωποκτόνος	,	οὐκ	ἔχει	ζωὴν	αἰώνιον	ἐν	αὐτῷ
you know	that	any	murderer	not	has	life	eternal	in	him	
V-RIA-2P	Conj	Adj-NMS	N-NMS	Adv	V-PIA-3S	N-AFS	Adj-AFS	Prep	PPro-DM3S	

3306 [e]
menousan
μένουσαν .
abiding
V-PPA-AFS

1. *Anthropoktonos* is literally “man-killer”

First John 3:16 – “By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.”

1722 [e]	3778 [e]	1097 [e]	3588 [e]	26 [e]	3754 [e]	1565 [e]	5228 [e]	1473 [e]	3588 [e]		
En	toutō	egnōkamen	tēn	agapēn	hoti	ekeinos	hyper	hēmōn	tēn		
16	Ἐν	τούτῳ	ἐγνώκαμεν	τὴν	ἀγάπην	,	ὅτι	ἐκεῖνος	ὑπὲρ	ἡμῶν	τὴν
By	this	we have known	-	love	because	he	for	us	the		
Prep	DPro-DNS	V-RIA-1P	Art-AFS	N-AFS	Conj	DPro-NMS	Prep	PPro-G1P	Art-AFS		

5590 [e]	846 [e]	5087 [e]	2532 [e]	1473 [e]	3784 [e]	5228 [e]	3588 [e]	80 [e]	3588 [e]	5590 [e]		
psychēn	autou	ethēken	kai	hēmeis	opheilomen	hyper	tōn	adelphōn	tas	psychas		
ψυχὴν	αὐτοῦ	ἔθηκεν	;	καὶ	ἡμεῖς	οφείλομεν	ὑπὲρ	τῶν	ἀδελφῶν	,	τὰς	ψυχὰς
life	of him	laid down	and	we	ought	for	[our]	brothers	[our]	lives		
N-AFS	PPro-GM3S	V-AIA-3S	Conj	PPro-N1P	V-PIA-1P	Prep	Art-GMP	N-GMP	Art-AFP	N-AFP		

5087 [e]
theinai
θεῖναι .
to lay down
V-ANA

1. *Egnokamen* “we have known” means a knowledge gained through contemplation. It is an acquired understanding.
2. This is referring to the historical example of Jesus demonstrating love by giving up his life. Now, we know Jesus death was substitutionary and no one will or can repeat it. Jesus death was more than a good example, but here John is using Jesus work on the cross as an example.

First John 3:17 – “But if anyone has the world’s goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God’s love abide in him?”

3739 [e]	1161 [e]	302 [e]	2192 [e]	3588 [e]	979 [e]	3588 [e]	2889 [e]	2532 [e]	2334 [e]	3588 [e]
hos	d'	an	echē	ton	bion	tou	kosmou	kai	theōrē	ton
17 ὅς	δ'	ἄν	ἔχη	τὸν	βίον	τοῦ	κόσμου	, καὶ	θεωρῆ	τὸν
whoever	moreover	anyhow	might have	the	goods	of the	world	and	might see	the
RelPro-NMS	Conj	Prtcl	V-PSA-3S	Art-AMS	N-AMS	Art-GMS	N-GMS	Conj	V-PSA-3S	Art-AMS

80 [e]	846 [e]	5532 [e]	2192 [e]	2532 [e]	2808 [e]	3588 [e]	4698 [e]	846 [e]	575 [e]
adelphon	autou	chreian	echonta	kai	kleisē	ta	splanchna	autou	ap'
ἀδελφὸν	αὐτοῦ	χρεῖαν	ἔχοντα	, καὶ	κλείση	τὰ	σπλάγχνα	αὐτοῦ	ἀπ'
brother	of him	need	having	and	might close up	the	heart	of him	from
N-AMS	PPro-GM3S	N-AFS	V-PPA-AMS	Conj	V-ASA-3S	Art-ANP	N-ANP	PPro-GM3S	Prep

846 [e]	4459 [e]	3588 [e]	26 [e]	3588 [e]	2316 [e]	3306 [e]	1722 [e]	846 [e]
autou	pōs	hē	agapē	tou	Theou	menei	en	autō
αὐτοῦ	, πῶς	ἡ	ἀγάπη	τοῦ	Θεοῦ	μένει	ἐν	αὐτῷ ?
him	how	the	love	-	of God	abides	in	him
PPro-GM3S	Adv	Art-NFS	N-NFS	Art-GMS	N-GMS	V-PIA-3S	Prep	PPro-DM3S

1. An extreme example is giving up one’s life, but how about simply giving up something from your life.
2. Few are called upon to give their life, but everyone is called up on to give

First John 3:18 – “Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.”

5040 [e]	3361 [e]	25 [e]	3056 [e]	3366 [e]	3588 [e]	1100 [e]	235 [e]	1722 [e]	2041 [e]
Teknia	mē	agapōmen	logō	mēde	tē	glōssē	alla	en	ergō
18 Τεκνία	, μὴ	ἀγαπῶμεν	λόγῳ	, μηδὲ	τῇ	γλῶσση	, ἀλλὰ	ἐν	ἔργῳ
Little children	not	we should love	in word	nor	in	tongue	but	in	deed
N-VNP	Adv	V-PSA-1P	N-DMS	Conj	Art-DFS	N-DFS	Conj	Prep	N-DNS

2532 [e]	225 [e]
kai	alētheia
καὶ	ἀληθεία .
and	in truth
Conj	N-DFS