

Love Not Hate 1 John 3:14-15

**14 We know that we have passed from death to life,**

This term, to pass, the word, metabeino means to move from one place to another, to transfer, to change ones dwelling place. So we have changed our address, and moved from the kingdom of this world, to the Kingdom of God. Jesus emphasized that this change of address has the result that we're no longer under the judgement of God. John is emphasizing another result—that we will have love for our brothers and sisters in Christ.

**because we love each other.**

It's not so much that John is giving us a checklist to prove to ourselves that we are Christians—because we can always lie to ourselves. John is saying that a result of our salvation, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, there Will Be love for our brothers and sisters in Christ. We all have the same Holy Spirit within us, urging us to love one another. We all have the shared experience of being hated by the world. We all go through life each “working out our own salvation” that Jesus has purchased for us. This results in camaraderie because of shared experience. This, combined with love from other believers that we receive can't help but inspire love for other believers. John is saying that a true living faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior will produce true self-sacrificing, agape love for another and can't help but take action to meet other's needs. It's a 1 Cor 13:4-8 kind of love. **4 Love is patient, love is kind, it is not jealous; love does not brag, it is not arrogant. 5 It does not act disgracefully, it does not seek its own benefit; it is not provoked, does not keep an account of a wrong suffered, 6 it does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; 7 it keeps every confidence, it believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8 Love never fails;** Yes, it's about action, doing works, but on a deeper level, it's about allowing the Holy Spirit to mold our hearts until we love people with this self-sacrificial love, willing to help our brothers and sisters out of sincere concern for their well-being. Patient with other's faults. Kind, as God is kind, causing the sun to shine and the rain to fall for the crops of all farmers, both those that love Him and those who don't. Not jealous or striving, jockeying for position with one another, but instead being happy for one another when they receive a blessing, or when they succeed. We should not pick and choose who to show kindness to, and not just love those who can return a favor we might do, but having compassion on those who can't. Turning the other cheek, and praying for someone when we want to lash out, and forgiving and forgetting wrongs suffered. Rejoicing with them when they make a breakthrough in their relationship with God, or have victory over sin. Treating them with courtesy, respect, and integrity out of true love for them, hoping along with them that we'll all make it together, as we journey toward Jesus, no matter what comes. This is what Jesus meant when He commanded us to love, saying in John 13:34 **I am giving you a new commandment, that you love one another; just as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35 By this all people will know that you are My disciples: if you have love for one another.**” Our love for one another is a great part of our witness.

**15 Anyone who hates a brother or sister is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life residing in him.**

John is covering much of the same ground that Jesus so clearly taught in Matthew 5:21-22 <sup>21</sup>“**You have heard that the ancients were told, ‘YOU SHALL NOT MURDER,** The first time that the Israelites were given the Ten Commandments, it was directly from the mouth of God. (Ex. 19:9; 20:1)

<sup>22</sup>**But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be answerable to the court;**

Jesus, in His authority as God takes it a step further, to clarify for the Pharisees that the traditional interpretation of the commandment has fallen short of what God had intended. Jesus in no way replaces the law with His own commands, but clarifies it, showing that God intended the law to extend to matters of the heart, not just outer actions. Jesus not only condemns the action taken, murder, but condemns all the steps that lead up to the murder, starting with anger in the heart. Anger is generally the root cause of murder, and so if the root cause is dealt with, then the murder will not occur. And Jesus' argument points to God as authority, not to man.

**and whoever says to his brother, 'You good-for-nothing,' shall be answerable to the supreme court;** Whoever says to his brother "Raca" shall be answerable to the Sanhedrin. Now Raca was a semi-swear word in Aramaic, and it meant empty-headed, good-for-nothing, worthless one, etc. In calling someone worthless or useless, you deny the worth and dignity that God gives them as those created in His image. Murder is the ultimate denial of someone's worth and dignity from which there is no opportunity to take it back or be reconciled, but saying something like this has a lot in common with murder.

**and whoever says, 'You fool,' shall be guilty *enough to go into the fiery hell.***

This word has a lot of history for the Hebrews in the Old Testament, and so when they used it, they were thinking of verses like Psalm 14:1 **the fool has said in his heart, "There is no God."** (also Prov 9:13, 14:9). A fool to them was an unrighteous, godless, immoral person, a wicked person destined for hell. So, it was a curse. Eternal destruction is God's purview, not ours. And so, it's very similar to what Jesus is getting at when He says a little later in Mathew 7:1 **"Do not judge, so that you will not be judged. 2 For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you.** And so, by condemning someone in this way, Jesus is saying that we sin, and condemn ourselves. So, we should have great love for our brothers and sisters in Christ, the kind of self-sacrificing, from the heart, motivated by God's Goodness and Forgiveness and love for us. If we do this, it will be impossible to hate our brothers and sisters in Christ.