

Apply The Word

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Message Info

Title:

Don't Be Like Cain

Speaker:

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Date:

December 26, 2021

Scriptures:

1 John 3:11-15

Theme: Turn from hatred and rest assured in love for one another.

Introduction: The nature of temptation is such that the more we resist, the more its power diminishes over time. We even see this promise in James 4:7, "...Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." As John writes to the church, he warns them against one particular, and deadly, temptation: hatred for one another. Loving one another is a mark of true Christianity, so hatred for one another must not characterize us.

We can trace his argument through 2 points:

1. Do not be like Cain (11-13)

In his call to one another, John uses the negative example of Cain to illustrate the opposite of love. Cain hated and murdered Abel.

We must not be like him. This seems like an obvious point, but we can be slow to learn and stubborn to repent, and so we need this call.

Genesis 4:8-10 gives the account of the murder. Cain murdered Abel out of envy, as he despised the difference in the Lord's responses to him and his brother.

He also showed no inclination to repent. He did all he could to justify himself and to plead the right-ness of his cause.

Murder works this way. It arises in our hearts in our sinful anger against others, as Jesus taught us (Matt 5:21-22).

As children of light, we should both: a) expect hatred by those in the dark; and b) have nothing to do with that kind of wickedness. We need to ask ourselves: am I harboring hateful thoughts toward others in my pride?

2. Because Cain has no life (14-15)

Cain's path leads only to death. "No murdered has eternal life abiding in him."

Perhaps counter-intuitively, Christians know that there is a path that reverses the flow.

Rather than going from life to death, we can receive new and eternal life because of Jesus (John 5:24).

In receiving life, we have escaped judgment and condemnation (Rom 8:1).

We can also have assurance that we have this new life because of our love for one another. Love in the church is the fruit of the Spirit and should encourage us with God's grace.

Questions:

1. Are there any brothers and/or sisters you hate?
2. How does hatred for others manifest in your life? What does your hate look like?
3. How is the Lord at work in you to produce a new and deeper love for others, especially in his church?