

Natural Born Killers

1 John 3:11-18

THE CALL TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER. v.11

1. This is not a new message. “*This is the message that you have heard from the beginning...*”

- This was Jesus’ message 60-80 years earlier – and has been John’s message continually.

2. John has already written that love for one another is an evidence of salvation. 1 John 2:9-11

TWO EXAMPLES. v.12, 16

1. Life-taking Cain. v.12 Ref. Genesis 4:1-16; Genesis 3:15; 1 John 3:8; John 8:44

- Cain was of the evil one. v.12a
- Cain murdered his brother. v.12b
- John tells us motive: Why did he murder him? → Cain’s deeds were evil and Abel’s deeds were righteous.

→ The Bible says we are all naturally born as a Cain: *we are all natural born killers*. Genesis 6:5-6, 11-13; 8:21

- When we are born, our heart has a natural Cain-like hatred of God and His ways. Mark 7:21-23; Jer. 17:9

2. Life-giving Jesus. v.16

- Jesus is the Son of God.
- Jesus gave up his life.

3. Followers of the life-giving Jesus are hated by the world. v.13

- Cain hated Abel... the world hates you.
- John makes an association between believers and Abel—and non-Christians and Cain.

A LIFE-CHANGING REDEMPTION. v.14-15

1. Love for one another can only happen when we pass out of death and into life. v.14a

- The gospel changes a Cain into an Abel. ...*passed out of death into life...*
- This is ‘resurrection’ wording.

2. Whoever does not love remains in spiritual death. v.14b

- Two camps: 1) remain in death (not love), or 2) pass from death to life... (love).

→ If you are not a Christian, the answer is not “stop hating and start loving” (b/c you cannot change your own heart). Instead, it is: ‘Come to Jesus Christ! He will change your heart and transform you from Cain into Abel.’

PRACTICAL TAKE-AWAYS...

1. How do we define love?

- How does the Bible define love? 1 Corinthians 13:1-7

2. The authenticity of our witness is tied to our practical, tangible love of the poor & marginalized. v.17-18

- John gives a practical example of love for the brethren. **v.17** (from plural “brothers” to singular “brother”)
- Love is not merely talk. It is concrete and tangible. **v.18**

→ Who are the most vulnerable populations in our midst?

3. We cannot love “from afar.”

- Love is incarnational—like Jesus’ love for us.
- It is intentional & messy.

4. We cannot love if we are not in daily communion with Jesus.

- *We love because he first loved us.* 1 John 4:19
- *The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.* Mark 10:45