

February 12, 2023

The Bridge Bible Fellowship

Pastor Paul S. Brown

1 John 3:10b-24

“Social Test #2: “We’ll Know We Are Christians By Our Love” – Part 1

- I. Prologue [Introduction] – 1:1-4
- II. Tests of Genuine Fellowship: Cycle (Spiral) #1 – 1:5-2:27 – Moral; Social; Doctrinal tests
- III. Tests of Genuine Fellowship: Cycle (Spiral) #2 – 2:28-4:6**
 - A. The Moral Test – 2:28-3:10 – Family Resemblance
 - B. The Social Test – 3:10b-24 – Family Resemblance**

So what?

Discussion & Application:

1. Assurance of salvation is simply knowing for sure that you are saved (forgiven and going to heaven). Why is this such an important topic to the Apostle John (see Jn. 3:16, 36; 5:24; 6:40; 10:27-31; 11:25-26; 1 Jn. 2:25, 28; 4:17; 5:11-13)? Why do some religions / cults / sects believe it is impossible to have assurance of salvation?
2. Presuppositions about assurance: 1) It is possible to be sure that you are a Christian and not be (Mt. 7:21-22). 2) It is possible to be a Christian and doubt that you are (1 Jn. 3:19-22). 3) It is possible to know with certainty that you are a Christian (1 Jn. 2:3; 3:14). 4) God wants us to know that we are true Christians (1 Jn. 5:13) and He wants us to pursue assurance (2 Cor. 13:5; 2 Pet. 1:10). 5) We must seek that assurance in the written Word of God (1 Jn. 5:13).
3. What are some common unbiblical things people trust in for assurance of salvation? Why do parents often tell their children (or grandchildren) that they know they are Christians even though there is no biblical evidence (fruit)?
4. Believers in Jesus throughout church history have written about their struggles in being assured of salvation. Do you ever question (doubt) your salvation? What specific things happen in your life to cause you to doubt? What do you typically do when these doubts occur? What tests would 1 John tell you to take to know for sure that you are truly a Christian?
5. The clear command from God is that we should love one another (Jn. 13:34; 15:12; 1 Jn. 4:7, 11f, 21; 2 Jn. 5; Mt. 22:37-40). Why does John use the negative illustration of Cain (Gen. 4)? What is the point that John is making?
6. Why does John transition from Cain & Abel to the world hating us? What is the connection? Bonus question: Why were Abel's deeds righteous and Cain's deeds unrighteous? (Gen. 4; Heb. 11:4)
7. People in the "world" (unsaved people) often say they love everyone, but God's Word says that people in the world hate true Christians. What does it mean by hate? (Look at Mal. 1:2-3; Rom. 9:13; Gen. 29:20, 30-31, and Luke 14:26 to see how love and hate are contrasted in the Bible). Ultimately this hatred can lead to anger, jealousy, persecution, and even murder (i.e., Cain).
8. What is the connection between hatred (anger) and murder (1 Jn. 3:15; Mt. 5:21f; Jn. 8:44)?
9. Why do Christians love other Christians? Why does a habit pattern of loving other Christians bring assurance that we are truly born-again?
10. "Like Savior, like son." How did Jesus demonstrate His love for us? (v. 16) Most of us will not have to physically die for other believers. What are some other practical ways we can lay down our lives for other believers?
11. Do you have assurance of salvation? Is it obvious that you are a child of God by the way you love His children? What practical things have you done in the past 30 days to demonstrate that you prioritize sacrificially giving to other believers? How might you love fellow Christians before you go home today? Who specifically might you voluntarily, sacrificially, practically, and joyfully love this week?
12. **Memorize 1 John 3:11-18.**