

CHILDREN OF GOD, CHILDREN OF THE DEVIL

1 John 3:10-24

By Raymond White

1 John 3:10 In this the children of God are manifest and the children of the devil.

John understood that there are distinct differences between the behavior of those who are children of God and those who are children of the devil. That there are children of the devil is not something that John made up. He learned it from Jesus who accused those who tried to kill him.

John 8:44 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do.

John wants us to understand the differences so we can determine where we are with God.

[1] CHILDREN OF THE DEVIL ARE MURDEROUS

1 John 3:12 Not as Cain who was of that wicked one and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous.

Wicked people can't stand righteous people and therefore just want to get rid of them by whatever means possible, sometimes murder. Fortunately, our first amendment rights to free speech make murder not an option, so those who want to silence the truth have to find other less violent ways. The so-called "fairness doctrine" comes to mind. Then there was McCain/Feingold for awhile. When someone wants to shutdown free speech for whatever reason, be worried.

There's a fundamental irony here: the righteous Abel made a sin offering seeking forgiveness while the wicked Cain made a pride offering demanding approval. That's always the way, isn't it? The righteous say, "I'm sinful"; while sinners say, "I'm righteous."

A final detail: The word "slew" (Greek: esfazo) literally means to cut the throat. Cain killed Abel by cutting his throat, the picture of a sacrifice, as if to say, "Okay God, you want a blood offering? Here. I'll give you Abel!" Spiteful. Vindictive. Not just rejecting God's commandment but throwing it in his face.

[2] CHILDREN OF THE DEVIL ARE HATEFUL

1 John 3:13 Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you. :15 Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer.

Murder is an act and hate is an attitude, but they are moral equivalents. Of course to hate is different than murdering, (there are laws against murder, there are no laws against hate), but hating is related to murdering if only because they have the same wish: to be rid of someone.

[3] CHILDREN OF THE DEVIL ARE UNCARING

1 John 3:17 Whoso hath this world's goods and seeth his brother have need and shutteth his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

Love is not an emotion, it is an act that involves self-sacrifice for the benefit of others. Those who see hurting people and don't care, they are not children of God but of the devil.

Children of God care, and do acts of love for others. How do we know that God loves us? Because he said, "I love you"? Well, that, yes, but words are just words. Anyone can say I love you, but do they mean it? How do we know God loves us? And how do we know we love him?

[4] CHILDREN OF GOD LOVE AND ARE ASSURED

1 John 3:14 We know we have passed from death to life because we love the brethren. :16 Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. :18 ...let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. :19 And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.

We know God loves us, not merely because he said so, but because **:16 ...he laid down his life for us.** And how do you know you love God and are God's child? If you are willing to do the same, care about other people and sacrifice your own interest for their benefit, **:18 love not in word...but in deed.**

[5] CHILDREN OF GOD OBEY AND ARE HEARD

1 John 3:22 Whatsoever we ask we receive of him because we keep his commandments and do those things which are pleasing in his sight.

There are many promises that God hears and answers prayers, but those promises apply only to those who obey him. God is not a genie that grants every frivolous selfish request, but for those whom God trusts, those who live in his will, God generously responds to prayer with unlimited blessings.

[6] CHILDREN OF GOD BELIEVE AND ARE IN GOD

1 John 3:23 And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his son Jesus Christ :24 And hereby we know that he abideth in us.

Just believing counts for a lot. God asks us to do many things, but at the top of that list is believing. If you believe, rest assured that God is in you working his miracles with your life.