

# 1 John

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 05 May 1964

Preacher: Dawson, Herbert (1890-1969)

[ 0 : 00 ] As the Lord shall be pleased to help me, I shall call your attention to a subject you will find in the first epistle of John, chapter 3, and the first half of the 14th verse.

We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. Chapter 3, first epistle of John, and the first half of the 14th verse.

The subject is one in which every sinner born again has a living interest.

And it might be that one of the earliest evidences of a sinner being born again is that he looks on people who are born again and desires to be found with them, living and dying, at whatever cost it is to have that privilege conferred.

The opening two words in the text are very significant. We know. And you find in this epistle of godly John that he does stress it again and again and again as you read the epistle through.

[ 1 : 41 ] It is, we know. We know. And the great thing is, dear friends, do we know. Everything hinges on that fact, whether we know, that we have passed from death unto life.

It is an amazing contrast. Death. Who can describe it or define it? Death. And then, where there has been death, there is life. Passed from death unto life.

And the evidence that a sinner born again has passed from death unto life is that he loves the brethren.

This is a wonderful word when you ponder it in your heart. And I say this with great reverence. It is wonderfully kind of the Holy Spirit to have recorded this word as it is in this epistle of John.

And to set up a standard whereby who are sinners born again, who hardly know as yet whether they are or know, may yet encourage their souls in God, hope in God, because they do know when they see people taught of God, that they want to belong to them.

[ 3 : 19 ] And with them numbered, may we be now and in eternity. And now, I want us, the Lord, to help me to work out a line of thought from this subject.

We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. There is something in this knowledge that is beautifully, blessedly, positive in its nature.

And you cannot love the brethren and love them for who they are as brethren unless you have passed from death unto life.

Until a sinner is born again, he cannot look on the brethren and desire to be numbered with them and to have their God as his God too.

Let us look at it as grace is given. Let us look at it as grace is given.

[ 5 : 04 ] Let us look at it as grace is given.

given me some searchings of heart. As a rule, when I begin to define the Spirit's work, I have inevitably begun with conviction of sin.

when he the spirit of truth is come he shall convince the world of sin but when you look down the Galatians epistle and see how the apostle Paul approaches it he tells us the fruit of the spirit is love first of all and then he goes on and enumerates other fruit so that the root of the matter found in a sinner's breast is love and what did you say?

love is the golden chain that binds the favored souls above and he is a hair of heaven who finds his foot glow with love that word glow is very significant there is in it a wondrous what John Wesley called a strange warming of my heart when he was born again and remember that he was although we do not agree with some of his line of things in what he preached yet he was a sinner born again and he states that he found his heart strangely warmed and you and I many of us have found our hearts strangely warmed and we believe it is the root of the matter sending up sack the life of God evidenced in love and it flows out to these people in the text designated as brethren but what do you love in the brethren it is not what they are by nature because some of them

I am not fitting caps on would be rather unlovable and not likeable according to their characteristics arising from what they are by nature but when you see those same people who are like that according to what they are by nature when you see those same people telling out the dealings of God and what they are by nature is subdued by grace and you can listen to it maybe hear some of them try to pray in the public prayer and your heart is subdued whatever you have felt according to what they are by nature has vanished for a while and you are one with each other one with God before the mercy seat and now that flows from love but this word then tells us we know that we have passed from death unto life much might be said about the dead you all know the doctrinal side of it sin entered into the world and death by sin so death passed upon all men for that all of sin so that as you and I came into the world we came as regards the things of God with a nature that was dead to every jot and tittle of the things of God no love whatever no inclination toward the things of God or God whose things they are but far otherwise a desperate state is how you and I were born the carnal mind is enmity against God and is not subject to the law of God and neither indeed can be and it can only be as a miracle of grace is wrought in a sinner's breast that he can feel otherwise look you if you have felt otherwise you were born again the Lord bless you you have passed from death unto life if you have felt your heart strangely warmed if you have found something in your breast that constitutes a revolution so that you come in the category of that scripture if any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creature new not the old patched up renovated no nor reformed a new creature old things have passed away behold all things have become new the man is looking or the woman it may be the youth or the maid on people who were taught of God with new eyes and he sees in these people there is something that is infinitely desirable which a man cannot receive except it be given him from heaven and he begins to seek to be the subject of it from that time on he finds in his breast an aching void which the world cannot fill and having passed from death although he may not be able to say much about it and he may not have been taught by terrible things in righteousness his undone state under the law but he is alive he is alive unto God and he is a sinner bound for heaven he is a sinner

[ 11 : 39 ] born again he has got the root of the matter within and it begins to function and he finds in his soul a feeling that he now loves that which he hated before he was born again and it must be said what hath God wrought whenever it is done for God only can bring about that miracle of grace remember that we know we know that we have passed from death unto life and now this life from that time on will be a life of prayer oh that sinner will come in the category that was said of Saul of Tarsus behold he prayeth and what does he pray for you will find if you analyze his prayers you can think about your own prayers you want God to deal with you and bless you as you can discern that he has dealt and how he blesses those whom you know and believe to be his people what they have got is what your soul desires and look you the soul that with sincere desires seeks after

Jesus love that soul the Holy Ghost inspires with breathings from above as yet the poor sinner may not be able to say much about the dealings of God but he is a sinner born again he has passed from death unto life he is being numbered with the brethren in the text he is being made manifest as one of those children one in that family on earth whose father fills a throne yes we know that we have passed from death unto life and dear friends we are all poor sinners with never dying souls and we do want to know something sure we want something positive in our soul's experience it must not be all negative there must be something positive and love is that which is positive he that loveth is born of God the word of God declares it and he who feels it he can take his stand on this word before us we know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren let us look at this life that such and one lives just one or two characteristics of it it is a life of prayer as I said such and one will be asking the way to Zion with his face thitherward and as every opportunity is afforded he will be found in the ways of God because he wants to follow on to know the Lord and he wants to have some religion wrought in his soul whereby he can say about the possession of it we know and you must have it to be lost something must be known and felt this is life eternal that they might know thee the only true God and Jesus

Christ whom thou hast sent it is a life of prayer it is asking seeking knocking hoping desiring longing hungering and thirsting after righteousness that one might be filled we know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren it is a life of separation from the world each one every one belonging to the brethren all sinners born again as soon as they are born again can no longer live as they have been living a change is wrought there is repentance unto life and the sinner is no longer living after the flesh the things of the flesh his great concern is to be after the spirit the things of the spirit and it is what he can see of the things of the spirit in other people who are born again that causes him to love them for who they are and what they are by the grace of

God do remember that what they really love in the brethren is the image of Christ which they can see evidenced in their lips and lives yes good it is if any of us reflect it in such a way that others can look on us and desire that they want to be found among us living and dying believing we are indeed people loved with everlasting love that concern should be in our everyday lives not in any way whatever to stumble others who might be on the stretch after God and godliness suffer that word of exhortation and now this life is not only a life of prayer and that life of prayer I might sum up is lived like this ever on thy captain calling make thy worst condition known he shall hold thee up when falling or shall lift thee up when down

I said it was a life of separation from the world and you find every sinner born again stands alongside Moses where he stood when he chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season it is a great choice to make but love in the sinner's breast enables him to make it he can look round the world in which he lives and moves and he can say let others stretch their arms like seas and grasp in all the shore grant me the visits of thy face and I desire no more he is like the psalmist when he said as you sung about him in the opening hymn one thing it just possesses his mind he is satiated with that all absorbing desire one thing have I desired of the

[ 19 : 07 ] Lord that will I seek after that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life that I may behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple how glad I am that this religion that is of God is so often expressed in desire when e'er to call the saviour mine my soul with ardent wish aspires can it be less than power divine which animates these strong desires and they are strong desires oh they are so strong that sometimes you can appeal to God I will not let thee go except thou bless me and think of Jabez oh that thou wouldst bless me indeed and God granted him that which he requested and he would do the light for you he delighteth in mercy we know that we have passed from death unto life and now you see that this life will be a life whereby the sinner being born again goes up to the house of prayer with a deep down concern to get something for his soul he now knows of a truth that he is the subject of a never dying soul and his soul being immortal can only feed upon immortal food and so he comes up longing

I seek and hope to find a fortune for my soul oh he wants something from God for he is like the prodigal returning and he began to be in want and it proceeds from life life divine we know that we have passed from death unto life and he says I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness he is on the stretch and it might be well for you dear people to keep it in mind especially the older ones and the grey heads that those who were young feeling like the character I am trying to describe one who was just past as it were or only recently from death unto life he will have his eyes open to see what there is of

God in you your lips your life and if you should slip turn aside you will make him feel stumbled in his mind that you being as he hopes a sinner born again should do this or that or you need to be on the watch that others may see that we have been with Jesus and that we may indeed show whose we are and whom we serve we know that we have passed from death unto life and now this life is not only a life of separation from the world it is a life of dependence not easy to live but when you get grace to do it it is a beautiful life to be helped to live dependence on

God as said the apostle for the life that I now live I live by faith upon the son of God who loved me and gave himself for me and how do you live such a life a life of dependence on God in everything mark the word it is inclusive it is comprehensive in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known unto God thus you live a life of faith a life of prayer a life of dependence and all the while you desire to follow on to know the Lord to hoard up the sacred word feed thereon and grow go on to seek to know the Lord and practice what you know much might be said along that line of thought we know that we have passed from death unto life

I might say and I must say that as soon as the sinner is born again this life will be made manifest as being a life of conflict the word of God is very suggestive fight the good fight of faith lay hold upon eternal life but oh there is a conflict that goes on within the flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh and the one is contrary to the other so that she cannot do the things that she would and the outcome of that is as I have told you I repeat it it will bear repeating that you say often at the end of the day I would do good but evil is present with me and what a handicap it is and how you need more grace that what you are by nature should be subdued under it and that grace should super abound and yet to find in your heart a principle a power that would do good is an evidence you will pass from death unto life no sinner as he is born would do good as he begins to grow up and go forth into life he will not give any evidence that he has got that concern to do good but he will just live according to what he is by nature as he was born and now when a sinner is born again then there is a miracle of grace wrought as

[ 25 : 54 ] I said and it is set forth in the word of God and good it is to look in your own heart and find that you also have had that miracle wrought within a new heart also will I give you and a new spirit will I put within you I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh and I will give you a heart of flesh and I will put my spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes and ye shall keep my judgments and do them and ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers and ye shall be my people and I will be your God this is what the word of God declares concerning poor sinners born again who find in their hearts a solemn predominating concern to do good although they have to painfully feel at the end of every day how far short they come in doing it often having to lament regarding being a real

Christian it is so high I cannot attend to it eh but the hymn writer says they who fain would serve God best are conscious most of wrong within we know that we have passed from death unto life and I say this life is a life of conflict the spirits of the just confined in bodies grown to death consigns them dust to dust and then and not till then the conflicts done what will you see in the Shulamite as it were a company of two armies one army is in accordance with what you are by nature and just fights for the flesh the other is according to what you are by grace and that is after the spirit the things of the spirit and look you sometimes victory hangs in doubtful scale but there is a word

I have been so glad of God a troop shall overcome him for he shall overcome it the last yes life will triumph over death we know that we have passed from death unto life just to sum up this viewpoint of the subject this life then that the sinner born again is concerned to live is a life of sanctification to be set apart for God oh how wonderful is the doctrine of sanctification but how much more wonderful it is to have the sweet experience of it known and felt in our souls and to have that feeling of this prayer and this ambition mind living and dying to be dying this is the will of God your sanctification let us look at the subject from another viewpoint we know that we have passed from death onto life because we love the brethren let us look at that word brethren it is a great word for it describes the elect of

God and it means this wherever you come in touch with one who is a sinner born again even if it should be at earth remotest bounds and his skin is black and not white you find your heart going forth to such and one as a brother a sister as the case may be the word of God tells us by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have love one to another and you do not pick and choose no if you are a sinner born again if this root of the matter the root of love is found in you the sack will rise wherever you discern the grace of God in anyone a man a youth and may and glad you will be to see it and be like Barnabas who when he came to

Antioch and saw the grace of God he was glad oh dear friends the grace of God has made me glad hundreds of times to see it read about it hear about it and I wish I could hear more about it and hear something about it from some of you before the church of Christ telling out what God has done for your souls in as much as you have passed from death unto life and you know that you do love the brethren and the brethren say to you who are in the church you who are without sinners born again come in thou blessed of the Lord wherefore standest thou without we know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren and now in these brethren there is a oneness it is called the unity of the spirit it is a oneness in aim you find every sinner born again feels just like you do and what you want he wants also when you desire to live nearer to

[ 32 : 09 ] God that is just what he desires to do when you are concerned to get good for your soul that is just what he is after as he seeks God night and day to get it yes there is a oneness of aim and look you this aim is not to do with time only here you see the great distinction between the dead and the living those who journey through life just as they are born all their concerns and their aims are to do with time eh but the man in our text who belongs to the brethren his great concern is about eternity where shall I spend it how stands the case my soul with thee for heaven are thy credentials clear oh he wants something for his soul he wants something to assure him it will be well when he steps out of time into eternity and that in a right mind is his great concern as he journeys on through life all other things are subordinate to it

Lord Jesus make thyself to me a living bright reality is how that man feels do you oh this love to the brethren is love to him who is our brother born for adversity our elder brother Jesus Christ is called wonderful it is to contemplate that and now these brethren then have this wonderful oneness in their aims if each one begins to tell out what he is really living for he will find that all are aiming in the same direction that I may know him and the power of his resurrection the fellowship of his sufferings and be made conformable to his death that I may have matters made right between my soul and God that I may win

Christ and be found in him then there is among these brethren and I mean each one every one there is a unity of knowledge knowledge and now that knowledge bears some may know only just a little but it is what God has given as yet they can only say one thing I know whereas I was blind now I can see or they cannot say yet what Paul said I know in whom I have believed and that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day they have not yet got to that stability in their soul's feelings but they will obtain it and they look on at what Job said and feel as yet shall I ever know it I know that my

Redeemer liveth but there are these graduations in experience there are these distinctions in knowledge and yet it is the knowledge of God there is a word I like to look at and it will help you too if you are helped to think about it and it says this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days saith the Lord I will put my law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts and will be their God and they shall be my people and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor and every man his brother saying know the Lord this is the word I mean for they shall all know me from the least of them unto the greatest of them saith the

Lord for I will forgive their iniquity and I will remember their sin no more from the least of them to the greatest of them and that just means in age young middle age and those in life even in time and the hoary head yes the least of them you may feel to come in there some of you even so it is not the will of your father in heaven that one of these little ones should perish it is a wonderful mercy to have the least knowledge that the spirit of God has wrought in our souls although as yet you cannot say much about it but you are indeed no longer as you were born you are alive unto God and deep down in your heart is that concern to be numbered with the brethren and meanwhile you look on those you know and listen to what they have to tell about the dealings of

[ 37 : 50 ] God with their souls and you find a sweet oneness as in water face answer with under face so does the heart of man to man there is a oneness in their exercises there is an exercise unto godliness and sometimes that is enumerated in the public prayers as you listen to them and you know dear friends sometimes you follow them along and how often in a public prayer as you listen to it do you say amen within you might even drop a silent tear where you are before god because you feel that oneness of spirit with the one addressing the majesty of heaven oh it is good to feel it and we know that we have passed from death on to life when we find that those whom god helps to pray ask god for just what we want what we know deep down in our souls we cannot live without what we must have or be lost another thought is among the brethren there is this unity of the spirit and this oneness as I term it not only in their prayers but in their praises and in their pleasures how good it is to see people taught of god united in worship when apart from what they are as sinners born again they would all be strangers one to another but by the grace of god they come together and they flow together to the goodness of god and they are brothers and sisters in the lord and in a church state how beautiful it is when you view it of right what says the apostle first of all we gave ourselves to the lord and then to each other and this is the way walking in it thus may we abide in union with each other and the lord and possessing sweet communion joys which earth cannot afford you will find as regards the brethren as you meet with them whether they are brothers or sisters it matters not but you will find there is a great difference in how they are taught of god and what their experience is some have got a deep down experience and have lived long and can tell out the deep things of god others as yet have only taken a step or two in the life divine and they must be considered from that viewpoint remembering who hath despised the day of small things and not forgetting what you sing those feeble desires and wishes so weak as jesus inspires and bids you still see and remember it is a great thing to be a seeking soul and any of you who can tell out a deep line of things in your soul's experience have you left off being a seeking soul you still come in that category yes bless soul that can say

Christ only I see be constant always yes wait on him dear friends however weak you feel to be the lord whom thou seekest will not tarry long and do remember this beautiful blessed characteristic of the sinner's friend to him the weakest is as dear as the strong remember that we know that we have passed from death onto life because we love the brethren there is this sweet unity in the worship of god and how good it is to feel it sometimes when you can say lord it is good for us to be here when the house of prayer becomes the house of god and the gate of heaven but I will soon come to the amen going back to this word love we know that we have passed from death onto life because we love the brethren and now there are many things that love will do and evidence that it is love love to the brethren when you may not be able to say much about the dealings of god with your soul but you are glad to do something for the house of god and he whose house it is to do what joseph heart says trust in the lord with all your heart and do what good you can oh that is a great line of things to be the subject of but just look at godly john here beloved let us love one another for love is of god and everyone that loveth is born of god and knoweth god and now here is love 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 does not mean that you must be put to death for the brethren to get good thereby although the martyrs did lay down their lives that you and i might be helped to worship god and have freedom to do it but it really means what is explained elsewhere i beseech you therefore brethren by the mercies of god that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice holy acceptable unto god which is your reasonable service so it is your reasonable service if god has done this for you if god has centered his love on you and taught you to love him and all to do with him and his if he has helped you to say and everything that's dear to him to me is also dear it is your reasonable service to do what you can to evidence that you do love the brethren as every opportunity is afforded to do good unto all men and especially they that be of the household of faith and says godly john but who so hath this world's good and seeth his brother have need and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him how dwelleth the love of god in him my little children let us not love in word neither in

tongue but in deed and in truth and hereby we know that we are of the truth and shall assure our hearts before him oh you see dear friends this love enables you to do something for the brethren and what you do for each one you have got this feeling in doing it because ye belong to Christ and I desire to also love and love flows out and is practical in the expression of it yes love will move our heart and cause it to overflow set going a concern to do what good you can and that will be either with your hands or with your feet to run errands to go hither and thither to render health where it is needful or with your lips and that will be to say a kind word a word of sympathy a word of help a word of encouragement yes when they that fear the Lord speak often one to another we know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren and oh what a word there is in the

Corinthians Epistle I looked at it before I came across to try to preach if any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ let him be anathema Maranatha oh that you and I might be helped to appeal to God with whom we have to do I love the Lord because you have heard the voice of my supplication therefore will I call upon him as long as I live and to be able to say we love the place oh God wherein thine honour dwells the joy of thine abode all earthly joy excels and why there my best friends my kindred dwell there

God my saviour reigns met men with him i air 9 4, 2, 10, 1, and the 11th.