

Homiletical Outline 1 Jn 3:11-18 (Intro to the preaching?)

None stumbled in his walk. Some were clearly whispering prayers. In the first YouTube recording, one is heard saying in Arabic, "Jesus, my life is in your hands," as he felt the knife on his neck. The man beside said, "Amen." Not an exact quote of Stephen at his martyrdom, but close enough.

A few weeks ago, twenty Egyptian Christians and a brother in the Lord from Chad were kidnapped, paraded, and beheaded by men of the Islamic State in Libya. One by one, they were urged to recant their faith in Christ. Not one did. They were murdered simply for being Christian.

Because we are Christ's people we must love one another. This morning's sermon will have three elements: **A Sad Story, A Solemn Warning and A Sacrificial Offering.**

A Sad Story

1. Verse 11
 - a. Who is recipient?
 - b. Answered by the text of First John
 - i. 1st John 1:7 says "the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all unrighteousness."
 - ii. 1st John 2:1 says "if anyone sins we have an advocate before the father"
 - c. Christians - believers
 - i. Struggling to love one another
 - ii. Not unique in NT
 - iii. Heretics were in and left: 1 John 2:19
 - iv. John was giving the hope of assurance in an exhortation to love
2. 'the beginning'
3. Verse 12a
 - a. Gen 3
 - b. Gen 4
 - c. Problem is Cain was of the evil one and delighted in doing evil
 - d. Verse 12b
 - i. We see the same in our neighbours
 - ii. Work of HS ☐worship☐hate
 - e. We have the beginnings of good works, and the world hates us for that.
 - f. Jesus says the same: John 6:7 "the world hates me because I witness concerning it that its deeds are evil."
4. Verse 13
 - a. ESV renders it well: "that"
 - b. We can't doubt that they will hate us
 - i. John 15:20: "Remember the word that I said to you, 'A slave is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, **they will also persecute you.**" There's no doubt here.
 - ii. **Sad story** goes on and on
 - c. Don't need to Google for very long to find proof of the constant war.
 - d. The 2013 International Religious Freedom Report states that "In Syria, the Christian presence is becoming a shadow of its former self. After three years of civil war hundreds of thousands fled the country, desperate to escape the ongoing violence perpetrated by the government and extremist groups. In the city of Homs the number of Christians went from approximately 160,000 to as few as 1,000."
 - e. Hatred is not only far away, but also here at home
 - i. C.S. Lewis - one error we can fall into is to disbelieve devils, demons, spiritual realm - ~ see the war
 - f. But the war is here
 - i. Root of the stereotypes of Christianity
 - ii. "Scared" "You think you're better" "Holier than thou" "Don't preach"

- iii. All because we choose not to do certain things
 - iv. Abortion protests – spew anger, vitriol, hatred
 - g. The temptation society gives us is to hope they won't hate us.
 - i. Use name of God – no meaning
 - h. 13 Million ppl in ON – 23 URCs
 - i. Far more non-religious ppl
 - ii. Add Bap, Luth, Evan, CRC, Pente, Presby
 - iii. 2001 census - Still not have as many ppl as non-religious category
- 5. Point of the **Sad Story**: even in this peaceful nation the ancient battle is raging, because we are Christ's ppl, they hate us.
- 6. At the same time our passage gives a **Solemn warning** for those who profess to believe in Christ, but whose lives show no evidence of that.

Solemn Warning

- a. Important to see that this passage is about assurance
- b. Backtrack:
 - i. Dealing with the problem of assurance in v. 2
 - ii. Our struggle as well in Matthew 7:22
 - iii. Solution in V. 10
- 7. Verse 14a
 - i. John 5:24 where Jesus says “the one who believes in me has passed from death to life.”
 - ii. Assurance of this fact comes from our love for one another
- 8. Verse 14b-15
 - i. Hate brother go to hell?
 - ii. Paraphrases Jesus in Matt 5 “I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be liable to the hell of fire”
- b. **Here's why John is so serious about this:**
 - i. What if your brother is one of Christ's people, sacrifice self for him?
 - ii. What about opposite? – hate him?
- c. If we hate them; we have murdered them, allied ourselves w/ppl of Satan
 - i. gossip, slander, envy, speak in anger, take revenge and dishonour members of Christ's flock, we are doing Satan's work- laughs
- d. *No Exit*
- e. Think back – brothers in Libya
 - i. Maybe if the hatred of the world was as obvious we would love
- ii. Recap Sad Story, Solemn Warning**
- f. We hear and ask ourselves is there any hope?
 - i. Need to repent and turn, spur on, not work *for*, but work *out* our salvation and be assured by the work of the Spirit in our lives
 - ii. They were Christians and their only hope was in the **Sacrificial offering**

Sacrificial Offering

- 1. Verse 16a
 - a. Good shepherd
 - i. If you do not know this Good Shepherd
 - b. John 15:12-14, “Greater love...you are my friends!”
 - c. Gave up everything
 - d. Loves us perfectly – only asks faith in return
- 2. Verse 16b “And we also ought to lay down *our* lives for the brethren.
 - a. Don't always have this opportunity but here's a test:
 - i. Verse 17
 - b. Offer all we possess – give of ourselves
 - i. Show our love by outward actions
 - ii. Not only out of excess – Eph 4 – work so that give

- iii. Have seen many instances
- iv. It would be nice if this was our only application
- c. John's not talking only about that
 - i. Let's dig a little deeper
 - ii. Person in back of your mind
 - iii. HC 107 - love our neighbors as ourselves, to be patient, peace-loving, gentle, merciful, and friendly toward them, and to protect them from harm as much as we can
 - iv. HC 112 says we are to defend their good name.
 - v. 1 Corinthians 13
- d. That person, what would you do for them?
 - i. That love which God had for us, we must direct it to our brothers and sisters.
- e. **Key point:** The love of our brothers and sisters is not because of how wonderful they are but because of how wonderful our Savior is
 - i. Because of what he did for us.
 - ii. Because he washed us clean in his blood.
 - iii. Because as a **Sacrificial Offering** he made us into one people who are free to love one another and so be assured that we are his people.

Conclusion

The truth from this passage is **because you are Christ's people, must love one another. Sad Story, Solemn Warning, Sacrificial Offering.** Brothers and Sisters, when you hear of these atrocities far away, let it turn you to your Saviour who has made you one with them and with each other. And when God, by his Spirit begins to work this love in your heart, then rejoice and be assured that you are indeed one of His people. But in the end, brothers and sisters, do not trust in yourselves or your own deeds, but fix your eyes on Christ, and "My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth."