

3:13 *The World Hates You*

Leaving the Darkened House of Death.

Origen: If we have passed from death to life by passing from unbelief to faith, let us not be surprised if the world hates us. For no one who has failed to pass from death to life, but has remained in death, can love those who have left the darkened house of death. Exhortation to Martyrdom 41.⁵⁸

Do Not Wonder.

Didymus the Blind: It is not to be wondered at if evil people, who are here called the “world,” hate those who live godly lives according to the commands of Christ. It would be much more surprising if such people loved us instead! Commentary on 1 John.⁵⁹

The World Distinguished from Creation.

Augustine: How often do you have to be told what the world is? John is not referring to the heavens or the earth or to anything which God has made but to the lovers of the world. Ten Homilies on 1 John 5.9.⁶⁰

3:14 *We Have Passed from Death into Life*

Because We Love.

Didymus the Blind: Whoever loves his brothers in God’s way has passed from death to life, but whoever does not have this love remains in death. In the same way the widow who enjoyed herself was dead, even if technically she was alive. ⁶² For anyone who lives like that has obviously forgotten God. Commentary on 1 John.⁶³

Passed from Death to Life.

Andreas: God says: “He who hears my words and does them will not see death but will be changed from death into life.” ⁶⁴ Catena.⁶⁵

3:15 No Murderer Has Eternal Life

Eternal Life Abiding.

Clement of Alexandria: Christ lives in a believing mind. Adumbrations.69

Brother a Generic Term.

Augustine: Whoever hates his brother is a murderer. But this text of Scripture does not apply to males only; it is equally valid for females. Any woman who has injured someone else must make amends as quickly as possible, and the injured sister must forgive without reserve. Letters 211.70

Killing Yourself with Hatred.

Augustine: Whoever hates is a murderer. You may not have prepared any poison or committed a crime. You have only hated, and in doing so, you have killed yourself first of all. Sermons 49.7.71

3:16 Laying Down One's Life for Others

Readiness to Die for Christ.

Augustine: We have been given the privilege of being able to lay down our lives for our brothers. But are you prepared to die for Christ? Tractates on the Gospel of John 47.11.75

3:17 Closing One's Heart to Another in Need

To the Least of These.

Cyprian: If alms given to the least are given to Christ, there is no reason for anyone to prefer earthly things to heavenly ones or to place human things before divine ones. Works and Almsgiving 16.78

Closing One's Heart.

Chrysostom: When you see someone in need, do not run away, but think to yourself, if that were you, would you want to be treated like that? Catena.79

Be Ready at Least to Give Goods.

Augustine: If you are not yet able to die for your brother, at least show him your ability to give him of your goods. Let love be stirring your inmost heart to do it, not for display but out of the very marrow of compassion, thinking only of the brother and his need. Ten Homilies on 1 John 5.12.⁸⁰

3:18 *Love in Deed and in Truth*

Put Love into Practice.

Chrysostom: It is not enough to have good intentions. You must also put them into effect with genuine willingness and a happy heart. Catena.⁸²

Love Is Active.

Hilary of Arles: Actions speak louder than words. Introductory Commentary on 1 John.⁸³

3:19 *Knowing That We Are of the Truth*

By This We Shall Know.

Oecumenius: We know that we belong to the truth if we love in deed as well as in word. Anyone who says one thing but does another is a liar and a stranger to the truth. Commentary on 1 John.⁸⁵

3:20 *God Is Greater Than Our Hearts*

God Knows Everything.

Clement of Alexandria: This means that God's power is greater than the conscience which belongs to the soul, because God's love knows everything. Adumbrations.⁸⁷

Persuading Our Hearts.

Oecumenius: If we practice what we preach, we shall persuade our hearts, that is to say, our consciences, that we are on the right track. For then God will bear witness that we have listened to what he says. Commentary on 1 John.⁸⁸

3:21 We Have Confidence Before God

If Our Hearts Do Not Condemn Us.

Augustine: Our conscience gives us a true answer, that we love and that genuine love is in us, not feigned but sincere, seeking our brother's salvation and expecting nothing from him except his salvation. Ten Homilies on 1 John 6.4.⁹¹

Attend to the Warnings of Conscience.

Cyril of Alexandria: As long as you are in this life (for this life is nothing other than the way which we all take), do not ignore or reject the warnings of your conscience. For if you do so, when you have run your course, your conscience will rise up against you and accuse you before your judge, and thrust you in front of the judge's sentence and turn you over to eternal punishment. You will not have to endure this if along the way you show yourself kind toward this adversary and accept his well-intended rebukes with gratitude. Catena.⁹²

3:22 Ask and You Will Receive

Whatever We Ask.

Theophylact: If we obey God's commands, then our obedience will bear fruit, for we shall receive whatever we ask for. Commentary on 1 John.⁹⁷

3:23 Love One Another

Believe in the Name of the Son.

Theophylact: The first point to be made here is that we must love one another according to the faith which we have in the name of Jesus Christ, for it is by this that we know that the grace of the Holy Spirit given to us will be firmly planted in us. The second thing to notice is the use of the word name, which is quite frequent in Scripture. It includes the will, the glory and the honor of the one who bears it, and his will is that everyone everywhere should be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. ⁹⁹ Commentary on 1 John.¹⁰⁰

3:24 *God Abides in Us by His Spirit*

God's Care.

Clement of Alexandria: Our assurance comes from his care for us and his provision for the future.

Adumbrations.¹⁰¹

Do unto Others.

Oecumenius: What does John mean by this? It is exactly what Jesus said: "Whatever you want others to do to you, do the same to them."¹⁰³ Therefore if we want our neighbors to be well-disposed toward us, we must be equally well-disposed toward them. If this is God's command, how much more ought we to obey it if we dwell in him and are sealed by him? He cannot deny himself, and it must surely be the case that whatever he has asked us to do he has already done or become in himself. Therefore if we do what he says, we know that he will give us whatever we ask and that his gift will be sealed in us. Commentary on 1 John.¹⁰⁴