

Love in the Family of God

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[0 : 00] 1 John 2, verses 3-17. The love of God is perfected.

By this we may know that we are in Him. Whoever says he abides in Him ought to walk in the same way in which He walked. Beloved, I am writing you no new commandment, but an old commandment that you had from the beginning.

The old commandment is the word that you have heard. At the same time, it is a new commandment that I am writing to you, which is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining.

Whoever says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in darkness. Whoever loves his brother abides in the light, and in him there is no cause for stumbling.

But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes. I am writing to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven for His namesake.

[1 : 37] I am writing to you, fathers, because you know Him who is from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. I am writing to you, children, because you know the Father.

I am writing to you, fathers, because you know Him who is from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one.

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life is not from the Father, but is from the world.

And the world is passing away along with its desires. But whoever does the will of God abides forever. I was reading an article published in the Nature Medicine Journal yesterday entitled The Proximal Origin of SARS-CoV-2.

I understood about 10% of it. But the article suggests that mutations in the receptor-binding domain in the protein spikes of the virus is what made this virus a deadly pathogen to humans.

[3 : 04] And that just boggled my mind, just thinking about how a microscopic mutation in a tiny virus is responsible for this global health emergency.

I think that should make us feel so very small. It reveals how little control we have over our lives and over this universe.

But as the late theologian R.C. Sproul used to say, if there is one single molecule in this universe running around loose, totally free of God's sovereignty, then we have no guarantee that a single promise of God will ever be fulfilled.

He's saying if there is even a single molecule in the world that is free, outside of God's sovereignty, then God cannot be sovereign. And there isn't a single molecule in the universe that's running around loose because God is the creator of it all.

And that's an awe-inspiring to think about in light of these realities, that God created it all, right? And what if I told you that I could introduce you to this God? What if I told you that you can have fellowship with God, a relationship with this God?

[4 : 24] And what if I told you that you can become a part of this God's family? And that's the kind of thing that should get us off our seats. And that's the grand reality that this passage is speaking of.

And this passage exposes kind of the false claims of having fellowship with God. And then it tells us what is the true test of whether or not we have genuine fellowship with God. So it tells us three things.

In verses 3 to 6, it says whoever keeps God's word has genuine fellowship with God. Verses 7 to 14, it tells us that whoever loves his brother has genuine fellowship with God.

And in verses 15 to 17, it says that whoever does God's will has genuine fellowship with God. So those are the three main points of this passage. Whoever keeps God's word, whoever loves his brother, whoever does God's will.

And the overarching message of this passage is that those who have received the Father's love through the gospel love their brothers and sisters in Christ. So the first sign of our love for God, of our fellowship with God, is that people keep God's word.

[5 : 29] It says in verse 3, And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. So even though Jesus was mentioned in the immediately preceding verse, he was mentioned as the advocate who enables us to have fellowship with God the Father.

But the main theme of chapter 1 has been fellowship with God. And Jesus was mentioned as the one who enables us to have fellowship with God.

So the person that we're getting to know here is probably the referring is God the Father. By this we know that we have come to know God, if we keep his commandments.

So then our ongoing assurance of salvation, our ongoing assurance that we have knowledge of God, rests on our ongoing obedience. Because obedience is the evidence of faith.

And this tells us what kind of knowledge is in view here too. And we think about that. It's not a mere abstract or impersonal cognitive knowledge, but it's a concrete and personal knowledge of God.

[6 : 33] It's experiential knowledge. When I was studying in seminary, I learned that there are plenty of people out there who write Bible commentaries worth thousands of pages who don't have a shred of knowledge of God, like this passage is talking about.

They don't actually know God. They just know about him. They just study and dissect his word. Yet don't know God in the personal sense of having relationship with him as this passage is speaking of, as John is speaking of.

And so do we actually keep God's commandments? That's the question to ask ourselves. If we really believe that there is a creator of this whole universe, a ruler of this universe, a judge of this universe, would we not do what he commands if we really believe that?

But what does God command? What does it mean to keep his commands? Verses 4 to 5 elaborate on that. It says, Whoever says, I know him, but does not keep his commandments, is a liar.

And the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. So keeping his commandments is parallel in this verse to keeping his word.

[7 : 52] And that leads us to ask, what is his word? And verse 7 tells us what it is. Beloved, I am writing you no new commandment, but an old commandment that you had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word that you have heard.

So the commandment is the word. And this word is the word that we have heard. In other words, it's the word that was mentioned earlier in chapter 1, verse 1. That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life.

So the word that we are to keep is the person and work of Jesus Christ. It's the gospel, the good news of Jesus Christ. To keep his commandments or to keep his word, that means to believe in Jesus and live as he did.

To love as he did. That's what it means to keep God's word, to keep his command. This is confirmed by verse 6 in our chapter. Whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.

That last pronoun he is literally that one in the Greek, and it's distinguished from the pronoun him. So it means whoever says he abides in God ought to walk in the same way in which that one or Jesus walked.

[9 : 16] So to keep God's word is to believe Jesus and obey Jesus. This is also confirmed by chapter 3, verse 23. It says, And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us.

So to keep God's word is to believe in Jesus and obey his commands. And some of obedience to his commands is loving, loving one another as Jesus did. And that's why the word commandment in 1 John, this letter of 1 John is always tied to Jesus' command to love the followers, the other fellow followers of Jesus Christ.

Go ahead. I think there's some people still waiting here. There's any way to add them. Okay, thanks. Thanks, John. And it says, Only when we believe in Jesus and love one another that we have God's truth in us.

And the love of God is truly perfected in us, it says. The phrase, The love of God is also a little bit ambiguous here. Does it mean the love that we have for God?

Or does it mean the love that God has for us? It's hard to be certain because the phrase is used, love of God is used also in chapter 5, verse 3.

[10:39] And there it refers to our love for God. But the word perfected, which can also mean completed, is used three other times in 1 John.

And every time it is used, it's referring to God's love being perfected in us, God's love being completed in us. And so that's, that's I think what is more likely to mean here, is that God's love is perfected in those who keep His word.

It's leading us to faith in and obedience to Jesus Christ, is the natural course of the love of God. I think that's what this means. God's love completes its course in our faith and obedience.

And that's such a beautiful idea. And it's that all of our faith, all of our obedience, everything that we do in life for God, is just an outworking of the love that God has already shown us.

It's captured differently in chapter 4, verse 19 of the same book. We love because He first loved us. It is because of God's love that we believe in Jesus, because God loved us first.

[11:54] It's because of God's love that we become like Jesus. It's because of God's love that we obey Jesus. It's God's love that starts it all. And so then, if our love for God is cold, that means we have not fully appreciated God's love for us.

If our obedience to God is lackluster, that means we have not fully appropriated God's love for us. So then, I want to urge you, brothers and sisters, to labor.

Labor every day to think about God's love for you and fill your heart with God's love every day. That should be what dominates our minds all the days of our lives.

The love of God, best captured in the gospel of Jesus Christ. That God so loved us that He sent His only Son to die for our sins that we might believe in Him and have eternal life.

That has the power to change us and that should dominate our minds. That should fill our days, fill our hearts. And that's, when we do that, it becomes a forceful current in our lives that leads us to more faith, more obedience, to a faithful Christian life.

[13:11] Now, this doesn't mean that true Christians who know God never sin. In chapter 1, made it very clear that Christians do sin. But Christians always repent of their sins and believe in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of their sins.

So in doing that, true Christians, every true Christian always keeps the gospel, always keeps the word, always keeps the commandment that's in view here.

And that's the first criterion, the first test of our true fellowship with God. Whoever keeps God's word, do we keep God's word? And having spoken of God's love for us, John appropriately addresses God's people as beloved in verse 7.

This is John's favorite way of referring to the church. He loves the church because he knows that the church is loved by God. And he writes to them, beloved, those loved by God, those loved by me, I am writing you no new commandment, but an old commandment that you had from the beginning.

The old commandment is the word that you have heard. At the same time, it is a new commandment that I am writing to you, which is true in him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining.

[14:30] But how can a command be both old and new? It means that this ancient command to love one another is new in the sense that it is continually reappropriated and applied in our lives as followers of Jesus.

Throughout his life, death, and resurrection, through his life and death, and the resurrection, Jesus ushered in a new age and he was the light of the world so that those who believe in him also become light of the world.

And just as when you use a torch to light another torch at, do they do that at the Olympic or do they just pass the torch? I think they just pass the torch. If you use one torch to light another torch, it doesn't become new light.

Right? It's the same light, yet it doesn't lose any of it. It just multiplies. It's reappropriated. It's reapplied. In the same way, the light of Christ lights the light of God in our lives and that shines continually and it is new.

It is a new commandment that we are to obey. The true light is already shining, speaking of the light of Christ, and therefore the darkness is passing away. And the darkness that is passing away is parallel to the world that is passing away along with desires in verse 17.

[15:44] So the darkness here refers to the sinful world that is passing away. And this comment by John paves the way for the second test of authentic faith, of genuine fellowship with God, and that is whoever loves his brother has true fellowship with God.

By this I mean loving our Christian brothers and sisters. Because we have God as our Heavenly Father, we have each other as brothers and sisters. And it says in verses 9 to 11, Whoever says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in darkness.

Whoever loves his brother abides in the light, and in him there is no cause for stumbling. But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

Remember the context in which 1 John was written that I mentioned to you guys last week? There were some people who claimed to have this newfound knowledge of God, but they actually denied Christ and then they separated themselves from the church.

They separated, left the church that John is addressing here. And so whenever John says, Whoever says such and such and says something bad, that means he's referring to the kinds of things that these separatists were saying, people who denied Christ and separated from the church.

[17:11] And as he said in the last chapter, fellowship with God is always, without exception, expressed in fellowship with God's people. No one can claim to love God while hating the people who are dearest to God.

No one can claim to be united with God while separating themselves from the people of God. And John just said in verse 8 that the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining. The separatists undoubtedly were claiming that they have the true light, but John disputes their claim on the grounds that they are failing to love their Christian brothers and sisters. Whoever says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in darkness.

Whoever loves his brother abides in the light and in him there is no cause for stumbling. But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

For those who remain in the light of God by remaining in community with one another, it says there is no cause for stumbling. Cause for stumbling is something that trips people up into sin, trips believers into sin, something that causes them to sin.

[18:25] And of course, as I said before, this doesn't mean that believers who love one another never sin. John said in no uncertain terms in verses 8 to 9 of chapter 1, if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. I think that's what he is referring to here, that there is no stumbling and no darkness for those who walk in love with one another.

Because faithful members of a gospel-preaching local church that love one another are not going to remain in darkness and continue in unrepentant sin.

Groping about in the dark because they've been blinded by their own sins. You can think of it this way, like an isolated walk that you find on a trail is going to be jagged, it's going to have sharp, rough edges.

But rocks that you find on the riverbed, the pebbles you find on the beach, on Shingles Beach, they're smooth, right?

[19:36] And they're rounded. And what's the reason for that? It's because of abrasion, right? That the rocks that are in rivers and in the ocean experience abrasion. The currents and the waves, they move the rocks, they collide with each other, causing the chips to break off and making them smooth, right?

They also face resistance from the sand. In the same way, we use sandpaper to smooth out rough surfaces. The sand in the riverbed and in the ocean serves to smooth out these rocks to make them these well-rounded pebbles.

And in much the same way, it's by staying in community precisely when things get difficult. It's by rubbing up against each other, sharpening each other as iron sharpens iron.

That's when we become more aware of our sins. And in that context, when we admonish one another in love, speak the truth in love to one another, when we confess our sins to one another, that's when we become smoother pebbles.

That's when we walk in the light. We don't walk in the darkness. Dietrich Bonhoeffer puts it this way in his book, *Life Together*. Sin wants to be alone with people.

[20 : 49] It takes them away from the community. The more lonely people become, the more destructive the power of sin over them. Sin wants to remain unknown.

It shuns the light. In the darkness of what is left unsaid, sin poisons the whole being of a person. In confession, the light of the gospel breaks into the darkness and closed isolation of the heart.

Sin must be brought into the light. Since the confession of sin is made in the presence of another Christian, the last stronghold of self-justification is abandoned.

The sinner surrenders, giving up all evil, giving the sinner's heart to God and finding the forgiveness of all one's sin in the community of Jesus Christ and other Christians. Sin that has been spoken and confessed has lost all of its power.

It has been revealed and judged as sin. Confession in the presence of another believer is the most profound kind of humiliation. It hurts, makes one feel small.

[21 : 54] It deals a terrible blow to one's pride. It is none other than Jesus Christ who openly suffered the shameful death of a sinner in our place, who was not ashamed to be crucified for us as an evildoer.

And it is nothing else but our community with Jesus Christ that leads us to the disgraceful dying that comes in confession so that we may truly share in this cross.

The cross of Jesus Christ shatters all pride. This is why those who do not have fellowship with brothers and sisters in Christ are blinded and they grope about in darkness of sin.

This is why those who abide in the light of the Christian community have no cause for stumbling.

We get to walk in the light, in the transparency, the brightness of the light.

And having spoken of this irreplaceability of Christian community, John addresses his audience personally and directly in verses 12 to 14. And he does this to remind them of the privileges of being in the family of God, being part of the family of God.

[23 : 02] And he addresses first the little children and then fathers and then young men in verses 12 to 13. And then he repeats his address to all three of those groups with slight variations in that same order.

And so it's tempting to interpret these categories of people as referring to Christians of varying maturity. For example, children being baby Christians, young men being, I guess, adolescent Christians, and fathers being mature Christians.

But I don't think that's what John is referring to here for several reasons. First, the diminutive form of the word child translated little children in verse 12 is one of John's favorite affectionate ways of addressing the church.

And whenever he uses it, he uses it to refer to all believers, not a small subset of believers. He does this in the Gospel of John as well. John 13, 33, 1 John 2, verse 1, 12, 28, chapter 3, verse 7, verse 18, and so on.

And then secondly, the content of the address does not suggest that there are varying degrees of spiritual maturity in view. And then third, if John was trying to convey differing degrees of maturity, it would have made sense for him to use either an ascending or descending order going from child to young man to fathers or vice versa, the opposite direction.

[24 : 31] But he mixes it up, he goes children and then fathers and then young men. And then lastly, I think this is the most compelling evidence is that, well, actually the first reason I gave the most compelling evidence, I think it's the second most compelling evidence, is that when referring to varying levels of maturity in the church, scripture usually only has two categories, the mature and the immature, the children and the adults.

So for example, Hebrews chapter 5, verses 12 to 14, it says, for though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness since he is a child.

But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil. So for all of these reasons, I don't think John's using these categories at different levels of maturity.

I think when John addresses children, he is addressing all believers and then I think he is addressing two demographic subsets under that. first, older members of the congregation and then secondly, the younger members of the congregation.

And men are being used here representatively, so it refers to the whole church. And this is consistent with how different demographic subsets in the church are usually addressed in other parts of scripture.

[25 : 51] Titus 2 addresses older men and then older women, younger women and then younger men. 1 Timothy chapter 5, verses 1 to 2 says, Do not rebuke an older man but encourage him as you would a father, younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters in all purity.

So then the exhortation to children is a general exhortation to all people, all of God's people. And then the exhortation to fathers and young men are addressing kind of narrower subgroups, the older people and the younger people.

And then that's why John says in verses 12 to 13, I am writing to you little children because your sins are forgiven for His namesake.

I am writing to you fathers because you know Him who is from the beginning. I am writing to you young men because you have overcome the evil one. So John's here reminding them about the privileges that they share by virtue of being members of the family of God.

And he's reminding them that we have all of us as children of God have been forgiven of our sins for His namesake. John speaks elsewhere in this letter about the need to believe in the name of Jesus and that's likely what he means here that God the Father forgives us our sins because of Jesus' namesake on account of what Jesus has accomplished in His life, death, and resurrection for us.

[27 : 18] That's the basis by which God forgives us our sins. It's what John talked about at the beginning of this chapter that we have an advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the righteous who is the propitiation for our sins.

So that means God doesn't forgive us because we have earned it by outbalancing our sins with good deeds. God doesn't forgive us because we deserve it on account of us for the sake of our name but rather He forgives us for Christ's namesake because of what Jesus has done in dying on the cross as the atoning sacrifice for our sin.

And this is something that we have as God's people once for all. A more literal translation would be your sins have been forgiven for Jesus' sake, for His namesake.

And then after addressing us generally He tells the older members of the church I am writing to you fathers because you know Him who is from the beginning. Older members of the church are prone to take pride in the fact in that they have knowledge in that they have experience in their age.

Well tell me let me tell you what you young people should know. Let me tell you what the days were like back in the day or let me tell you what things were like when I was your age.

[28 : 48] You should listen to me because I've lived longer than you and know more than you and have experienced more than you. That's the kind of things that older members are prone to take pride in but John reminds them here that their greatest spiritual asset and privilege is not their age but that they know the ageless one.

You know Him who is from the beginning. The Word of God who was in the beginning with God and was God the Word of Life which was from the beginning you know fathers you know mothers.

And then John addresses the younger members of the church. I am writing to you young men because you have overcome the evil one. Younger people I think in their youthful exuberance are likely to take pride in their strength their vigor their optimism they are excited about the prospect of overcoming the problems and barriers that remain in this day and age.

They want to change the world. They want to resist and overcome the status quo. But John reminds them that their greatest spiritual asset and their greatest privilege is not their triumphant strength or outlook but the fact that they have already overcome the evil one in Jesus Christ.

God defeated the evil one Satan through the life death resurrection ascension of Jesus and we get to partake in that victory and no matter how successful or accomplished we get we can never one up that accomplishment.

[30 : 22] He's wanting to establish in a sure greater reality than what we might be prone to aspire to. And then very interestingly John repeats his threefold exhortation in very similar terms in verses 13 to 14.

I write to you children because you know the Father. I write to you fathers because you know him who is from the beginning. I write to you young men because you are strong and the word of God abides in you and you have overcome the evil one.

So why does John repeat it like this? There are slight variations so we know it's not a copy editing mistake but they are nearly identical and it's curious why he repeats them like this and if you look more carefully you'll also notice a pattern in the first three exhortations John said I am writing to you three times in the present tense in the second three exhortations John says I write to you three times that's a translation of the aorist tense in Greek which communicates a completed aspect something that has already been completed so that in the first set John's emphasizing the ongoing aspect of his writing and then in the second set he's emphasizing the already done aspect of his writing so to exaggerate this contrast the new American standard Bible another translation translates the first three clauses as I am writing to you and then the second three clauses as I have written to you I think it's similar to the way Paul repeats himself in Philippians chapter 4 verse 4 when he says rejoice in the Lord always again I will say rejoice right John wants our identity as members of the household of God our privileges as members of the family of God to be so deeply etched onto our souls that he's taking such pains to repeat himself he's wrapping in one potent package both his instruction and the repetition of that instruction and he's saying I am writing to you little children that your sins are forgiven for his namesake I am writing to you fathers that you know him who is from the beginning I am writing to you young men because you have overcome the evil one you see I have already written this to you children that you know the father that your greatest privilege is not your worldly status but your heavenly status as children of God the father I've already written this to you

I've already written to you fathers and mothers that your greatest privilege is not your worldly knowledge or experience but that you know Jesus who is from the beginning I've written this already to you young men and women that you are strong not because of your health or youthfulness but because the word of God dwells in you and this and not any other worldly accomplishments is your greatest triumph that you have overcome the evil one in Jesus Christ that's what he's trying to convey to us brothers and sisters that's the greatest triumph of our generation is not going to be overcoming COVID 19 our greatest triumph as God's people is that we have already overcome the evil one in Jesus Christ we should be even more glad that we have been spared from the fatal pathogen of sin than that we have been spared so far from

[34 : 06] COVID 19 our greatest privilege in life is not our worldly status our educational attainment our corporate promotion our greatest privilege is that we are children of God our father that's the reality the strong powerful truth that can that can keep us rooted and grounded amidst all of this chaos and are you living with this reality etched onto your minds and onto your hearts right now that you are children of God and if we live with an awareness of what a staggering privilege it is to be a part of the family of God then we will love our brothers and sisters we will love one another that's the second test of our authentic faith of genuine fellowship with God and the third test is given in verses 15 to 17 and it's the converse of what

John has just been talking about it's the flip side and that's to not love the world he says in verse 15 do not love the world or the things in the world if anyone loves the world the love of the father is not in him John said earlier in verse 2 that Jesus died for the sins of the whole world meaning that salvation through Jesus Christ is available to all the world not just to a select few and of course the famous verse that we are all familiar with likely is John 3 16 says for God so loved the world that he gave his only son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life so obviously John's using the word world in a different sense than is used in those contexts by the world John doesn't mean the unbelievers are unbelieving neighbors to whom we should love and share the gospel of Jesus Christ with he's referring rather to the sinful world to worldliness things that are contrary to the will of

God that things that we ought to flee from and if we have the love that which is from the father within us and we love the father in return then it says we will not love the world because the things of this world are not from the father so John defines worldliness with three phrases first the desires of the flesh second the desires of the eyes and third pride of life the desires of the flesh is quite

general it refers to the inordinate unruly cravings of our sinful flesh in Galatians chapter 5 verses 19 to 21 Paul lists some of these and calls this the works of the flesh he says sexual immorality impurity sensuality idolatry sorcery enmity strife jealousy fits of anger rivalries dissensions divisions envy drunkenness orgies and things like these and he says

I warn you as I warned you before that those who do such things will not inherit sex as God designed it in the context of a lawful marriage is good but sexual immorality fornication bestiality homosexuality adultery they are sinful and worldly enjoying food as God designed it in proper proportion is good but gluttony is sinful and worldly enjoying adult beverages in moderation can be good but drunkenness is sinful and worldly friendly competition can be a healthy way to spur one another up spur on one another but rivalries dissensions divisions and envy are sinful and worldly the desires of the flesh are always seeking to transgress its God given boundaries and to indulge them is worldly that's what

John is writing the desires of the eyes is a bit more specific refers to sins that are activated by the covetous eye looking at other people with envy desiring the esteem and affection that rightly belong to them for yourself desiring the possessions of other people their clothes their appearance their cars their houses their wealth looking around with greed seeing with our eyes with greed wanting more for yourself than others looking desiring with lustful eyes these are all worldly desires that produce sin and death and then finally John mentions the pride of life if you're using the English standard version the ESV there's a footnote next to that phrase if you check the footnote in your bibles it says pride in possessions I think that specific nuance is in view here also the word life is used in numerous places throughout the New

[39 : 24] Testament to refer to one's life savings or to one's inheritance and there's a close parallel later in 1 John chapter 3 verse 17 which says but if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need yet closes his heart against him how does God's love abide in him so there the phrase world's goods is literally in Greek the life of the world so whoever has things in life the have should share with the have nots in the church family similarly then the pride of life refers to our pride in the things we have in life certainly includes our wealth and property but I think it can be applied more broadly to any worldly thing that we take pride in our status our education things that we have the parallels this really parallels in a way the first sin of humanity in Genesis chapter 3 verse 6 not sure

John intends this but it suggests the parallel because it says there that when the woman saw that the tree was good for food desire of the flesh and that it was a delight to the eyes desires of the eyes and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise in other words to be like God the pride of life she took of its fruit and ate and also gave some to her husband who was with her and he ate but the members of the family of God John is saying should not be entangled in such worldly pursuits because as verse 17 says the world is passing away along with its desires but whoever does the will of God abides forever and this is the third and final test whoever does the will of God worldliness is often attractive the desires of this world are often pleasurable but it's extremely short-sighted according to this passage to pursue these things because the world is even now passing away along with desires it's the same expression that John used early in verse 8 the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining and because the word of life Jesus took on human flesh and was born into this world in the person of Jesus Christ by dying on the cross for the sins of those who would trust in him and by being raised victoriously from the dead Jesus has turned the world on its head he's turned the hourglass over so to speak so that the world and its sinful ways now have a definite expiration date already the kingdom of God has broken into our world already it's just a matter of time before the dominion of God is fully established in the world because the world has already been overcome the dominion of evil the evil one has already been overthrown so then why should we cling to a world that's passing away like Lot's wife did in looking back at Sodom and Gomorrah there is no future in worldliness is what John is telling us I was thinking about this why are people emptying the grocery shelves of non-perishable goods rice flour canned beans canned tuna it's because they're trying to limit the number of their trips to grocery stores yes and they're preparing for the unlikely event that we enter a total lockdown where people are not even allowed to go to a grocery store but why don't we see anyone buying cases of milk because milk has an expiration date it's foolish to stock up on milk because it's going to spoil after just a short time there's no point in getting more than you need and likewise

John's telling it's foolish to be so invested in the things of this world it's foolish to indulge the desires of the flesh the desires of the eyes and the pride of life because we have a far more enduring inheritance in Jesus in contrast to the world that is passing away it says whoever does the will of God abides forever John's referring to the eternal life he spoke of in chapter 1 verse 2 why should people of eternity be infatuated with such transient things why should people who possess the precious jewel of the gospel of Jesus Christ be fascinated with the cheap rusting trinkets of this world why should people who belong to the family of God the triune God himself who have a heavenly eternal inheritance why should we try so hard to belong in this world to boast in the pride of life we shouldn't we have no reason to we should remember who we are that's what John is telling us that those who have received the father's love through the gospel of Jesus Christ should love their brothers and sisters in Christ that should be our primary occupation