

Briefing Document-1 John Lesson 62

May 20, 2026

Executive Summary

The following briefing examines the sharp contrast between the "children of the devil" and the "children of God" as presented in 1 John 3:11-18. The central theme is that love for fellow believers is the primary evidence of a person's spiritual state. The document identifies three negative characteristics of those who do not know God—murder, hatred, and indifference—and contrasts them with the sacrificial love and active service required of believers. A critical takeaway is that hatred is considered the "moral equivalent" of murder in the eyes of God. Furthermore, true Christian love must go beyond words and manifest in physical actions and self-sacrifice to provide genuine assurance of salvation.

The Characteristics of the Children of the Devil

The source identifies three specific behaviors and attitudes that define those who are not children of God. These traits range from extreme violence to passive selfishness.

1. Murder

Murder is described as the extreme condition of hatred and the first characteristic of the children of the devil.

- **The Example of Cain:** Cain serves as the historical archetype. He murdered his brother, Abel, because his own deeds were evil and his brother's were righteous. The source suggests Cain's anger began when his religious sacrifice was rejected while Abel's was accepted.
- **Religious Hostility:** Some of the most intense hatred toward true believers comes from religious individuals who seek a relationship with God based on personal achievement rather than obedience.
- **The Role of Government:** Because the human race is capable of murder when left to its own devices, government exists to control human anger and prevent anarchy.

2. Hatred

Hatred is defined as the "moral equivalent" of murder. Even if a person never physically kills someone, their hateful attitude carries the same spiritual weight.

- **The World's Hatred:** Believers are told in *1 John 3:13*, "*Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you.*" This hatred is expected because the ungodly are exposed by the righteousness of the godly.
- **Moral Judgment:** In *Matthew 5:21-22*, Jesus teaches that being angry with a brother without cause or using insulting language (such as calling someone a "fool") puts a person in danger of judgment just as murder does: "*You have heard that it was said*

to those of old, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.' But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment."

- **The Root of Hostility:** The world hates Christians because it first hated Jesus. As stated in *John 15:18*, "*If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you.*"

3. Indifference

Indifference is described as the "best" characteristic that can be said of the ungodly, but it is still a sign of spiritual death.

- **Selfishness:** The children of the devil are consumed with themselves. While they may not kill or openly hate, they remain indifferent to the needs of others.
- **Refusal to Help:** *1 John 3:17* asks, "*But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?"*
- **False Philanthropy:** Any charitable work performed by the ungodly is often done for personal glory or to quiet a guilty conscience rather than out of genuine, broken-hearted love.

The Characteristics of the Children of God

In contrast to the children of the devil, the children of God are defined by their capacity for love and sacrifice.

Love as Evidence of Life

The primary way a person knows they have "passed from death to life" is through their love for other believers.

- *1 John 3:14: "We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death."*
- Believers do not wish to kill or hate; instead, they seek to be a source of blessing and life to those around them.

Sacrificial Action

True love is modeled after Jesus Christ, who gave His life for humanity.

- **The Model of Christ:** *1 John 3:16* states, "*By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.*"
- **Selflessness:** This love requires a willingness to give up everything. The source cites Epaphroditus and the Apostle Paul as examples of men who risked or offered their

lives for the service of the church and the gospel. As Paul states in *Philippians 1:21*, "For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

Love in Deed and Truth

The source emphasizes that profession is not enough. Love must be practical and visible.

- **Beyond Words:** *1 John 3:18* commands, "My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth."
- **Assurance of Salvation:** When a believer loves through genuine action and sacrifice, it provides an "assuring testimony" to their own heart that they belong to the truth.

Correction of Scriptural Misinterpretation

The source notes that some individuals may attempt to "spin" Scripture to justify violent or political ends. It specifically references a manifesto by an individual named Allen who argued that attempting to assassinate a political leader was a "Christian" act by twisting the command to "turn the other cheek." The document clarifies that the Bible never commands the assassination of enemies; such justifications are a corruption of the Word of God used to fit personal biases.

Greek Terminology

The following table provides a phonetic guide and definition for the Greek term used in the source context regarding human compassion.

Greek Word	Phonetic Pronunciation	Definition
Splagchnon	splahngkh-non	Literally "bowels" or "intestines"; used figuratively to describe the seat of emotions, deep-seated affection, or compassion.[^1]

[^1]: This term appears in the analysis of *1 John 3:17*, where it describes a person "shutting up" their heart or inner parts against a brother in need.