

1 JOHN: DEFEATING MISLEADING SPIRITUAL ERROR TRULY TO COMMUNE WITH GOD

Part VI: Blessings The Mature "Father" Has In His Walk With God

C. The Blessing Of Confidence We Are Maturing By Our Expressing TRUE Love For Believers

(1 John 3:10c-18)

I. Introduction

- A. True fellowship with God produces a tremendous, multifaceted, spiritually fulfilling lifestyle even on this earth, something John briefly stated in 1 John 1:3-4.
- B. So, having laid out the three basic levels of spiritual maturity, John supplied insight into the blessings that spiritual "fathers" have as a result of overcoming a dependence on others as a "little child" and the world's lusts as a "young man", and the **third** blessing he discusses is the great confidence a spiritual "father" has that he **IS** maturing due to his growing **expression of true** love for other believers as described as follows:

II. The Blessing Of Confidence We Are Maturing By Our Expressing TRUE Love For Believers.

- A. After addressing the three levels of maturity in 1 John 2:12-27, John began an extensive treatment of the blessings occurring for spiritual "fathers" as motivation for his readers to mature into spiritual fatherhood.
- B. The **third** blessing of maturity is confidence we are maturing by noting we **express true LOVE** for other believers, a love that is described in 1 John 3:10c-18 as follows:
 - 1. Putting in the positive what John said in the negative at 1 John 3:10b,c, one who matures before God **loves his Christian brother**, something Christ required of His apostles, 1 John 3:11 with John 13:24.
 - 2. This truth is explained so as to reveal evidences of spiritual maturity in 1 John 3:11-18 (as follows):
 - a. True Christian love comes out of a **righteous relationship** with **God**, 1 John 3:10b,c.
 - b. Such true Christian love then leaves the believer who has it free of experiencing personal **guilt** opposite how Cain failed, Genesis 4:3-8, cf. 1 John 3:12.
 - c. True Christian love that thus leaves one free of **guilt keeps him from** feeling **jealous** over God's blessing **other righteous** folk, so he does **not** consequently hate and harm them, 1 John 3:12, 14-15.
 - d. True Christian love will thus **not** come from the **unsaved** world (or carnally immature believers for that matter!); the ungodly are under conviction by the blessing in the lives of the upright "fathers", and that tempts the ungodly to be jealous and to hate and to harm the godly, 1 John 3:12-13.
 - e. True Christian love then is marked by **selfLESSness**: the godly, mature "fathers" are so fulfilled in God that they, like Christ, have no reason to envy or harm, but only to give to others, 1 John 3:16.
 - f. True Christian brotherly love thus does not selfishly express itself in the needless hoarding of goods and services to be "blessed", and that to the harm of other materially needy believers, 1 John 3:17.
 - g. True Christian brotherly love thus neither gives mere lip service to expressing love to other believers; the truly godly and hence truly loving believer follows through with his claim to love by tangibly providing the goods and services he can supply to help needy brethren, for there is no need for him to pretend to love and then to hoard goods and services, for he functions out of guiltlessness and a sense of satisfaction in Christ, and that all equips him to give selflessly unto others, 1 Jn. 3:18.

Lesson: *When a believer matures in Christ, he will note the following (1) POSITIVE evidences of it his life: (a) As God's true love rises from righteousness, the mature will live above guilt. (b) This equips him to enjoy a sense of fullness in Christ and to live without envying or harming others. (c) Thus, a mature believer will give not only lip service to loving others, but supply the goods and services others need. (2) Yet, a NEGATIVE evidence of spiritual maturity ALSO of NECESSITY exists: as his upright life that produces this "fullness" makes ungodly onlookers jealous and in turn desire to harm the mature, the spiritual "father" WILL INEVITABLY face jealousy and harm FROM the UNGODLY!*

Application: *(1) If we see righteousness that leads to guiltlessness and a resulting sense of fullness in Christ that leaves us relating to others selflessly, we are to be encouraged we are maturing in Christ. (2) If the ungodly envy and harm us, that ALSO means we are maturing, for our lives elicit guilt in them, so we should be EQUALLY encouraged even in the face of such mistreatment, John 15:18-22. (3) Conversely, if we find that WE feel jealous and are thus tempted to harm others, we must realize that we, like Cain, are unrighteous and miss out on God's blessing, and thus we must repent!*