

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

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

G. The Blessing Of Confidently Facing Christ's Bema Seat For Living A Propitiating Brotherly Love (1 John 4:7-21)

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 revealed the basic levels of growth, John gave insight into the blessings mature "fathers" enjoy for overcoming a reliance on others (along with the world's lusts) as a "little child" and of overcoming reliance on the world system as a "young man". The **seventh** blessing John presents is that of confidence in facing Christ's Bema Seat Judgment for exhibiting a propitiating love for fellow believers (as follows):

II. The Blessing Of Confidently Facing Christ's Bema Seat For Living A Propitiating Brotherly Love.

- 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 **seventh** blessing is confidence we can face Christ's "Bema" Seat Judgment for **believers** [re: awards for the Christian life and service, not judgment for the destiny of the soul as in Rev. 20:11-15; cf. 1 Cor. 3:13-15; 2 Cor. 5:10-11] **BECAUSE** we have *lived out* a propitiating love for other believers (as follows):
 - 1. John recalled his earlier admonition for believers to love one another (cf. 1 John 3:11, 18), urging the mature to love fellow believers since doing so typifies those who fellowship with God, 1 John 4:7.
 - 2. Indeed, God is love at the basic core of His Being, a great observation John noted in 1 John 4:8!
 - 3. To clarify the **special expression** of love John **meant** here, a love that was just like God's love, John referred back to the costly, selfless love that led Christ to come to earth to absorb God's wrath against our sin on the cross that we might be saved from wrath and enjoy His blessing in grace, 1 John 4:9-10.
 - 4. John noted that this **kind of expression** should be reflected in the mature believer's life, 1 John 4:11:
 - a. The word the KJV translates as "so" in 1 John 4:11 is *houtos*, an adverb meaning "in this manner, just as," U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966 ed., p. 821; Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., p. 602.
 - b. Thus, **John called those who mature in Christ to mimic Christ's propitious love by influencing fellow believers to escape God's discipline through overcoming sin in their lives by His grace that they might gain His blessing**, and this call leads to a special life [as follows]: (a) we should then aim to influence fellow believers to depart from sin and escape God's discipline by grace that they might enjoy His blessing; (b) even if we are not appreciated by others in the process, something Jesus knew as His disciples abandoned Him at Gethsemane (Mtt. 26:56b), we are still called of God to minister that our brethren might overcome sin by grace, 2 Cor. 12:15. (c) In so doing, we minister **patterned after** Christ's **sacrificial** work on the cross that appeased God's wrath against **our** sin and led to God's **righteousness** being **applied to us in grace for our blessing!**
 - 5. In exhibiting such love, we will verify that our propitious God indwells us and that His love that led to Christ's work to propitiate His wrath against our sin is actually being perfected in us, 1 John 4:12-16.
 - 6. For **expressing** such a **propitiating** kind of **brotherly love**, John claimed **the mature will have confidence he will have NO cause for fear when he stands before Christ's Bema Seat [after the rapture]; rather, he will be able to be bold**, 1 John 4:17-19; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, fn. to 4:17!
 - 7. In summary, hating fellow believers means we do not love God and thus are out of fellowship with Him, 1 John 4:20. We should rather propitiously love fellow believers, doing all we can to influence them to be victorious over sin by God's grace that they might be blessed (1 John 4:21 in the context)!

Lesson: A spiritual "father" has **CONFIDENCE** re: Christ's Bema Seat if he sees he **SELFLESSLY** and **UNCONDITIONALLY** gives himself to **INFLUENCE** other believers to escape God's discipline for sin by availing themselves of God's grace to overcome sin and walk in righteousness to be blessed.

Application: No matter the cost to US, may we give of ourselves to influence others, especially fellow believers, to depart from sin and turn to righteousness by God's grace that they might be blessed. In **DOING** so, we give evidence we mimic Christ's propitious love toward us, and **THUS** can be **BLESSED** with **BOLDNESS**, knowing we can face Christ's Bema Seat with His **FULL APPROVAL** of our lives!