

The Two Seeds (1 John 3:1-13)

A - See how great a **love the Father** has bestowed on us, that we would be called **children of God**; and *such* we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.

B - Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.

C - And everyone who has this hope *fixed* on Him **purifies himself**, just as He is pure.

D - Everyone who **practices sin** also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness.

E - You know that He appeared in order to take away sins; and in Him there is no sin.

F - ***No one who abides in Him sins; no one who sins has seen Him or knows Him.***

E' - Little children, make sure no one deceives you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous;

D' - the one who **practices sin** is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil.

C' - No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and **he cannot sin**, because he is born of God.

B' - By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother.

A' - For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another; not as Cain, *who* was **of the evil one** and slew his brother. And for what reason did he slay him? Because his deeds were evil, and his brother's were righteous. Do not be surprised, brethren, if the **world hates** you.

Analysis of Text: Understanding structure helps with meaning. Note the respective parallels (A-A', B-B', C-C', D-D', E-E'). The text swings around the center element (F). The clear contrast is between the children of God and the children of the devil. The children of God practice righteousness. The children of the devil practice lawlessness. The accent is on the idea of *practicing* good or evil. We determine status before God by how people live, by their practice. This is one element of assurance among many.

Main Point of the Text:

1. What is the text about? Answer: The distinction between deeply loved, born again children of God and Cain-like, worldly children of the devil.
2. What is the distinction between deeply loved, born again children of God and Cain-like children of the devil? Answer: The former hope in Christ, purify themselves, and practice righteousness but the latter hate their righteous brothers and practice sin and lawlessness.
3. Main Point of the Text: Combine the answers from 1 and 2.

Deeply loved, born again children of God hope in Christ, purify themselves, and practice righteousness but Cain-like, worldly children of the devil hate their righteous brothers and practice sin and lawlessness.

Main Lesson of the Text:

If you sincerely hope in Christ, purify yourself, and practices righteousness, then you are a deeply loved, born again child of God; if you hate your righteous brothers and practice sin and lawlessness, then you are very likely a Cain-like, worldly child of the devil.

Food for Thought: The main lesson of this text is one facet of assurance of salvation. How do other facets of assurance, already covered in 1 John 1-2, relate to the main lesson of this text? How does assurance of faith fit with the main lesson of this text? Remember that you were by nature children of wrath (Eph. 2:1-3). You are now children of God by adoption. Progressive sanctification is required; you will "discipline yourselves for the purpose of Godliness" (1 Tim. 4:7). If you truly hope to be like Christ when He comes again a second time in glory, you will seek forgiveness, purify yourself, and practice righteousness. As a result, you will, more and more, experience and realize God's deep love for you. As in families with natural or adopted children, there seem to be progressive cycles here.