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### Murder Without Firing a Shot

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## MURDER WITHOUT FIRING A SHOT

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF 1 JOHN  
NUMBER 22  
1 JOHN 3:14-15

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1 JOHN 3:14-15 "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him."

We can best introduce this paragraph by going back to Hebrews 12:15. "Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;" It is impossible to have the roots of bitterness of mental attitude sins and at the same time have love dominating your thoughts. It may be pride or bitterness or vindictiveness or egotism, but when mental attitude sins are allowed to enter your life all vital relationships with God and others are destroyed. Bitterness is a mental attitude sin that will destroy the foundation of an effective happy life.

1 JOHN 3:14 "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death." Commands in the Bible to love the brethren always refer to mental attitude. It means have no bitterness, no jealousy, no hostility. This verse is addressed to believers only and this kind of living depends on a relaxed mental attitude.

### The Positive Side Of Life

This verse leads us over to the positive side of life. Please notice here that the relaxed mental attitude kind of living is presented as one of the signs of salvation. "We know" is a present, active, indicative of oida. It means we have taken in doctrine and have learned it and have transferred it over into our human spirit. This knowledge is simply the application of the principles and mental attitude which produces Christ-like living. This "we know" indicates that we understand who God is and what God is up to in our lives. Doctrinal knowledge always leads to a freedom from mental attitude sins and a freedom from bitterness, malice, hatred and jealousy. This doesn't mean that we never have mental attitude sins, but it means that mental attitude sins do not rule us and dictate our pattern of thinking and living. This perfect, active, indicative of oida, used as a present tense, is followed by a perfect, active, indicative of metabaino "we have passed over" or "we have made a migration." As believers we have migrated over into a state where we are able to handle our mental attitude sins.

### A Permanent Position For the Believer

Once we have been converted we have made a migration. This sets up for us a relaxed way of living. We have learned to mind our own business and have decided to let other people run their own affairs. And this is a permanent thing, we are never going back to that old way of living again. The active voice of metabaino means that this decision was a decision of the will and this act can never be undone or invalidated. This is a permanent migration. The indicative mood is the reality of this transaction and means that this move was permanent from spiritual death to spiritual life. Next we have the words ek thanatos and it means out from the death and it refers to the principle

of death. In this reference it is not referring to physical death but rather to spiritual death. The word ek means that by the grace of God we have been lifted right out from spiritual death to spiritual life. "Unto life" is from eis zoe and it means lifted into the function of everlasting life. The door has been slammed and we can never go back to the old way of life again.

#### How Do You Know You Have Made This Migration?

Not all believers know this, but John certainly did and every believer will be greatly benefitted by this divine truth. Down in the next verse we have the phrase "no murderer hath eternal life" but that is an incorrect translation, and it should be translated "Not every murderer has eternal life." This indicated that some murderers do have eternal life, but have allowed mental attitude sins to completely dominate them. We will explore this correct translation more when we come to verse 15. We have already studied overt murder when Cain killed his brother Abel.

#### Mental Murder

In these verses we have moved away from overt murder and we are discussing mental murder. Every time you hate or are jealous or have bitterness or vindictiveness, you have committed mental murder. Next we have the phrase "Because we love the brethren." This word "because" is from hoti and proves we have made this migration, this transaction. "We love" is from agapao and this is mental attitude love. This is love devoid of hate or anger or pride. This is the kind of love that brings us a relaxed mental attitude. "The brethren" includes all kind of believers. Please notice that it doesn't say you have to phileo them, just agapao them. We are so constituted that we can agapao a vast multitude, but we can only phileo a rather small number. So this is a real challenge to our relaxed mental attitude. If you allow people whom you do not know to destroy your relaxed mental attitude, just think of the problems you are going to have because of those you do know and know rather well. This can blow you right out of the saddle.

#### A Mature Way Of Living.

Here in this passage we are brought face to face with the mature, stabilized Christian life. This is one way to know that we are climbing up the ladder of the Edification Complex. We discover that as we learn doctrine that mental attitude sins disturb us less and less. More and more the relaxed mental attitude takes over. The love Christ has infused into us drives out hatred and bitterness and one of the signs of this new found life in Christ is a relaxed mental attitude of love for fellow believers. This word for love is a present, active, indicative and it means we keep on loving the brethren and this will be our way of life from here on until the end of life. This is a function of our priesthood.

#### Illustration

When a mother snaps at her children when they come home from school and she almost bites their heads off, and they go into the next room and say to each other, "What's wrong with mother?" The answer to that is that mother has allowed something to upset her and is bitter about something and has taken the bitterness out on her children. The bitterness was there and it had to come out. If you have mental attitude

sins, you can't keep them private very long. Mental attitude sins have a way of overflowing to others. Soon everybody around has a fairly accurate photograph of your mind and heart. In this passage we are talking about maturity and stability. The indoctrinated believer climbs the ladder of doctrine, and this causes a mental attitude to develop devoid of mental hate and jealousy and bitterness. Loving the brethren is one of the many glorious fruits that grows on the tree of personal maturity and stability. This will happen every time. If you have an indoctrinated mind, you will have a relaxed mental attitude also. They go together. God's unchanging law operates this way every time.

#### What Has This Sentence Actually Said?

If this verse has said anything to us it is this--just as sure as you learn the Word of God and store doctrine away in your mind, you will certainly end up with love for other believers. It is your natural way of life and doctrine in the mind will produce a relaxed way of living toward others every single time. Millions of happy Christians throughout all the ages have confirmed this again and again.

#### Illustration

We see this every time we come to this church. Happy people come and feast on Christian fellowship, devoid of gossip. Each lives his own life as unto the Lord and each allows the other his way of living and thinking. We are genuinely saved and are taking in doctrine and are growing in the Christian life and this makes for a relaxed church every time.

#### The Opposite Side Of The Coin

Now we come to the reserve side of this great statement. The original Greek of this statement says, "He that loveth not abideth in death." The words "his brother" is not in the original, so drop it out. "He that loveth not" is a present, active, participle plus the negative-- me plus agapao. Loveth not means to have a characteristic of mental attitude sins. In other words, mental attitude sins is his way of life and pattern of life. These are the people who live under spiritual thanatos, death. It is impossible for unsaved people to be free from mental attitude sins. They may cover some of them up, but they are always there. It is a physical and mental impossibility for the unbeliever to be free from mental attitude sins. They may cover some of them up, but they are always there. I repeated that, for I hope it will sink into your minds. But this is also true of the carnal believer, and as long as he is carnal, mental attitude sins will haunt his steps every day.

Next we have "keeps on abiding" and this is a present, active, indicative of meno. Now I reminded you that the words "his brother" are not found in the original, and the reason is this. The unbelievers do not have any brotherhood. He does not have any brother believers. Now they think they do. They will tell you that God is the Great Father of all and that all men are brothers, but they are wrong. Aside from faith in Christ, there is no brotherhood, no fellow believers. "Abideth in death" is the principle of life upon which the unbeliever lives. This is the unbeliever who constantly abides in spiritual death. This present, active, indicative means that this way of living has become the daily practice of his life and will remain this way until he comes to have faith in Christ. He keeps on abiding in the sphere of spiritual death.

1 JOHN 3:15 "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." The "whosoever" here refers to the carnal believer. The present, active, participle of miseo refers to a continuing strong hatred that is the result of other mental attitude sins. Hatred comes into the picture because of jealousy and implacability and envy. Antagonism and bitterness finally grows into hatred but hatred is the full-grown sin. There is no such thing as instant hate. Hate is the result of a rather long road of bitterness and all kinds of mental attitude sins. Miseo, therefore, means hatred, but it isn't instant hate. Miseo means the compounding of mental attitude sins and little by little it grows into hatred. Miseo is one of those words that lets you see behind the closet door and see all the skeletons hidden there.

So this verse says, "Whosoever hateth his brother believer" is a murderer. This "is" comes from the present, active, indicative of eimi and it means this is his way of life and it continues to be this way for him. The word for murderer is anthropokotonos and it means to kill a man without him actually dropping dead. It means you kill him in your mind. When you hate someone, he is already dead in your mind. And anyone who is dead to you, it means you have no relationship with them. This is a believer and he is called by God a murderer. Now the next phrase is mistranslated. We have here "and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." Now that is not true. Some murderers do have eternal life abiding in them and this passage brings out that truth. The Greek here says this--"And you know that every murderer does not have eternal life abiding in him." Just one little word makes the difference and that word is pas. You are a murderer as a believer when you have mental attitude sins of hatred toward someone.

#### You Don't Hate In General

People don't hate in general, they hate specifically. Hatred and bitterness is directed toward someone specifically. Hatred and bitterness is mental murder. You can have self-pity to the extent that if someone walks by and smiles, you hate them. You say, "How dare they smile when I feel as badly as I do!" No, there is no such thing as instant hatred. And there is no such thing as hatred in general. Hatred is something that grows and grows and it must have some specific target.

Back in verse 14 we saw the phrase, "We know that we have migrated from spiritual death to spiritual life." When we are living under spiritual death, it is easy to murder people. In that next sentence, we saw that if we lack mental attitude love, then it is easy for us to abide in spiritual death. We also saw that the word "brother" is not in the original language. But in the next sentence "brother" is brought in for we are going to get some truth that will apply to carnal believers. If people died every time we committed mental murder the human race would soon cease to exist.

#### A Very Poor Translation

Many people have taken this one verse and used it to prove that no murderer can be a believer. That is not true. If a believer commits murder, then he breaks one of God's great commandments and he brings great sorrow to himself, his family and to society in general. He brings the discipline of God down on him, but he cannot erase his salvation by an act of this kind. That little word pas lets us know that

not every murderer is unsaved. This verse also lets us realize that there are millions of believers running loose in the earth and they commit all kinds of mental murder and they are still believers. Now to be sure they are out of fellowship, they have grieved God, and they have sacrificed their spiritual power and their inner happiness.

This is a verse that tells us that we ought to cleanse our minds of all bitterness and hatred and not allow mental attitude sins to clutter up our thinking. And remember, you don't have to pull the trigger in order to murder a man. That is why I called this study "Murder Without Firing A Shot."