

EX: And so, in close, John illustrates that key to the **building blocks of the Christian life** is a **purification of hate**. And that hate shows in multiple ways: in murder, most obviously. But also in refusal to serve and give of ourselves and our possessions. When we show our love for one another in service, dedication, and devotion, one to another, we show in that, the image of Christ. *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. (1JN 3.16)*

JN 13.34-35 ~ *A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. ³⁵ By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.*

CONCLUSION – The Children’s Inheritance (1JN 3.19-24)

SCIENCE/DNA/Friedrich Miescher – Initial Reception

SCIENCE/DNA/Phoebus Levene

Long after Friedrich’s death, his discovery lives on. Now, we all know the term, DNA—and we understand instinctively their purpose as **“the building blocks of life”**. This now serves as the foundation for Biology and much of scientific study—unlocking new understandings in heredity, disease, and improving the quality of life of people all over the globe.

JN sought to help his **“little children”** to understand the truth of Christian doctrine and how it paired with Christian teaching. That, ultimately, our Christianity was to make us like our Father, His Son, and His Spirit—showing our similarity in **family traits—purified from sin** and from **hate**. Showing in our lives a mirror of Christ.

But this may seem to us impossible. And a part of us wonders: **how can we be confident in our inheritance as His children?** In answer, he explains, at last, the **children’s inheritance**:

1JN 3.19-24 (NKJV) ~ *And by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him. ²⁰ For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. ²¹ Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. ²² And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. ²³ And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment. ²⁴ Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.*

By keeping His commands, believing in His name, and loving one another, we keep ourselves in the love of Christ—*And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.*

HB 4.14-16 ~ *Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. ¹⁵ For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

INVITATION

#663 [Exp-NTGE][4.6]
08/30/2025

The Building Blocks of the Christian Life

1JN 3

PC __ Pchd _____

QUESTION: What are the building blocks of the Christian life?

TRN TO 1JN 3

INTRODUCTION

SCIENCE/DNA/Discovery by Friedrich Miescher – Part 1

SCIENCE/DNA/Discovery by Friedrich Miescher – Part 2

It’s always interesting to me how often some of the greatest discoveries in human history are made by mistake—seemingly by chance. Initially intending to investigate and catalogue the proteins within white blood cells, Friedrich Miescher ended up stumbling upon what we now consider to be the very building blocks of life.

BACKGROUND – Children of God (1JN 3.1-2)

This month, we’ve been spending our Sunday evenings following the text for the month’s Bible Bowl material. This month, the kids have been assigned the first four chapters of the book of **1JN**. Written by the same John who wrote the Gospel of **JN** and the book of **RV**, **1JN** is focused upon an unknown group of Christians who were struggling with false teachers who proclaimed a belief in something like Christ, but now quite—this was a pure **“spiritual”** belief, that had little impact on their actual character or moral lives. **How would they be able to tell the difference?**

To help them to understand the difference, John would spend the next chapter breaking down **the building blocks of the Christian life**—that much like how a child carries the DNA of their parents (proving their identity and standing as the basis for family traits), the Christian has something akin to it!

1JN 3.1-2a (NKJV) ~ *Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. ² Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be,*

I find it interesting that **JN** uses the same language as he did in his gospel: *But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: ¹³ who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. (JN 1.12-13)*

John points to the trouble the Christians had found in their interactions with the world around them. Whatever their city or nation, those outside of the church had looked upon them with confusion and misunderstanding—not **“getting”** them, because they’d not **“got”** Him. John describes Christians as being **“children of God”**—but much like how you can’t look at a newborn in the NICU and predict easily their height or appearance, the same was true of the church. **What would they ultimately look like after all was said and done?** John continues to clarify: *but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. (1JN 3.2b)* In just the same way you can look at a newborn’s parents to get a hint of what they will grow up to look like, the same was true of Christ. If we are children of God, then we will grow up to look like God!

That’s a high standard—and a high expectation! And so, for the remainder of the chapter, John explains it. He helps the church to understand just what it meant to be

a “**child of God**”—he **building blocks of Christian life**. He points to two clear areas in which the Christian is to be like Christ—and if we want to grow up to look like Him, we need to embrace and build upon these things that make up the very DNA of the Christian.

BD1: Purified from Sin (1JN 3.3-9)

It’s interesting that the first hint of DNA was identified in Friedrich Miesche’s investigations into leukocytes (aka: white blood cells). When we’re in elementary school, we learn about white blood cells—the foot soldiers of the autoimmune system. It’s through them (and other components) that our bodies identify and eliminate infections that place our bodies at risk. Interestingly, millennia before the concept of infection and the immune system would be understood by man, John seems to intuit its purpose in the body of the Christian.

1JN 3.3-4 (NKJV) ~ *And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure. ⁴ Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness.*

EX: The Christian is presented with a dangerous infection: sin and lawlessness. But a part of the **building blocks of the Christian life** is a system by which he can be purified of these infections. *And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin. (1JN 3.5 - NKJV)* Christ cleanses us—He helps to remove the stain of sin. But that’s not the end of the danger of sin in the life of the Christian. No, remember back to the start of the passage: *And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure. (1JN 3.3)* Being a Christian isn’t just a passive thing—expecting God to “**white out**” our sins like a bleach pen on a stubborn sriracha stain. The Christian has, core to his character, the family trait of His Father and the Father’s Son and Spirit: a desire for purification.

ILL—Allergy (I was pretty lucky to not inherit many; but I know many who have; it’s a common thing to pass down from father or mother to son) As a Christian, we are to have a kind of “**allergy**” to sin. A visceral and violent reaction to it causing us to seek to cleanse ourselves from it! *Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him. (1JN 3.6 - NKJV)*

1JN 3.7-8 (NKJV) ~ *Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. ⁸ He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.*

AP: You can know a child by their parents—and as they grow and begin showing their primary traits, you can know their parents by looking at the child! John looked at the false teachers and their disciples and he made a terrifying claim: they were not children of God—if they were, they’d have **purified themselves from sin**. Rather, they were children of the devil.

1JN 3.9 (NKJV) ~ *Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.*

“**But I can sin; I show it every day!**” John isn’t saying that a person who’s a Christian never sins (just look back at chapter one: *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹ If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1JN 1.8-9)*). Rather, a Christian is as disgusted by and averse to sin as Christ is. The seed of Christ is in us: His example, His Spirit and Word—and that changes us, down to our

very DNA. And as a result, the true Christian no longer desires to live in sin, but rather, the Christian desires to live in purity from sin.

1PT 2.21-24 ~ *For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: ²² “Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth”; ²³ who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously; ²⁴ who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed.*

Is that true of me? Is that true of you? Have we so internalized His Word and the example of Christ that we are changing from the inside out? The true Christian is **purified from sin**—showing in our Christ-like-ness that we are a child of God—every bit as clearly as a son shows the image of his father in a strong chin or prominent nose.

BD2: Purified from Hate (1JN 3.10-18)

ILL—Eye Color Trait (demonstrated in school; how brown eyes are dominant, green and blue are recessive; how if the dominate gene is present, the dominant trait will apply; if two recessive genes are present, the recessive gene will apply) Of course, it’s a whole lot more complex than what I learned in middle school science class. But the basics are easily understandable—we inherit our traits from our parents—both dominant and sometimes, recessive.

1JN 3.10 (NKJV) ~ *In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother.*

EX: John says here that you can easily know who one’s father is by their actions. Both if they’ve been **purified of sin**, and if they’ve been **purified from hate**.

1JN 3.11-12 (NKJV) ~ *For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another, ¹² not as Cain who was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother’s righteous.*

EX: John looked at the spite and struggle going on with his “*little children*” of **1JN** and saw it as an analogue all the way back to Cain. Cain was like them: showing the traits and DNA of his father, the devil in both his **sin** and in his **hate**. Ultimately, John points out that it was his **hate** that gave birth to his **sin**. And the implication was that this was the same of the false teachers of the time. They were likely similarly abusing and mistreating the brethren. And the brethren had likely wondered why. But John said it wasn’t a secret: they hated them out of envy—because the false teachers didn’t have what they had. They hadn’t been **purified of sin**, and rather than choosing to submit to him and allow for their sins to be **purified**, they instead, reacted with **hatred** and spite. And this continues today! *Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you. (1JN 3.13 - NKJV)*

1JN 3.14-18 (NKJV) ~ *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. ¹⁵ Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. ¹⁶ 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. ¹⁷ 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? ¹⁸ My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.*