

1 John 3:14 Commentary

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FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD AND HIS CHILDREN
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Another Overview Chart - [1 John](#) - [Charles Swindoll](#)

BASIS OF FELLOWSHIP		BEHAVIOR OF FELLOWSHIP	
Conditions of Fellowship	Cautions of Fellowship	Fellowship Characteristics	Fellowship Consequences
Meaning of Fellowship 1 Jn 1:1-2:27	Manifestations of Fellowship 1 Jn 2:28-5:21		
Abiding in God's Light	Abiding in God's Love		
Written in Ephesus			
circa 90 AD			

From Talk Thru the Bible

1 John 3:14 We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death

Greek - hemeis oidamen (1PRAI) hoti metabebekamen (1PRAI) ek tou thanatou eis ten zoen hoti agapomen (1PPAI) tous adelphous o me agapon (PAP) menei (3SPAI) en to thanato .

NET - We know that we have crossed over from death to life because we love our fellow Christians. The one who does not love remains in death.

Wuest As for us, we know absolutely that we have passed over permanently out of the sphere of the death into the life, because we are habitually loving the brethren. The one who is not habitually loving is abiding in the sphere of the death.

- **We know:** 1Jn 2:3 5:2,13,19,20 2Co 5:1
- **have:** Lu 15:24,32 John 5:24 Eph 2:1,5
- **because:** 1Jn 2:10 3:23 4:7,8,12,21 5:2 Ps 16:3 Mt 25:40 John 13:35 15:12,17 Ga 5:22 Eph 1:15 Col 1:4 1Th 4:9 Heb 6:10,11 13:1 1Pe 1:22 1Pe 3:8 2 Pe 1:7
- **Does not love:** 1Jn 2:9,11 1Jn 4:20 Pr 21:16
- [1 John 3 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

EVIDENCE OF REGENERATION: BROTHERLY LOVE

Eternal life is not restricted to the world to come but for those who by grace through faith **have passed out of death into life**, that abundant life is available **NOW!** Too many saints are living like "aint's"! This world is not our home and when we live like it is, we are the most miserable of creatures! Jesus came to rescue us from this darkness and to give us the light of life and give it abundantly (Jn 10:10). Have you **passed from death into eternal life**? You can know (and experience) eternal life now, for Jesus said "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has (**present tense** - possesses now and forever) **eternal life**, and does not come into judgment, but **has passed out** (metabaino - **perfect tense** = speaks of the permanence of this passage!) **of death into life.**" (Jn 5:24, cp Jn 3:36)

We is stressed as it is in an emphatic position in the sentence (first word) - **What does this mean?** As **A T Robertson** says "(**we**) in contrast to the unregenerate world. This Christian consciousness (is) shared by writer and readers." The idea is "as for us" in contrast with the tragic state of the rest of the lost world. This truth ought to simulate great thanksgiving and a great desire to share the good news with the lost!

We know ([1492](#))(**eido**) is the verb that speaks of intuitive knowledge, not knowledge gained by experience (that's **ginosko**). It is "a matter of the consciousness of the fact, and not a case of progressive experience." (Vine) John says we can know **beyond a shadow of a doubt** that they we are truly born again. How? When we love the brethren. Beloved, some brethren are not easy to love, but enabled by God's Spirit (Gal 5:22-**note**), we can exhibit supernatural love to them. Supernatural love is clear evidence of a supernatural Source (the indwelling Spirit) and sure evidence of authentic salvation.

Vine observes (as alluded to above) that "there is great stress on the pronoun (**we**), which is intended to mark emphatically a contrast between believers and the world, suggesting that, whatever the condition of the world and however hostile its attitude, that which marks believers is that they know that they have been freed from that condition. The knowledge is intuitive, a matter of the consciousness of the fact, and not a case of progressive experience (the verb is oida or **eido**, not ginōskō). (Collected Writings)

Charles Haddon Spurgeon has the following wise words on John's words **we know** - I have heard it said, by those who would be thought philosophers, that in religion we must believe, but cannot know. I am not very clear about the distinction they draw between knowledge and faith, nor do I care to enquire because I assert that, in matters relating to religion, we do know! In the things of God, we both believe and know. If you will read this Epistle through and, with a pencil draw a line under the word, "know," wherever it occurs, you will be astonished to see how John continually asserts about the great Truths of our faith, "We know, we know, we know, we know." He does not admit that any one of these things is the subject of conjecture, but he asserts it to be a matter of positive knowledge. These philosophical gentlemen call themselves Agnostics—that is a word derived from the Greek and has the same meaning as the word, "ignoramus," which comes from the Latin—and is the English equivalent for a "know-nothing." Well, if they like to be called ignoramuses, I have not the slightest objection to their keeping the title, but they should never presume to argue with Christian men! They put themselves out of court, directly, for we say, "We know."... We know them, we are sure of them, for we have felt them, tasted them, handled them—and we know them as surely as we know the fact of our own existence. My text seems to me to speak of four things about which Believers in Christ are and ought to be positive and certain. I. First, WE KNOW THAT ONCE WE WERE DEAD IN TRESPASSES AND SINS. That is implied in the text—"We know that we have passed from death unto life."... Secondly, we know another thing and a brighter thing—WE KNOW THAT WE HAVE UNDERGONE A VERY AMAZING CHANGE—"We know that we have passed from death unto life."... Thirdly, we know something else. WE KNOW THAT WE LIVE—"We know that we have passed from death unto life."... Now, fourthly, WE KNOW THAT WE LIVE BECAUSE WE LOVE... So, Brothers and Sisters, if we can say that we love God's people, as God's people, because they are God's people, that is a mark that we have passed from death unto life! Do you love them for Christ's sake? Do you say to yourself, "That is one of Christ's people. That is one

who bears Christ's Cross. That is one of the children of God and, therefore, I love him and take delight in his company"? Then that is an evidence that you are not of the world. If you were, you would love the world, but, belonging to Christ, you love those who are Christ's and you love them for Christ's sake... God grant us all to have a share in this precious knowledge, for Christ's sake! Amen and Amen. ([Life Proved by Love](#)) ([See also his Sermon Notes on this Text](#))

No outward mark have we to know
Who thine, O Christ, may be,
Until a Christian love doth show
Who appertains to thee:
For knowledge may be reached unto,
And formal justice gained,
But till each other love we doe,
Both faith and workes are feigned.
— George Wither, 1588-1667

Utley on we know - This is another common theme. God's children's confidence is related to (1) a change of mind and (2) a change of action, which are the root meanings of the term "**repent**" in Greek and Hebrew. ([Commentary](#))

Earlier in this letter John described another marker of the **assurance of salvation** -

"And by this we **know** that we have come to **know** Him (**perfect tense** = past completed action with ongoing results or effects - we still know Him speaks of permanence), if we **keep** (**tereo**) His commandments (one of which is love one another - Jn 13:34)." (1John 2:3-note).

In this passage the two verbs for **know** are both **ginosko** which speak of knowledge obtained by experience. **Henry Morris** observes that "This is the first of at least thirty-eight occurrences of "**know**" (Greek **ginosko** or **eido**) in 1 John. One of the prominent themes in this epistle is the assurance we have in Christ. This first test of how we know our salvation is real is that we desire to keep His commandments just because they are His commandments, and we desire to please Him." **Matthew Henry** asks "What knowledge of Christ can that be, which sees not that he is most worthy of our entire obedience? And a disobedient life shows there is neither religion nor honesty in the professor."

John again emphasized the fact that we can have assurance writing that...

whoever keeps (**present tense** - as their general direction) His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this (**By what?**) we know (**ginosko** - from our experience) that we are in Him (to be in Christ is to be in covenant with Him, an immutable covenant that He will never break -- our salvation is eternally secure beloved!) (1John 2:5)

Harris feels that John's use of **eido** and **ginosko** "is probably a matter of stylistic variation (of which the writer is extremely fond) rather than indicative of a subtle difference in meaning." ([Ref](#))

Near the end of this letter John again emphasizes that we can be fully assured that we possess eternal life...

1John 5:13 These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, in order that **term of purpose**) you may know (**eido** = beyond a shadow of a doubt!) that you have (**present tense** - continually possess) eternal life.

Vine on because we love the brethren—this is the great test of divine relationship. To this statement much of the teaching in the preceding part of the Epistle has led up. Briefly the steps are as follows: True believers—

- (a) walk in the light (1Jn 1:7),
- (b) keep God's commandments (1Jn 2:3),
- (c) walk as Christ walked (1Jn 2:6),
- (d) show that they are abiding in the light by loving one another (1Jn 2:10),
- (e) no longer love the world and the things that are therein (1Jn 2:15),
- (f) practice righteousness (1Jn 2:29),
- (g) do not go on living in sin (1Jn 3:9),
- (h) exercise love (1Jn 3:14). (Collected Writings)

Guzik - A love for the people of God is a basic sign of being born again. If this love is not evident in our lives, our salvation can be questioned. If it is present, it gives us assurance... This speaks to our pursuit of fellowship. If we love the brethren, we will want to be with them - and even if we have been battered and bruised by unloving brethren, there will still be something in us drawing us back to fellowship with the brethren we love. (1 John 3 Commentary)

John MacArthur comments that "**One sure mark of a transformed life** is the desire to be with fellow Christians...That does not mean, or course, that Christians are to have no contact with unbelievers. But a professing Christian who prefers the company of the people of the world is probably still one of them."

Spurgeon comments on how a believer know they have come to a place where they can have genuine assurance of their salvation - I have, heard it said, by those who would be thought philosophers, that in religion we must *believe*, but cannot *know*. I am not very clear about the distinction they draw between knowledge and faith, nor do I care to enquire; because I assert that, in matters relating to religion, we know; in the things of God, we both *believe* and *know*.

JOHN DESCRIBES THE NEW BIRTH

Have passed out of death into life - What a beautiful description of our new birth! We "were dead in (our) trespasses and sins" (Eph 2:1-note), but God "even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace [we] have been saved)" (Eph 2:5-note) and in saving us He "**delivered** (Rescued = **rhuomai**) us from the domain (**exousia** = the right and the might = cp "of the evil one") of darkness, and **transferred** (**methistemi**) us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in Whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins." (Col 1:13-14-note) So here we see instead of passing from life to death as every man born eventually does, we go in the opposite direction. Can you see why "a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them." Why can't the natural (unregenerate) man understand the truth that it is possible to pass **out to death into life**? "Because (these truths) are spiritually appraised (**anakrino**)." (1Cor 2:14-note)

We have passed (have migrated) (3327)(**metabaino** from **meta** = signifies change of position or state + **baino** = to go or come) means literally to pass or go from one place to another as when Jesus "**departed** from there to teach and preach in their cities." (Mt 11:1) In 1Jn 3:14 and in Jn 5:24 **metabaino** is used figuratively to describe passage from **death into life**, John's way of describing the new birth. I am thankful that John used the **perfect tense** (also used in Jn 5:24) which speaks of a past completed action (our "birth" day - "We have already done it while here on earth." - Robertson) with continuing results or effect. In short, once again John emphasizes the permanence of our new position in Christ and sure possession of eternal life! God wants us to KNOW where we are headed. If you know your future is secure, it allows you to focus on His kingdom work, especially the proclamation of the Gospel, that others might experience that same assurance.

Vine on the **perfect tense** of **metabaino** - perfect tense, expressing the permanent result of the past act, i.e., an abiding in the new state as those who have been delivered once and for all from the old. (Ed: Hallelujah!)

Out of death into life - Literally out of the death and into the life - "The article marks it as one of the two spheres in which men must be; death or life. The death, the life, present one of those sharp oppositions which are characteristic of the Epistle; as love, hatred; darkness, light; truth, a lie." (Vincent) **Wuest** adds that "We have here an ablative of separation, "**separated from the death**." That is very good news!

Death (2288)(**thanatos**) is a permanent cessation of all vital functions and thus is the end of life on earth (as we know it). Death speaks of **separation**. The separation of the soul from the body and the end of earthly life. Spiritual death is separation from the life of God forever by dying without being born again. The first use in the Septuagint is in a well known promise from God "you shall surely die (Lxx = thanatos apothnesko)." (Ge 2:17) followed by the second use in the deceptive lie by Satan "You surely shall not die (thanatos apothnesko)!" (Ge 3:4)

In 1Jn 2:11 associates this spiritual **death** with **darkness** explaining that "the one who hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes."

Henry Mahan - Genuine love for the brethren is an evidence of redemption. It is not the cause but the sign, for no one sincerely loves his brethren unless he is regenerated by the Spirit of God. It is God's spirit who sheds abroad God's love in our hearts (Romans 5:5; Galatians 5:22). The love of the natural man is self-love (Luke 6:31-35). 'He that loveth not' continues in a state of spiritual death. (1 John 3 Commentary)

John Piper - What does a lifestyle of love prove? In word, life-spiritual life, eternal life, the life of God Himself. Or to be more precise, a lifestyle of love gives strong and sure evidence that we have **passed out of death into life**. That's John's conviction about the nature of a Christian. A Christian is one in whom a resurrection has occurred, a spiritual resurrection in union with Christ

"out of death into life." In 1John 2:10-note **love** was the sure evidence of a Christian's abiding in the **light**. Here in 1 Jn 3:14, **love** is the surest test of having **life**. The contrary is also true. "He who does not love abides in death," just as he is "in darkness" according to 1 Jn 2:9-note, 1Jn 2:11-note. In the vocabulary of John, **love, light, and life** belong together as do **hatred, darkness, and death**. John's argument for his last assertion in 1 Jn 3:14 ("**He who does not love abides in death**") comes in 1Jn 3:15 ([click for continuation of Piper's argument](#)). "**Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer.**" (Discussion continued in 1Jn 3:15). ([Love: A Matter of Life and Death](#))

Life (2222)(**zoe**) in context refers not to physical life but supernatural spiritual life which is in contrast to eternal death. This quality of life speaks of fullness of life which alone belongs to God the Giver of life and is available to His children now (Ro 6:4-note, Ep 4:18-note) as well as in eternity future (Mk 10:30, Titus 1:2-note on Eternal Life). Wuest adds that **zoe** "is used of the absolute fulness of life, both essential and ethical, which belongs to God. It is used to designate the life which God gives to the believing sinner, a vital, animating, spiritual, ethical dynamic which transforms his inner being and as a result, his behavior."

Vine on **out of death into life** says "that which marks the condition of death is hatred; that which marks the condition of life is love. The change signified by the preposition **ek**, "**out of**," is not one of place (**Ed**: as would be indicated by the preposition **apo**) but of state. To pass out of death into life is a matter of resurrection."

Paul describes the "**divine migration**" this way "Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was **raised from the dead** through the glory of the Father, so we too might (implied that we too were raised from the dead that we might) walk in newness (**kainotes** = a brand new quality) of life" (Ro 6:3-4-note) and "when you were dead in your transgressions (Eph 2:1-note) and the uncircumcision of your flesh (Eph 2:11-note), He **made you alive together with Him**, having forgiven us all our transgressions." (Col 2:12-note)

John Piper - Let us sum up, then, this section on the evidence of love. Lifestyles of love and hate (and I say lifestyles because all these verbs are in the present tense, and as you remember from last week, present tense verbs in Greek denote ongoing, continual activity) are very revealing. Specifically they reveal whether one abides in death or whether he has indeed passed out of death into life. People who persistently and consistently love other people in heartfelt ways that are practical and sacrificial—all those people and only those people—can have assurance that they indeed possess the eternal life of God himself. Brothers and sisters, loving one another is not a trivial thing; it is not optional. Loving one another is critically important, eternally important. It is a matter of life and death. ([Love: A Matter of Life and Death](#))

David Legge - From the beginning of 1Jn 3:14 that you can know, and that puts the lie to those who say you can't really know and be sure of your salvation. That's what this epistle is all about, and here he is repeating it again: 'Hereby we can know that we have this eternal life'. That fact is not as difficult to discern as this love in the life of some people who call themselves Christians. You can know that you have eternal life, but it's hard to know as you observe the life of people who profess Christianity whether or not they really love their brothers and sisters. John comes in here speaking of this lack of brotherly love that proves an absence of eternal life, and he says: 'If you don't love your brothers', verse 14 the second part of it, 'you're still dead', for a love for brothers is a sure sign that you've passed from death unto life. But if you don't love your brethren, you're still dead (Eph 2:1)! his is serious stuff. John is saying that **where there is no love there is no life...** In this same epistle in 1Jn 2:11 he's already stated that not only are we dead, but we're in the dark: 'the one who hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes.' A loveless man, John is saying, is a lightless man - he can't see his way. A loveless man is not only a lightless man, but he is a lifeless man - and ultimately the only conclusion you can come to is that a man without light and a man without love is a man who is lost! Now I know, and I agree to differ with some who see this portion of Scripture outlining primarily the two natures of the Christian; but I believe that the sentiments here are too strong, because John, time after time after time, is telling us that these people who have an absence of these characteristics are proving that they do not have the life of God in them - and your old nature can never have the life of God in it. My friend, what John is saying is that if you have a lack of love towards your brothers it proves an absence of eternal life. You're still dead. ([1John - Brotherly Love](#))

Sam Storms summarizes John's descriptions of **regeneration** or the **new birth**...

The term "begotten" or "re-born" or "born of" (gennao) is found 10x (1John 2:29; 1John 3:9(2); 1John 4:7; 1John 5:1 (2x); 1John 5:4; 1John 5:18 (2x)). In 1John 3:14 he uses another term which is translated "passed out of" (metabaino).

When one examines these texts where the terminology of regeneration is used, one finds that John is concerned with describing the **consequences** or **fruit** of the new birth:

Question: "How may I know that regeneration has occurred? How may I know if someone has been born again?"

Answer: "That person will not practice sin (1John 3:9; 5:18). That person will practice righteousness (1John 2:29). That person will love the brethren (1John 4:7). That person will believe in Christ (1John 5:1). And that person will overcome the world (1John 5:4)."

John's point is simply that these activities are the evidence of the new birth and hence of salvation. Their absence is the evidence that regeneration has not taken place. He makes this point, not because he wants to demonstrate the cause/effect relationship between regeneration and faith, but because he wants to provide the church with tests by which to discern between true and spurious "believers". ([Sam Storms- First John 5:1-21](#))

Because - Always pause and ponder this **term of explanation** asking at least "What is the author explaining?" While the answer in many passages such as this one is straightforward, this discipline of pausing to ponder slows you down and allows the Spirit time to speak to your heart. **Robertson** adds that "because" here is "Proof of this transition, not the ground of it."

We love (25)(**agapao**) "refers to divine love which is self-sacrificial in its essence, the love produced in the heart of the yielded saint by the Holy Spirit, the love defined by Paul in 1Corinthians 13:4-7-**note**, the love shown by God at Calvary. The **brother** here is ostensibly a Christian brother. The expression is equivalent to "a fellow-Christian." (Wuest) **Agapao** in the **present tense** describes this quality of love as a believer's general attitude and practice (possible only by continually being filled and enabled by the Holy Spirit!).

Wuest adds that "Evidence of a saved condition is that the person is habitually loving Christians with a love that impels him to deny himself for the benefit of the fellow-Christian."

Sam Storms - John is again setting forth a test of life: a present, on-going practice points to a past reality. **Love** for the brethren now, in the present, is an indication or sign of regeneration then, in the past. Note: it should be stressed that active love is the sign of life, not its procuring cause. Our love for the brethren is evidence that we have been regenerated, that we have passed out of death and into life. It is by no means the condition for life. The person who does not love the brethren is exposed as yet abiding in death. Note: John does not say that if he does not love he will die, but that he does not love because he is already dead; death is his natural state. ([Sam Storms- First John 3:10b-24](#))

Spurgeon - Do you love them for Christ's sake? Do you say to yourself, 'That is one of Christ's people; that is one who bears Christ's cross; that is one of the children of God; therefore I love him, and take delight in his company'? Then, that is an evidence that you are not of the world.

Lenski - "The death," "the life" are as definite as "the truth," "the Word," "the commandment," "the righteousness," etc.; they are not simply "death" and "life" in general. It is well to note that both the physical life and the spiritual life are not seen directly but are apparent only from their evidence, their activity. The plainest activity of the spiritual life is that of loving those who are one with us, are our spiritual brothers. We are not merely being friends with them (philein), but, understanding our spiritual relation to them, we act with a purpose that is according (agapen).

Martyn Lloyd-Jones on we love the brethren - Our new nature is one of love; that is what we have been given by the Holy Spirit—the fruit of the Spirit is love. So, having this new nature, there is the principle of life in us which was never there before. It is natural to love members of the family; the world has become unnatural in sin and does not do that, but this is natural, to love members of the family, to love those that are in it as we are. But the real explanation is that we love the brethren because they are 'of God.' We see God in them, Christ in them; it is the expression of our love to God. (Children of God)

Tim Keller - The way you know you're in the family of God is that people get along in the family of God who can't get along anywhere else. Now if you look around and say, "Gee, I don't see churches like that," that doesn't disprove Christianity; it disproves the church. It doesn't disprove Christianity; it disproves that congregation. Because the fact of the matter is, as I just showed you, it's a historical fact that the gospel, when understood, creates that kind of love. That's your evidence. If you don't see much of it, Christians, we'd better start to look at our own hearts. Are we living in accord with what we know? Are we being who we are? Are we working out the implications of being sons and daughters of God by grace alone? If we do, the world will know that he loves us. (from his sermon The Marks of a Christian - 1John 3:10-18)

Utley on we love the brethren - This (the verb "love") is a Present active indicative. **Love** is the major characteristic of the family of God (cf. Jn 13:34-35; 15:12,17; 2John 1:5; 1Cor 13:4-7; Gal. 5:22) because it is characteristic of God, Himself (cf. 1Jn 4:7-21). **Love** is not the basis of human relationship with God, but the result. **Love** is not the basis of salvation, but another evidence of it. ([Commentary](#))

Melvin Tinker: 1 John 3:11–24

INTRODUCTION: Loving other Christians is basic to what it means to be a Christian. If you are a believer you will imitate your Father. God is love (1 John 4:16) and so we must love others. We can find our confidence in this passage.

1. The Opposite of Love Is Seen in Cain (1Jn 3:11–15).

2. The Measure of Love Is Seen in Christ (1Jn 3:16–18).

3. The Fruit of Love Is Confidence (1Jn 3:19–24).

CONCLUSION: If you are not trusting you will not love; if you are trusting then you will love. Faith in Christ is the root, loving Christians is the fruit, and if we are doing both authentically then we can rest assured we are His.

THE TRAGIC CONTRAST!

He who does not love abides in death - The world, by hating believers, gives evidence of its true spiritual position (in Adam - Ro 5:12-note). And in spiritual **death** in Adam they will remain unless they receive the Gospel and are born again. In short, the fact that they do not love (with a supernatural, self-less love, Spirit enabled love) is clear evidence that they have no supernatural Source abiding in them and thus their "*sin remains* (meno = abides)" (Jn 9:41b)

A T Robertson - "The not loving man," (is a) general picture and picture of spiritual death.

Wuest - The individual who does not thus love Christians is abiding in the aforementioned death. This is that condition of the unsaved spoken of in Ephesians 2:1, as "dead in the sphere of trespasses and sins.

Vine - spiritual death involves the absence of spiritual love; the presence of it marks spiritual life. This closing statement of this verse makes clear that spiritual death is the condition of man by nature (Eph 2:1, 5). It is the exercise of love in its broadest scope that is here referred to, love, that is to say, shown not merely to believers but to fellowmen. "Faith worketh by love" and "faith without works is dead." He who professes faith and does not exercise love is after all in his old state of death.

Abides ([3306](#))(**meno**) in simple terms means he (or she) remains in the same position into which he (or she) was born, which is spiritually dead in Adam (Ro 5:12-note). John uses the **present tense** which signifies that spiritual death as their continuing *temporal* and eventually (if they do not repent) their *eternal* destiny. This truth parallels Paul's description of these souls as spiritually "dead in (their) trespasses and sins." (Eph 2:1) We do not need to watch the television show "The Walking Dead." All we need to do is go out in various venues in the world. Sadly, they are everywhere (and they need to hear the Gospel from us!).

Does not love - Hatred for one's brother is reiterated by John in three other passages...

1John 2:9 The one who says he is in the light and [yet] **hates his brother** is in the darkness until now.

1John 2:11 But the one who **hates his brother** is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

1John 4:20 If someone says, "I love God," and **hates his brother**, he is a liar; **for (term of explanation)** the one who **does not love his brother** whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen.

H A Ironside asks "Do we know that we have passed from death unto life because we are sound in the faith, because we are fundamentalists, because we are earnest Christian workers, or because we give liberally to missions or the Lord's work? No. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." We love them in the divine sense-with agape. **Dear friend, if you don't have that testimony you better begin to investigate the foundations of your Christian profession.** "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." ([1 John 3 Commentary](#))

Sam Storms - [Having briefly mentioned the hatred which will inevitably arise from the world towards the Christian, John now speaks of that love which should permeate the church. As to its role as a test of authentic Christianity, love for the brethren is an evidence of life, as its absence is a testimony of death (1Jn 3:14-15). Furthermore, the essence of such love is self-sacrifice as seen from the person and work of Jesus (1Jn 3:16-18).] 2. the presence of love for the brethren confirms and assures the genuine Christian as having passed out of death into life, whereas he in whom it is absent abides in death, and is manifested as a murderer and one in whom eternal life does not abide - 1Jn 3:14-15 ([Sam Storms- First John 3:10b-24](#))

Utley on **He who does not love abides in death** - This (**love**) is a Present participle used as the subject with a present active indicative verb (**abides**). As believers continue to abide in love, unbelievers abide in hate. Hate, like love, is an evidence of one's spiritual orientation. Remember John's stark, dualistic categories; one abides in love or abides in death. No middle ground. ([Commentary](#))

Charles Simeon on the vital importance of showing genuine love to Christian brethren - Two things must be borne in mind, as distinguishing the true test from all its counterfeits. The “love of the brethren” is a love to them purely for Christ’s sake, and a love displaying itself towards them in all its proper offices. It is not a love to them on account of their having embraced our sentiments, or their belonging to our party; nor will it shew itself merely in speaking well of them, and in espousing their cause: it is called forth by the single circumstance of their being the friends and servants of the Lord Jesus Christ: and it will show itself in such a deportment towards them, as we would maintain towards the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, if He were circumstanced as they are. The description given of love in the 13th chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians(1Cor 13:4-7-note), is precisely that which the Christian will realize in his conduct towards Christians of every denomination: and **then only is it a proper test of our conversion to God, when it so operates.** But, supposing it to be of this kind, then may we **know** from it, without a shadow of doubt, that **“we have passed from death into life:”** for such love can proceed from God alone: it springs from no root whatever but faith in Christ: and, consequently, **its existence and operation in the soul proves us to be true believers, children of God, and heirs of glory.** Those who are strangers to this peculiar regard—If the existence of it in the soul prove that we have passed from death unto life, the non-existence of it may well lead you to fear that this change has never been wrought in you. **Examine yourselves,** therefore, and **try your own selves** (2Cor 13:5-note). In truth, this test is of peculiar importance to you: for, if you will look within, you will find that, by nature, you are rather alienated from persons on account of their relation to Christ, than drawn to them: the want of congeniality of taste and sentiment sets you at a distance from them; and a consciousness of this may well lead you to conclude that you are yet dead before God. The Apostle tells us this, in the very words following my text; “He that loves not his brother, abides in death.” **○ consider this, ere it be too late: and seek that change, without which you must for ever perish!** ([1 John 3:14 Love of the Brethren](#))

F B Meyer Devotional - Practicing Christianity - 1 John 3:14

IT IS a great comfort to find that Love is not regarded by the Apostle as though it were merely an emotional or sentimental matter, for every reference points to action! The love of God was manifested in the laying down of His life, and we are to be willing to follow in His steps ([1 John 3:16](#)). The injunction is that we should love in our deeds. We are not to shut up our hearts in compassion, but to help our brother in need. If we begin with doing kind and loving actions, we shall end by feeling the same. Often when people come to me, saying that love has completely died out of their life towards some other person, I have bidden them go back again, and act with love, making the other one the centre and object of helpful ministry; the invariable result is the refreshing and rekindling of the hot geyser-springs of affection.

Do not wait to feel love, but begin at once to show it, because it is fight, and your duty, and as you step out in simple faith you will find that God will make this to abound towards that also abound in grace you may this good work. Love of such kind is self-giving and it is the gift of the Spirit of God. This exotic bloom cannot flourish on our wintry soil; the heart of man cannot furnish it. There may be a few wild growths, but they bear small comparison to its beautiful flower and fruit. Love is of God. It proceeds from His Nature, and is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us. "The fruit of the Spirit is love," and as we are united with Christ by faith, the love of God will be shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, and we shall be able to love with God's love.

We know that we have been born from above as soon as we find ourselves willing to put the interests of another before our own, not because we have a natural affection or affinity for him, but because he and we belong to God. If there is hatred or dislike in our hearts towards any, let us beware! We must uproot it by generous action, or it will bring darkness into our own lives (1 John 2:9, 10, 11).

PRAYER - Enable us, O God of patience, to bear one another's burdens, and to forbear one another in love. Oh, teach and help us all to live in peace and to love in truth. Subdue all bitter resentments in our minds, and let the law of kindness be in our tongues. AMEN. - F. B. Meyer. Our Daily Walk.

JOHN PIPER SUMMARIZES JOHN'S EVIDENCE OF THE NEW BIRTH

I think God wants the totality of this book to have its impact on us. It is dominated by the concern to give **tests of life** or effects and evidences of the new birth. He gives at least eleven evidences that we are born again. We could probably boil them all down to **faith** and **love**. But for now let's let them stand the way he says them. Here they are:

1. Those who are born of God keep his commandments.

1 John 2:3-4-note: “By this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. Whoever

says 'I know him' but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him."

1 John 3:24-note: "Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him."

2. Those who are born of God walk as Christ walked.

1 John 2:5-6-note: "By this we may know that we are in him: whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked."

3. Those who are born of God don't hate others but love them.

1 John 2:9-note: "Whoever says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in darkness."

1 John 3:14-note: "We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death."

1 John 4:7-8-note: "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love."

1 John 4:20-note: "If anyone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar."

4. Those who are born of God don't love the world.

1 John 2:15-note: "If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

5. Those who are born of God confess the Son and receive (have) him.

1 John 2:23-note: "No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also."

1 John 4:15-note: "Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God."

1 John 5:12-note: "Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life."

6. Those who are born of God practice righteousness.

1 John 2:29-note: "If you know that he is righteous, you may be sure that everyone who practices righteousness has been born of him."

7. Those who are born of God don't make a practice of sinning.

1 John 3:6-note: "No one who abides in him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him."

1 John 3:9-10-note: "No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God. By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother."

1 John 5:18-note: "We know that everyone who has been born of God does not keep on sinning, but he who was born of God protects him, and the evil one does not touch him."

8. Those who are born of God possess the Spirit of God.

1 John 3:24-note: "By this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us."

1 John 4:13-note: "By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit."

9. Those who are born of God listen submissively to the apostolic Word.

1 John 4:6-note: "We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error."

10. Those who are born of God believe that Jesus is the Christ.

1 John 5:1-note: "Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God."

11. Those who are born of God overcome the world.

1 John 5:4-note: "Everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith."

Two Wrong Conclusions - One of the effects of all those “tests of life” is to overwhelm us with the sense that John may be saying: “If you’re born again, you’re perfect. If you’re born again you don’t sin at all. There is no defeat in the Christian life. There is only victory.”

Another effect that these tests might have in our minds is to make us think we can lose our salvation. That is, we can be born again for a while and then begin to fail in these tests and die and lose the spiritual life that we were given in the new birth.

Two Key Clarifications - John is very aware that his words could be taken in these two wrong ways. So he is explicit as any writer in the New Testament that this is not the case: Christians are not sinless, and born-again people cannot lose their spiritual life and be lost.

He says in 1 John 1:8-10-**note**, “If we say we have no sin [present tense], we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins [present tense], he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.” So John is at pains to say that “walking in the light” (1Jn 1:7-**note**) does not mean walking flawlessly. It means that, when you stumble, the light of Christ causes you to see it and hate it and confess it and move forward with Christ.

And John is just as jealous to make sure we don’t infer from these “tests of life” that we can be born again and then later lose our life and be lost. 1John 2:19-**note** is one of the clearest statements in the Bible that there is another way to understand what happens when a person abandons the church. It says, “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us.”

Notice three things John says to protect us from misunderstanding. 1) Those who seemed to be born again and forsook the faith never were born again—they never were of us. “They went out from us, but they were not of us.” In other words, the explanation is not that they lost their new birth. They never had it. 2) Those who are truly born again (“of us”) will persevere to the end in faith. 1Jn 5:19b-**note**: “For if they had been of us, they would have continued with us.” Endurance is not the cause of the new birth. The new birth is the cause of endurance, and endurance is the evidence of new birth. 3) God often makes plain who the false Christians are in the church by their eventual rejection of the truth and the people of God. Verse 19c: “But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us.” It became plain. And it often becomes plain today. ([Everyone Who Has Been Born of God Overcomes the World](#))

Here is a letter from **Dr John Piper** that is a critique of Zane Hodges' interpretation of 1 John. The letter was written in 1986 and entitled "[Who Am I Talking About?](#)" (Bold added for emphasis).

I have referred several times to a contemporary movement of evangelicalism that offers assurance of salvation to professing Christians who go on living in sin. Who am I talking about? Here is an example.

Zane Hodges, who teaches at Dallas Seminary, has written a book entitled **The Gospel Under Siege** (Redencion Viva, 1981).

His position is the very opposite of mine:

“An insistence on the necessity or inevitability of works fundamentally undermines assurance” (p.13). That is, “if good works are really . . . an essential fruit of salvation,” we cannot be sure of our eternal salvation (p. 9). Therefore, “works have nothing to do with determining a Christian's basic relationship to God.” “There is not even a single place in the Pauline letters where he expresses doubt that his audience is composed of true Christians.” (p. 95).

Apart from the fact that 2 Corinthians 13:5+ contradicts his last statement, 1 John remains an insuperable obstacle. His interpretation will not stand. Consider for yourselves what he says concerning 1 John 3:14+ (“We know that we have passed from death to life because we love the brothers.”). Here assurance of passing out of death into life is the product of loving our fellow Christians. **How will he escape it?**

He tries to escape it by saying that the verse has “no reference to conversion as such.” He says that there is a sphere of light and a sphere of darkness within the Christian life. “If anyone does not love his brother he is out of touch with God. He is not living as a true disciple of his Master” (p. 63). But he is still a child of God because eternal security has nothing to do with whether you are a loving person or not.

This will not stand scrutiny. The one other place where John uses the same Greek phrase (“**We have passed from death to life**”) is John 5:24, where he says, “Truly, truly I say to you that the one who hears my word and believes the one who sent me has eternal life and does not come into judgment but **has passed from death into life.**” Therefore it is **grasping at a straw** to say that “passing from death to life” in 1 John

3:14 refers to two states within Christian life. **It plainly means: passing from lostness to eternal life.**

I appeal to you, judge for yourselves, does John's assurance in 1 John 3:14 come from loving the brothers or not?

Bowing before the Word with you,

Pastor John

Related Resources:

- [Zane Hodges](#) - Middletown Bible church
- [The Unusual Teachings of Zane Hodges](#) - Middletown Bible church

The **Easy English Bible commentary** summarizes (in simple, straightforward language) what John is saying...

All those people who trust in the *Lord Jesus belong to him. They know that they have a new life. People of the *world may hate them. But they are safe with the *Lord. Death is in contrast to the new life. Death is the state of all who do not know the *Lord. We Christians know that we are no longer dead. We have come into a new life. Once we belonged to death but now we do not. The *Lord has transferred us from death to life. Now we belong to him. We know that this is true. Our love for each other shows that it is true. We know that we have life. We know this because we love other Christians. Such love shows that we are God's children. We do not become Christians by our love. But love shows that we have become Christians. Those who do not love do not have this life. They remain in death. This is the opposite of life with God. Love is the evidence of life. But hate is the evidence of death. ([1 John - Bible Commentary in Easy English](#))

Robert Morgan - Five 'til Eight - He cast a long shadow—a preacher for 67 years, a theological professor for 60 years, a seminary president for 13 years. John R. Sampey's influence touched multiple generations. John was born in Alabama on his mother's birthday, September 27, 1863. One of his earliest memories occurred short years later when, as a young child, he watched his mother being baptized. When she disappeared beneath the water, he cried out in alarm and never forgot the scene. His own conversion occurred as a teenager. *As I lay on the trundle bed on the night of March 3, 1877, I could not go to sleep. We had just had family prayers, and Father was reading and Mother was knitting. My younger brother had fallen asleep beside me; but I was in distress over my sins. In my desperation I began to talk in a whisper: "Lord Jesus, I do not know what to do. I have prayed, but get no relief. I read the Bible, but my sins are a burden on my soul. ... If I am lost, I will go down trusting You." Then something happened. It seemed a great Presence filled the room and said to me almost in audible words: "My boy, I have been waiting for you to do what you have just done. You can count on Me to save you." I looked up to the old family clock on the mantel, and it was five minutes to eight o'clock.* Sampey didn't announce his conversion until July when he stepped forward in church, saying he now loved God and God's people as never before. The minister turned to the congregation and said: "Hereby we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." That verse became Sampey's theme verse, for it impressed on him the mark of a Christian. Its words guided him for years to come, contributing greatly to his patient spirit and his willingness to serve. It became personified in him, and none who knew him doubted that he had passed from death to life, for he did love the brethren. (From this Verse)

J. C. Philpot. Daily Portions. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." 1 John 3:14 - The Lord's people in their early days have a measure of heavenly love. Though perhaps they cannot say that Jesus is theirs; though they dare not declare they shall certainly go to heaven when they die; though they sometimes cannot even assert that the work of grace is really begun upon their souls; yet there is love manifested in them to God's word, God's people, God's servants, and God's truth. There is in them, in their weakest and tenderest days, a separation from the world, a casting-in of their lot among the people of God, a going-out in the tenderness of their heart and affection towards them. We see this in Ruth--though she was a poor heathen idolatress, no sooner was her heart touched by the finger of God, than she cleaved to Naomi.

Love to Christ can only spring from the teachings and operations of God upon the heart. Our "carnal mind is enmity against God"--nothing but implacable, irreconcilable enmity. But when the Lord is pleased to make himself, in some measure, known to the soul; when he is pleased, in some degree, to unveil his lovely face, and to give a discovery of his grace and glory--immediately divine love springs up. He is so lovely an Object! As the Bride says, He is "altogether lovely." His beauty is so surpassing, his grace so rich, his mercy so free--all that he is and has is so unspeakably glorious--that no sooner does he unveil his lovely face, than he wins over all the love of the heart, takes possession of the bosom, and draws every affection of the soul to center wholly and solely in himself. - J. C. Philpot. Daily Portions

Love The Brothers - Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God. —1 John 4:7 - In his book Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home, Richard Foster tells of an old sage who asked his disciples, "How can we know when the darkness is leaving and the dawn is coming?" "When we can see a tree in the distance and know that it is an elm and not a juniper," one student responded. "When we can see an animal and know it is a fox and not a wolf," replied another.

"No," said the teacher.

Puzzled, the students asked for the answer. The sage replied quietly, "We know the darkness is leaving and the dawn is coming when we can see another person and know that it is our brother or sister; otherwise no matter what time it is, it's still dark."

Do we take seriously John's words, "We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren"? (1 Jn. 3:14). Or do we know of Christians whom we dislike intensely? Do we hold in contempt those who go to a different church and don't agree with us on every issue? What about Christians of another race? Do we like them not only from a distance but also when they are up close and personal?

If love is the mark of a believer, do people recognize that we belong to Christ? By Haddon W. Robinson ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Every kindness done to others
Is a kindness done to Thee;
Christlike love for all my brothers
May the world observe in me. —Brandt

People with a heart for God have a heart for people.

The Moment I Knew - I now send you, to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light. —Acts 26:17-18

The lights dimmed on the platform as Tom Whittaker began to sing the words of "Mary, Did You Know?" The steady, quiet strumming of his guitar beautifully complemented his calm, deep voice. His wife, Gloria, says that the first time she heard him sing that song, she realized she was in love with him.

Many people who know Jesus as Savior can point to a specific moment when they suddenly grasped the extent of God's amazing love for them. At that instant, they got it. Ray Boltz describes it in song:

The moment it happened,
It was the moment I knew;
It was like walking in the darkness
When the light comes shining through.

Paul had such a moment on the Damascus Road. His first encounter with Jesus transformed him from a fierce persecutor of Christians to the first great missionary. Spurred on by this eye-opening experience, Paul's newfound love for the Savior compelled him to share the gospel with everyone he met (Acts 26). Perhaps you know about Christ but have never trusted Him for salvation. John wrote, "We know that we have passed from death to life" (1 John 3:14). But that statement applies only to those who look to Jesus for forgiveness. Because of God's love, you too can "receive forgiveness of sins" through Jesus Christ (Acts 26:18) and be "born again" (John 3:3). The moment is now. By Cindy Hess Kasper ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

It's one thing to know there is a God; it's quite another to know the God who is.

The Resurrection Open - 2009-us-open-logolt had to be a mixture of thrill and relief on Monday for Lucas Glover when he holed his final putt, claiming the 2009 US Open. Glover struggled early in the final round but recovered down the stretch, and showed the kind of steely nerves that are necessary to win our national championship. It was a great story in the middle of a week filled with great stories. But for me, one of the most fascinating stories was that of David Duval. The 882nd ranked player in the world coming into the Open, Duval showed flashes of the brilliance that had helped him score a 59 in competition and climb the ladder to become the No. 1 ranked player in the world in the late 1990s. Then, he suddenly lost his game and it seemed he would never find his way back. When he did play in a tournament, he struggled badly—making it almost painful to watch. But his life, and his game, has come back together. In fact, his showing at the Open, along with good play from Lucas Glover and Ricky Barnes, was such a remarkable turnaround that NBC golf analyst Johnny Miller said that they should call this year's event "The Resurrection Open." It sure did seem that, at least for one magical weekend, David Duval's golf game had come back to life from the dead—and his 2-under-par performance at the 2009 US Open proved it.

In a far more significant arena, the follower of Christ has been brought from death into life by the power of Christ's cross and resurrection. But where is the proof of that spiritual resurrection in Christ? We can talk all we want and say what we will, but the proof of the resurrection is not in the talking—it is in the living. In 1 John 3:14, John writes, "We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren." There, we get at least part of the answer about what stands as evidence of new life in Christ. One of the dominant characteristics of the person who has been "raised from the dead" is that they will love what Christ loves—most specifically, His people. It is not enough to simply talk a good game. Loving like Christ loves can show a watching world that the resurrection of Christ has changed our lives forever—and for right now. Bill Crowder, Sport Spectrum Chaplain

GREEK WORD STUDIES

Passed (3327) (**metabaino** from **meta** = denotes change of place/condition + **baino** = to go or come) means to pass or go from one place or one state to another. To transfer from one place to another. **Metabaino** describes Jesus departing or leaving one place to go to another (Mt 11:1, 12:9, 15:29) In Jn 5:24 and 1Jn 3:14 metabaino is used figuratively to describe passage from death to life, a passage that occurs when one is born from above. John 13:1 speaks of Jesus departing from earth to heaven to the right hand of the Father. Most of the NT uses of metabaino mean to leave or depart.

David Smith - Metabaino "is used of transition from one place to another (John 7:3, 13:1), of passing from one form of government to another (Plat. Rep. 550 D), of the transmigration of souls (Luc. Gall. 4)." ([Expositor's Greek Testament](#))

Thoralf Gilbrant - In classical Greek **metabaino** primarily means "to go away," "to remove," or "to depart." It describes the change when someone moves from one dwelling to another or makes a change in course or direction. In speaking and in writing, the word means "to pass on to another subject." In logic it is the process of making a transition or an inference based on an analogy or resemblance. In drama it is the changing fortunes of the actors as the plot unfolds. ([The Complete Biblical Library Old and New Testament](#) - recommended)

TDNT - The usual meaning is "to change place," but the term also denotes change of topic or state. It is mostly topographical in the NT but figurative in John, e.g., for the change from death to life

Liddell-Scott-Jones (summarized) - to pass over from one place to another, the stars had passed over the meridian: to go over to the other side 2. to pass from one point to another, change thy theme, changing their course, turning round, having passed to another life. In writing or speaking, pass from one subject to another, pass from one state to another, change - of changes of fortune in a drama. In the Epicurean logic, make a transition: hence, infer, esp. from analogy or resemblance.

Metabaino - NAS Usage: depart(1), departed(1), departing(2), leave(2), left(1), move(2), moving(1), passed(2).

Metabaino - 12x in 11v - There are no uses in the non-apocryphal Septuagint.

Matthew 8:34 And behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus; and when they saw Him, they implored Him to **leave** their region.

Matthew 11:1 When Jesus had finished giving instructions to His twelve disciples, He **departed** from there to teach and preach in their cities.

Matthew 12:9 **Departing** from there, He went into their synagogue.

Matthew 15:29 **Departing** from there, Jesus went along by the Sea of Galilee, and having gone up on the mountain, He was sitting there.

Matthew 17:20 And He said to them, "Because of the littleness of your faith; for truly I say to you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, '**Move** from here to there,' and it will **move**; and nothing will be impossible to you.

Luke 10:7 "Stay in that house, eating and drinking what they give you; for the laborer is worthy of his wages. Do not keep **moving** from house to house.

John 5:24 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has **passed out of** death into life.

John 7:3 Therefore His brothers said to Him, '**Leave** here and go into Judea, so that Your disciples also may see Your works which You are doing.

John 13:1 Now before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knowing that His hour had come that He would **depart**

out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.

Acts 18:7 Then he **left** there and went to the house of a man named Titius Justus, a worshiper of God, whose house was next to the synagogue.

1 John 3:14 We know that we **have passed** out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death.

Death (2288) (**thanatos**) is a permanent cessation of all vital functions and thus is the end of life on earth (as we know it). The separation of the soul from the body and the end of earthly life. Spiritual death is separation from the life of God forever by dying without being born again. The first use in the Septuagint is in a well known promise from God "you shall surely die (Lxx = thanatos apothnesko)." (Ge 2:17) followed by the second use in the deceptive lie by Satan "You surely shall not die (thanatos apothnesko)!" (Ge 3:4) Death is natural to humanity as part of the created world. Death is a result of Adam's sin (Ro 5:12). Death is universal - no one can escape it.

Death is a complex topic so the reader is encouraged to read the following phrases (and the entire passage) to see various descriptions or associations with death to help get a sense for the meaning of this important Biblical word.

Put to **death** (punished referring to the OT practice) (Mt 10:21, 15:4, 7:10). Shall not taste **death** (Mt 16:28, Mk 9:1, Lk 9:27 referring to the 3 who would witness the transfiguration) condemn Him to **death** (Mt 20:18, Mk 10:33), My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of **death** (Mt 26:38, Mk 14:34), deserving of **death** (Mt 26:66, Mk 14:64); brother will deliver brother to **death** (Mk 13:12); shadow of death (Lk 1:79 - Thayer says "figuratively, a region enveloped in the darkness of ignorance and sin"); not see **death** before he had seen the Lord's Christ (Lk 2:26) ready to go both to prison and to **death!** (Lk 22:33); nothing deserving **death** has been done by Him (Lk 23:15) no grounds for the **death** penalty (Lk 23:22) sentence of **death** (Lk 24:20), passed out of (spiritual) **death** into (spiritual) life (Jn 5:24), if anyone keeps My word he shall never see (eternal, spiritual) **death**. (Jn 8:51, 52), "This sickness is not unto **death** (Jn 11:4), Jesus had spoken of his **death** (Jn 11:13), the kind of **death** by which He was to die (Jn 12:33, 18:32, 21:19), the agony of **death** (Acts 2:24), no proper ground for a **death** sentence (Acts 13:28), I persecuted this Way to the **death** (Acts 22:4), have committed anything worthy of **death**, (Acts 25:11, 25:25, 26:31, 28:18), those who practice such things are worthy of death (God's **death** penalty) (Ro 1:32), the **death** of His Son, (Ro 5:10), just as through one man sin entered into the world, and **death** (the result or penalty for the "Sin" virus that infected every man) through sin, and so **death** spread to all men, because all sinned (Ro 5:12), death reigned from Adam until Moses, (Ro 5:14), death (physical) reigned through the one (Adam), (Ro 5:17), sin reigned in death, (Ro 5:21), have been baptized into His **death** (mystical union with Christ) (Ro 6:3-5), **death** (personified) no longer is master over Him (Ro 6:9), either of sin resulting in **death**, or of obedience resulting in righteousness (Ro 6:16), the outcome of those things is **death** (Ro 6:21), the wages of sin is death, (Ro 6:23), bear fruit for **death**. (Ro 7:5), proved to result in **death** for me (Ro 7:10), Did that which is good, then, become **death** to me? (Ro 7:13), Who will set me free from the body of this **death**? (Ro 7:24), set you free from the law of sin and of death (Ro 8:2), the mind set on the flesh is death (Ro 8:6), I am convinced that neither **death**, nor life (Ro 8:38), or life or death (1Cor 3:22), you proclaim the Lord's **death** until He comes (1Cor 11:26), since by a man (Adam) came **death**, (1Cor 15:21), The last enemy that will be abolished is **death** (1Cor 15:26), "**DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP** in victory (1Cor 15:54), "**O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?** (1Cor 15:55), The sting of **death** is sin, (1Cor 15:56), we had the sentence of death within ourselves (2Cor 1:9), delivered us from so great a peril of **death**, (2Cor 1:10), to the one an aroma from **death** to **death**, (2Cor 2:16), the ministry of death, in letters engraved on stones (2Cor 3:7), being delivered over to **death** for Jesus' sake, (2Cor 4:11), **death** works in us, (2Cor 4:12), the sorrow of the world produces **death** (2Cor 7:10), danger of **death** (2Cor 11:23), whether by life or by **death** (Php 1:20), sick to the point of **death**, (Php 2:27), he came close to **death** for the work of Christ, (Php 2:30), being conformed to His **death**; (Php 3:10), now reconciled you in His fleshly body through **death**, (Col 1:22), Jesus, who abolished death (2Ti 1:10), because of the suffering of **death** crowned with glory and honor, (Heb 2:9), that through **death** He might render powerless him who had the power of **death**, (Heb 2:14), might deliver those who through fear of **death**, (Heb 2:15), to the One able to save Him from **death**, (Heb 5:7), they were prevented by death from continuing, (Heb 7:23), a **death** has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions (Heb 9:15), there must of necessity be the **death** of the one who made it, (Heb 9:16), so that he should not see **death** (Heb 11:5), it brings forth **death** (James 1:15), his way will save his soul from **death**, (James 5:20), we have passed out of **death** into life, (1Jn 3:14), If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to **death** (1Jn 5:16), there is a sin not leading to **death** (1Jn 5:16), I have the keys of **death** and of Hades (Rev 1:18), Be faithful until **death**, and I will give you the crown of life (Rev 2:10), the second **death** (Rev 2:11), I will kill her children with **pestilence** (Rev 2:23, 6:8), in those days men will seek **death** and will not find it; and they will long to die and death flees from them (Rev 9:6), they did not love their life even to **death** (Rev 12:11), and his **deadly** wound (Rev 13:3), whose **deadly** wound was healed (Rev 13:12), **pestilence** and mourning and famine (Rev 18:8), second **death** (Rev 20:6, 14, 21:8), **death** and Hades (Rev 20:13), shall no longer be any **death** (Rev 21:4).

Friberg has a simple summary - (1) physically, as the separation of soul from body (physical) death (Jn 11:13); (2) as a legal technical term, of capital punishment (physical) death (Mt 26:66); (3) spiritually, as the separation of soul from God (spiritual) death

(Jn 5:24; Jas 1:15), opposite zoe (life); (4) spiritually, as the separation of soul from spirit or from the possibility of knowing God, as the result of judgment (eternal) death (Ro 1:32); called *second death* in Rev 2:11; 20:6; (5) by metonymy deadly disease, pestilence (Rev 6:8)

Hawker - There is a threefold sense of **death**; natural, spiritual, and eternal. That which is **natural**, respects the separation of soul and body. (James 2:16.) **Spiritual** death means, the soul unquickened by the Holy Spirit. (Eph. 2:1) And **eternal** death implies the everlasting separation both of soul and body from God to all eternity. (Luke 12:5.)

BDAG summarized -

(1) the termination of physical life = death

(a) natural death Jn 11:4, 13; Heb 7:23

(b) of death as a penalty --

(i) as inflicted by secular courts = Mt 26:66; Mk 14:64

(ii). of the death of Christ generally: Ro 5:10; 6:3–5; 1Cor 11:26.

(iii). of natural death as divine punishment Ro 5:12ab; 21; 1Cor 15:21

(c) of the danger of death (2 Ch 32:11) Heb 5:7.

(d) of the manner of death Jn 12:33; 18:32; 21:19.

(e) death as personified Ro 5:14, 17; 6:9; 1Cor 15:26, Rev 1:18

(2) death viewed transcendentally in contrast to a living relationship with God

(a) of spiritual death, to which one is subject unless one lives out of the power of God's grace. Jn 5:24; 1Jn 3:14; Ro 7:10; 8:6.

(b) eternal death. Ro 1:32; 6:16, 21, 23; 7:5; 2Cor 7:10; 2 Ti 1:10; Heb 2:14; the second death Rev 2:11; 20:6, 14b; 21:8

(3) a particular manner of death, fatal illness, pestilence and the like, as established by context (Job 27:15; Jer 15:2; Rev 2:23)

Vine - death, is used in Scripture of **(a)** the separation of the soul (the spiritual part of man) from the body (the material part), the latter ceasing to function and turning to dust, e.g., Jn 11:13; Heb. 2:15; 5:7; 7:23. **(b)** the separation of man from God; Adam died on the day he disobeyed God, Ge 2:17, and hence all mankind are born in the same spiritual condition, Ro 5:12, 14, 17, 21, from which, however, those who believe in Christ are delivered, John 5:24; 1John 3:14. **Death** is the opposite of life; it never denotes non-existence. As spiritual life is "conscious existence in communion with God," so **spiritual death** is "conscious existence in separation from God." **Death**, in whichever of the above-mentioned senses it is used, is always, in Scripture, viewed as the penal consequence of sin, and since sinners alone are subject to death, Ro 5:12, it was as the Bearer of sin that the Lord Jesus submitted thereto on the Cross, 1Pet 2:24. And while the physical death of the Lord Jesus was of the essence of His sacrifice, it was not the whole. The darkness symbolized, and His cry expressed, the fact that He was left alone in the Universe, He was 'forsaken;' cp. Mt. 27:45, 46."

TDNT - Classical meaning of thanatos - **Death** destroys life; the shadowy existence of the dead in Hades is no true life. The most that may be expected is the survival or transmigration of the soul. All must die, so that **death** casts a shadow on life and its meaning. Yet **death** brings release from the dubious boon of life. Thus suicide may be liberation. Yet no one wants to die, and there is no knowledge of what comes after it. Heroes live on immortally in their renown, for it is good to die for the pólis. **Death** is seen as a natural phenomenon. The psuche lives on as the vital force in the cosmos, but only as the birth of one is the death of another. This does not solve the riddle or remove the terror of individual **death**. Plato lifts the issue to another plane by giving precedence to the question of right and wrong. The point, then, is to die a good death. Indeed, death can be the fulfilment of life by rising above the mortal body. On this basis the hope arises that the soul will live on. Aristotle follows the same reasoning, except that for him it is the nóús (mind) that survives in some obscure way.

- [Dictionary of Bible Themes- death, natural](#)
- [How is physical death related to spiritual death?](#)
- [What does the Bible say about death?](#)
- [What is the second death?](#)
- [Is there an angel of death?](#)
- American Tract Society [Death](#)

- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary [Death](#)
- Baker Evangelical Dictionary [Sin Unto Death](#) [Second Death](#)
- Charles Buck Dictionary [Fear of Death](#) [Death](#)
- CARM Theological Dictionary [Death](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Death](#) [Eternal Death](#)
- Spurgeon's Illustration Collection [Death](#) [Death \(2\)](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Death](#) [Death of Christ](#) [Second Death](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Death](#)
- Hawker's Poor Man's Dictionary [Death](#)
- Wilson's Bible Types [Death](#)
- 1911 Encyclopedia Britannica [Death](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Death](#) [Body of Death](#) [Second Death](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Death](#)

Strong's summary - that separation (whether natural or violent) of the soul and the body by which the life on earth is ended, with the implied idea of future misery in hell (the power of death). Since the nether world, the abode of the dead, was conceived as being very dark, it is equivalent to the region of thickest darkness i.e. figuratively, a region enveloped in the darkness of ignorance and sin. (2) Metaphorically, the loss of that life which alone is worthy of the name - the misery of the soul arising from sin, which begins on earth but lasts and increases after the death of the body in hell (3) the miserable state of the wicked dead in hell (4) in the widest sense, death comprising all the miseries arising from sin, as well physical death as the loss of a life consecrated to God and blessed in him on earth, to be followed by wretchedness in hell

Thanatos - 120x in 106v - **NAS** Usage: danger of death(1), death(112), fatal(2), pestilence(3).

Mt 4:16; 10:21; 15:4; 16:28; 20:18; 26:38, 66; Mark 7:10; 9:1; 10:33; 13:12; 14:34, 64; Lk 1:79; 2:26; 9:27; 22:33; 23:15, 22; 24:20; John 5:24; 8:51-52; 11:4, 13; 12:33; 18:32; 21:19; Acts 2:24; 13:28; 22:4; 23:29; 25:11, 25; 26:31; 28:18; Ro 1:32; 5:10, 12, 14, 17, 21; 6:3-5, 9, 16, 21, 23; 7:5, 10, 13, 24; 8:2, 6, 38; 1Cor 3:22; 11:26; 15:21, 26, 54-56; 2Cor 1:9-10; 2:16; 3:7; 4:11f; 7:10; 11:23; Phil 1:20; 2:8, 27, 30; 3:10; Col 1:22; 2Ti 1:10; Heb 2:9, 14-15; 5:7; 7:23; 9:15-16; 11:5; Jas 1:15; 5:20; 1 John 3:14; 5:16-17; Rev 1:18; 2:10f, 23; 6:8; 9:6; 12:11; 13:3, 12; 18:8; 20:6, 13-14; 21:4, 8

Septuagint -

Ge 2:17; 3:4; 21:16; 26:11; Ex 5:3; 9:3, 15; 10:17; 19:12; 21:12, 15ff; 22:19f; 31:14f; Lev 20:2, 9-11, 15f, 27; 24:16f, 21; 26:25; 27:29; Num 12:12; 14:12; 15:35; 16:29; 26:10, 65; 35:16ff, 21, 31; Deut 19:6; 21:22; 22:26; 28:21; 30:15, 19; 31:14, 27; Josh 2:13f; Jdg 5:18; 13:7, 22; 15:13; 16:30; 21:5; Ruth 1:17; 1Sa 1:11; 5:6, 11; 14:39, 44; 15:32, 35; 20:3, 14, 31; 22:16; 2 Sam 1:23; 3:33; 12:5, 14; 14:14; 15:21; 18:33; 19:28; 20:3; 21:1; 22:5f; 24:13ff; 1 Kgs 2:26, 37, 42; 3:26f; 8:37; 2 Kgs 1:4, 6, 16; 2:21; 4:40; 8:10; 11:15; 15:5; 20:1; 1 Chr 21:12, 14; 2 Chr 6:28; 7:13; 20:9; 32:11, 24, 33; Ezra 7:26; Esther 4:8, 17; Job 3:5, 21, 23; 5:20; 7:15; 9:23; 12:22; 15:34; 17:14; 18:13; 24:17; 27:15; 28:3, 22; 30:23; 33:18, 22, 24, 30; 38:17; Ps 6:5; 7:13; 9:13; 13:3; 18:4f; 22:15; 23:4; 33:19; 34:21; 44:19; 49:14; 55:4, 15; 56:13; 68:20; 73:4; 78:50; 88:6; 89:48; 107:10, 14, 18; 116:3, 8, 15; 118:18; Prov 2:18; 5:5; 7:27; 8:36; 10:2; 11:19; 12:28; 14:27; 16:14; 18:6, 21; 21:6; 23:14; 24:8, 11; 25:10; Eccl 3:19; 7:1, 26; 8:8; Song 8:6; Isa 9:2, 8; 25:8; 28:15, 18; 38:1; 39:1; 53:8f, 12; Jer 8:3; 9:21; 13:16; 14:12, 15; 15:2; 16:4; 18:21, 23; 21:6ff; 24:10; 26:8, 11, 16; 34:17; 38:15; 43:11; 44:13; Lam 1:20; Ezek 3:18; 5:12, 17; 6:11f; 7:15; 12:16; 14:19, 21; 18:13, 23, 32; 28:8, 23; 31:14; 33:8, 11, 14, 27; 38:22; Da 2:9; 4:1; Hos 13:14; Amos 4:10; 5:8; Jonah 4:9; Hab 2:5; 3:13; Zech 5:3;

1 John 3:13 Commentary <> 1 John 3:15 Commentary