

A Reflection on “Hate” in 1 John 3:15
by Caleb Lenz
(Posted October 26, 2021)

On Sunday my pastor spoke about the verses in Matthew 5 concerning anger towards a brother (Matthew 5:21–26). He referred also to 1 John 3, and there my eye caught something which convicted me. In 1 John 3:15 we read this (modified KJV):

Whoever hates his brother is a murderer: and you all know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

The Greek word for “hate” is *μισέω* (pronounced /mi.'se.o/), which I explain in a previous post ([“Understanding ‘Love’ and ‘Hate’ in Matthew 10:37 and Luke 14:26”](#)) to mean “to disenjoy someone’s or something’s company”. Here John says that whoever disenjoys the company of his brother is a murderer. This caught me on Sunday, and my mind went to a brother that I don’t exactly enjoy the company of when I’m with that person. According to 1 John, I am therefore a murderer, and I need to repent before God. I worked through it in my mind, and I let go of not enjoying that person’s company. I’ll keep working on this whenever I see the person. I feel compelled to share this, because I know I’m not the only believer who struggles with disenjoying another brother’s company. We need to let go of our disenjoyment of any brothers in the faith. This does not say to enjoy their company, but rather to not disenjoy their company. It is disenjoying the company of a brother which is the same as murder. I hope this reflection encourages someone.

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