

“Crossing Over”

10 June 2018

Little Trinity Anglican Church, Toronto

Discussion Questions

(take as many as you want, in any order)

Read 1 John 3.10-24

1. The sermon began by contrasting John’s spiritually “simple” view of the world (children of God versus children of the devil) with the “wisdom of this world” that celebrates complexity and embraces nuance (see 1Cor 3.18-20). Which of these feels more natural for you? Which is more appealing?
2. If John is to be believed about the behaviour of the children of God/the devil in v10, how do we account for the fact that each of us does both good and bad deeds? What does this mean for who/se we are?
3. John mentions Cain as an exemplar of the devil’s children because he murdered (lit: “butchered”) his brother (v12). But “everyone who hates their brother or sister is a murderer” (v15). Is there a moral difference between hatred and murder? If so, what do you make of this connection between hatred and murder? (See also Mt 5.21-22)
4. Read v14: “We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love each other.”
 - a. Why is this past tense?
 - b. What does it mean that we have passed “into life”, given that we know we will die?
 - c. Before we made this passage, what does it mean that we were “in death”, given that we were then (and are still) alive?
 - d. Why does mutual love give us knowledge of this passage?
5. Is there anyone at church whom you don’t love? Whom you hate? Any fellow Christians anywhere whom you hate? If hate equals murderer, and murderers can’t have eternal life abiding in them, do you need to do something about your situation?
6. Are you living out a life of love “in deed and in truth” as described in vv16-17? What would it look like to live this out more fully?
7. If your heart condemns you for not loving enough, remember that you are not saved by your love. But your love is your offering to the God whose love *does* save you, and it is the way you know him – which is to say, have eternal life (see John 17.3). How would it affect your life if you saw everything you did as an spiritual offering or sacrifice? If all loving acts were offerings to God, and all hateful acts were offerings to the devil?