

28 - 1 John 3:1 - 2018-11-25

Call to Worship: Psalm 103:1 Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name!

Scripture Reading: Jeremiah 3:14-19

Sermon: "Behold What Manner of Love" 1 John 3:1a

Benediction: Isaiah 9:6 For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

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.

ESV See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

KJV Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

## INTRODUCTION

Thursday and Saturday of this past week I drove my family to be with the relatives for Thanksgiving.

-trees in their Fall colors

-moon when it was full

My dear wife loves those trees when their leaves turn red and yellow and orange in the Fall. But she spends most of her time working hard in the house to make things good for our family, so she doesn't normally have a view of those beautiful trees.

They would enjoy a break from the tedium of riding in the car.

So it is here. John is walking us through a doctrinal argument. And on that walk, we get to the top of a hill called "we are children of God." That is not the doctrinal destination; yet from that hilltop, we can get a good look at the beautiful colors of the love of God. The particular view we get of God's love from that hilltop is the view of what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us; what kind or what sort of love the Father has given us.

## TEXT

1 John 3:1a

## BODY

Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us by considering

- I. Be Sure You Are Looking to Behold the *Manner* of Love
  - A. that is John's point
  - B. Other times the size of it: Ephesians 3:14-19 For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, (15) from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, (16) that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, (17) that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, (18) may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height-- (19) to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.
  - C. here the manner, kind, sort, type
  - D. G4217 *potapos*
    1. Thayer: of what sort or quality
    2. RWP: Qualitative interrogative
    3. VWS: Originally it means "from what country or race;" then, "of what sort or quality."
  - E. 2 Peter 3:11 NKJV Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner [ESV what sort] of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,

## II. Behold the Unworthiness of the Objects of His Love

- A. Not the people we typically love
  1. Not His own family
  2. Not His own friends
  3. Not His own countrymen
  4. Not His own allies
  5. Not even His own kind
  6. Not someone good
  7. Not someone who could give Him some benefit

The manner of love God has bestowed on us is not the kind we usually bestow on people

- B. His enemies
  1. whom He originally had given all privilege
  2. but who, not because of the least fault in Him, had rebelled against Him
  3. those who hated Him
- C. Those unable to return any benefit to Him
  1. He does not want anything
  2. so we cannot give Him any benefit
  3. He is not happier because He has us
  4. He did not need someone to love

D. Romans 5:6-10

1. without strength
2. ungodly
3. still sinners
4. enemies

E. Jacob have I loved

1. Malachi 1:2-3 "I have loved you," says the LORD. "Yet you say, 'In what way have You loved us?' Was not Esau Jacob's brother?" Says the LORD. "Yet Jacob I have loved; (3) But Esau I have hated, And laid waste his mountains and his heritage For the jackals of the wilderness."
2. think of Jacob
  - a) not the firstborn, so not deserving of favor
  - b) of terrible character; exceedingly sinful

F. The manner of love God has bestowed on us is the kind that loves those who are the most unworthy of it, and who are completely unable to offer any benefit in return.

Behold that the manner of love God has bestowed upon us is the kind that loves those most unworthy of being loved.

III. Behold the Greatness of the Benefit that the Love Bestows

- A. It is not the kind of love that produces a bare toleration
- B. It is not the kind of love that grants some moderate benefit
- C. It is the kind that makes the enemy of God, His child
  1. The gift given is the highest possible gift
- D. The manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us is the kind that gives the highest possible benefit to the object of that love

Behold that the manner of love God has bestowed upon us is the kind that loves those most unworthy of being loved, and grants them the highest possible benefit.

IV. The Terrible Price of the Gift that Is Granted

- A. Making the sinner His child was not to be done at no expense to the Father
  1. the penalty for sin is death
  2. God is just
  3. if you are to be spared, someone must die in your place
  4. not a private, painless death, either; instead, the most public and prolonged
- B. John 3:16 God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son
- C. The Son of God made Himself a substitute for the sinner

## CONCLUSION

Behold that the manner of love God has bestowed upon us is the kind that loves those most unworthy of being loved, and grants them the highest benefit at the dearest price to Himself.

Romans 5:6-10 For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. (7) For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. (8) But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (9) Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. (10) For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

1. Romans 9:10-16 And not only this, but when Rebecca also had conceived by one man, even by our father Isaac (11) (for the children not yet being born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of Him who calls), (12) it was said to her, "THE OLDER SHALL SERVE THE YOUNGER." (13) As it is written, "JACOB I HAVE LOVED, BUT ESAU I HAVE HATED." (14) What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? Certainly not! (15) For He says to Moses, "I WILL HAVE MERCY ON WHOMEVER I WILL HAVE MERCY, AND I WILL HAVE COMPASSION ON WHOMEVER I WILL HAVE COMPASSION." (16) So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy.

Calvin:

What the sophists say, that God foresees those who are worthy to be adopted, is plainly refuted by these words, for, in this way the gift would not be gratuitous. It behooves us especially to understand this doctrine; for since the only cause of our salvation is adoption, and since the apostle testifies that this flows from the mere love of God alone, there is nothing left to our worthiness or to the merits of works. For why are we sons? Even because God began to love us freely, when we deserved hatred rather than love.

JFB:

This verse is connected with the previous thus: All our doing of righteousness is a mere sign that God, of His matchless love, has adopted us as children; it does not save us, but is a proof that we are saved of His grace.

JRY:

John has just mentioned that we who practice righteousness are begotten/born of God. If we are begotten of God, then it can rightly be said that we are children of God. John is making a point about how we can avoid being deceived. But at this point in the argument, the point he is making is so glorious in itself that he must stop and exalt the Lord with us!

We would rather praise the Lord for His love toward us than study hard how to avoid being deceived. So here our Lord graciously allows us that very thing. There is an important argument being made here, but we may take a break from it to praise the Lord for His love toward us!

**Behold** ESV see

Gill: see, take notice, look by faith, observe...view it with admiration and thankfulness

Clarke: look upon it, contemplate it, wonder at it

Spurgeon: behold it, wonder at it, and never cease to admire it

JRY:

That, being begotten or born of Him, we are then the children of God, is something we already know. But the apostle would have us behold something, see something.

illus: Yesterday I took my family on a trip to be with the relatives. On that trip, I found myself saying, "Look" to my wife and children several times. There are things that are beautiful, but that from our usual vantage point, we can't see or don't notice. On our trip, we would go up a hill, and something amazing, that we don't usually see, would come into view. Sometimes it was the red oaks and other trees whose Fall colors were very striking. Sometimes it was the full moon. Sometimes it was the skyscrapers of downtown Dallas. My dear wife loves those trees when their leaves turn red and yellow and orange in the Fall. But she spends most of her time working hard in the house to make things good for our family, so she doesn't normally have a view of those beautiful trees.

So it is here. John is walking us through a doctrinal argument. And on that walk, we get to the top of a hill called "we are children of God." That is not the doctrinal destination; yet from that hilltop, we can get a good look at the beautiful colors of the love of God. The particular view we get of God's love from that hilltop is the view of what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us; what kind or what sort of love the Father has given us.

**what manner of love** ESV what kind of love *potapen agapen*

G4217 *potapos*

Thayer: of what sort or quality

RWP: Qualitative interrogative as 2 Peter 3:11, Mt 8:27. Originally of what country or race.

2 Peter 3:11 NKJV Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner [ESV what sort] of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,

Matthew 8:27

KJV But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!

ESV And the men marveled, saying, "What sort of man is this, that even winds and sea obey him?"

NKJV So the men marveled, saying, "~~Who can this be~~, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?"

VWS:

The word is of infrequent occurrence in the NT, but is found in all the Synoptists and in 2 Peter 3:11. Only here in John's writings. Originally it means "from what country or race;" then, "of what sort or quality." It is used of the quality of both persons and things.

Calvin:

from mere bounty and benevolence  
gratuitous

Poole:

or "how great!"  
all of a mere (and the greatest) kindness and good-will  
Titus 3:5-7

Clarke:

both as to quantity and quality, for these ideas are included in the original term

Barnes:

in kind and in degree  
In kind the most tender and the most ennobling  
in degree the most exalted

JRY:

not "how much" but "what kind"

Geneva:

free love

JRY:

generous  
gracious "Jacob have I loved"

Gill:

how great a favour...a wonderful blessing of grace  
no need on the adopter's side...no worth and loveliness in the adopted  
matchless love

JFB:

of what surpassing excellence; how gracious...how precious to us

**the Father has bestowed on us**

ESV the Father has given to us

KJV the Father has bestowed upon us

VWS:

emphasizing the endowment of the receiver. Compare with [other word] which emphasizes the goodwill of the giver.

**that we should be called the sons [ESV, NKJV children] of God**

John 1:11-13 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. (12) But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right [KJV power] to become children [KJV sons] 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.

RWP: Clearly the idea of regeneration is involved here as in John 3:3

Poole:

He confers not the name without the thing; the new, even a Divine nature, 2 Peter 1:4, in regeneration; the real advantages and dignity of the relation by adoption; and all of a mere (and the greatest) kindness and good-will

Spurgeon:

Let the truth of our adoption amaze us

Candlish:

It is not said merely that we are called His sons, as having His standing to us in the relation of a Father; but that we are called His children; His divinely-born children; deriving from a divine birth a divine nature

JRY:

here not adopted, but begotten

**we**

Romans 5:6-10 For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. (7) For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. (8) But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (9) Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. (10) For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

-6 without strength

-6 ungodly

-8 still sinners



-10 enemies

Barnes:

ungrateful, rebellious, and vile

Hawker:

poor creatures

born in the Adam-nature of sin

Spurgeon:

the adoption of such unworthy ones as we were to so high a relationship

we who were the slaves of Satan, the children of disobedience, the heirs of wrath

Prelude: Trinity 442 "Behold th'Amazing Gift of Love"

Camille: piano - play from hymnal in G

Noah: trumpet - see attached in A

Anna: clarinet - see attached in A

Trinity 634 "Hallelujah! Thine the Glory"

Camille: flute - see attached in F

Noah: direct

Anna: piano - see attached in F

Grace 128 "O Sinner, Come to Jesus Christ"

Camille: piano - transpose to Db

Noah: trumpet

Anna: clarinet

Trinity 535 "Psalm 92"

Camille: piano - transpose or see attached in Bb

Noah: trumpet - play from hymnal in C

Anna: clarinet - play from hymnal in C

Grace 35 "Count Your Blessings"

Camille: sing

Noah: sing

Anna: piano