

TRUTH COMMUNITY

- TEACHING GOD'S PEOPLE GOD'S WORD -

That'll Be the Day

1 John 3:1-3

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Welcome to GraceLife this morning. It is very encouraging to see so many people out this morning at a time where summer vacations start to come in. Thank you for your faithfulness to be here, thank you for your love for the word of God. And I just thank God for you and it is a privilege to be a pastor in GraceLife.

And that's kind of fresh on my mind because today's passage is the first passage that I preached when I was formally made a co-pastor here in graceLife. This is the passage that I went to to open up my ministry in GraceLife, it is in 1 John, chapter 3 and I invite you to turn there with me.

If you came in a little bit dull and a little bit laboring perhaps, this passage is going to invigorate you.

I've always resisted the idea of having a favorite passage in the Bible. How could you elevate one passage in the inspired scripture over another and say that's my favorite as though the others were somehow less important. But this passage this morning is a passage that never lets go of me. This is a passage that my mind goes back to on a weekly basis if not sometimes on a daily basis because of the great glory that it has for us as believers and the great encouragement that it is and how it points us to the greatness of our salvation. This is a passage that when you externalize it if you will, this is a passage that consistently elevates you to greater spiritual heights and cheers you even your darkest moments as a believer in Christ because it points you beyond this earth to the glory that is to come, the glory that belongs to everyone who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ.

1 John 3:1-3 is our text for this morning. Let me read it with you as we begin. The apostle John says:

See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us that we would be called children of God and we are. For this reason the world does not know us because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are children of God and it has not appeared yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him because we will see Him just as He is. And everyone who has his hope fixed on Him purifies himself just as He is pure.

The context of the overall book of 1 John is just so important to keep in mind. John tells us repeatedly and tells us plainly that he is writing to help Christians achieve spiritual victory in the

difficult world in which they live. The Bible understands which means that God understands that it is a challenge to walk through this world of trials and temptations and tears, and so John writes to promote our joy. 1 John 1:4:

I write these things so that our joy may be made complete.

He says I write to promote your holiness. Look at chapter 2:1:

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin.

He doesn't want us to struggle through life and fall in and out of sin. He wants us to live holy lives and above all, he wants us to know the assurance that we truly have eternal life in Christ, in chapter 5:13, he says:

These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.

Joy and holiness and assurance is the goal of this letter for the true believer. And here in the center of that purpose, those multiple purposes with which John writes is this great passage in the first three verses of chapter 3.

And so, having said that, this has something for you if you are a Christian. What we have here today is something to promote your joy, promote your holiness, to promote your assurance of eternal life—who wouldn't want that? If you don't want that, you are not a Christian. If that doesn't appeal to you, you are not a believer because those are the deepest aspirations of the true Christian.

And so, those of you that know Christ, those deep aspirations that you have for joy and holiness and assurance of salvation, John writes to fulfill those aspirations of your heart so that what you desire would become yours in present spiritual experience. And so it is with the great sense of anticipation that we come to this wonderful passage this morning.

Now, John has been writing throughout what we have studied through the first two chapters of 1 John. He has been teaching us that one of the marks of a true believer is the practical biblical righteousness flows out of his life and that is a necessary consequence, that absolutely has to happen because God has given us His very life, He gave birth to us and when a righteous God gives birth to someone, righteousness is going to somehow flow out of that person's life. Look at verse 29 where we spent so much time over the past few weeks. We are just kind of setting the context here, he says:

If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone also who practices righteousness is born of Him.

And so his context here, what he has in mind as he goes in to these first three verses of chapter 3, he is talking about the big picture of the righteous life of the believer. And as you study what he

has to say here, you realize that that the motivation for holy living, the power for holy living is so much more than a list of do's and don't's. You got to do this if you want to be righteous, you shouldn't do that if you are not righteous, and a list of do's and don't's.

Now look, we all know that there are plenty of people who try to approach Christianity that way, but there is really no power in that at all. If that's all it was, if it's a list of do's and don't's, there is really not much power in trying to live that way. To just lay weight on a conscience is really not very motivating way to try to live.

What I want you to see here is when John is talking about promoting righteousness in the life of a true believer, he does something that is so powerful and so motivating that it makes you want to obey, it makes you want to live out righteousness, it makes you enthusiastic about being a Christian, it makes you animated in whatever way you express animation in your life. You know how I do it because I'm up here and I'm throwing up my hands around and all of that stuff. But understand that that is a sincere animation. I don't do that just to put on a show, I have to somehow express the greatness of what it is that the Bible shows us. And in your life, however you manifest the satisfaction that you have in Christ that animates you, somehow that comes out in your life in response to these great truths that we have here in front of us.

There are three motivations to righteous living that are in this passage that I want you to see—motivations that flow from a gratitude to God for the great salvation He has given you in Christ. When you think rightly about God, when you think rightly about salvation, it should dwarf your ability to express gratitude for it. When you see it for what it really is, when you start to dig in to the scriptures and have the Bible unfold for you the glory of what God has done for you in Christ, it should make your heart so grateful and so motivated to obey that you really don't need the lists of do's and don't's because it is your desire to do what He wants you to do, it is your desire to be righteous out of grateful response to the wonderful salvation that God has given to us.

There are three points to today's message. The first thing that John calls us to is for you to:

1. Recognize Your Position in Christ

Recognize your great position in Christ, that's our first point for this morning. Look in verse 1 of how John reflects on the glory of being born of God. He has just said in verse 29 that we are born of God and then he picks up that child motif and carries it in to the next chapter as we now have it in our modern day Bibles. In chapter 3:1 he says:

See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us that we would be called children of God, and such we are.

John's statement here as he opens this up when he says "See how great a love..." it is a statement of astonishment, it is a statement of exclamation. He is astonished at the reality, he says, and if he were here, he would look out at you and he says, you've got to see this, do you see this, do you see how great this is? I want you to see it. It is with the astonishment as though

a child points to something he wants his parents to say, “Oh, see that,” John here wants you as a believer to see this, to see this great manner of love. How great a love the Father has bestowed on us who know Christ. And you ask, “What is it apostle John that causes such wonder? What is it that creates such astonishment in your spirit that you spontaneously burst forth with an exclamation of greatness of the love of God? Why are you so animated, dear apostle, inspired by the Holy Spirit as you write?”

Look at what he says, he gives you the content. What is this great love that the Father has bestowed on us? Read the next clause: “...that we would be called children of God...” Every word there is important, “...that we would be called children of God...” Every element of that is simply astonishing. If you are here today and you are a Christian, you share the very nature of God because He has imparted His life to you. The God who reigns over all, the God who has all power, the God who has all knowledge, the God who is everywhere present, has taken notice of you and imparted His divine life to you. He has brought you in to the divine family and He did that even though you were dead in your trespasses and sins, you were separated from God, your inequities had hidden His face from you. And with every justification to condemn you, God reached down and brought you in to His family.

Christ, 2000 years ago, came in to this world and sacrificed His life so that your sins could be forgiven. And on the basis of the work of Christ, God worked in your heart, led you to faith in Christ and now you belong to the divine family. You share the very nature of God through His indwelling Holy Spirit. You who were dead and a child of the devil now are alive in Christ and a child of the living God—that is great love, that is great unspeakable, unfathomable love, that which you could have never merited on your own, that which you could never have deserved, that which you never could have prompted God to do if you were not willing to do so. God in His own grace and mercy and love showered on you and bestowed on you and has brought you in to the divine family with all the rights and privileges there.

In 2 Peter 1:4, Peter says:

He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises so that by them, you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.

If you are a Christian, you are saved. You are saved from the corruption and the judgment that was on the world and you have been delivered over in to the divine family and you belong to God and in a proper sense He belongs to you. Christ is mine and I am His, that is what it means to belong to the divine family. God has made you a new creation that is essentially different from what you were before as an unsaved person.

If you think about it in terms of the privilege, to help think about the privilege, think about your relationship to your parents, if you had bad parents, think of somebody else. (I said that for the benefit of my own kids I guess.) But thinking about it in the context of the healthy family, which I know that wasn't the privilege of all of you, but in the context of the healthy family, children have a unique relationship to their parents, they share the very life of their parents, they are the

special objects of the love and protection and provision of their parents. My six kids, five girls and one boy have a unique claim on me that doesn't belong to anyone else. They are uniquely entitled to my attention and provision and protection in a way that doesn't belong to other people.

Well, in an infinitely greater way, in an infinitely more magnificent way that stretches from eternity past to eternity future, that is the relationship that you as a Christian enjoy with your heavenly Father. You belong to Him, you are the special object of His love and care and provision and protection. He has set His hand upon you never to withdraw it. The god of the universe, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of the one who said "Father, not my will, but thine be done" that Father is your Father. And if He is your Father, you belong to His family, you are a child of His and the love of that is unspeakably great.

You know that you are starting to understand it when you realize it so astonishing that you cannot understand that. If it is cold and indifferent truth to you, you have never seen this love in the first instance. When you marvel at it, when your heart responds to that, when you are stirred in response to that over time, you know that you are starting to get it. God has done something for you that you did not deserve and could not deserve and the wonder of it is so far beyond anything that you could have planned, anything that you could have deserved that all you can do is step back and say "This is great unspeakable love that my Father has bestowed on me." And if He has bestowed it on you in the first instance, you can know for sure that He is going to carry it through throughout all of eternity. He didn't bestow it on you for temporary purposes, we will see that for sure in a moment. We have a great God and He has loved us with a great love, and with that we would say, I am a child of God through faith in Christ.

Now, that creates some problems between here and what is to come, look at the end of verse 3 as we recognize our position vertically and the privilege that is ours as children of God, we are mindful that in the meantime there is a conflict that comes as a result of it, look at verse 3, Bible tells us so repeatedly to expect this. He says:

For this reason, the world does not know us because it did not know Him.

Built in to that, remember I told you that repeatedly, that John is writing to help us achieve spiritual victory in the midst of a hostile world—the world is hostile to us as Christians, it is opposed to us, it is opposed to Christ, it does not know us, it does not understand us, it does not get the nature of our affections—that's what John is saying here. This is why the world doesn't know us, it doesn't know us because we're children of God not children of the world any more.

The unsaved man, the unsaved, unredeemed system of the world does not share the values of the kingdom of God and is fundamentally opposed to them. And so it is no wonder, it is to be expected that collectively we as Christians, and occasionally you as individuals, will be the object of ridicule and scorn and persecution as you walk through this world—it's hostile to you, what else would you expect? But the world loved its own, it would love you if you were part of the world. John here is helping us to see that we expect this hostility and therefore, we are not surprised by it and we are not thrown off by it when it comes. Jesus made the same point when

He spoke to the disciples in the Upper Room just before His crucifixion. He said in John 15:18-20, Jesus Himself said:

If the world hates you, you know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own, but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this, the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, that slave is not greater than his master. If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will keep yours also.

And so, when you are rejected for being a Christian, when you face opposition for your commitment to Christ, for your love to Christ, even from the closest circle of your loved ones and family and friends, understand that you have to step back, God has given you an opportunity when that occurs to step back and to use some discernment, to think and to put it in to context of your position as a child of God. You have to step back and remember that when it is based on your testimony for Christ, not because you are being someone obnoxious, you don't get any point from being obnoxious, not that any of you would be, but just in case you know somebody who that would apply to. (Why are you looking at me?) (laughter)

Understand that when people spurn you because you are a Christian, because you have taken a stand for Christ, you have to understand that there is a spiritual reality behind that. The world is rejecting you, your loved ones are rejecting you because they reject Christ Himself and the rejection of you as one of His children is simply consequence of their more deeply rooted rejection of Christ—Bible tells you to understand that and think through that. I know that some of you have been scorned by family and friends because of your testimony for Christ—I have. It is an ongoing burden of my heart of family members that will not talk to me because I gave testimony to Christ years ago—it breaks my heart, I would change that if I could, and I know some of you have that same sense.

But while you and I grieve over those human relationships on a human level, we have to look up to see the approval of our heavenly Father and the results of what it means to be a child of God. I will trade the rejection of men for the approval of God, won't you? I would rather know this great love of God that sent Christ to save me from my sins, that has brought me in to His family and has secured my eternal future, I'll take that in a moment in a heartbeat over anything that this world would have to offer or over any human relationship or any approval of human relationship. You know, if they frame the decision, if they frame the choice for you as you need to choose Christ or choose me, the answer is sure, "I'm going with Christ and I would love it if you came with me. But if you won't, the separation is coming from you not from me because my arms are open wide, but I'm not moving from Christ."—that's the way you think through that. That's the way you manifest loyalty to this heavenly Father who has bestowed such a great love upon you, it makes you firm and immovable while your heart is tender and desiring the same blessing for those that rejected you because you are a Christian. You recognize your position, it is clear in your mind that God has loved you and set His affection upon you and therefore, you won't leave. Your loyalties, your heart affections are cemented to Him in an immovable way that cannot be broken.

Now, if that was all there was to being a Christian, to belong to the divine family today and throughout this life, if all that there was to being a Christian was to walk through this life as a child of God and then you die and if you ceased to exist and that was just the end of it, there was no future beyond this life, you would still have reason to praise God all the days of your life. If it was just about being in His family in this life, you would still spend your earthly days praising the Father that He had shown such grace to you, praising the Father that He had been so good to you, praising Him for the privilege of intimacy with Him even if it was going to cease when you die, you would still have reason to praise Him continuously, unendingly because in that circumstance He would have poured out on you far more blessings than you ever deserved.

If that's all there was, you would still walk through life praising His great name for just taste of the privilege of being in His family. But that's not all there is, but there is something yet to come for you and me that surpasses even the richness of this present position of being in Christ that we have talked about so far this morning. There is something coming for you as a believer in Christ, there is something just beyond the horizon of life that is going to dwarf the greatness of being in this present position as a Christian in this fallen world belonging to God's family. There is something coming that is going to be so great and glorious that the wonders of loving Christ in this life are going to fade in to insignificance by comparison because there is a second great promise that comes out here, there is a second promise for righteous living that is the second point this morning. We said remember your present position:

2. Rejoice at Your Future

Rejoice at your future. Look at 1 John 3:2 with me:

Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him because we will see Him just as He is.

I want you to notice something, keep your eyes on the verse here. Notice that he is drawing a contrast between now, what we know now as a believer and then he shifts in to using the future tense to point us to that which has not yet come. He says now we are children of God, he pauses on that, he says, yes, now we are children, that's great, that's wonderful that we would be children of God, but what he is doing here in verse 2 is he is going on to say that the full greatness of what it means to be a Christian is not yet in our present experience. There is more to come in ways that go exceedingly abundantly beyond all that you could ask or think.

This is the revelation of God to His children. We could not know these things unless God had opened them up and shared them with us in His word. And so we know what we are about to see by direct revelation from God and we know that it is true because His word is trustworthy and true. This promise of rejoicing at your future belongs to you now if you are a Christian. He says now we are children of God, but brothers and sisters in Christ, your present position in Christ is only a down payment for greater things that are yet to come, it is only an initial deposit, it is only a promise with some present goodness to experience now, but full greatness is yet to come. It is a certain guaranty that being a child of God now means it holds the promise of greater blessing in the future. He adds to the present state saying now we are children of God, look at the verse with

me, he says “Now we are children of God,” and that would be enough, but there is that little conjunction, and, wait a minute, you mean there’s something more, there’s something to add to this that makes it even more glorious? That’s what the word “and” is telling you there, we are children of God “and” something more, we are children of God and there is the fullness of it, we haven’t even started to talk about yet. He says “And it has not appeared as yet what we will be...” future tense, more to come, something better. He says somehow we are going to change. It has not appeared yet what we will be. Apparently, if we just stop there, apparently, there is going to be something better for us that is still ahead. We will be more than we are now as it were. We will experience a greatness and the perfection of salvation in a way that we don’t know right now in our present spirit. He says we don’t know, it has not appeared as yet what we will be. Think about this, the inspired apostle says I’m not sure what all of this is going to be like. The apostle John, writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit says the fullness of this has not yet been disclosed, so it’s going to be really, really great. If the apostle himself couldn’t get his arm around it, if that had not been disclosed, the full greatness of this hadn’t yet been disclosed to the apostle, it is going to be something great. He says I’m not sure, I don’t know what all is going to be, it hasn’t appeared yet.

But he says, while we don’t know the fullness of it, we don’t know the fullness of what it is going to be like in the future for the Christian, there is something we know for certain, here is something to bank your future on, here is something certain that we do know. Look to the middle of verse 2 with me, he says:

We know that when He appears, (when Christ appears) we will be like Him.

We will be like Christ because we will see Him just as He is.

Now, listen, what you have in front of you there in verse 2 is such a staggering truth because it takes your thoughts and desires to a realm that is beyond this earth, it takes your thoughts and desires to a heavenly realm that is reserved for the children of God and reserved for them alone. Unsaved people will never experience the glory of what we are seeing here right now. And yet, your heavenly Father has reserved this for you. Here is what your future holds, forget about what is going to happen this week. How insipidly would be of me to talk about what is going to happen this week in light of what is going to happen in all of eternity.

Here is what is going to happen—we don’t know when, but we know it for certain. Jesus Christ, the crucified and risen Lord of the universe, is going to appear in the world one day, He is going to come from heaven and come back to earth and He is going to come with great power and glory. It is going to happen, God said it is going to happen, so it is done, it is over, it is going to happen, it is simply a matter of the passage of time before this certain reality comes to pass.

And speaking to you as a Christian, when He comes, you will see Him, not as a threat to you, but as the fulfillment of the purpose of your salvation. You will see Him visibly with physical eyes more clearly, more certainly than you see me standing up here now. With great clarity and visible sight, you are going to see the resurrected Christ returning to earth in power and glory. And when you see Him, this verse tells us, you and I will be transfigured in to another condition

in which we are somehow transformed in to His likeness. You will in some manner share in His holiness in perfection, you will in some manner share in His resurrected glory. John says you and I, we will be like Him.

One of the things that amazes me about this verse is the simplicity of the language, there are no multi syllabic theological terms here, these are words that a child can understand, these are words than a child can say—we will be like Him, no long words, no difficult words there. But in the generous of the mind of God, He has communicated to us what the ultimate hope of our salvation is in those little words—we will be like Him. They say, an enormous mouthful in words if it comes off of the lips of the child. Jesus promised this, the Bible promises this repeatedly. Back in John 17 when Jesus was praying to His Father on the eve of His crucifixion, listen to what He said as He prayed for you and me, prayed for all of those who would believe through the word of the apostles, Jesus Christ, our wonderful Lord and savior, on the verge of crucifixion, prays to His Father on our behalf and He says:

Father, I desire that they also whom you have given me be with me where I am, so that they may see my glory which you have given me, for you loved me before the foundation of the world.

It is not just that God promised this to us, Jesus Christ wants this to happen and He was praying for the fulfillment of it just hours before He would die on a cross. He said, Father, I want them to see my glory which you gave to me.

Back in the book of Revelation, the Bible practically ends on this high note of aspiration and hope in Revelation 22:3-5:

There will no longer be any curse and the throne of God and the Lamb will be in it, and His bond servants will serve Him, they will see His face.

Beloved, I can only pray for the Spirit of God to open your heart to get your arms around the greatness of this because I freely tell you, I don't have the words to express the glory of what we are talking about here. As you sit here in those uncomfortable plastic seats, in an ugly gym in Southern California, those of you that are Christians are on a fast track to see the face of the Son of God. You are going to see Him. And you are not just going to see Him, you are going to be changed so that you are like Him. And it is not just that you are going to see Him and you are going to be like Him, the glory, the multiplied glories of this, one aspect of the glory of this is that you are going to belong there because you are children of God, because you belong to the divine family. There is not going to be any sense of discomfort, any sense of what am I doing here. Jesus prayed for you to see this, this is the intent and the purpose of Christ on the life of everyone that He has saved. And if you belong to Him, you are going to see Him, you are going to be like Him, and you are going to belong there more than you belong here today. There is somehow going to be a sense for us that this is what I was eternally appointed to see and do and be to belong to.

John says we know this, we know that when He appears, he is describing in assured confidence.

You know, just to be clear, you are not going to be equal to Christ at that great eternal moment. You as a creature are never going to be equal to your creator. But you will somehow share in His resurrected perfection. For you and I as Christians, this is our destiny, this is what is going to happen for sure. I don't know what is going to happen later today, but I know what my future holds, I am going to see my savior face to face and be like Him. I don't need to know any more details than that, I don't even try to speculate in my imagination to what that is going to be like because in my sinful mind, there is no way I could do it justice. I'll just take the bare promise of God and say as great as Christ is, somehow I am going to be like Him, I am going to see Him face to face—I want that day to come, don't you? God's intention, God's purpose, God's plan is to bless you in glory far beyond anything that you can anticipate. He is a great God and He has given us a great salvation.

Context for that wonderful thought, step back for a moment, remember your life before Christ, remember that you were a lost sinner, separated from Him, not seeking Him, yet somehow the gospel came to you. Remember the darkness of your life, the darkness of your heart, the indifference of your heart toward Christ, remember that even now, as believers in Christ, you often, like me, fall in to a spirit of pride or prayerlessness, spirit of ingratitude, spirit of outright sinfulness. And yet, God with full knowledge of that, bestowed this gift of salvation upon you and is going to certainly carry you to the ultimate fulfillment of this great perfection and glory where you see Christ face to face.

Why is God so good to us? Why has He poured such mercy and grace on us? Because if we think about ourselves rightly, we know we don't deserve this—this is so great. I just don't have the vocabulary, neither does an exhausted Webster's dictionary to express how great this is. Martyn Lloyd-Jones puts it this way:

“Do you know that you are destined to see Christ as He is? Blessed, glorious vision to see the Son of God in all of His glory, as He is, face to face. You, standing and looking at Him and enjoying Him for all eternity. It is only then that we will begin to understand what He did for us, the price He paid, the cost of our salvation, oh, let us hold on to this. Shame on us for ever grumblings, shame on us for ever saying that the Christian life is too hard. Shame on us for ever half-heartedly worship, praising and loving Christ and His glory. You and I are destined for that vision glorious, we shall see Him as He is, face to face.”

I don't know about you, I want that day to come. I mean, if it came today, that would be great. If it came right now, I would be happy to leave my sermon notes behind and just go and be with Christ and you probably would be too, I want that day to come. And when I think about these things, and when I preach on this passage, I don't even want to leave the mental realm of that glory. I would like to just park it here and leave it here.

But you know what is interesting? That's not what the apostle John does, that's not what God wants us to do, that's not the fullness of what He wants us to do. He wants us to rejoice in our future, but that's not all because He has put us here providentially today and so having gone to glory as it were, at least in terms of our understanding and our desires, God would have us come back to today and say, what does this mean for today, this is all immensely practical.

As we finish this morning, what does this mean for us today?

3. Repent of Your Sins

Look at verse 3, he says:

Everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself just as He is pure.

What is this verse saying? He says, you should be so overwhelmed with God's plans for your future, so overwhelmed with the love and grace and mercy that God poured out on your unworthy life that you pursue holiness today. You should be saying to yourself "When I have seen the character of God, the grace He has shown me, the future that He has for me, I belong to His family, I'm going to see Christ face to face, you know what? I want to live for Him now" That's the connection, it is absolutely unthinkable, it is an unspeakable heinous sin to say "That is my hope, but I'm going to live as I please today in disregard to what God would have me to do, in disregard to His word and indifference to communion with Him." That's ridiculous, why would you do that? Why would you think that way? That's a tragic sin against the glories that God has given to us.

No, the true Christian says "You know what? It is difficult to live in this hostile world, but I'm going to pursue purity right here, right now." John says that's what everyone who truly has this hope does. Look at verse 3 with me:

Everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself.

This hope, this confident expectation that God will keep His promise, that's what "hope" is in the New Testament. It is not an ambiguous, maybe this will, maybe this won't, this is an assurance based on the revelation of God that this is going to happen.

And so, if you are confident about this hope, if you believe that this hope belongs to you, then John says as a certain matter, you will pursue purity in your life. This word for purity particularly emphasizes the inward purity of the Christian life, confession of sin, resisting temptation, righteous living, righteous attitudes will be the mark of the one who has this hope.

The apostle Paul in Titus emphasized this theme also, he said in Titus 2:11:

The grace of God has appeared bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and savior Christ Jesus.

If this is your hope, then there is impact today. You get ready for the return of Christ by repenting of your known sin today, you deal seriously with the pursuit of sanctification, you deal seriously with the pursuit of holiness because it is so clear and obvious to you that that would be the only righteous way to respond to the great hope that God has stored up for everyone who knows Him and loves Christ.

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I like to tell people and I like to tell you, in light of this message, I invite you to try to disagree with me. It is the greatest thing in the world to be a true Christian. We belong to Christ now and we are going to be with Him eternally, seeing His face glory to glory forever. And that's what gives us the hope, that's what gives us the motivation, that's what gives us the confidence, the desire, the certain path to pursue righteousness and to live righteously now in the midst of this hostile world.

My friends, do you know Christ? I wouldn't want anyone in the sound of these words to miss this, don't miss this. Come to Christ, confess your sins and receive Him and all of these glorious promises will belong to you too.

Let's pray. *Father, with all of the imperfection of our understanding, all of the diminishment of sin on our mind and heart, with all of that, we step outside of it as it were and to the best of our ability we thank you and give you glory for our present position as the child of God in your family. Father, at the magnificent reality of what the future holds, we rejoice to be able to see Christ face to face. We pray for the hastening of that day, oh, it can't come soon enough Father. But while you in your wisdom hold the reins back just a little longer Father, we present ourselves to you as those redeemed by the blood of our savior and committed to pursuing purity and holiness and righteousness in this life. We give you all the glory that our hearts can muster Father, knowing that you are worthy of so much more. We look forward to that day when we will be in your presence, seeing our savior face to face and worshiping you and thanking you unhindered by the sin that (inaudible word). Be glorified in our lives and bring forth the fulfillment of what you have promised to us here in your word. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.*