

31 - 1 John 3:3 - 2018-12-30

Call to Worship: Psalm 130:7-8

Scripture Reading: Malachi 3:1-18

Sermon: "Hope and Purification" 1 John 3:3

Benediction: Psalm 33:20-22

INTRODUCTION

Our Lord Jesus, by His apostle John, presented us with this amazing truth: If you know that Jesus Christ is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him. And if we are born of God, that means we are the children of God. The apostle beckons us to stand upon that truth and look at something we can see from there: Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! 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.

At that point, our Lord's apostle answers a question that flows naturally from the discussion of our being the children of God. If we are the children of God, why does the world not know us as such, but instead hates us? The answer comes: The world does not know and love us because it does not know and love Him, whose children we are. It is indeed distressing to live in this world as those who are not of it, as those whose citizenship is not here. In this world we have tribulations. It is hard to walk among strangers, who do not understand your language or your customs. But be of good cheer! This world is against you because it is against Christ, whose disciple you are, and against God, who has made you His child.

In the face of alienation from the world in which we live, our Lord Jesus comforts us and assures us of our place as the children of God even now, and reminds us what we shall become when He comes again.

Remember that you are the Lord's beloved, being in His beloved Son

Be assured that your privileged place as children of God is a present reality

While we wait for the Lord to come, enjoy the hope of what it will be like when He does

-at the resurrection, when the Lord comes, we shall be changed

-we shall be like Him

-we shall see Him as He is

You recognize that as a summary of what we have been learning together since we started the present section of 1 John, beginning in chapter 2 verse 29. Today we go on to 1 John 3:3, where we see the hope described in verse 2 connected with the work of purification.

TEXT

1 John 3:3

BODY

- I. Understand Two Basic Things About the Disciples of Jesus Christ
 - A. We have hope in the return of Jesus Christ the Son of God
 1. when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is; that is, when He comes again, He shall raise us incorruptible, to be with Him forever
 2. in the previous verse, the wording was “when He” and “shall we.” that is hope
 3. when we believe in Jesus Christ, and, on the basis of that faith, we have a sure expectation of what shall be in the future, that is hope!
 - a) past, present = faith
 - b) future = hope
 4. illus. You are seeing this in action even now. My dear wife has recently lost both of her parents. She has cried many tears over it, but she and her brother and her sister are the disciples of Jesus Christ, as their parents are, also. As such, they all expect to be raised incorruptible when the Lord comes back, and to be with the Lord forever. So as they grieve the loss of their parents, these disciples of Jesus Christ do not grieve as the world grieves, without hope; instead, their grief is not bitter, because hope is mixed all in with it, and hope is sprinkled liberally on top, so that even the grief is made sweet by all the hope.
 - B. That hope leads us to purify ourselves as He is pure
 1. what does our hope produce in us? we purify ourselves; we want to purify ourselves because He is pure; we are not content to wait impure for the full purifying at the end; we strive for purification now
 2. think how pure our Lord Jesus Christ is!
 - a) no sin from Adam
 - b) no sin of His own
 - c) nothing of the devil
 - d) nothing of the world
 - e) absolutely morally pure
 - f) the lamb without blemish
 3. note how undesirable the substance is from which we purify ourselves
 - a) something essentially different from what we want
 - b) something that destroys - e.g. engine oil, if not filtered, will cause engine to lose power, then to fail completely
 - c) something that makes ugly - e.g. black paint mixed in with yellow
 - d) something that spreads

- e) something that keeps us from being like Christ; and therefore from bringing all glory to Him
- 4. think how serious a work it is to purify oneself
 - a) from our experience with purifying things in this world
 - (1) clothes, to be purified from dirt, must be agitated with hundreds of strokes in hot soapy water
 - (2) metals must be heated to hundreds or thousands of degrees
 - (3) our teeth must be drilled out and filled
 - (4) cancer must be treated with cutting, and poisoning, and radiation
 - b) from God's dealings with Israel
 - (1) stricken with drought for years at a time
 - (2) pillaged by foreign armies
 - (3) killed or deported to far-away places
- 5. notice how firmly John insists on this here

II. APPLICATION: Renew Your Zeal for Purifying

- A. It happens in the life of a Christian that he or she may flag in fervency, may become inattentive to the work of purifying.
- B. Let it be that this doctrine turns your attention back to this vital area of the Christian walk
- C. Set your mind back on the things that purify
 - 1. see them mentioned here in 1 John chapter 3
 - a) see in verse 4 that sin is lawlessness; therefore meditate on God's perfect law
 - b) see in verse 11 that sin is hatred; therefore make every effort to love both God and other people. (of course, since God's law and love are not separated, but essentially linked, these are not really two items, but one)
 - c) see in verse 24 the Lord's commandments; but again His commandments and His law and love are essentially connected
 - d) it is God's law, His commandments of love, that we use in the work of purifying
 - 2. Psalm 119:9-16 How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word. (10) With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! (11) Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You. (12) Blessed are You, O LORD! Teach me Your statutes. (13) With my lips I have declared All the judgments of Your mouth. (14) I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies, As much as in all riches. (15) I will meditate on Your precepts, And contemplate Your ways. (16) I will delight myself in Your statutes; I will not forget Your word.

III. APPLICATION: Be Ready to Use This Understanding As John Intended

- A. John is teaching us how to know whom to accept, and whom to reject
 1. John has been teaching us not to be seduced, deceived, lead astray, by the many antichrists who would like us to accept them as our teachers. He has helped us understand what really we know: People who profess Jesus, but do not hold to the truth about Him as delivered from the beginning by His apostles, are liars, whose doctrine we are not to accept. Instead, we are to keep in ourselves the sound doctrine of Jesus Christ that we received in the bible from our Lord's apostles, so that just as that truth abides in us, we also shall abide in Him, so that we may look forward with confidence to His coming again.
 2. But of course true Christianity is not a matter of sound doctrine only. There is also the matter of holiness of living. Mixing lies in with truth is not the devil's only trick. He also knows how to prompt deceivers to put forth doctrine that is entirely sound, all the while living in sin. This kind of deceit our Lord's apostle John must also instruct us about, warning us against deception by those sound in doctrine but unrighteous in life.
 3. so John observes that
 - a) Jesus' disciples practice righteousness as He is righteous
 - b) Jesus' disciples purify themselves as He is pure
- B. John already gave this maxim in another form; here he gives it again; compare 2:29 with 3:3
 1. every one that doeth righteousness is born of Him
 2. every man purifieth himself that hath this hope in Him
- C. John will continue developing this theme, stating and restating this maxim in stronger and stronger language
 1. 1 John 3:7-8a Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. (8) He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning.
- D. Fortify your conscience with this truth the Holy Spirit inspired John to write to us.
 1. your conscience is your faculty for making moral judgments, for evaluating things as to whether they are right or wrong
 2. it works by taking things you know to be true, and comparing people's doctrines and practices to those things
 - a) e.g. your conscience has in it this truth: "God says, "Thou shalt not kill." You compare that with the doctrine, "Babies may be killed in the mother's womb if the mother wants to." That doctrine does not line up with that truth, so you know to reject that doctrine, and the practice built on that doctrine.
 3. your conscience is strengthened when truths are firmly fixed there, especially when falsehood is replaced by truth

4. so take this truth and place it firmly in your conscience: Every one who has the Christian hope in him purifies himself as Jesus Christ is pure.
- E. Be ready to make judgments on this basis:
1. whom should we accept as church members?
 - a) 1689 26.2 All persons throughout the world, professing the faith of the gospel, and obedience unto God by Christ according unto it, **not destroying their own profession** by any errors everting the foundation, or **unholiness of conversation**, are and may be called visible saints; and of such ought all particular congregations to be constituted.
 2. whom should we choose as deacons?
 - a) Acts 6:3-4 Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; (4) but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word."
 - (1) men of honest report
 - (2) men of good repute
 - (3) men of reputation
 3. whom should we have as elders?
 - a) Titus 1:5-9 For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you-- (6) if a man is **blameless**, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination. (7) For **a bishop must be blameless**, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, (8) but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled, (9) holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.

CONCLUSION

1 John 2:29-3:3 If you know that he is righteous, you may be sure that everyone who practices righteousness has been born of him. (3:1) 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. (2) Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. (3) And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

1 John 3:3 And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

1 John 2:29 If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him.

1 John 3:3 And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

1 John 2:29	1 John 3:3
He is righteous	He is pure
every one	every man
doeth righteousness	purifieth himself

is born of Him

hath this hope in Him