

INTRODUCTION

1. Please take God's Word and turn with me to 1 John chapter 3.
2. In our last time together we looked at verse 1.
3. Today we are considering verses 2-3.
4. Beginning at verse 1 John says, "See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. 2 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. 3 And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure."
5. In our last time together, we looked at verse 1.
6. And we learned that John has paused to marvel at the love of God that has caused us to be "born of Him" (2:29).

7. And not only to be born of Him but to be called His children.
8. This “great love” that the Father has lavished on us is the kind of love that demonstrated pure selflessness.
9. God did not withhold from us what we needed.
10. He gave us the purest expression of His love by giving us Jesus to die in our place for our sins.
11. And because of this, we can become His children.
12. And such we are because of faith in Jesus Christ.
13. But the world doesn’t know us because they don’t know Him.
14. They cannot “see” His great love.
15. They spurn at His love and grace.
16. John continues in verses 2-3 building off of verse 1.
17. He addresses 3 realities.

18. The first has to do with what we are now (v.2a).

19. The second with what we will be in the future (v.2b).

20. And the third with what we should be now (v.3).

So John first gives...

LESSON

I. The Reality of Who We Are Now (v.2a)

He says, “Beloved, now we are children of God.”

A. This could literally be translated “Now children of God we are.”¹

1. “Now” (nun) is the adverb of time and is a “renewed assertion” of what he already said in verse 1.

2. Not only are we called children of God in verse 1 but we are now children of God “by adoption, secretly in God's predestination, and in the covenant of grace; and openly in regeneration, through faith in Christ, and by the testimony of

¹ Hiebert, D. Edmond. [*The Epistles of John: An Expository Commentary*](#). Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1991. Print.

the Spirit.²

3. This is who we “now, at the actual present time.”
4. This word is used elsewhere in the NT to be of present time:
 - a) In Luke 6:21 (NASB) Jesus said in the Beattitudes, “Blessed are you who hunger now, for you shall be satisfied. Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh.”
 - b) To the Samaritan woman Jesus revealed our present life by saying in John 4:18 (NASB) for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; this you have said truly.”
5. This adverb is speaking of the actual present time.
6. The “actual present time” is we are right now children of God because we have been “born of Him” (2:29).

² Gill, John. John Gill's Exposition on the Whole Bible. E-Sword.

- B. Notice back at the beginning of verse 2, John uses the word “Beloved” (agapetos) to speak of the love that he has for them too. The recipients of God’s love are also loved by the writer.
1. This is not the first time he addresses them by this term.
 2. He refers to them as “Beloved” 6 times in 1 John (2:7; 3:2,21; 4:1, 7,11).

John now contrasts the present reality with the future.

Notice...

II. The Hope of Who We Will Be in the Future (v.2b)

If you think being a child of God is incredible, “it has not appeared as yet what we will be.” There is more to come!

- A. The reference here is to the time of Christ’s coming for His church.

John mentioned this in 2:28 as an incentive for holy living, and now he mentions it again.

- B. God's love for us does not stop with the new birth. It continues throughout our lives and takes us right up to the return of Jesus Christ!³
- C. Right now we are children of God but "it has not appeared as yet what we will be?"
1. What will we be in the future? John says when Jesus comes "we will be like Him."
 2. When Christ returns He shall conform every believer to His image, i.e., His nature.⁴
 3. This does *not* mean that we will be *physically* like Jesus in heaven. The Lord Jesus will have His own definite appearance, and will bear the scars of Calvary throughout eternity.⁵
 4. Nor does it mean we shall become little gods.

Burdick notes, "Believers can never be *equal* to Christ, since He is infinite and they are finite; but they can and will be *similar* to Him in holiness

³ Wiersbe, Warren W. [The Bible Exposition Commentary](#). Vol. 2. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996. Print.

⁴ MacArthur, John, Jr., ed. [The MacArthur Study Bible](#). electronic ed. Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997. Print.

⁵ MacDonald, William. [Believer's Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments](#). Ed. Arthur Farstad. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1995. Print.

and in resurrection bodies.”⁶

5. John Gill says we will be like Him “in body, fashioned like to his glorious body, in immortality and incorruption, in power, in glory, and spirituality, in a freedom from all imperfections, sorrows, afflictions, and death; and in soul, which likeness will lie in perfect knowledge of divine things, and in complete holiness.”⁷
6. Philippians 3:20-21 (NASB) For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; 21 who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.
7. This means we will have new, glorified bodies, suited to heaven.
8. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15:50-53 (NASB) in heaven we will have glorified bodies. He says, “Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. 51 Behold, I

⁶ Ibid., Hiebert.

⁷ Ibid., Gill.

tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. 53 For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality.”

9. Verse 49 says, “Just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we will also bear the image of the heavenly.”
10. We will have “heavenly bodies” (v.49), “imperishable” bodies (vv.52-53). Bodies not like we have now that have sin and corruption.

Our future bodies will not be tainted with the shame of sin. They will be powerful, not weak (15:43). They will be spiritual bodies, not natural bodies (15:44).⁸

It has been rightly said that imitation is the highest form of praise, and this transformation will be a supreme tribute to Jesus Christ—that He is the Chief One, the *prototokos*, among many who are made like Him. Those whom the Father has elected to salvation through the Son will be

⁸ MacArthur, John; Mayhue, Richard. *Biblical Doctrine: A Systematic Summary of Bible Truth* (Kindle Locations 23286-23287). Crossway. Kindle Edition.

made like the Son, conformed to the image of Christ. He will be the first among His elect and redeemed humanity who will join with the holy angels to praise and glorify His name, reflect His goodness, and proclaim His greatness, as they worship Him endlessly.”⁹

We have seen what we are now and what we will be in the future. Now John shows us what we should be in verse 3. Here we see...

III. The Motivation of Our Hope Today (v.3)

John says, “And everyone who has this hope (what hope? The hope of seeing Him) fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.”

The past experience of regeneration brings with it a living hope for the future, and this hope motivates present Christian living.¹⁰

John insists that every individual who holds to this objective hope “purifieth himself” (*hagnizei heauton*), willingly and repeatedly exercises self-purification.¹¹

A. Our hope is fixed on Christ

⁹ MacArthur, John. [1, 2, 3 John](#). Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2007. Print. MacArthur New Testament Commentary.

¹⁰ Ibid., Hiebert.

¹¹ Ibid., Hiebert.

1. Paul said the Thessalonian believers in 1 Thessalonians 1:3 (NASB) had a “work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the presence of our God and Father.”
2. Paul said to Timothy in 1 Timothy 1:1 (NASB) that “Christ Jesus,...is our hope.”
3. Matthew said in Matthew 12:21 (NASB) “in His name the Gentiles will hope.”
4. Paul told Titus in Titus 2:13 (NASB) that Jesus is our “blessed hope.”

B. Because we will see Him we live holy lives

1. This motivates us to self-purification

“And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself.”

“Purifies himself” (hagnizei heauton) is a present active indicative¹²

¹² Robinson, A.T. Robertson's Word Pictures in the NT.

- a) 2 Corinthians 7:1 (NASB) Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

- b) 2 Peter 3:13-14 (NASB) But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells. 14 Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless.

Lenski says, “We have a plain mark by which to judge ourselves. To claim that we are God’s children, who have been born of him, to claim the hope of heaven and glory and yet to stop self-purification is to be lying (1:6).”¹³

Paul Washer said, “The biblical evidence that there was one time in your life that you repented unto salvation, is that you continue repenting until today and continue growing in repentance.”¹⁴

- 2. Jesus is pure. He is the standard by which we measure everything in our lives

¹³ Lenski, R. C. H. *The Interpretation of the Epistles of St. Peter, St. John and St. Jude*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1966. Print.

¹⁴ <https://paulwasherquotes.wordpress.com/tag/repentance/>

“He is pure.”

3. Jesus never had even a trace of sin. “Is pure” = purity is his inherent quality.¹⁵
4. Hebrews 4:15 (NASB) For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.
5. 1 Peter 2:21-23 (NASB) For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, 22 who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth; 23 and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously.

CONCLUSION

1. God has given us this amazing love that has caused us to be born of Him making us His children and in the future like Jesus and because of this we constantly purify ourselves from sin.

¹⁵ Ibid., Lenski.

2. Do you want to know if you're a follower of Jesus?
3. Are you constantly purifying yourself?
4. Is your hope fixed on Christ?
5. Paul Washer said, "Conversion is not like a flu-shot. "Oh I did that. I repented. I believed." The question is my friend. Are you **continuing** to repent of sin? Are you continuing to believe? Because he who began a good work in you will finish it. He will finish it."¹⁶
6. Let's pray.

¹⁶ <https://reformedspirit.blogspot.com/2015/04/god-began-good-work-in-you-will-finish.html?q=paul+washer>