

HEY! DON'T MISS THIS!

1 John 3:1-3

As we step out of **chapter two** of **1 John** and into **chapter three** we immediately notice a change. In fact, John begins by introducing a new truth to his readers. He has told us God is light and in order for us to be able to have fellowship with God the Father and others belonging to His family, we must walk in the light ourselves. He not only told us where we are to walk but also how to walk.

He confronted the Gnostics head-on about the truth of Jesus being the Christ. John had not doubt that Jesus was both God and man in the strictest sense: He was very God of very God and very man of very man.

We have learned a true believer does not make sin a life-style (he'll continue teaching on this subject), but when one of His children does sin, we learned we have an advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the righteous. As His children, the best thing we can do is keep His commandments.

He also taught us we are God's little children or "teknon" in the Greek which refers to both son and daughter. We are a part of His family and we are to love others who are a part of God's family too. And if we do not, then there is a big problem.

John informed us about the antichrist and we learned we are not to love the world or the world system in which we live. We also learned we have an ever present unction abiding within us Who will teach us all things we need to know.

One more thing—as an important reminder before we begin our study in **chapter three**—we learned how we may have confidence before the Lord when He returns and how not to be ashamed at His appearing.

Allow me to read **verse 1**. It says: "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." May I say something profoundly theological here? "**WOW!!!**"

"Behold" is the word John was inspired to use at the beginning of this verse. With the choice of that word John is saying: "Hey, don't miss this!" Sit up! Pay

attention! Take note! Be sure and get this! The aged Apostle is saying, in essence, what I'm going to say next is very important!

Can you imagine this? God's love is so great for us He has chosen to call us "the sons of God." He calls us who were fallen creatures, lumps of clay, sinners needing to be saved by the grace of God, "the sons of God." This is the result of the love which He manifested for us in giving His Son Jesus to die for us. John says God has "bestowed" or showered that love upon us to such a degree the result is, that those who trust Him as Savior are called "the sons of God."

With that in mind, it is little wonder John directs our attention to a kind of love that is out of this world! "Behold, what manner of love" speaks of that special kind of love. It is a kind of love that is foreign to this world and to those fallen, depraved men and women who occupy this world. This special kind of love is a love that loves the unlovable. It is a love that is generated in the heart of God for lost humanity. It is a love that is Divine, eternal, unconditional, underserved, and unmerited, but has been made available freely and fully to the "whosoever will(s)" of this world. (**John 3:16**)

Notice John said it has been "bestowed" upon us. I believe he means it has been done so lavishly. When I think of this word I am reminded of women being showered with love and gifts when they are either getting married or are ready to have a baby. (I remember wondering, as a little boy, why so many people were needed to give one person a shower???...somebody should have educated me on what a shower was! Don't you think so?)

This love John is speaking of is "*agape*" love or a one of kind love which has God as its origin and source. According to **Jeremiah 31:3** it is everlasting; according to **Romans 8:35-39** it is unstoppable; according to **John 13:1** it is a love that is enduring; according to **Ephesians 3:17-19** it is knowable although unexplainable.

"Therefore" the writer continues: "the world knoweth us not because it knew him not." I don't know about you, but I just don't feel at home in this world. I feel out of place and out of step and that is the way it should be for a child of God! Please, don't lose sight of the fact God is addressing His little children. And let's all remember, although we "are in the world" we are "not of the world" **John 17:11, 14.**

Verse two begins with another amazing word, “Beloved.” Now, I think, in order to get the full force of this word it needs to be enunciated this way: be-love-ed. Now I know this is not the proper way to enunciate the word, but in some way I cannot explain, putting emphasis on this word as I have suggest helps in portraying its message or meaning more emphatically when it is broken up and annunciated in this manner (that’s just my opinion). “Be-love-ed” speaks of someone who is experiencing God’s one-of-a-kind love. The word actually means: “Divinely loved ones.” That is the message being conveyed. Now, I don’t know about you, but as I consider this great truth I don’t know whether to shout or cry...maybe I should do both!

John continues by saying: “Now are we the sons (or “teknons” in the Greek meaning sons and daughters) of God.” Please note John says are the children of God, now! That means it is a present tense reality. It is something that is certain. Isn’t it good to know we have a “know so salvation” in this life? Isn’t it good to know we don’t have to wait until after death to discover whether or not we are saved and actually a part of God’s family? I think so. Sad to say, far too many people believe this. There are many people who have trusted Christ as Savior and yet live in constant doubt and unrest about their salvation because they have been taught to believe no one can know for sure whether or they are saved until they die. They have been taught it is nothing less than pride and presumption to claim they know they are saved and Heaven will one day be their home. Sad to say, I know exactly how they feel. That is the way I was raised. I was raised to live in doubt about something that we can be sure of. How sad! But, thank God, that’s not what John was saying! John is saying, “now are we the sons of God.” Thank the good Lord!

In the remainder of this verse we are given some wonderful additional truths! Have you ever wondered what it will be like to be fully like Christ? One glorious day, we will be! Remember in **Acts 11:26** believers or followers of Christ “were called Christians first in Antioch.” That term was intended to be a slur on the followers of Christ, but by the grace of God, it has become a word of identification to be worn as a badge of honor for those whose life’s goal is to live like Christ or to be Christ-like.

John continues by saying: “it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know we shall be like him.” Now if that doesn’t put you on shoutin’ ground I don’t

know what will! There are a lot of things we could consider here as we think of how our Lord appeared to His disciples on the first day of His resurrection.

Although we will not explore those things too deeply, please allow me to mention a few things I hope you find helpful. In His resurrection body:

1. He was totally recognizable. He looked like the same Jesus which had been crucified. His body still had the nail prints in His hands and feet. Although He had a physical body it was not limited as it was before His death, burial, and resurrection. For instance, He was able keep His identity hidden even in the company of those how were familiar with Him. **Luke 24:13-35**
2. He was able to enter a room where His disciples were that was locked, as if the door to the room was wide open **John 20:19-23**
3. He was not just a spirit or some sort of phantasm, but actually had a body with flesh and bone that could be touched. **Luke 24:36-45** (doesn't it make sense that Luke the Physician would record this?)
4. He was also able to eat. **Luke 24:36-45**

The amazing thing is, John says: “we shall be like him!” How exciting is that? **Romans 8:29** teaches us that God’s ultimate goal for all believers is to “be conformed to the image his Son.” **Philippians 3:21** teaches us we will have a body “fashioned like unto his glorious body.” I don’t know about you, but I’m ready for a new and improved one.

The Apostle continues by saying: “when he shall appear.” Right here I want to shout again! John said there is no doubt about it, He’s coming again! John didn’t say if He comes, but said: “when.” Glory halleluia! It’s a done deal in the mind of God. (**Romans 4:17**) So, in light of His coming there are three things we would be wise to take note of:

1. The word “appear” lets us know, when He comes, we will see Him manifest or revealed in His true character. In the Gospels according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John we find the writers did a marvelous job describing Jesus the Christ. They said He was God manifest in the flesh whose glory was hidden or veiled by flesh. Although John had known Jesus personally as a man in the flesh, we find him—in **Revelation 1:12-17**—describing Jesus as he saw Him walking in the midst of the “seven golden candlesticks” in a somewhat unique way. He describes Him as one “liken unto the son of man.” The Apostle who had laid his head on the very bosom of Jesus in the Upper Room in essence was saying: “I’ve never seen Jesus look like this

before!” And folks, “when he appears” we shall see Him in all of His glory. In fact, “we shall see him as he is.”

2. With that truth in mind, please allow me to add a small caveat here in hopes that it will provoke us all. In light of the fact we will be able to see Him as He is, don't you think we should realize He will see us as we are? Isn't that what the writer was speaking of when he exhorted us to “abide in him; that when he shall appear we may have confidence and not be ashamed before him at his coming” in **chapter two verse 28**?
3. So, can we not understand why **verse three** says: “And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.”?

I will close this study with a few simple thoughts on **verse three**. Knowing our Lord is soon to return ought to affect us and motivate us in a positive way. Although we do not know when He is coming, we do know He is coming. As we study eschatology or end time events, we must remember we do so in order to build character and not in order to mark a day on a calendar.

In light of this fact, we find God is gracious to us in at least two ways about the appearing of His Son. First, He is gracious in the fact He did not tell us the day and hour for His appearing. Second, He is gracious and loving enough to let us know that He will return so we can be ready, whenever He does return. Both of those thoughts need expounding, but I simply do not have the time to do so.

Notice what this verse admonishes us as believers to do. It admonishes us to be ever conscience of our need to live as pure a life as we can. It admonishes us to strive to become as much like Christ as we can. It admonishes us to allow the hope of Christ's return to affect us positively in this day and hour we live regardless of the circumstances we find ourselves living in.

In this life we will never be able to be as pure as our Lord and Savior was when He lived among us, **BUT** we should desire to be and strive to be as much like Him as possibly.

Can you remember what the title of this little lesson is? “Hey! Don't miss this!” I'm sure I have left far too many things unsaid that could have and maybe should have been said. But, I do think we've gotten the message John wanted us to get.

We are loved with an out of this world kind of love that guarantees us one day when we see our Lord return for those He has redeemed by His blood, we will be made just like Him. Until we do and are, we are to separate ourselves unto God and from this world system in which we live as we strive to become as much like Him as we possibly can be.

In our next study John will set forth truths on how one can know whether or someone professing to know Christ as Savior is saved or not. We may find the language John has chosen to be hard to take, but we will also find it easy to understand.

Tom Price, 2020