

The Children Of God

1 John 3:1-3

Study #9

(Not entirely original with me)

INTRODUCTION:

1. In **1 Jn 2:29**, for the first time John speaks of Christians as those who are “born” of God...
 - a. It is an expression that will be used time and again throughout the remainder of this epistle - **1 Jn 3:9; 4:7; 5:1,4,18**
 - b. It is a figurative expression, emphasizing that the Christian’s spiritual life is a result of the redemptive work of God - cf. **Co 2:12-13; Ti 3:4-7**
 - c. As a result of this working of God in our lives, we have been “born again”, and can therefore be properly called God’s “children”
2. That we can be called “children of God” was amazing to John, and in our text (**1 Jn 3:1-3**) he desires that we reflect...
 - a. Upon the significance of being called the “children of God”
 - b. Upon the implications of what it should mean in our lives

I. WHAT WE ARE AS CHILDREN OF GOD (1)

A. WE ARE RECIPIENTS OF GOD’S LOVE...

1. *“Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!”*
2. It is through the love of God that we can even become His children - **Jn 3:16; Ro 5:8; 1 Jn 4:9-10; Ti 3:3-7**
3. It is an honor for God to even take notice of us as one of His creatures (cf. **Psa 8:3-4**), how much love God must have to allow us to become His children!

B. WE ARE UNKNOWN BY THE WORLD...

1. *“...the world does not know us...”*
2. That is, they do not truly recognize or appreciate what we have become in Christ
3. They may even deem us as religious fanatics, fools - cf. **1 Co 4:9-13**
4. But this is understandable...
 - a. For the world did not (and still does not) really know Jesus - **Jn 1:11**
 - b. And for now, our lives are “hidden” in Jesus - **Co 3:3-4**

[Loved and honored by God, unknown and sometimes despised by the world; that is what we are today as the children of God. But as stated by Paul in **Co 3:4**, when Christ comes we will “appear with Him in glory”!

II. WHAT WE SHALL BE AS CHILDREN OF GOD (2)

A. IT HAS NOT YET BEEN FULLY REVEALED...

1. Exactly what we shall be like has not yet been revealed
2. Which may be that due to our finite capability to comprehend
3. In general terms we have been promised a spiritual body and immortality - cf. **1 Co 15:42-44,50-53**
4. But there is something else, hinted at by both Paul and John...

B. WE SHALL BE LIKE JESUS...

1. “...we know that we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.”
2. Paul also says that we will be like Jesus when He comes...
 - a. We shall bear the image of the “heavenly Man” - cf. **1 Co 15:49**
 - b. Our lowly bodies will undergo a wonderful transformation to become like Jesus - **Ph 3:20-21**
3. Though we cannot fully know what we will be like, it must really be something, for as Christ is now, no man can really see Him and live! - cf. **1 Ti 6:13-16**

[This wonderful hope of what we will be some day should encourage us to “stand fast in the Lord” (cf. **Ph 3:20-4:1**).

III. WHAT WE SHOULD BE AS CHILDREN OF GOD (3)

A. OUGHT TO BE MOTIVATED BY OUR HOPE...

1. “everyone who has this hope...”
2. The hope of which John writes, of course, is the earnest expectation that we will be like Jesus when He comes

B. DILIGENTLY INVOLVED IN PURIFYING ONE’S SELF...

1. The Greek word for “purify” is **hagnizo** which means “to make clean, i.e. (fig.) sanctify”
 - a. It is closely related to the word for “holiness”, which in Greek is **hagiasmos**, meaning “holiness, sanctification”
 - b. It therefore involves the idea of being “set apart” for a holy purpose, which Christians are taught to pursue - cf. **He 12:14**

2. Properly motivated by the hope that Jesus will “transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body” (**Ph 3:21**), the true child of God will work toward the purity (holiness) seen in the Lord Himself
3. How can Christians purify themselves?
 - a. First and foremost by appropriating the cleansing power of the blood of Jesus! - cf. **1 Jn 1:9**
 - b. Only then can we hope to be truly holy and without blemish - cf. **Ep 5:25-27**
 - c. But we also have an obligation to remove ourselves from things that would defile us - cf. **2 Co 6:16-7:1**

CONCLUSION:

1. By virtue of God’s love for us, and His working in us, we can truly be called the “children of God”!
2. However, to become a child of God, and truly remain such, we must be willing to cooperate with God...
 - a. When our faith joins with the working of God, we can become His children! - cf. **Co 2:12-13; Ga 3:26-27**
 - b. As long as our faith remains strong, we have the assurance of receiving the promises God has made - cf. **He 3:12-14; 4:1-2; 10:35-39; Re 2:10**

May the love our heavenly Father has shown in making us His children, serve to motivate us to remain faithful to Him!

(Material from Mark A. Copeland)