

## 1 John 2:28-3:3

### Destined For Glory

We must always remember that the main reason why John wrote his first letter is so we could have great joy. In chapter 1, John wrote,

that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. <sup>4</sup> And these things we write to you that Your joy may be full.  
(1 John 1:3, 4)

Therefore it is possible for us, in this life, in this world so full of troubles, trials and sorrows, to have fullness of joy. And our fullness of joy flows from the fountain of our fellowship with God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

We share in the life of God and Jesus Christ and we share in their glorious destiny as well. Now, John has told us that there are certain conditions that are essential to enjoying fellowship with God and Christ. We must walk in the light of God's Word. We must love our brothers and sisters in the family of God. And our faith must be rooted in sound apostolic teaching. In a word, we are to live "righteously." In the Scriptures before us now, John gives us a deep and profound reason to live righteously.

And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.  
(1 John 2:28)

What future event lies ahead for each and every one of us? The answer is that we will all see Jesus Christ face to face. The appearing and presence of the Lord Jesus Christ is our great and blessed hope.<sup>1</sup> The apostle Paul tells us in 2 Timothy 4:8 that those who love Christ's appearing will receive a crown of righteousness. Those who do not will shrink in shame before him. According to 2 Corinthians 5,

we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ,  
that each one may receive the things done in the body,

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<sup>1</sup> Titus 2:13

according to what he has done, whether good or bad.  
(vs. 10)

The Greek word translated “done” means to carefully and habitually practice. Our sins have already been completely forgiven by the sacrifice of Christ.<sup>2</sup> We will not be judged for our sins. But we will be judged on what we have done with our lives.<sup>3</sup> The Greek words translated “good or bad” point to a comparison between worthwhile, eternally valuable activities verses worthless ones.

The point is not that we shouldn't enjoy life and wholesome activities, but that we should strive to bring glory to God and good to His people in all that we do, rather than strive for vain self-glory. On judgment day all that we've built in a life of faith, hope and love will be rewarded. Everything else will be burned up. When Christ appears we do not want to feel ashamed in his presence because of how we've lived our lives. Therefore,

If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone  
who practices righteousness is born of Him.  
(1 John 2:29)

The Greek word translated “practice” means to rehearse as you would an art form or to train as a good athlete. In other words we should strive to live our lives as if we are children of God. Our attitudes and actions reveal the life of God in us. We strive to live our lives as those who are born of God. His life is in us! And God did not give us new life to leave us how He found us. He has saved us and made us His children to make us like Christ, who is like our Father, God.

You and I are “born of God”! Peter declares that we are “partakers of the divine nature.”<sup>4</sup> Paul declares that “we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.”<sup>5</sup> When the world asks you who you are, when you look in the mirror and ask yourself who you are, respond by saying “I am a child of God. I am born of God.” And then live accordingly.

The thought of being born of God so overwhelmed John that he was inspired to write about how people, like you and me, become children of God. And he tells us how in chapter 3, verse 1.

Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed

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<sup>2</sup> Colossians 2:13, 14

<sup>3</sup> Romans 14:19; 1 Corinthians 3:10-15

<sup>4</sup> 2 Peter 1:4

<sup>5</sup> Romans 8:16, 17

on us, that we should be called children of God!

What makes us children of God is the immense love of God. It was the love of God, the love of our Father, who planned and achieved our salvation. Is this not the whole message of Christ's death on the cross? Romans 5:8 tells us that,

God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Let's read 1 John 3:1 again.

Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!

The best Greek manuscripts add a phrase here: "and we are!" The love of God looked upon us, in spite of our sin, in spite of our lack of love for God. And the love of God sacrificed His Son and then raised him up from the dead. God proved His love to us. And when we receive Christ as Lord and savior by faith we become the children of God. But there is something else.

Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.  
(1 John 1b)

We are children of God, but the world doesn't understand or care. This because the world still does not understand the love of God towards it.<sup>6</sup> But don't allow the world to rob you of your joy. Do you know who you are? You are a child of God.

Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.  
(1 John 3:2)

One of the great tragedies in the church, one of the reasons why too many Christians are like the world, why we are so easily seduced away from the things of God, is that we fail to realize who we are. Sometimes we complain and worry, we feel unhappy and we get depressed by life's trials and set-backs, because we fail to keep this truth before our eyes—"Beloved, now we are the children of God."

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<sup>6</sup> John 3:16, 17

And we are destined for glory. We don't know all the details, but when God in Christ is revealed we shall be like Him! If we truly believed this there would be no pleading for us to live righteous lives. How we are to think and feel and act is rooted in who we are as children of God.

The Bible has little to say about the behavior of those who are not saved—they sin. But they can be saved. God loves them and does not want them to perish but to have everlasting life. But the great appeal to live righteously, to love God, to love one another is made to us. The Word of God says to us, “Beloved, realize who you are, realize your destiny.” Romans 8:29 tells us that

whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Philippians 3:21 says that Christ

will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

Colossians 3:4 proclaims

When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

And 1 Corinthians 15:51, 52 declares

we shall all be changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet.

The apostle John wrote,

Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.<sup>3</sup> And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.  
(1 John 3:2, 3)

It is after John has told us who we are and the destiny that lies before us, that he urges us to live righteously. Living a holy and righteous life is not something we do in order to become something. We purify ourselves because we are children of God and we will be like Him.

I must put off the world. I must put off the old man.<sup>7</sup> We must be imitators of God as dear children.<sup>8</sup> We must be loving, forgiving, kind and loyal to God. I am proud of my heavenly Father and I want to grow up to be just like Him. Everyone who has this hope—the hope of seeing Christ and God, the hope of being like Him, purifies himself of herself. The Bible says,

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

How do we purify ourselves? We do it with the Word of God. Psalm 119:11 says,

Your word I have hidden in my heart,  
That I might not sin against You.

And by the power of the Spirit of God.

But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.  
(2 Corinthians 3:18)

Behold, now we are the children of God. Behold what love the Father has bestowed on us. We are destined for glory. Let's act like it.

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<sup>7</sup> Ephesians 4:24

<sup>8</sup> Ephesians 5:1