

1 JOHN 3 V 1-10.

3 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^{2a} 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.

4 Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness. **5** You know that he appeared in order to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. **6** No one who abides in him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him. **7** Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous. **8** Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. **9** No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's^{9a} seed abides in him; and he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been born of God. **10** By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.

So, this week we are back in John's epistle, we will be covering the first ten verses of ch3 today. And we have this wonderful encouragement starting with these first few scriptures.

We may or may not have a high status in this world, and society will generally judge us on a number of criteria. That could include how much our income is, the place we live in, our standing in the community or what school or university we attended. It could be our popularity in a social setting, or it could be the past when we have made bad and wrong life choices and there are many other benchmarks that others will use to define our character or position in the world, we are in.

But this morning I want us to not concentrate on how the world perceives our standing and how the world shoehorns us into its way of thinking but to look what God our Father says about us.

And straight from the off in v 1 John states this, behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us that we are called the

children of God. Let that sink in a moment. Let us not consider what the world, society or anybody thinks of us but who we are in the eyes of our Father. We all do this, its part of our nature we measure ourselves against everyone and everything else and are forever making comparisons.

No, you are a child of the King of the Universe and quite frankly He doesn't care about your popularity or approval ratings, what you have or haven't got, oh He cares and He will provide. No, the only possession He wants for you is His Son, and He who has the son has everything. Let's try to get a heavenly perspective this morning because contrary to all the media and the experts, or the so called, would feed you its only your place in the Lord that matters. And if you have placed your faith and trust squarely in Yeshua, Jesus Christ you are truly His child and part of the family.

John says the world does not know us because it doesn't know Him. Do you remember Jesus words that if the world hates me, it will hate you also? That's because we are no longer of this world and if we are in Christ and following Him, we are going to be diametrically opposed and out of step with the flow of this society and culture.

Look at v2, it says, 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.

This is our great hope as believers, this is what we live for. And in spite of all the opposition we face as believers, all of the difficulties and stresses we face on a day-to-day basis, sometimes the complete sense of hopelessness we can be overwhelmed by. Yet there is an assurance we have in Christ. If you are feeling bedraggled and tired of life, listen to this promise from Romans 8 v17. Now if we are children, then we are heirs-heirs of God and co heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may share in his glory.

As heirs, children of God we will inherit all that Christ has for us, believe me what's out there is nothing compared to what Father has stored up for us. We are not only going to see Jesus when He is revealed in a way never revealed before but it says we will be just like Him. We will be just like Him, our bodies will no longer be constricted by the physical dimensions that limit us down here or subject to sickness, ill health or all the maladies that inflict us presently. And no longer will sin have any choke hold in our lives nor will we be warring against in our flesh. What we have now is down payment but we will receive all Jesus has for us when we meet Him or are called up to Him.

But for now, we are called to partake in His sufferings. For all of us that will involve a different course or path that the Lord has set for us. But where ever that should lead us He will be in the storms; he promises never to leave us or forsake us. The disciples in the book of Acts considered it an honour to suffer for the name of Yeshua, we may have too also. But the Lord will also be in the mundane and the many struggles we go through on a daily basis, for some resolving difficulties in a family situation may be the cross they carry, ill health or the complexities of getting from one week to another might be someone else's.

In the midst of this Isaiah 41 v10 reminds of this. Fear not for I AM with you, be not be dismayed for I AM your God, I will strengthen you I will help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

And we remember all Gods promises are yes and amen.

V3 states, everyone who has this hope purifies himself, just as He is pure.

God will use our walk with Him and life experiences to change us from one degree of glory to another. What we go through will mould us, the Lord is refining us, washing the dirt in our lives away making us purer like His son Jesus.

The second part of the reading this morning deals with sin, just to reiterate. ⁴ Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness. ⁵ You know that he appeared in order to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. ⁶ No one who abides in him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him. ⁷ Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous. ⁸ Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. ⁹ No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him; and he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been born of God. ¹⁰ By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.

Now you might say didn't we look at John 1 and 2 a few weeks back didn't it say that, if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us John ch1 v8 , and if we confess our sins, He is just and sure to forgive us and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Then doesn't John 2 v2 say that He Himself is the propitiation for our sins and the whole world also. So, what's the deal here, why the supposed anomaly between ch 1 and 2 and what we read in ch3.

Well, the answer to this apparent contradiction is found through verses 6-9.

All of us as Christians are capable of falling into sin, it can be in our thoughts or actions. And the reality is that as believers we will be in a constant struggle against our old nature, Paul speaks of this in Romans 7, not doing that which he desires to do, and doing those things which he hates. Yes, we can all backslide and we drop our crosses, but we should never throw it away.

Verse 8 and 9 says as follows, He who sins is of the devil. For this purpose, the Son of God was manifested to destroy the works of the devil. Whoever is born of God does not sin because God's seed is in Him, and cannot sin because He is born of God. What John is saying here is the following I believe.

it's to live persistently in a lifestyle and to be comfortable where our conscience isn't troubled by what we are doing. Where we become hardened to the Holy Spirit in our lives, where when He convicts us, we feel no desire to stop our immoral lifestyle or to run back to Father confessing and repenting. As it says in v9, His seed, His Spirit remains in us. We cannot have the Lord living in our lives and give a key to a squatter to live in the same house, the Lord can't look upon sin.

When I first became a believer, I didn't really understand the concept of repentance, I just accepted the truth of the gospel and believed, but there is more to it than that. And sadly, many churches don't preach this to those that are seeking to become Christians. I have had to learn this for myself and realised I only knew a part of the gospel.

Mark 1v 15, Jesus says. Repent and believe the kingdom of God is at hand.

Acts 2 v38. Peter said to the crowd, Repent and be baptised everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins and you will receive the Holy Spirit.

Matt3.2 Again, repent for the kingdom of God is at hand.

Luke 5 v32 Yeshua says, I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.

And there are multiple such scriptures that emphasise the necessity of repentance.

If we repent and confess, we say to the Lord, oh Father I'm struggling, I'm finding this a tough nut to crack. Then He will be sure to forgive and cleanse us. There are going to be many things that as believers we are going to have to leave behind, our old lifestyles, habits that are harmful and maybe relationships in some cases. Things that can ensnare us and affect our relationship with God.

You see in v10 it says we are to practice righteousness. Now this doesn't mean put ourselves in some moral straight jacket and trying to act out holy as the world would understand it. We don't have any righteousness in or of ourselves.

Phil 3 v9 says.

And may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith.

Praise God His righteousness is imputed to us through the saving work of Jesus Christ. And His desire is that we move in that righteousness he attained for us so that we can live the lives He wants us to. To change us on a daily basis, to bring about that difference so that when we look back to last year or five years down the line, we are a different person. It's only the righteousness of Christ that enables us to stand before a Holy God who cannot abide sin.

Jesus is coming back and He wants a pure bride. Imagine you're the bride groom standing at the altar. Now I know it's a bride's privilege to be late on the day but what if its an hour or more, everyone looking at their watches. Then finally she arrives running up the aisle, she's still got her rollers in, forgot to put her makeup on, dress is too tight, zips come undone at the back, ill fitting shoes so she trips at the altar. And on top of that she's still hungover from her hen night with the girls.

Not a pretty sight, and the groom I dare say wasn't to impressed either.

No Jesus Yeshua deserves the best from His bride and everyone of us. He wants to show us off to the world because we are His. So how do we make our groom, Jesus, proud and pleased with us.

We do what our hapless bride didn't do. We purchase shoes and a dress that fits, we spend the time adorning and making ourselves beautiful, being watchful for the time we need to be in church. We don't go out on the town the night before.

How does that translate for us? We keep getting ready for His return. There's nothing revolutionary here. Abide in Him daily, in the word and in prayer. Get before Jesus frequently allow Him to correct and guide you especially those difficult issues in your life. Don't stop running to Him even if you fall, because He is the restorer of our souls. Don't be out the night before the wedding, don't return to the world or a sinful life when you know His return could be anytime.

So today lets just take a quick resumé of what we have looked at this morning.

Regardless of our position in this world or what the world thinks of us we are children of the most wonderful and powerful being in the universe through Christ Jesus and there shouldn't be a moment in our lives when we are not amazed by that fact.

But that also God calls us to a life of righteousness in Him, to turn from persistent sin to repent so that we may be truly called children of God.

Why because we love and desire Him and can be imagers of Him, we seek to serve.

Christ will be revealed to us and we will be like Him.

Finish with this encouraging word today.

2 Cor v 9. Eye has not seen nor ear heard. Nor have entered into the heart of man. The things which God has prepared for those who love Him.

By Misha Droniuk