

1 John 2:28-3:10 “Children of God, What do they look like?”

So far in this letter Paul has pointed out, the contrast between light and darkness, love and hatred and truth and error. He has explained that a real Christian lives a life of obedience, love and truth. It is impossible to live in fellowship with God if you are disobedient, hateful or untruthful.

Last week Eric talked about the deception that keeps many of us from living out a truthful, genuine life. False teaching that comes from deceived people, (anti-Christ’s) that manifests itself in false living.

We learned that God has given us His written word and at Salvation and He has given us His “anointing”, the Holy Spirit to help us know His will.

At the end of last week’s message Paul challenged these believers to remain in Him. Trust His word and obey His Spirit.

This morning Paul reminds them and us that because of their new birth through the Holy Spirit that they are children of God and because of that intimate relationship they should begin to look like their Father.

And now, (present) **dear children**, (motivated by love) **continue in him**, (actively follow Him, expected to grow, 2 Peter 1:3-11) **so that when he appears** (His second coming, judgment, we will be held accountable for our actions) **we may be confident** (“outspokenness” in this context boldness, courage. **Confidence comes from knowing**) **and unashamed before him at his coming**. The return of Christ should be a motivation for us to live a life of obedience. Christ is coming back, we do not know when, we must live like it could be any time. How would you feel if Jesus came back right now? Confident, excited and relieved or ashamed and disappointed. My testimony .

If you know that he is righteous, you know that everyone who does what is right has been born of him. Doing what is right is a mark of a true believer. A test of our obedience. **The Grace of God and His righteousness is the only way any of us can ever do right**. The motivation behind why you do right can only be known by us and the Father. We get our standard of what is right from God not by comparing ourselves to others.

John uses two different words for “know”. The first word is a word for intuition, (knowing as a matter of fact, **knowledge**). The

second refers to **knowing from experience**. Jesus is our standard and if we just know about Him and have never experienced His life changing righteousness no matter how many works that we do we can never be confident that we are His child. God’s children reflect the character of their Father. Our example is Jesus. God in the flesh.

2 Cor. 5:17-18 “**Therefore, if anyone is in Christ** (united with Christ through faith in Him and committed to Him) **he is a new creation**, (redeemed, restored) **the old is gone, the new has come!** **All of this is from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation**” vs. 20 “**We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors as though God were making His appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.**

Christ’s return **should motivate us** to continue in Him by living a life of obedience **but so should His love** shown to us by what he has already done on the Cross.

While we were still sinners and enemies of God He sent Jesus to allow us to become His children.

How great (originally meant “of what country” out of this world) **is the love the Father has lavished** (God loved us first, **more than what is expected, no half hearted devotion**) **on us, that we should be called children of God!** (we do not deserve to be His children, He chose us) **And that is what we are!** The reality of the Gospel is that we are His children . We know Him personally.

Our Father does it all. He created us, He takes care of us by providing for our needs, God teaches us to walk (steps of faith) and to talk. God protects us by watching over us (intervention, discipline). God gives us boundaries in our lives to protect us. (His word and His ways) **The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him**. His boundaries include us not being in love with the world and allowing it to mold us. It is the Father’s job to raise His children. **Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known**. (He knows our future so that should motivate us to obediently follow Him and His ways not sin and the world’s ways, the potter) **But we know that when he appears, we shall**

be like him, for we shall see him as he is. (Again speaking of His second coming and our hope for our future in Heaven)

Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure. The person who has the confident expectation and really believes that He is coming does what it takes to get ready. **To purify means “to put away all that defiles.”** (things have to go)

Although Christ’s work is the only thing that can purify us completely we have a responsibility to seek to purify ourselves on a daily basis. This is the sanctification process. Accomplished by God’s Grace. We should be willing to get rid of anything in our lives that the Lord exposes that will contaminate us and keep us from being pure. (Through preaching, believers, reading, conviction, God’s word.) **If you find yourself justifying and dismissing exposed sin in your life you can have no confidence in knowing that you are a child of God.** Your motivation to continue and grow in Him will be minimal. “Doing righteousness” is a phrase that sums up Christian living. Walking the walk not just talking the talk.

The nature of sin: in us

Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness. All have sinned and fall short of the Glory of God. Just because everyone does it does not make it right or acceptable. We are told that “the wages of sin is death” **there was a high price paid so that we could be called children of God and we should not ever take any sin lightly.** False teachers will tell you that all sin is not that big of a deal. Sin is designed to destroy you. When an unbeliever sins they sin against the law but when a believer sins they sin against a loving father. **But you know that he appeared so that he might take away (to lift or to carry) our sins. And in him is no sin. No one who lives in him keeps on sinning.** Since we have experienced the love of the Father we should have no desire to live in sin. The fear of the Lord is not that you are afraid that He will hurt you but the fear that you will hurt Him. Jesus died for me and I died with Him. I now live in Him. I yield myself to Him and sin will not control me. **No one who continues (lifestyle) to sin has either seen him or known him.** This is not saying that if you have ever sinned or if you continue to slip in a specific area that you are not His child. But **you cannot continue to enjoy sin the way you did before you became a child of God and have any confidence that you are His.**

Sin is missing God’s mark for your lives and **the essence of sin is that we assert our will over our Father’s, which is rebellion.**

Rebellion can be external as well as internal. Sin is a matter of the heart. It is our human nature to sin. So if your life is characterized by you doing what you want and not considering what God thinks about issues in your life you are in danger of being deceived.

The origin of sin: in satan

Dear children, do not let anyone (preachers, counterfeit Christians will try to tell you that you can be saved and continue to live in sin, your own understanding, your feelings, people doing the same sin as you) **lead you astray.**

He who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous. He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil’s work. The origin of sin is the devil.

Christ appeared to destroy the works of the devil (to oppose Christ and His people, promote sin and deception)

satan was cast out of heaven for rebellion, he is not all knowing, all powerful or everywhere, he has fallen angels-demons assisting him in his work. Jesus was tempted by satan and Paul referred to him as the god of this age, he is under God, he was defeated by Christ at the cross, **although he poses a great threat to people he has no power over us that we do not give him.**

At conversion we were given the Holy Spirit who lives in us. Through Jesus we are Justified (declared righteous, never to be lost, confidence) We were given a new position as his child. We are set apart for God’s purposes and through our daily walk we are sanctified, some days are better than others but we continue to grow in Christ. The most beautiful impact of the Holy Spirit is that we are given a new heart. Our desires are molded and motivated by the impact of what Jesus did for us and the fact that He is coming back to get us. And it shows in our actions. **No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God’s seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God. This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God; nor is anyone who does not love his brother.**