

COMPTEMPLATIONS OF GOD'S CHILDREN | 1 John 3:1-3 | Pastor Mark Bofill | 12/11/2022

I. Their Position (3:1) | II. Their Perception (3:2) | III. Their Purification (3:3)

INTRO: We currently live in a time when so many are confused about their Identity and Future (*Expound*). However, over **1900 hundred years ago** the apostle John recorded this little epistle for his little children, to unequivocally declare the **confidence** and **assurance** we have as believers in Jesus Christ. – That we can be called **"children of God"** was amazing to John, and in our text (**1 John 3:1-3**) he provides three **CONTEMPLATIONS OF GOD'S CHILDREN** of which we must pause to consider this morning. **READ TEXT**

Regarding...

I. Their Position (1): The very first word that John mentions, draws attention to the TRUTH that so many Christians seem to overlook or even forget: **"BEHOLD,"** {Gr. *Horáō*} properly, to stare at, to discern clearly, perceive, see, take heed. As if to say, *'Check this this out!'* or *'Feast your eyes' on this!*

What is the OBJECT God's children are to focus on? LOVE! – A *distinct love* and *special love* is implied by use of the phrase, **"what manner of love."** It emphasizes **the Quality to be Considered!** {Gr. *agapē*} which surpasses the other Greek words for love: {*storge*}, describes love of family; {*eros*} - carnal, sexual love, and {*phileo*}, love for dear friends. – In particular, this is the **unconditional love that a good father has for his little children**. (*Unfortunately, so many have such a bad view of this love! – I believe that this is where serious identity issues take root! – Regardless of our past experiences, the special position of believes...*)

A. is Distinct (1a) **"Bestowed on us..."** – John makes clear that this **distinct** and **special fatherly love** is **offered freely to those who believe in Him**. (John 1:12) says, **But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name (John 1:12)**

- The word **"bestowed"** communicates the **abundance of God's love for us**; it also denotes His love as being **lavishly poured out on us**. – Second, it describes **the way in which God gives His love**; **a one-sided offering** rather than a reward for work well done. (*It's distinct, only for 'US'*)

B. is Declared (1b) Not only is it true that we are **lavishly loved by God**, but a **title of endearment** is granted to **ALL** who believe in Jesus Christ. **"We should be called children of God."** – As if adding a cherry on the top of a Sunday, John calls God's Children to **CONTEMPLATE** this fact of **PRIVLEDGE**

- David tells us that God delights to even take notice of his creation, **When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, 4 what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him?** (Ps 8:3-4).
- Scripture confirms the Godhead's declaration of this divine privilege...
 - **The Father:** **"I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the LORD Almighty,"** (2 Cor 6:18).
 - **The Son:** **He is not ashamed to call them brethren,** (Heb 2:11).
 - **The Spirit:** **The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,** (Rom 8:16)
- I love what **C.H. Spurgeon** commented about this fact: **"'There,' He says, 'you poor people that love me, you sick people, you unknown, obscure people, without any talent, I have published it before heaven and earth, and made the angels know it, that you are my children, and I am not ashamed of you. I glory in the fact that I have taken you for my sons and daughters.'"** – C.H. Spurgeon

John now mentions that this privileged position...

C. is Different (1c) Jesus taught that only children of God experience new birth and the accessibility to see the kingdom of God (John 3:3), but the world does not understand this! John makes clear that **"The world does not know us..."** – The world categorizes us as religious fanatics, fools, conservatives, or even right-wingers. **They do not truly recognize or appreciate what we have become in Christ.** – In (Matt 10:22 NLT) Jesus said, **And all nations will hate you because you are my followers. But everyone who endures to the end will be saved.**

- We should **not be shocked** by the world's rejection of us, neither by its classifications or titles. Why? **Because we are Children of God!** (c.f. 1Cor 4:9-13, 1 Pet 4:4) And for now, our lives are **"hidden"** in Jesus (Col 3:3-4).
- But this is understandable...for the world did not really know Jesus (John 1:11) He came to his own people, and even they rejected him. (don't expect them to embrace you – You're different!)

Closing Point: Are you aware that when you became a born-again Christian, **you received a very distinct position as God's Child?** And as God's child, **Do you stop to contemplate the great love your Father has lavished on you?** **Why not! You are greatly loved!** (How does that simple thought impact you?)

Now John speaks of God's Children and ...

II. Their Perception (2) Life Eternal should be our Contemplation! – **Too many Christians are focused on their future in this world** but as we learned in (2:17), this world is temporary and will soon pass away. When we become earthy focused, we tend to drift from our heavenly focus. – **"Two men looked out from prison bars, one saw the mud, the other saw stars."** – Dale Carnegie

- **We must learn to focus on spiritual things...heavenly things, which then allows it to manifest in here and now!**

A. is Reality (2a) **"we are children..."** Again, John refocuses them of their genuine relationship as **God's Beloved!** But did you notice, (v.1) declared that we **"should be called children,"** but this verse says **NOW WE ARE children of God!** – **Our IDENTITY is THE REALITY of our FUTURE ETERNITY!** (Contemplate that!) – **READ (tt. 2 Cor 5:1-7)** (we will all be transformed one day...)

However, temporarily our perception...

B. is Restricted (2b) – Limited, Partial, Imperfect, Inadequate, Reduced, Blurry, and Hindered... as John states... it is **"not yet revealed what we shall be"** – **Our current situation is clear, but what lies ahead is uncertain.** What we will become in the world beyond is not yet known to us in the level of detail we would prefer. Right now, it's impossible for us to envision what we will look like in our future glories. – **READ (tt. Rom 8:16-18)**

Our patient perception...

C. is Rewarded (2c) **"we shall see Him as He is"** – **What exactly will we see when we see Jesus? I DO NOT KNOW!** However, in (Matt 17:2) we read of **the mount of transfiguration** where **Jesus' face was shining like the sun and His clothes shone as white as light (glorified body).** (Rev 1:13-16) describes John's vision of Jesus in heaven: Having snow white hair like wool, eyes glowing like a flame of fire, His feet were as brass and His voice as the sound of many waters. – **While these are glimpses of Jesus' glorified body, we can't know for certain what our new bodies will be like!**

Because of the scriptures, we can be certain that a change will take place...

- (1 Cor 13:12 NKJV) *For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.*
- (1 Cor 15:51 NLT) *But let me reveal to you a wonderful secret. We will not all die, but we will all be transformed!*
- (Phil 3:20-21) *For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ who 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.*

Closing Point: I'll finish this point with a comment that King David wrote on this matter (Ps 17:15) *As for me, I will see Your face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake in Your likeness.*

Church, have you lost focus of the fact that you are in a temporary body, which is soon to be transformed into heavenly body? (*Contemplation of this point will revolutionize your outlook in this life!*)

The last point for God's Children to contemplate is...

III. Their Purification (3) The NLT renders this passage as: *And all who have this eager expectation will keep themselves pure, just as He is pure.* (I'm going to comment on this in reverse order)

A. is Hi-lighted (3c) in the life of Jesus! *"He is pure" – We must know that are living Lord is unspeakably pure! He is sinless, spotless, and stainless. In His person is an **absolute fullness of purity** that our words can never fully express. **This fact alone changes our entire human and moral situation and outlook.** – A.W. Tozer*

- A wonderful **cleansing impact** on our life should stem **from the hope** of being with Jesus or from the impending return of Jesus Christ. **It motivates us to be prepared,** serve Him today, and please Him right away.

Their Purification has a goal. It...

B. is Holiness (3b) *"purifies Himself" – The Greek word for "purify" is {Gr. **Hagnizo**} which means "to make clean, i.e. (fig.) sanctify" – It is closely related to the word for "**holiness**", which in Greek is {**hagiasmos**}, meaning "holiness, sanctification." – You may recall in (2:7; 4:17) where John said that our love can be perfected as we keep His word. **Here he instructs believers Be Purified!** – (*A necessary practice... not a suggestion! Yet, so many struggle horribly in this area.*)*

- **In my DEVO TIME I was reading through (Ezekiel 8) and the Spirit revealed to me the ancient struggle with idolatry, uncleanness and impurity!** (*Expound – Especially Leadership!*)
- **In a vision Ezekiel saw:**
 1. (Ezk 8:3-6) In Jerusalem, at the north gate, an "image of jealousy" where great abominations were practiced, **which made God go far away from His Sanctuary!**
 2. (Ezk 8:7-12) Behind a secret court door, 70 elders defiled themselves by worshipping creepy abominable beasts and idols portrayed on their walls, (*claiming the Lord does not see us!*)
 3. (Ezk 8:14) At the door of the North gate, **women were sitting and weeping for Tammuz!**
 4. (Ezk 8:16) In the "inner court," **25 men with their back to the temple, worshipped the sun god!**
- Church family, if we claim to be Children of God, **then we must contemplate this point!** The writer of Hebrews emphasized the need to be **"set apart" for a holy purpose,** which Christians are taught to **pursue...**

– (Heb 12:14) Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord. (We can't fool ourselves any longer! And certainly, we can't fool God!)

• If we claim to be Children of God, then we have an obligation to remove ourselves from things that would defile us – READ (tt. 2 Cor 6:16-18).

– (2 Cor 7:1 NLT) Because we have these promises, dear friends, let us cleanse ourselves from everything that can defile our body or spirit. And let us work toward complete holiness because we fear God. A Perfect Segway to hope...

Their Purification...

C. is **Hopeful (3a)** because their "hope is in Him." – The hope of which John writes, of course, is the earnest expectation that we will be like Jesus when He comes.

• Having hope in the promises of Jesus **should be motivation** to be pleasing to Him. **Hope is great motivation!** (Is your hope in His promises **high or low** right now? – What are you doing to cultivate your Hope Meter?)

• Knowing our future destiny should prompt a life of purify right now!

Closing Point: As we close this study in the KNOWING GOD series, what did we learn?

1. KNOW that you are Lavishly Loved by God!
2. KNOW the one day you will be LIKE HIM!
3. KNOW that you are to WALK in PURITY!

Contemplating these three simple points will help us stay focused in these confusing times! – May the love our heavenly Father has shown in making us His children, serve to motivate us to remain faithful to Him!

LET'S PRAY!