

1 John 2:28-3:10

A life of Sanctification

Image Church // First John: Week 5

Introduction

Welcome guests...

Celebrate... How awesome was last weekend?!?

- This is what we want to be about as a church... One more person taking a step of faith and obedience...

If you have your Bible, turn to 1 John...

- *If you don't have a Bible, we have one for you at the Connection Center!*

John's talked about it's the **last hour**, as we wait for the return of Jesus to finish what He started... In the meantime, we live in a **deceptive** world, and the way we stand firm, the way that we endure through deception, and the way we can have **assurance** of our salvation is through the **Spirit of God** and the **Word of God**...

- *The Spirit of God opens our eyes to the Word of God, and the Word of God is our guide and filter that keeps us centered on the truths of God...*

What John's going to do next is show the **implications of being centered on the truths of God**...

1 John 2:28-3:10

²⁸ So now, little children, remain in him so that when he appears we may have confidence and not be ashamed before him at his coming.

In light of the deception around you: **Remain in Jesus**...

He's used the word **10 times**... This is number **11** here...

- This is the key... And he gets it straight from Jesus in **John 15**... *I am the vine, you are the branches, remain in me*...

How do you remain in Jesus?!?

- Daily believing and surrendering to the gospel... And allowing the truth of the gospel to shape your life...

This is why we say that the gospel isn't the start of the Christian life. It's the essence of the Christian life...

- This is also a distinguishing mark between those who are true followers of Jesus, those who are really saved, and those who aren't...
 - **Religion** is about rituals, **remaining** is about consistent fellowship with Jesus...

You do this by resting in what He's done for you and then allowing his work to you to shape you...

- This is why I preach the gospel every week. You don't need 4 ways to be a better person...
 - You need to behold Jesus... You need to remain in Him!
 - He's the one that all of Scripture points you too...
- The goal of the Christian life is to remain in Jesus... Why? Because He's the source of hope, change, and transformation in your life...

BTW: This call to remain isn't something that you do on your own, it's something that we do together... **John's talking to the church**...

God's given us the church as a **means** of remaining in Jesus... You were saved from something to something... The church...

- So that you could be motivated and encouraged in the things of Jesus!
- The church isn't an event you attend, it's a group of people you belong to for the purpose of holding onto the gospel...

IOW: You could say it like this, **remaining in Christ is a group project!**

- Wavering in the things of Christ is always accompanied by pulling away from the Body of Christ...

Now, don't miss this, here's why John wants us to **remain** in Jesus: **so that we can have confidence when He returns...**

- **Note:** *second coming of Christ is the most neglected doctrine...*
 - **Most talked about doctrine in the bible...** *In the 260 chapters in the NT there's 318 references to it...*¹

It matters because what you believe about the future shapes how we live today...

Illustration: *Adalyn asking about what we're going to do tomorrow at 7am the day before...*

Jesus is going to return, this is the biggest reality that we all face... Yet often overlooked...

- What will matter in the end is not your bank account, your degree, or your career status but your standing before Jesus...

And the way that we can have **confidence** at the return of Jesus is by **remaining in Him today...**

- And what I love is that your confidence isn't contingent on you... This is where religion fails you...
- Your confidence is in Christ...
 - **Romans 8:1...**
- There's no reason to be ashamed...

BTW: This is stabilizing comfort in the midst of a broken world...

- This grounds you in a coming reality even though your present reality may be hard...

Now, the opposite of this is also true... For those who do not remain in Christ, there will be great shame because you will be seen for who you are...

- You will be seen apart from Christ, you will see the reality of who he is and all of the gaps in your life will be exposed...
- You will be ashamed...

This is a sad reality, and yet if this is you, there's an incredible hope that John's pointing you to... Don't miss it... It's Jesus... If you're hearing this, it's not too late to turn to Jesus...

There will come a day when every one of us will stand before Jesus, the question is, **will you have confidence on that day?**

- *Flesh out...*

Verse 29:

²⁹ If you know that he is righteous, you know this as well: **Everyone who does what is right has been born of him.**

John says the evidence of your belief, the evidence as to whether or not you're remaining in Jesus, is reflected by the way that you live...

Now, something to note here, when John says, **everyone who does what is right has been born of Him...**

He's **not** saying that just being a morally good person means that you're a Christian...

- That word *right* in the Greek is **righteous...**

What John's talking about a way of living that flows out of who Jesus is and what He's done for us...

This is important to understand because we live in a culture where Christianity is defied simply by being good...

- **The problem is the standard for good is cultural not biblical...**

¹ JD Greear, Ask Me Anything, *Whats going to happen in the "End Times"*

You can be a culturally good person and not be a true follower of Jesus...

- **Example:** *The Pharisees were a pretty good example of this... Culturally speaking, they were basically perfect people... Yet, not followers of Jesus...*

What John's talking about here is **righteous living** that flows out of who God's made you to be...

Look at Chapter 3, verse 1:

¹ See what great love the Father has given us that we should be called God's children—and we are!

GOSPEL

- The beauty of who God's made us be...
- Adoption: part of God's family

Implications:

- New identity, new life, new power and motivation...
- There's a fundamental change at the core of who you are...
 - New desires... No longer centered around you but centered around the one who saved you...

Watch the gravity of the effect on your life... He says:

The reason the world does not know us is that it didn't know him.

John's saying that as a child of God, you stand out from the world. They don't recognize you as one of them...

We see again evidence of the difference between culturally and morally good and living as a child of God...

So let me ask you this: *Does the way that you live stand out?*

- How you go about your job?
- How do you parent your kids?
- Where you find satisfaction and fulfillment?
- Where you find joy and peace?
- Where you find security and hope?
- How you steward your **money**?

- This is a big one, because it was a big one for Jesus...
- Where your treasure is there your heart will be also...
- What does your money show that you treasure?
- How you serve and love others?
- Your priorities? Commitment to things different than the world (local church)?
- Evangelism?

A child of God stands out, the world doesn't recognize you as their own...

- Do you live as a child of God? Or do you look more like a product of this world? ... This is the contrast he's drawing!!

We're going to see the key to living as a child of God at the end...

John's going to drill down on this in **Verse 2-10:**

² Dear friends, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet been revealed. We know that when he appears, we will be like him because we will see him as he is. ³ And everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself just as he is pure.

What we will be hasn't been revealed... **IOW:** Jesus hasn't returned yet to redeem our bodies... But we know that when Jesus returns, we will be like Him because we see and know Him for who He is...

- **IOW:** We will have a *glorified body like Jesus (Phil. 3:21)*... And our redemption will be complete, we will be perfected in every way and in the presence of God forever...

Then John says in light of that **... everyone who has this hope in him...**

There is **hope in Jesus...** Because of who Jesus is and what He's done, and what it means for their future...

BTW: I don't want to jump over this... Don't miss this, there's an incredible hope in Christ...

- Some of you are enduring a lot of opposition and hardship...
- This is not all there is, this is the worst it will ever be...

There's hope in Jesus beyond this life... Beyond what you're facing now, beyond what you're going through... And it's this hope that motivates the next part of what John says here...

Here's the implication of everyone who has that hope in Jesus: [he] *purifies himself just as he is pure.*

Now, this isn't about purification for salvation, this is about how you live in light of your salvation...

- Paul would say it like this is **2 Cor. 7:1** *So then, dear friends, since we have these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from every impurity of the flesh and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God. [Reference verse]*

John's saying there's a new way of living in light of who you are!

- This is a call to **Holy living**...
- Holy doesn't mean perfect. It means set apart...
- This is about doing what is **right according to God**...

But here's the thing, this is a process that happens over time... There's a name for it, it's called **Sanctification**... *The change that the gospel brings...*

Illustration: *A Child grows and develops... A Christian grows and develops in the things of Jesus...*

If you're not growing in the things of Jesus, then you have to ask if you've ever surrendered to Jesus!?

*Look at what he says in verse 4 he's going to press into the importance of **sanctification** and how if you don't have it then there's a problem...*

Verse 4:

⁴ Everyone who commits sin practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness. ⁵ You know that he was revealed so that he might take

away sins, and there is no sin in him. ⁶ Everyone who remains in him does not sin; everyone who sins has not seen him or known him.

So John defines **sin**: *to sin is to practice lawlessness, sin is lawlessness... It is an act of rebellion...*

Then John says this: ⁶ Everyone who remains in him does not sin; everyone who sins has not seen him or known him.

Uh oh, what do we do with this?? And the thing is, he's going to keep building on this, so we have to understand what he's saying here...

In college, I had some people on campus using this verse, saying this means you don't sin anymore at all, and if you do, then you're not really saved...

- This verse was welded to demand perfection... The problem is ain't none of us are perfect!
- *So what does this mean??*

It doesn't mean perfection, John's already said:

- **1 John 1:8:** *if we say we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us.*
- **1 John 1:10:** *if we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.*

What John is talking about is a life of **practicing lawlessness**... There's a key connection between **verses 4 and 6**...

IOW: What we need to see is that there's a difference between a life of **repentance** and a life of **rebellion**...

- A life of **rebellion** is where you keep running from the things of Christ...
- A life of **repentance** continually reshapes you around the things of Christ and produces growth and fruit in your life...

Repentance reorients us...

- **1 John 1:9** *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness...*
- **1 John 2:1** *My little children, I am writing you these things so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ the righteous one.*

*I want to stop right and remind you of this... **As a child of God, you get the patience of a father...***

Illustration: *Cole not eating at the table...*

- *Patience, or lack there of...*
- *God is patient...*

Romans 2:4: *it's God's kindness that leads us to repentance...*

Repentance takes us from our sin to the Savior over and over again!

- And guess what the byproduct of that is... **Sanctification...**
The change that the gospel brings...

Verse 7

⁷ Little children, let no one deceive you. The one who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous.

All the Mormons said Amen... WRONG! This is not about works as a means of salvation, this is about a transformed life that comes as a result of you being saved...

Listen, the only way that you can do what is **right (righteous)** according to God is through the power of the **righteous one** in you! John says don't be deceived... If **righteousness has truly come to you, then righteousness flows through you!**

Verse 8:

⁸ The one who commits sin is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning.

He's talking about those who are in a lifestyle of perpetual unrepentant sin, just like the devil is in perpetual unrepentant sin...

- And those living a life counter to thing things of Christ are *under the influence of the devil... Who is the chief deceiver...*

But watch this, look at the incredible hope...

The Son of God was revealed for this purpose: to destroy the devil's works. [Then he says in light of that] ⁹ Everyone who has been born of God does not sin, because his seed remains in him; he is not able to sin, because he has been born of God.

New birth that leads to new behavior... You can't truly experience new life in Christ and not also in experience the transformation that that new life brings...

- When you truly surrender to the work of God you get the **Spirit of God** (the seed of God) in you...
- You won't go on living the same as Lord of your own life you have a new heart, you have new desires...
- You have the ability to do what is righteous...

Then John says this in verse 10:

¹⁰ This is how God's children and the devil's children become obvious. Whoever does not do what is right is not of God, especially the one who does not love his brother or sister.

It's **obvious** who has experienced new life in Christ and who hasn't...

- It's not hard to tell... It's obvious...
 - *Kinda Like Alabama fans...*
- Because if you have the Spirit of God in you then the things of God flow through you...

Jesus would say it like this in **Luke 6:43-45** **A good tree doesn't produce bad fruit; on the other hand, a bad tree doesn't produce good fruit.** ⁴⁴ For each tree is known by its own fruit. Figs aren't gathered from thornbushes, or grapes picked from a bramble bush. ⁴⁵ A good person produces good out of the good stored up in his heart. An evil person produces evil out of the evil stored up in his heart, for his mouth speaks from the overflow of the heart.

[Reference verse]

Very logical layout from Jesus... But what I want you to see is that ***the fruit is a byproduct of the heart...***

If you have surrendered to the person and work of Jesus, then you have the presence of God in you through the power of the Holy Spirit and the Spirit in you produces fruit in you and through you...

The Word of God brings this together for us in **Galatians 5:22-24**
But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, and self-control. The law is not against such things. ²⁴ Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. **[Refference verse]**

These are characteristics of Jesus, Characteristics of what being a child of God looks like that are produced in us through the power of the Holy Spirit.

- **BTW:** notice this isn't manufactured. That would be moralistic behavior modification that would be impossible over time...
 - That's a life that's all about performance when we try to manufacture this on our own, it's exhausting and drudgery.

Illustration: Stapling flowers to a rose bush...

- There's a difference between manufacturing and producing...
- One happens from the outside in, the other happens from the inside out!

We need the transformational power of the gospel that the Holy Spirit brings in our lives...

- And hear me on this, this isn't about perfection, this is about progressive ***sanctification...***

Let me show you how it happens in our lives...

- When we see a lack of fruit, we go to the root... *Flesh out...*
- *Going back to Jesus over and over again... We remain...*

This is the ***cycle of sanctification*** that we're on for the rest of our lives

And here's the thing, it's this ***cycle of sanctification*** that produces Christ-like fruit that stands out in lost world...

- Giving evidence of the fact that you are a child of God as you wait with confidence for the return of Jesus!

A life of ***sanctification*** is the goal and it happens through ***repentance...***

Conclusion [VAMP]

So what do we do with this?!?

For some of you, you need to receive the gospel for the first time...

- There's no evidence of life change...
 - You might be good according to the world, but you're not producing the fruit of Jesus in your life...
- You've been around the things of Jesus/religion, but you've not experienced the transformation that Jesus brings in your life... ***You need to become a Child of God to experience the work of God in your life*** that is undeniable...
 - Admit, Confess, Believe... Do that right now...

For those of you in Christ, here's how we want to respond, we want to take the next few moments and take inventory of our lives...

- ***Where are the gaps in our lives, where do we need to repent and reorient around the things of Jesus?***
- Our goal is to remain in Jesus. This is how we do it...

Pray