

Wednesday Night Yard Teaching Guide: 1 John 2:28–3:3

[28] And now, little children, abide in him, so that when he appears we may have confidence and not shrink from him in shame at his coming. [29] If you know that he is righteous, you may be sure that everyone who practices righteousness has been born of him.

[1] 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 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.

Main Idea

Church, be comforted! God has made us his children; opposition from the world proves that we belong to God; and Jesus is coming back soon.

Outline

- I. Introduction (2:28–29)
 - A. God abides in us through the Holy Spirit, so we ought to abide in him
 - B. Introduces major themes of 3:1–10
 1. Status as children
 2. Confidence at Christ's appearing
 3. Assurance through the evidence of practicing righteousness
- II. God has made us his children (3:1a)
 - A. God's children are the members of his family; those to whom God has given the new birth
 - B. "See what kind of love..." – *meditate* (sustained, prayerful attention) on God's love!
 - C. God is our Father through Christ. But don't project the flaws of your parents onto God. Take what Scripture reveals about how God relates to us as our Father. That is primary.
- III. Opposition from the world proves that we belong to God (3:1b)
 - A. As Christians, we will be opposed by the world because the world opposes Christ, the one with whom we are most closely identified.
 - B. When others oppose us on account of our Christian faith, we are actually supposed to take comfort! Such opposition is a sign that we belong to Christ.
 - C. Stephen's example in Acts 7 shows us how the Lord redeems the world's opposition.
 - D. Knowing Christ is of ultimate value (see Philippians 3:1–11).
- IV. Jesus is coming back (3:2)
 - A. What does it mean to be like Christ at his appearing? See 1 Corinthians 15:50–57, especially.

- B. The bodies we receive at the resurrection will be imperishable, immortal, etc. There will be no more death.
 - C. See Revelation 22 – the final prayer of the Bible: come, Lord Jesus!
- V. Purify yourself as Christ is pure (3:3)
- A. With such assurance of so great a salvation in Christ, with the love of our heavenly Father, with the comfort of knowing Christ more even in suffering, with the promise of the resurrection, it is fitting and appropriate for us to strive to be like Christ.

Discussion Questions

1. What does it mean for us, practically, to be God's children?
2. Have you ever practiced meditation on God's word? What is difficult about it? Has it yielded fruit in your life with God?
3. Have you found it hard to relate to God as your Father? Why? What are the dangers of projecting your experience onto God? What can help us relate to God as our Father?
4. Have you ever experienced opposition from the world on account of your Christian faith? What form did that opposition take? In what ways is it hard to be a Christian?
5. How does opposition from the world comfort us, according to John? How does Stephen's martyrdom give us an example of the hope and comfort to be found in worldly opposition (see Acts 7)?
6. Are you suffering today? How do you need help from your church family? (Your life group might consider praying together for those who are suffering.)
7. What do you think of when you think of Jesus' second coming? Does it give you hope? Are you excited? Are you fearful?
8. Do you pray for Jesus to return? Why or why not?