



Fostering Ministry | 1 John 3

May 11, 2025

By Pastor Tom VanAntwerp

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## Group Leader Notes

Welcome to our third sermon of our current series, *Just Love: Living out the Vision of 1 John*. Over the last several weeks, Pastor Tim has been talking about how John keeps weaving the idea of love throughout this letter. Today we'll talk about chapter 3, where John brings us to the intersection of love and his understanding of family.

### Questions:

Who are the people you envision in your family?

### Bottom Line:

God has adopted each of us into his family. And His mission is for us to bring people outside of our family – into His family.

### Take Home Message:

Calculating the risk to minimize the downside is what makes us successful in the ways of the world. But Jesus calls us to a different kind of success – one that measures our lives not by our ability to acquire, but by our capacity to love not just other Christ followers, but even strangers.

### Main Scripture Reading: 1 John 3:1-2, 14

**3** See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. **2** Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears,<sup>[a]</sup> we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

<sup>14</sup> We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love each other. Anyone who does not love remains in death.

### Other Scripture References

- John 1:12
- John 19:26-27

## Group Discussion

Begin in prayer before reading and discussing the text.

1. Are there people you consider family who are not blood relatives? If yes, why do you consider them family? If there are any members of your group who have supported or adopted children in foster care, ask them to share their experience.
2. Read Psalm 68:5-6.
  - a. <sup>5</sup>A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows,  
is God in his holy dwelling.  
<sup>6</sup>God sets the lonely in families,
- Read James 1:27.  
<sup>27</sup>Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.
  - Discuss what these verses say about God's character?
3. Pastor Tom pointed out that it is not enough for us to point out the failures of the foster care system, but to take action as individuals and families. Ask yourself these questions:
  - Is there a way for me to provide shelter and love and care?
  - Do I have room in my home and enough resources to share?

Perhaps you're not ready to adopt a foster child. Here are other ways that you can contribute.

- Is there a family that is taking on responsibilities that I may be able to come along side of?
- Is there a child who is in need of some extra mentoring, or help with homework, or a brief outing?
- Is there a social worker I could support?

To discover opportunities for how you can help, go to Finding Your Fit, on Sunday, June 1<sup>st</sup> from 12:30 – 2:00. Those of you considering fostering or adopting, there is Virtual Foster Care and Adoption Info Session on June 5<sup>th</sup> 700 – 8:30.

### ***Let's Pray***

Heavenly Father, we are so grateful for your lavish love and the grace you have freely given to us. Bless us with courage to step out in faith and to reach out to children in need of protection, love, care, shelter, and hope. We ask your Holy Spirit to help us discern practical ways that we can support a child, or to come alongside their families. In Jesus name, Amen.