

**The Hope of
God's
Children: 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.

3 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.

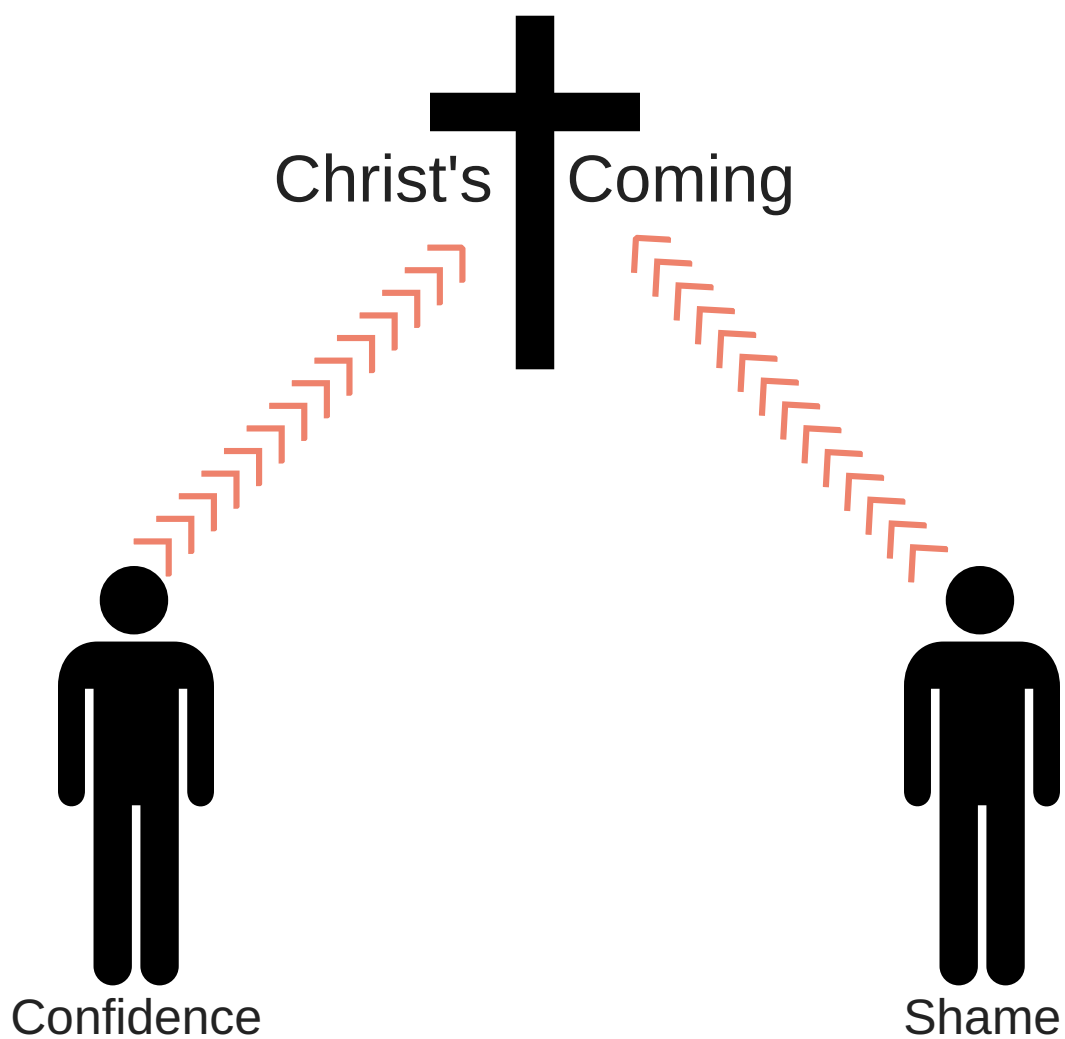
confidence (v. 28)
Greek: parrhesia

Freedom in speaking; free and fearless
confidence; cheerful courage

coming (v. 28)
Greek: parousia

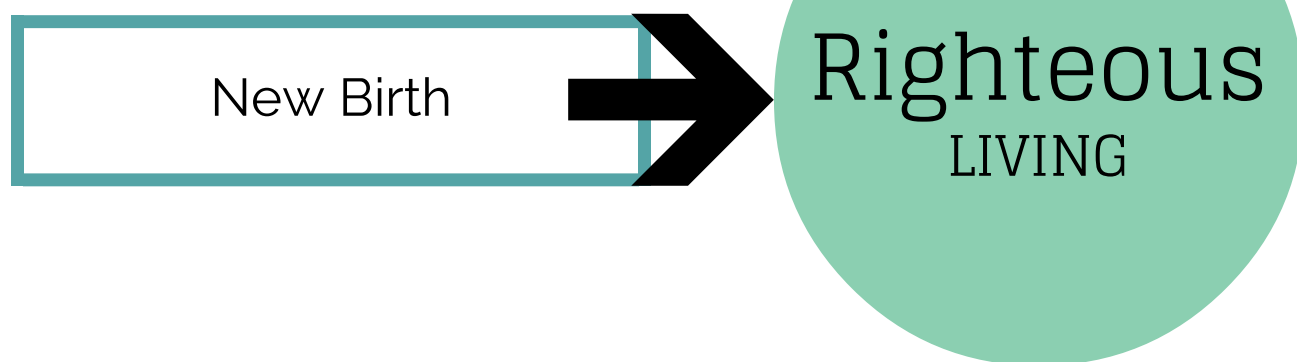
A coming; an arrival; presence; used
to refer to Jesus' Second Coming

The two responses at Christ's Coming (v. 28)



The new birth in the New Testament (v. 29)

- 1 John 3:9
- 1 John 4:7
- 1 John 5:1
- John 1:13
- John 3:3-5
- James 1:18
- 1 Peter 1:3
- 1 Peter 1:23
- 2 Peter 1:4



God's love (3:1-3)



- 1** We are called children of God, 3:1a
- 2** The world does not know us, 3:1b
- 3** We shall be like Him, 3:2

Engaging the text

Read 1 John 2:28-3:3

When Jesus returns, what two responses will people have? If Jesus came back today, what response would you have? (v. 28)

What evidence do we have that we have been born of God? (v. 29)

Why does God's love for us lead to the world's hatred? (3:1)

According to verse 3, what role does hope play in the Christian life?

Notes on the text

Verse 28

Verse 29

Verses 3:1-2

Verse 3

**The 'Sinlessness' of
God's
Children: 3:4-10**

4 Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness. 5 You know that he appeared in order to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. 6 No one who abides in him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him. 7 Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous. 8 Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. 9 No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God. 10 By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.

lawlessness (v. 4)
Greek: anomia

Iniquity; disobedience; sin; in context
refers to the rebelliousness of
evildoing

Three terms for sin in the Bible (v. 4)

harmartia

sin: a missing of the mark

parabasis

*transgression: overstepping
of bounds*

anomia

lawlessness: rebellion

The key to interpretation (3-10)

In the Greek text, many of the verbs in verses 3-10 are in the present continuous tense. Many commentators find this to be significant. John seems to be emphasizing the incompatibility of being a child of God and living in habitual, unrepentant sin.

The humanity and deity of Jesus Christ (v. 5)

Humanity

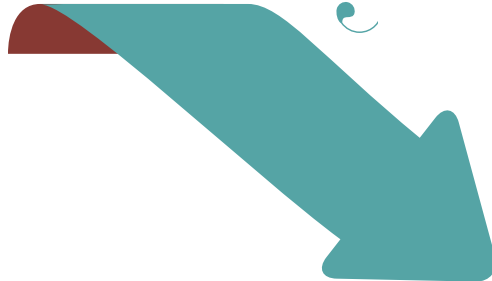
"he appeared in order
to take away sins..."

Divinity

"and in him there is no sin..."

Sin is incompatible with believers (v. 6)

*Christians aren't sinless,
but they do sin less.*



Read Romans 7:14-25 for more insight
into the relationship between believers
and indwelling sin.

Engaging the text

Read 1 John 3:4-10

According to v. 4, what is the true nature of sin? How does this new understanding challenge your view of sin? (v. 4)

In verse 5, what two theological statements are made about Jesus? (v. 5)

Explain how we resolve the tension of this verse? Does this mean believers cannot ever sin? (v. 6)

According to this passage, what are two marks of genuine Christianity?

Notes on the text

Verse 4

Verse 5

Verses 6-8

Verses 9-10

**Brotherly Love
the Mark of
a Christian: 3:11-18.**

11 For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. 12 We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous. 13 Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you. 14 We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death. 15 Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

16 By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. 17 But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? 18 Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.

the world's goods (v. 17)
Greek: bion tou kosmou

The phrase refers to earthly possessions.

The story of Cain and Abel (v. 12)

Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, "I have gotten[a] a man with the help of the Lord." 2 And again, she bore his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a worker of the ground. 3 In the course of time Cain brought to the Lord an offering of the fruit of the ground, 4 and Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering, 5 but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell. 6 The Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? 7 If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is for[c] you, but you must rule over it."

8 Cain spoke to Abel his brother. And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him. 9 Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" He said, "I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?" 10 And the Lord said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground. 11 And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. 12 When you work the ground, it shall no longer yield to you its strength. You shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth."

Also read Hebrews 11:4

Christians hated by the world (v. 13)

18 “If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you.

19 If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. 20 Remember the word that I said to you: ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours. 21 But all these things they will do to you on account of my name, because they do not know him who sent me. 22 If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have been guilty of sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. 23 Whoever hates me hates my Father also. 24 If I had not done among them the works that no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin, but now they have seen and hated both me and my Father. 25 But the word that is written in their Law must be fulfilled: ‘They hated me without a cause.’

John 15:18-25

Love in action (16-17)

Deuteronomy 15:7-9

7 "If among you, one of your brothers should become poor, in any of your towns within your land that the Lord your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart or shut your hand against your poor brother, 8 but you shall open your hand to him and lend him sufficient for his need, whatever it may be. 9 Take care lest there be an unworthy thought in your heart and you say, 'The seventh year, the year of release is near,' and your eye look grudgingly[a] on your poor brother, and you give him nothing, and he cry to the Lord against you, and you be guilty of sin.

James 2:15-16

15 If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that?

The meaning of love (v. 18)

*Hatred is incompatible
with spiritual life*

*Love must be prepared
to meet the needs of
others whatever the cost in
self-sacrifice*

*Love means readiness to
do anything for other
people*

Engaging the text

Read 1 John 3:11-18

According to Genesis 4 and Hebrews 11, what were the major differences between Cain and Abel? (v. 12)

Why does the world hate Christians? In what sense is John using the word "world"? (v. 13)

According to verse 14, what is a clear mark of genuine Christianity? (v. 14)

How do we know what it means to love? What is the best way to demonstrate love to others?

Notes on the text

Verse 4

Verse 5

Verses 6-8

Verses 9-10

**Assurance
and
Obedience: 3:19-24.**

19 By this we shall know that we are of the truth and reassure our heart before him; 20 for whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything. 21 Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God; 22 and whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him. 23 And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. 24 Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us.

confidence (v. 21)
Greek: parrhesia

Word means "boldness" or "freedom of speech."

The progression of John's thought (19-24)



The work of the Holy Spirit (24)

1. Brings alive spiritually dead souls (Rom. 8:9; John 3:5-8; Titus 3:5)
2. Causes sinful hearts to repent (Acts 16:14)
3. Draws us in faith to Jesus (1 Peter 1:2)
4. Places us into the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13)
5. Gifts us for ministry in the church (1 Cor. 12:7)
6. Illuminates our minds (1 Cor. 2:10-14)
7. Energizes our prayers (Eph. 6:18; Jude 20)
8. Intercedes for us (Rom. 8:26-27)
9. Leads and guides us (Rom. 8:14)
10. Assures us that we are God's children (Rom. 8:15-16; Eph. 1:13-14)

The nature of biblical belief (23)

Notitia

refers to the content of
.....our faith.....

Assensus

conviction that content
.....is true.....

Fiducia

personal trust and
.....reliance.....

Engaging the text

Read 1 John 3:19-24

How do we know that we are of the truth? (v. 19)

What is the answer to an overactive conscience? (v. 20)

What is one way that we express our Christian confidence/assurance? (v. 22)

How do we know that God abides in us? (v. 24)

Notes on the text

Verse 19

Verse 20

Verses 21-22

Verses 23-24

**The Spirits
of Truth and
Falsehood: 4:1-6**

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. 2 By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, 3 and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already. 4 Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. 5 They are from the world; therefore they speak from the world, and the world listens to them. 6 We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

test (v. 1)
Greek: dokimazo

Put to the test; prove; examine; word used of testing metals and coins to determine their weight and worth.

The nature of false teachers (1-6)

1. They appear to be _____ (Matt. 7:15; 2 Cor. 11:14)
2. They lead people _____ (Matt. 24:11)
3. They are able to perform _____ wonders (Matt. 24:24; cf. Exodus 7:22)
4. They may sometimes arise from within the _____ (Acts 20:30)
5. They deny that Jesus Christ has come in the _____ (1 John 4:3)
6. Their lives are often overrun by _____ (Matt. 7:16)
7. Their errors are mostly _____ based (2 Peter 2:1)
8. They are often characterized by _____ (2 Peter 2:3)
9. Many of these teachers will be able to gain a _____ (2 Tim. 4:3)
10. These teachers operate in _____ (Jude 4; 12)
11. Ultimately, these false teachers will be _____ by God (2 Pet. 2:12)

Light from ancient history (v. 3)



Cerintus

ca. AD 100

taught that Jesus was separate from Christ



the "Christ" spirit came on the man Jesus at His baptism, but left Him before his crucifixion; only the man Jesus died and rose again.

Engaging the text

Read 1 John 4:1-6

What does John mean by "spirits?" Why is it important to test the spirits? (v. 1)

What criteria can we use to judge the truthfulness of a spiritual teacher? (v. 2-3)

What is the spirit of the antichrist? (v. 3)

How are we to withstand the temptations of false teachers? (v. 4)

What does it mean when spiritual teachers do not submit themselves to the orthodoxy of the Bible? (v. 6)

Notes on the text

Verse 1

Verse 2

Verses 3-4

Verses 5-6
