

Lessons From I John

The Children Of God

(I Jn 3:1-3)

INTRODUCTION

1. Good Morning
 - a. Greeting...
2. Series of "Lessons From I John."
 - a. We looked last week at the need for having "Confidence In Christ's Return."
 - i. How we need to ready at all times, and be ready to answer the question "are you ready and confident for Christ's Return."
 - b. Today we are going to look at "The Children Of God."
3. In **I Jn 2:29** we see John refer to Christians as "born" of God for the first time.
 - a. It is an expression that will be used numerous times from there on.
 - i. **I Jn 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18**
 - b. It is a figurative expression, emphasizing that the Christian's spiritual life is a result of the redemptive work of God.
 - i. **Co 2:12-13** "having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. 13 And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses"¹
 - ii. **Ti 3:4-7** "But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, 5 he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, 6 whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life."
 - c. As a result of this working of God in our lives, we have been "born again," and can therefore be properly called God's children.
4. John thought being called "children of God" was amazing and in our text he desires for us to consider...
 - a. The significance of being called the children of God.
 - b. The implication of what it should mean in our lives to be called children of God.

I. What We "Are" As Children Of God

- A. We are recipients of God's love (1a)
 1. "See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are."
 2. It is through the love of God that we can even become His children
 - i. **Jn 3:16** "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." (NKJV)
 - ii. **Ro 5:8** "but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

¹ All Scriptures are taken from the ESV unless otherwise noted.

Lessons From I John

3. It is an honor for God to even take notice of us as one of His creatures (**Ps 8:3-4**), how much love God must have to allow us to become His children!
- B. We are unknown by the world (1b)
 1. "...the world does not know us..."
 2. That is, they do not truly recognize or appreciate what we have become in Christ.
 - i. They may even deem us as religious fanatics & fools.
 - a. **I Co 4:9-13** "For I think that God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death, because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men. 10 We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute. 11 To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are poorly dressed and buffeted and homeless, 12 and we labor, working with our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; 13 when slandered, we entreat. We have become, and are still, like the scum of the world, the refuse of all things."
 3. This is understandable though...
 - i. Because the world did not (and still does not) really know Jesus.
 - a. **Jn 1:11** "He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him."
 4. And for now, our lives are "hidden" in Jesus.
 - i. **Co 3:3-4** "For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory."

II. What We "Shall Be" As Children Of God

- A. It has not yet been fully revealed
 1. Exactly what we shall be like.
 2. Which may be that due to our finite capability to comprehend.
 3. In general terms we have been promised a spiritual body and immortality.
 - i. **I Co 15:42-44** "So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. 43 It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. 44 It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body."
 - ii. **I Co 15:50-53** "I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. 51 Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. 53 For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality."
 4. But there is something else, hinted at by both Paul and John...

Lessons From I John

- B. We shall be like Jesus
1. "... we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is..." (2)
 2. Paul also says that we will be like Jesus when He comes.
 - i. **I Co 15:49** "Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven."
 - ii. **Ph 3:20-21** "But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself."
 3. Though we cannot fully know what we will be like, it must really be something, for as Christ is now, no man can really see Him and live.
 - i. **I Ti 6:13-16** "I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, 14 to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 which he will display at the proper time—he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, 16 who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen."

III. What We "Should Be" As Children Of God

- A. We ought to be motivated by our hope
1. "everyone who thus hopes in Him..."
 2. The hope of which John writes, of course, is the earnest expectation that we will be like Jesus when He comes.
- B. Diligently involved in purifying one's self
1. The Greek word for "purify" is hagnizo {hag-nid'-zo} which means "to make clean, i.e. (fig.) sanctify"
 - i. It is closely related to the word for "holiness", which in Greek is hagniasmos, {hag-ee-as-mos'}, meaning "holiness, sanctification"
 - ii. It therefore involves the idea of being "set apart" for a holy purpose, which Christians are taught to pursue.
 - a. **He 12:14** "Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord."
 2. Properly motivated by the hope that Jesus will "transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body" (**Ph 3:21**), the true child of God will work toward the purity (holiness) seen in the Lord Himself.
 3. How can Christians purify themselves?
 - i. First and foremost by appropriating the cleansing power of the blood of Jesus.
 - a. **Ac 20:28** "Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood."
 - b. **Ac 22:16** "And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name."

Lessons From I John

- ii. Only then can we hope to be truly holy and without blemish.
 - a. **Ep 5:25-27** "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, 26 that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27 so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish."
- iii. But we also have an obligation to remove ourselves from things that would defile us.
 - a. **II Co 6:16-7:1** "What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, "I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 17 Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; then I will welcome you, 18 and I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty." 1 Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God."

CONCLUSION

1. Question: Are you what you "should be" as a child of God?