

Part 6 – 1 John 2:28-3:8

I. Being Like Christ – 1 John 2:28-3:3

A. Vs. 28 – Here John tells us of how we should be living

1. Note again the affectionate phrase “little children” used by John.
2. The word “abide” is a command, thus it describes our daily walk with God. We are to keep on with Christ, and by doing so there will be results of that “abiding.”
3. By continuing we can have “courage” or “confidence.” This word means “freedom in speaking” or “free and fearless confidence.” We can have freedom to live for Christ if we “abide” in Him.
4. Some will be “ashamed” before Him at His coming. We as Christians should do nothing that we would be ashamed of (1 Cor. 10:31).
5. Some feel that this verse finishes the section beginning in 2:18, which dealt with antichrists. Thus, we would not have to be ashamed by getting caught off-guard by false teachers but we could have boldness in facing them. This inclusion of the verse in that section is plausible.

B. Vs. 29 – Here John begins to once again describe the “practice” of the believer.

1. The word “practices” or the phrase “do what is right” is a present participle, describing a current situation. Since we do know that God is righteous, or holy, we can then determine that those who are truly His followers will live the same type of life.
2. The issue is not sinlessness, but a habit. A person who sins habitually, with no conscience, is not born of God.
3. Our lifestyle shows whether we have been “born again” (James 2:14-26). The one born of God lives for God – 1 John 3:5-7.
4. Knowing that Christ may come at any time (2:28), that should give us incentive to live for God.
5. The inner man, the real you, desires to serve God (Rom. 7:22-25).
6. The word “righteous” or “right” in vs. 29 is important. It describes “integrity, virtue, correctness in thinking, feeling, and acting.” It is to be the mark of the true believer – Mt. 5:6.
7. This does not mean we are sinless, what it does mean is that since Christ indwells us, we will live a righteous life – See Rom. 6:13-20; 1 Tim. 6:11
8. John was emphatic. A true believer seeks righteousness and lives it out.

C. Now we move into chapter 3 – vs. 1 – John reminds us of how much God loves us and how much the world does not.

1. The word “kind” at the beginning of the verse means “of what sort” or “quality.” In other words, “what sort of love is this that God has given us?” Note John 3:16; Rom. 8:35-39.
2. God’s giving of His Son is the unbelievable quality of love. Because of this love that God has given us, we are to love Him over everything – Matthew 22:34-40.

3. The result of this love is that we are God's children. We are His spiritual "offspring" – Jn. 1:12, 13.

4. Our adoption into God's family was based solely on His grace and mercy, not on anything that we did.

5. Note that John takes for granted that if you are God's child, your relationship with the world changes. Our desires, goals, and priorities change in Christ. See Jn. 15:18-25.

D. Vs. 2 – We are reminded of the transformation to take place in the future.

1. John writes this as if it is common knowledge that when we do see Christ, we shall be like Him. According to James Montgomery Boice the return of the Lord is mentioned 318x in 260 chapters in the New Testament.

2. When He returns for us, we shall be like Him in that we will receive a glorified body fit for heaven (1 Cor. 15). It does not mean, I believe, that we will all look alike, but that we will be clothed in immortality and be with Christ forever. See Rom. 8:29; Phil. 3:20-21.

E. Vs. 3 – Knowing that Christ is coming, it is to affect our lives.

1. The "return of the Lord" is what is stated in vs. 2. Knowing that we shall be like Christ in the future, it should make a difference in how we live now.

2. We are to live righteous lives (2:27), love as God would (3:1), and to be like Christ (Rom. 8; Eph. 5).

3. Be holy for God is holy (1 Peter 1:15-16).

II. Evidence Of True Salvation – 1 John 3:4-11

A. Vs. 4 – John begins his discussion by describing what sin is.

1. His use of the present participle indicates a continuous action. The one that is indeed committing sin as a regular practice is also committing lawlessness, opposing God.

2. Sin is a failure to hit the mark. It is failing to obey the Word of God. Lawlessness is contrary to God and His will – Titus 2:13-14.

B. Vs. 5 – Here is why Christ came.

1. He came to "take away sins." Not just in a legal, positional sense, we might say, but in a practical sense. The idea is that sin's guilt is sent away from us, but so also is the action. We are to change – John 1:29

2. It is only logical and Biblical that "in Christ" we would no longer continually sin.

3. Christ was sinless before coming to earth, on earth, and now in heaven.

C. Vs. 6 – This builds on verse 5. He begins in more detail to separate the believer from the unbeliever.

1. The “continuing” or “abiding” here describes our salvation experience with Christ. Whoever is thus saved does not continually, habitually sin.

2. Whoever “habitually, continually sins”, has neither “seen” God nor “known” Him. They have no real clue of what Christ really did regarding salvation, which is to give us new life. See 2 Cor. 5:17; Rom. 6: Eph. 4; Col. 3.

D. Vs. 7 – Here is a warning. Do not be deceived by what people say.

1. Some believe they can sin and it not affect them. That was the gnostic claim.

2. The person “practicing” righteousness, that is, living a right life, is righteous, as Christ is righteous.

3. The use of the present tense for “do” or “practices” indicates the reality of the new birth in the present situation.

4. Our life is to reflect Jesus Christ.

E. Vs. 8 – Here John gets very forward about the unbeliever.

1. He who “keeps on sinning” (present tense), belongs to the devil. Note John 8:44.

2. The person who continually sins, with no remorse, thought, or concern, is lost, and is not born of God.

3. These sins can be expressed in attitude as well as action.

4. John tells us that the reason Christ came was to “destroy” the works of the enemy. See 1 Cor. 15:54-58; Heb. 12:31; John 12:31; John 16:11. The “destroying” means “to render inoperative or inactive”, to “make of no effect”, to “put an end to.” Thus, in Christ, we need to no longer live a life of sin because the power of sin is rendered inoperative if we allow God to lead us.

Questions To Think On:

1. How should the return of the Lord affect our lives in practical ways? (**1 John 3:1-3**).

2. What are your thoughts regarding John’s words in **1 John 3:4-10** about those who “continue to sin” and those who try to live “righteous”? Is John drawing a distinction between those who are truly Christians and those who may profess to be but are not? And how does God being in us keep us from habitually sinning or does that even come into play?