

So That You May Know

An Expository Study of the Epistle of **1 John**

Chapter 12- Sons of God **1John 2:29-3:3**

97. Being in the Family- Part 2

WAOY Tuesday 10/09/07

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We're continuing our verse by verse "journey" through the Epistle of **1John**, and today I want to continue to look at what John taught about "Being in God's Family". So, let's turn in our Bibles and read **1John 2:29- 3:3** again together:

29 If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone also who practices righteousness is born of Him.

3:1 See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and *such* we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.

2 Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.

3 And everyone who has this hope *fixed* on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

Now on the last broadcast- we were going over just what John was saying here in these four verses and we began to look at just what it means to be one of the sons of God. On today's broadcast, I want us to look carefully at verse 1 of Chapter 3:

See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and *such* we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.

Now this verse is the theme for this entire Epistle and in fact- this verse is the theme for the entire Bible. And John begins it by saying, "See!" Behold... stand at attention and listen carefully... pay close attention to this announcement. That is what John is saying here when he uses this word, "See". So, what is the great announcement that John

is making to his readers here that he wants them to stand at attention and to listen carefully to? John wants us to understand that we are the children of God. But John is saying here that we are *not* children as though somehow we made *ourselves* to be children or that we became children by some accident or some haphazard event.

No, John wants us to know that we have been “made” to be children of God because of God’s Love. And this Love is far greater than any other type or kind of love on earth because John wants us to See **“how great a love the Father has bestowed on us”**. So, let’s explore this for a while.

Just what *kind* of love did it take for us to become children of God? And just what was this love based on? Now I realize that much is said today about love and I think that we have greatly cheapened the concept of love today by using this word so loosely and so frivolously in our conversations.

So, we must first understand that when we use this word, “love”- we can mean vastly different things. For example- we might hear someone say, “*I love macaroni and cheese*”. And someone else might say, “*I love the Dallas Cowboys*”. And yet another person might say, “*I love my wife*”. And still another person might say, “*I love my country*”. But then yet another person might say, “*I just love that hairstyle*” and then someone else might say, “*I love God*”.

So even though we use the word, “love” in all of these statements- we do not mean to say that we have the same affection for macaroni and cheese as we do for our country. And we don’t mean that we love our country in the same way that we love our wives and we also do not mean that the love that we have for our wives is the same love that we have for God.

No, what we really mean many times when use the word, “love” is that we are fond of something. We admire or appreciate or even enjoy something. But we really do not “love” them. We may *enjoy* a good meal- but we certainly do not “love” a good meal. We may *follow* and *enjoy* a particular sports team- but we certainly do not “love” that team in the same sense that we love or cherish a person who is close to us. But that is the way that the English language works.

But the Greek language is unique however in that it allows for all these unique differences. English is not suitable to accurately describe all of the various ways that we love – but Greek is much more suited for

this. In the Greek language- we find that we have altogether different words- which are all translated into English as “love”- and yet they all mean different degrees of affection and desire.

So, notice here that John is not talking about any of the loves or the affections that we have- even for God- in this verse. Here- John is talking about the love that God has for us. So, does God love us? IS it true that the Almighty actually loves sinners like us? The Bible says that He does. But if God loves us- precisely *why* does God love us? Is it because we are so amazingly loveable? Is it because we possess some great quality that makes us attractive to God? Is there something innate within us that God is drawn to?

I mean I love my wife- but there are reasons *why* I love my wife. I love my wife; I am attracted to my wife because she loves God as much or more than I do. But I love my wife because of what she does and how she carries herself and the way she conducts herself. All of those are reasons why I love my wife and the fact that she is drop dead gorgeous doesn't hurt either.

But why does God love us? I mean we are all wicked sinners who insult God's Holiness every day- all day long. So, what makes *us* attractive to God? Because we sing well? God has angels- why would He need our voices? Because we dress a certain way? God has the beauty of the created Universe- He is not impressed with my tie. What drew God to me? Because I am such a nice guy? Hardly. So why does God love us?

In this verse- John is saying, “**See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us**”. And this phrase is implying great astonishment as if to say that this love is so unparalleled in the human experience that John cannot tell where it comes from. John is saying here that this love that has been *bestowed* upon us by God is beyond any love or any affection that any human can ever experience from any other human or any other earthly experience. It is beyond explanation.

Now also notice here *how* the Father's Love has come to us. John uses the word, “bestowed”. Actually, the Greek word that John wrote here is, *didoomi* (di/dwmi), which means: *to grant; to supply; to furnish; or to provide what is necessary*.

So, notice that it is God Himself Who has provided or furnished or granted this love toward us and also notice that this love was not an *obligation* that God *owed* to us; or something that we were *entitled* to

receive; or that we have earned; and neither was it some quality that we deserve.

So, by definition then, the bestowing of this love is *not* something that originated with us or is the result of something that we did or some quality that we possess. John says that it came from God to us. And so, we must also see that this love was not something that we possessed prior to God bestowing it upon us.

So, this love is a gift. And it is a gift from a Holy and Merciful God to undeserving vile sinners. And because it is a gift- it cannot be something that we are entitled to or that we have earned or that we deserve- but it is and must remain a free gift of God's Grace.

Now what is the end of this love? In other words- what is the purpose of God bestowing this unimaginable love to us? John tells us right here:

... that we would be called children of God ...

So, John is saying to us that this great Love of God that is undeserved and unearned and which comes as a free gift of Grace without obligation is bestowed upon us unworthy sinners so that we can be God's children.

So, John is saying here that this love that is bestowed upon us is what makes us to *be* God's children. Now by default- this statement implies that *before* this love was bestowed upon us- we were *not* God's children. But if we were *not* God's children until this love was bestowed upon us – then whose children were we? Let's find out by reading **Ephesians 2:1-7:**

1 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins,

2 in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.

3 Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,

5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),
6 and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus,
7 so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

Notice that verses 1-3 says that before we were saved- we were many things- but we were *not* children of God. Look at what God's Word says that we were:

- ✓ Dead in trespasses and sins
- ✓ Walking or living according to something called, "the course of this world"
- ✓ Living and operating our lives in conjunction with the "**prince of the power of the air**"- who is satan himself- who is the spirit who functions inside the "**children of disobedience**"

And then notice that God's Word says that before we were saved- we all- everyone of us- had our conversation or our way of life wrapped up in:

- ✓ The lusts of our flesh
- ✓ And that we all indulged in those fleshly lusts in what we did and how we thought and in how we conducted our lives

And then notice that God's Word says that we

"were by nature- the children of wrath."

Now that phrase doesn't mean that we were angry all the time or that all of us did violent things. The phrase- "were by nature the children of wrath" means that without even trying to- we were by nature: in other words as a normal and natural response to being fallen and lost- we were without God and without hope to the extent that every imagination of our hearts was only evil continually and that we were *destined* for the Wrath of God.

Now keep in mind, brothers and sisters, that this "lostness" was

not *only* the result of the sins that we ourselves engaged in- which were many- but this “lostness” was primarily the result of our fallen nature- the nature that we obtained at the very moment of conception- the fallen, sinful, rebellious nature of Adam.

Yes, we personally sinned against God many times- and that was wrong- but we were the children of God’s Wrath naturally or by nature- because we were conceived in our mother’s womb with a corrupt and sinful nature and thus- we are all *personally* guilty of the sin of Adam.

Now this powerful Truth has the affect of making it *impossible* for anyone under any system using any means to correct his own problem absent a sovereign intervention by God. No one can simply stop sinning. No one can simply stop acting out on that nature of Adam. So human beings are doomed to sin because we are born corrupt.

But it even gets worse than this. Because not only do we sin- but the Bible teaches that we actually *enjoy* and even *love* our sins.

Now we certainly don’t enjoy the *results* of our sins. We don’t enjoy the empty feeling that we get; and we don’t enjoy what sin does when it robs us of our friends and our loved ones, and we don’t enjoy how sin hurts people and how it steals from us and puts us in jail and in rehab and in the morgue. So, we really don’t enjoy the *consequences* of sin at all.

And that is why lost people are very busy- working overtime- so that Science and Government and Technology and Politics will alter or minimize the results that sin brings to our lives on this earth.

For example- lost people do not want to cease from adultery and fornication and sexual perversion- so we want science and government and technology to find a cure to all the diseases that these sins bring into our lives. And when science does find a cure for sexual sins- we can then sin with abandon without fearing those consequences- and so seemingly we don’t have to repent and change either.

We want the Government to pay lazy people money not to work instead of forbidding lazy people to eat so they will feel led to repent of their slothfulness and get a job. We want technology and Politics to sanction sin – so that we don’t have to repent of it and actually obey Jesus Christ.

So, John says that God sees our great dilemma and He knows that unless He personally intervenes in our lives- we are doomed to enter into His Wrath. So, God bestows His great Love upon His chosen

people so that they will see and hear and believe and understand and they will repent and in turn love God and follow Him and serve Him and be His children.

Well, I have to stop right here, but please join me on the next broadcast as we continue our journey through the Epistle of **1John**. May God help us all.

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