

# So That You May Know

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

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

#### 101. Being in the Family- Part 6

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WAOY Tuesday 10/16/07

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 children of God. And on today's broadcast, I want us to look carefully at verse 3 of Chapter 3, so let's read that verse again together:

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

Now over the last several broadcasts, we have been discussing just what it means to be a child of God and what it means to be in the family of God. We have talked about what John said in verse 29 of Chapter 2- that John said that part of what it means to be in the family of God is

that we hold very highly the honor of the family of God and the personal integrity and character of our heavenly Father- so John says that we must walk and live in a righteous manner- forsaking sin and disciplining our flesh so that we do not bring shame and dishonor to Jesus Christ.

Then over the next two verses- John discusses his great wonder and amazement about all that God has done in washing our sins away and of adopting us into the family. And this is something that we need to take heed of today. We don't ever need to get to a place where Salvation becomes common to us. We need to always be in awe of the fact that before the foundation of the world- God chose us to be saved- not based upon any good or evil that we have done- but based strictly on God's own good pleasure.

Even though we may be in a trial- the enormity and the majesty of Salvation should always be in such a high position in our hearts and minds that even a trial which will cost us our life seems to be petty by comparison.

This was the attitude of the early Church fathers and almost without exception- they did have to pay for their Faith with their lives and so we who are so blessed; who live in such comfort; who have access to so many nice and pleasant things really need to take inventory of our own hearts to see if we view Salvation and the wonder of God plucking us out of a hell that we deserved to be in is high on our list of important things.

Brothers and sisters, I want to remind all of us today- me included- that every single human being who goes to hell *deserves* to be there. Everybody who burns in the Lake o Fire deserves to be there. There is no injustice with God. But what we have to realize is that every single human being who is already in Heaven or who is on his way to Heaven also deserves to be in hell. So, nobody deserves Heaven, and everybody deserves Hell. So the only reason that we are saved and they are not; the only reason that we love God and they do not; the only reason why we will spend eternity with God in Heaven and they are going to spend eternity in hell is not because we are better people than they are or because we possess some nobility about us that made us attractive to God. But only because God set His great love upon us- before we were born; before we did anything good or evil and before He made the world.

Christian man, never think that it was because of some inherent goodness that you possess that God saved you. Christian woman, don't ever get to a place where you think that God *owed* Salvation to you- because the insulting and humbling truth about Salvation is that *none* of us deserved it; and *none* of us earned it; and *none* of us was entitled to it and God was not obligated to save a single soul.

So, the great mystery is not that God saves some but not all- no, the great mystery is why does God save *anyone*? So, Salvation is all of Grace and all of Mercy and nobodies Salvation is dependent on us doing anything to earn it. So, Mercy rewrote our lives. And Grace caught us right when we were falling headlong into the very mouth of the lake of fire. So do not be high minded about your own value, beloved, but rather fear. And let gratefulness well up within your heart and lift your hands to a holy God and fall on your knees and clap your hands and thank God for His kindness- His undeserved and unearned kindness that He had toward us in saving our wretched soul from what we all deserved to receive.

Don't get so caught up in making money and paying bills and raising children and enjoying the unbelievable freedom and blessings that we have here in America that you forget that it would have been just as easy for God to leave you lost as it was for God to save you.

So, remember the pit from where God dug you out and look to the rock from where you were cut and remember that you too, me too, that we all were in hostile rebellion against God and that we all have sinned, and we all have come short of the Glory of God.

So as John continues to explain what manner of great love the Father has bestowed upon us that we who were so guilty are now called his children- John then gives us this instruction found in **1John 3:3**:

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

Every single person who has this great hope deep down inside him- does something, John says. John tells us here that every single child of God; every single human being who has experience the new birth; every single person who has had Mercy and Grace flow down upon him like a river; every single person who has been regenerated by the power of God so values what God has done; so loves God for what

God has done; so highly esteems all that God has done for him that this person begins to alter his behavior; he begins to change the way that he talks and the way that he lives.

John says that every single person who is saved by Grace through Faith in Christ alone- **purifies himself**. And John says that this person purifies himself to the same extent; and with the same energy; and to the very same degree that Jesus Christ Himself is pure.

Now this is an incredible statement and if we are going to understand it properly- we need to examine it very carefully. First of all- John is not saying here and we must be careful that we do not say that it is possible for a human being to put forth enough effort and exercise will power to the extent that he can reach a place of sinless perfection. That is *not* possible on this earth and in this life and is *not* what John is saying. Some misguided souls have taught this over the 2,000 year history of the Church- but the Bible clearly teaches that human beings cannot *ever* be sinless on earth. Jesus Christ alone and singularly lived a perfectly sinless life here on this earth- which is the only reason that He was able to develop a spotless Righteousness.

Now having said that- let me also remind you of the flip side to that statement. While it is true that human beings are not able to live in sinless perfection while on earth- it is also equally true that no sin; absolutely no sin is acceptable to God.

You see, because of faulty teaching and faulty hearing- many have come to believe that because of Grace- that sin no longer matters to God; or that sin is somehow not as big a deal to God under Grace, and it was under the Law.

Those who have been taught like this- or those who believe this must remember a guiding Principle about God. There is nothing that God has ever done or will ever do which can violate His Own Character and Nature. In other words- God *cannot* act or do contrary to His Own pristine Character and Nature. For Him to do so – would cause Him to cease to be God.

For example- The Bible says that God is Love- so God cannot act or move in any way that betrays true; holy; genuine, godly love. Now if we just stopped there- we would get a very lop sided view of God and we would not be able to assign certain traits or objects to God because these things would violate Love. But although God is Love- the Bible also reveals that God is not *only* Love. In addition to being Love- God is

also Just. And since God is not like us and God is not warped or one sided- but because God is perfectly balanced and perfectly situated in his Character and Nature- God's Love does not and cannot take precedent over His Justice even as His Justice does not and cannot take precedent over His Love.

So, this is why a loving, kind, merciful, good, and gracious God can judge all sin. This is why a loving, merciful God can create and sustain a place like hell. God is longsuffering to be sure- but longsuffering does not mean tolerant. Longsuffering means that God gives everyone space to repent- He gives us chance after chance after chance to turn from our sin and love and serve Him. So, when the axe finally falls- it is because we have exhausted the longsuffering of God and have spurned His mercy and if God didn't judge us at that point- He would cease to be Just.

We look at earthquakes and tidal waves and hurricanes and other "acts of God" and we think, "*Why would a loving God allow such catastrophes to come to so many good people?*" But in reality, beloved- there is no such thing as "good" people- not in a biblical sense. We are all sinful in God's Eyes and so God would be perfectly Just if He immediately condemned the entire human race instantly. That is how bad we are and how much we have sinned against Him.

Yet even though God would be perfectly just in condemning all of us all right now- the fact is that God does not do that. He is merciful; and His is kind; and He is longsuffering- waiting and giving us time to realize how we have sinned so that we may repent and live.

But in His longsuffering- God is never tolerant- not in the least. God expects and God demands, and God is entitled to our repentance and our love, and our devotion and we must not confuse the longsuffering of God with weakness or an inability or an unwillingness to judge sin- because that would be a tragic mistake.

Sin will be judge by God. All sin will be judged by God. You can examine your own heart and when you see something that is unlike Jesus Christ in your life- you can confess that sin and willfully turn from it or God is good to expose your sin and allow you to repent and turn from it. That's really up to us *how* we repent- but repent we will- if we belong to Him.

Sin is wrong. All sin is wrong. All sin is judged by God. All sin is an insult to God. All sin dishonors God and brings shame to Him. God

hates sin and God will not tolerate sin in anyone for any reason. And because this is true- the genuine believer also develops a hatred toward sin. You see, beloved, we are commanded in Scripture not to hate any other human being- not even our enemies- but we *are* commanded to hate sin. And I believe that this is an area that we really need to work on. We tolerate sin because we do not hate it- so we must develop a healthy, biblical hatred for the things that God hates- and we will tolerate much, much less.

I believe that because we have been taught wrongly about sin- that we do not look at sin in a proper, biblical way. And the result of this is that we excuse sin, and we make allowances for it- and this has caused us much harm.

So John is telling us here that every single believer who understands that it was unmerited Grace that saved us and that it was undeserved Mercy that redeemed us- that everyone who has this hope in them is so grateful for what God has done for Him- that he proves his love; he proves his devotion; he proves his thankfulness by walking in holiness before God and every one of these people, John says, purifies himself to the same extent that Jesus is pure.

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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