

First John Chapter Three

We Are Sure About Our Family

I. Introduction (1John 3:10)

- A. Chapter One was written that our joy would be full, just by maintaining a relationship with Jesus Christ – every day walking with Him, worshipping Him!
- B. Chapter Two gave us six keys to victory over sins in our life.
- C. Chapter Three reveals the difference between the children of God, and the children of the devil (Cf John 8:44)
- D. It shows us things that give us assurance about our relationship with God and all His family (Eph 3:14,15)
 - 1. John will present a clear contrast between two families (1Jn 3:10)
 - 2. He starts off Exposing the Marks of Sonship (3:1-3)
 - 3. He Exposes the Myth of Living in Sin (3:4-9)
 - 4. He then Shows how our HEART reveals Whose Family We are In (3:10-18)
 - 5. He Finishes by Revealing some things that are greater than our Heart (3:19-24)

The Marks of Sonship (3:1-3)

II. Lesson 1 - the Marks of Sonship (3:1-3)

A. Behold – what a word!

- 1. Take a good long look at this truth! Seek most of all to understand, to perceive such a thing as the love of God
- 2. Most religions have deities, but almost none of them love their creation
- 3. They all demand people to love and care for their “gods”, but almost none of the gods love back (Ps 135:15-18)
 - a. Allah – no love at all towards this world
 - b. Buddhism – there is no god, so no one loves you
 - c. Hinduism – there are 3,000,000 gods, and they are all too busy to love you, and you had better have been born into the right caste to be loved at all
 - d. African and Polynesian Spiritism – belief in spirits – always in fear of upsetting the spirits. never knowing one that loved them, EVER!
 - e. Catholicism – God is too angry to actually love us! Who would think that God REALLY loves this world? Only Jesus’ MOTHER could love this world!
- 4. And yet God throughout Scripture tells us that He loves us (Dt 7:7,8; 10:15; 1Jn 4:19; John 3:16)

B. God’s Kind of Love

- 1. Not Hollywood’s kind, or the Beatles’ kind, or girlfriend/boyfriend kind
- 2. *Furnished Love* – bestowed on US (Rom 5:5-8)
 - a. Came from God, not from ourselves
 - b. It is a love that supplies everything that we cannot
 - c. Even righteousness is supplied
 - d. THAT’S SOME LOVE!
- 3. *Family Love* – sons of GOD
 - a. Like a father towards his children (Gal 4:6)

- b. The same kind of love that GOD the Father has towards His Son (Jn 17:23,24)
 - c. THAT'S SOME LOVE!
4. **Forgiven Love** (Rev 1:5)
- a. Truly forgiving kind of love that does all that is needed to forgive (1Jn 4:10)
 - b. We usually expect a lot out of someone who has hurt us before we forgive them
 - c. But not God!
 - d. He forgives on the basis of what HE did when he became a Man and died at our own hands!
 - e. When was the last time that it cost YOU everything to extend forgiveness to an enemy? yeah, I thought so!
 - f. THAT'S SOME LOVE!
5. **Forever Love** (Jer 31:3)
- a. Not on again, off again love
 - b. But constant
 - c. And if you can believe it, an ever growing love
 - d. Just like all the love songs sing – and yet we get to actually experience such love!
6. **Full Love** – sufficient, you will never need more than such love
- a. Not a limited love, but sufficient for everyone
 - b. More than enough for all your life, and even into all of eternity (Eph 2:4-7)
 - c. THAT'S SOME LOVE!

C. To be “Called” the sons of God

- 1. Like Jesus was – He was called “the Son of God”
 - a. By the devils (Mt 8:29)
 - b. By the believers (Mt 14:33)
 - c. By the sceptics (Mt 27:54)
 - d. By God Himself (Mt 3:17; 17:5)
- 2. It doesn't matter what the world calls us, as long as GOD calls us His sons (Jn 1:10-12)
 - a. We have claim, no power, no authority to say such about ourselves
 - b. Yet, Jesus grants us such power!
- 3. Jesus is our older brother, so-to-speak (Rom 8:29; Heb 2:11,12; Mt 12:47-50; Jn 20:17)

D. The Effect of Such Love (1Jn 3:1b)

- 1. It does something to you! It does something to ME!
- 2. **It Changes us** – makes us so that people can't figure us out anymore
 - a. The world doesn't know us
 - b. Doesn't recognize who we really are
 - c. Just like they didn't recognize who Jesus really was
 - d. And God is not finished changing us – THANK GOD – we don't appear like we will when He is finished (Ps 138:8)
- 3. **It Possesses Us** – now owned by God (1Cor 6:19,20) – no longer by the devil! His kingdom has been spoiled
- 4. **It Encourages Us** (3:2b)

- a. We KNOW that when He returns (with us behind Him) we will be just like Jesus (Ps 17:15)
 - b. That means we will:
 - 1) Walk on water
 - 2) Walk through solid, locked doors
 - 3) Eat anything we want
 - 4) Float into the air
 - 5) Be perfect
 - c. We will KNOW that we are like Him, because one day soon, we will all see Him as He IS
 - 1) Not as He was
 - a) Meek and lowly
 - b) No home, no money, no army, no horse, not even a mule
 - c) Hungry, tired, dirty, sweaty
 - d) That is how He was – and how we are by the way!
 - 2) But we will see Him as He IS right now in heaven (Rev 1:7-17)
 - a) Perfect in every way, except 5 scars
 - b) Our high priest – the only mediator between us and God
 - c) His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow
 - d) His eyes were as a flame of fire!
 - e) His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace
 - f) His voice as the sound of many waters!
5. *It Purifies Us* (2Tim 2:19)
- a. To have the hope of heaven, of seeing Jesus, and becoming like Him
 - b. It purifies us!
 - c. It does not make us lax towards sin, but motivates us to want to be clean from it
 - d. It causes us to work hard at living out what God has put in us (Philp 2:12,13)
 - e. To be holy and pure as JESUS is pure! That is our goal, our mark
 - f. So, the fact that you WANT to be clean, and pure from sin in your life is a good sign – a very important proof that you are a child of God.
 - g. If you do not care about sin residing in your heart, then you need to be very worried!

E. Conclusion

1. So, the Identifying Marks of a Child of God Are:
 - a. That you have answered God's call to be adopted into His family by the new birth
 - b. You know you are loved by God
 - c. You know you are secure in that love – nothing you can do can stop that love, separate you now from that love (Rom 8:35-39)
 - d. You KNOW you are a child of God – not hoping, striving for it, but possessing it
 - e. You want to be pure and clean and like Jesus in every way
2. Do you have those marks? Can anyone SEE those marks in your life?
 - a. Maybe they are there but you are hiding them
 - b. Or, maybe you are just faking it, and need to be born again!

The Constant Battle With Sin (1John 3:3-10)

III. Lesson 2 – The Constant Battle With Sin (1John 3:3-10)

A. Introduction.

1. We have seen the marks of Sonship (1John 3:1-3)
 - a. Adoption into His family by the new birth
 - b. An awareness that you are loved by God
 - c. An awareness that know you are secure in that love (Rom 8:35-39)
 - d. A desire to be pure and clean and like Jesus in every way
2. Now we learn about the Marks of Rejection – what identifies a non-believer

B. Abiding in Sin? (3:3-6) – The Marks of Rejection

1. We Start with Personal Purity (3:3)

1Jn 3:3 *And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.*

- a. Verse 3 sets the context for the next few verses – that a Christian WANTS to be clean, pure, and works hard at staying pure – it is called sanctification!
- b. At least PART of him wants to be!
- c. If you ever get a sure hope, a confidence, you will want to be pure!
- d. Great Truth: Sin is the result of the loss of hope!

2. Definition of Sin (3:4)

1Jn 3:4 *Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.*

- a. Sin is: Transgressing, or the breaking of the law of God
 - 1) Whether we have read it in His word
 - 2) Or broken the law of our own conscience (Rom 1:19)
- b. When a person sins, they are not just hurting themselves, or other people - they are breaking GOD’S laws!

3. “HE” was manifested – Jesus – to take away our sins, not enable us to live in our sins (3:5)

1Jn 3:5 *And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.*

- a. Manifested means Jesus existed before he was born! And then He appeared!
- b. Jesus was GOD manifested (1Tim 3:16) in the flesh
- c. His main reason for coming was:
 - 1) Matthew 1:21 to “*save his people from their sin*”
 - 2) 1Timothy 1:15 He “*came into this world to save sinners*”
 - 3) Luke 19:10 to “*seek and to save that which was lost*”
 - 4) Heb 2:14 “*through death he might destroy him that had the power of death*”
- d. Notice that in HIM is no sin at all (Cf 2Cor 5:21). Totally human, but not any sin!
- e. ONLY HE could take it away, because as a perfect human He was without spot. GOD as GOD could not take away sin, only God as MAN – because as a man he could DIE in our place!

- f. What did Jesus take away from us on the cross?
 - 1) Was it our sinful nature on the cross?
 - a) Nope! Still stuck with it!
 - b) Paul says he was a wretched man as a man (Rom 7:24)
 - 2) What DID He take away?
 - a) Our sinful record that was against us (Col 2:13,14)
 - b) Our due punishment – death (2Tim 1:10)
 - c) Our guilty conscience about our sins (Heb 9:9,14)
 - d) Even God’s memory of our sins (Heb 10:17,18)
- 4. So! Christians Still Sin (Cf 1John 1:8,9) even though God has forgiven it in heaven
- 5. The idea is that if you are abiding in Christ, you will not sin much (Rom 5:20; 6:1)
 - a. Grace makes up for our sin - But it does not excuse our sin
 - b. The more you “abide” in Jesus, the less you sin!
 - 1) Why? Because you LET Him take away every sinful tendency, one at a time!
 - 2) 1Jn 3:6 *Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him.*
 - 3) People who constantly sin, and have no struggle against it, has not seen Jesus, and does not know Him
 - a) People were claiming to speak for Jesus who have not seen Him
 - b) Paul SAW Him, and KNEW Him
 - 4) “Sinneth” means sins, and sins, and sins some more. No break, no struggle.
 - 5) The more you sin, the less anyone will believe that you know Jesus!
 - 6) The only struggle a Christian should have is with ABIDING with Christ
 - a) Walk in the Spirit and you won’t sin (Gal 5:16)!
 - b) Ignore your walk with Jesus and you will ONLY sin, no matter how you look at it!
 - c) It is a gross sin that will lead to more and more wicked sins if you ignore your necessary walk with God!
 - c. So, abiding in Christ is an effort to stay close to Him, and follow Him

C. The Two Natures of a Christian (3:7-10)

- 1. There is a part that does not sin, and a part that does! And there is the real you in the middle, always choosing between the two natures!
- 2. “Let no man” means, let no “teacher” or influencer deceive you (3:7)!
 - a. If you are doing right things, you will be doing what Jesus did! For what HE did was righteous! There are no new interpretations on what righteousness is other than the life of Christ!
 - b. 1Jn 3:7 *Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.*
- 3. Misconceptions - Some people look upon certain saints and able ministers, and say, "Surely, these men do not suffer as I do; they do not contend with the same evil passions as those which vex and trouble me"
 - a. If they really knew those men, and knew their inward conflicts, they would discover the nearer a man lives to God, the more he mourns over his own evil heart

- b. James 5:17 says all men have the same passions
- 4. Every sin you commit, got its start in the heart of the devil. You are simply fulfilling HIS lusts, not just your own!

1Jn 3:8 He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.
- a. Tolerance of sin is no virtue!
- b. You end up getting a seared conscience
- 5. Jesus came not to just pay for all your sins, but to destroy his works in your life
- 6. What are the works of the devil in a persons life?
 - a. All his plans of wickedness. He uses people to do things that bring HIM glory
 - b. And his control over the hearts of people.
 - c. See Mat 8:29 “*Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?*”
 - d. See Mar 1:24 “*Art thou come to destroy us?*”
 - e. See Heb 2:14 “*that he might destroy him who had the power of death*”
 - f. The argument here is, that as the Son of God came to destroy all the works of the devil, he cannot be his true follower who lives in sin.
- 7. So there is a part of you that seems to always sin – the carnal part – the flesh (Cf Rom 7:18)
 - a. This nature was inherited from your parents, which came from Adam
 - 1) It is a fallen nature, and is at enmity to God (Rom 8:17)
 - 2) When a man becomes a Christian, he gets the infusion of a new nature (we will talk about this more in a moment)
 - a) He was by nature "dead in trespasses and sins," and he was "without God and without hope"
 - b) The holy spirit enters into him, and implants in him a new nature, and a new life
 - c) That life has a high, holy, perfect and supernatural character, it is in fact the divine nature; it is the Holy Spirit of God dwelling in a sinful man
 - 3) The Christian then becomes a double man; two men in one!
 - a) Some have imagined that the old nature is kicked out of the Christian, but this is not so
 - b) The word of God and experience teaches us that the old nature in the Christian is unchanged, and as bad as ever it was; while the new nature in us is holy, pure and heavenly
 - c) For this reason there arises a CONSTANT conflict between the two – Galatians 5:17
 - b. This “body of sin” (Rom 6:6) is a body of so many messed up things that just don’t and CAN’T do right!
 - 1) Chemical reactions
 - 2) Chemical pathways
 - 3) Hormones
 - 4) Memories
 - 5) Habits

- 6) Genes
 - 7) That's why it is impossible to save it, and very hard to change it
 - c. It is called the "old man" (Eph 4:22)
 - d. The old nature of man, which remains in the Christian, is only evil (no matter how good it may think it is), and it cannot ever be anything but evil!
 - e. So, The old Adam-nature cannot be improved; it cannot be made better; it is hopeless to attempt it – *without the new birth!*
 - 1) We may do so many things with it: we may educate it, instruct it, and actually end up giving it more instruments for rebellion
 - 2) We cannot make the rebel into a friend, we cannot turn the darkness into light; our old man is an enemy to God, and an enemy to God it shall ever be
 - f. But that does not mean that we are doomed – not unless we neglect so great salvation!
8. The part of the believer that is born again CANNOT sin now (1Jn 3:9)! The Holy Spirit!

1Jn 3:9 Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

- a. The flesh of a believer ONLY sins, so it has to be forced to submit to the law of God (Rom 7:17,18)
 - 1) Again, the flesh of a person is made up of chemical reactions, genes, chemical pathways
 - 2) It is VERY hard to modify the flesh
 - 3) It is IMPOSSIBLE to save it!
 - b. The soul of a believer can and does sin, but doesn't have to now – it is separated from the flesh (Col 2:11-13; Rom 7:22)
 - c. The spirit of a believer cannot sin
 - 1) It is sealed by the presence of the Holy Spirit. It can be filled with unholy spirits, but it does not sin anymore once regenerated!
 - 2) The spirit is usually willing, but the flesh is ALWAYS weak (Mk 14:38)!
 - 3) Christ in you!
9. Two tests to see whether you are a real believer, or are rejected by God (3:10)
- 1Jn 3:10 In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.*
- a. Two Parents (Matt 13:38; John 8:44)
 - b. Do you do righteousness as JESUS did? If not, then you are not born of God
 - c. Do you love your brother? If not, then you still walk in darkness!

D. What We Can Learn From This!

- 1. There are clear differences between a believer and a faker – they have different parents
- 2. Jesus was manifested to take our sins away: Both our penalty, and each tendency
- 3. Focus on your walk with God, and the less sin you will commit
- 4. The more you sin, the less anyone will believe that you know Jesus!
- 5. People who constantly sin, and have no struggle against it, have not seen Jesus, and do not know Him
- 6. You will never completely eradicate sin from your flesh

7. Your fleshly habits will NEVER please God
8. Every sin you commit, got its start in the heart of the devil.
9. The more people learn WITHOUT salvation leads them only to more rebellion and damnation

The Constant Battle With the Heart (1John 3:10-18)

IV. Lesson 3 – The Constant Battle With the Heart (1John 3:10-18)

A. Introduction.

1. We have seen the marks of Sonship (1John 3:1-3)
 - a. Adoption into His family by the new birth
 - b. An awareness that you are loved by God
 - c. An awareness that know you are secure in that love (Rom 8:35-39)
 - d. A desire to be pure and clean and like Jesus in every way
2. Then we learned about the Marks of Rejection – what identifies a non-believer
3. Now, tonight we focus on the heart
 - a. To see if there is any activity there, or whether it is dead or not!
 - b. Salvation is more than just a belief
 - c. It is a different way of living – living eternal life
 - d. A person who asks for full forgiveness from God not only is forgiven, they are adopted (John 1:11,12; Rom 8:15). They become a child of God
 - 1) Jesus was the only begotten Son of God
 - 2) All believers are spiritually born into God’s family (Gal 3:26)

B. Characteristics of a Christian (3:10)

1Jn 3:10 *In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.*

1. If you don’t do right, then you are NOT a child of God
 - a. You ought to at least be trying, wrestling (Rom 7:15-19)
 - b. If you are living sinfully, and not bothered by it, then you are not a child of God
 - c. That is plain and simple – your way of living tells the world about your “faith”
2. AND, if you don’t love your brother, then you are NOT a child of God either!
 - a. Wow! There is that “love one another” thing!
 - b. Family love – loving everyone in your family
 - c. Christian love – loving everyone in the family of God
 - d. If you don’t love the following things, then you need to examine yourselves
 - 1) If you don’t love praying for one another
 - 2) If you don’t love serving one another
 - 3) If you don’t love giving to one another
 - 4) If you don’t love being corrected and instructed by your pastor
 - 5) If you don’t love spending time with believers
 - 6) If you don’t love just being with one another!
 - 7) Then don’t call yourself a Christian!
 - e. These are what families do! They sacrifice for each other, and over-look a lot of things – because they are FAMILY!

C. The Command – love one another (3:11-13)

1Jn 3:11-13 *For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.*

1. It is a command you know!
2. From the beginning – from Genesis
 - a. Where is it in Genesis?
 - b. Gen 2:24 “cleave unto his wife” – love his family
3. The example given however is in Genesis 4:4-8 with Cain and Abel
4. The point is to NOT love as Cain “loved” Abel
 - a. Cain was spoiled
 - b. Cain was extroverted
 - c. Cain was good
 - d. Cain was proud
 - e. And when God ignored Cain’s offering for sin, and honoured Abel’s offering (Heb 11:4), Cain was furious – AT ABEL!
 - f. Cain allowed his anger ferment and become murder!
 - g. Cain was a child of Adam and Eve, but spiritually he was a child of the wicked one (Mt 13:19; 13:38; 1Jn 2:13; John 8:44)
5. Just look at how the “world” hates Christians (3:13), and see if YOU also treat others the same way?
 - a. Ignoring them
 - b. Imagining evil towards them
 - c. Seeking revenge for the way they treat you
 - d. Talking about them behind their backs
 - e. Saying hurtful things to their faces
 - f. Never edifying them
 - g. You say Christians wouldn’t treat each other that way would they? See Gal 5:13-15!

D. The Conversion (3:14,15)

1Jn 3:14-15 *We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.*

1. Here is another “KNOW” – we know that we have passed from death unto life... How? Because we love the brethren
 - a. Not just love God, even though that is a must
 - b. But love Christians
 - c. Birds of a feather will naturally flock together
2. The Life Principle – He that loveth not...
 - a. It does not say, don’t hate your brother
 - b. It says don’t NOT love your brother!
 - c. The emphasis is on what you MUST do, not on what you are NOT to do
 - d. If you are not actively causing your heart to love your family members, (your wife, your husband, your children), AND actively causing your heart to love other

Christians, then you ARE a murderer on the inside, and are headed down a path that will lead to physical murder!

- e. Anger is the start of murder (Num 35:20,21)
 - f. If you don't love someone, then you are living in DEATH (3:14b) – you are still unsaved – at least you are acting unsaved!
 - 1) Listen to the thoughts of an angry person
 - 2) Examine the heart of a murderer
 - 3) Is THAT what a Christian is supposed to be like?
3. No murderer is a Christian
- a. A Christian can murder – see Moses, David
 - b. But that is NOT a characteristic of a Christian (1Cor 6:9-11)
 - c. Every one of those characteristics are in ALL our hearts, but they cannot be a normal part of our living, and we actually be a child of God
 - d. Because we have been converted – changed, or at least are BEING changed!
 - 1) Washed
 - 2) Sanctified
 - 3) New Heart
 - 4) New Mind

E. The Pattern (3:16-18)

1Jn 3:16-18 *Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.*

1. How the world perceives the love of God
 - a. Based upon personal sacrifice for another person
 - b. God laid down His life for us – as a Man.
 - 1) It was real
 - 2) It was painful
 - 3) It was for others, not Himself
 - c. We love first out of obedience (1Jn 5:2)
 - d. And THEN we get the ability to love out of compassion
 - e. Because we get the ability to love
2. Open up your compassion – don't hold it back
 - a. Let it hurt you when you care
 - b. Let others hurt you when you care (Ps 35:11-15)
 - c. The most important thing is to FEEL, and CARE about others!
3. Be worried if you don't have any compassion (Gal 6:10)
 - a. Not just on the world around you – they are hurting
 - b. But especially on the household of faith – the brethren
 - c. If you don't have love towards other believers, how can you say you have experienced the love of God?
4. Love in action, and in sincerity

- a. It is easy to say I love you – it is important to say it a lot (Song of Solomon)
 - b. It is much harder to love
 - c. What are the acts of love (Col 3:12,13)?
 - 1) Forbearing
 - 2) And Forgiving
 - 3) And one more... Pleasing (2Pet 1:17)
 - 4) To Forbear is:
 - a) To endure! To abstain, avoid, forgo, go easy, hold back, refrain, restrain yourself, avoid confrontation, to pass-over, to pass up an opportunity, to refuse to attack, to starve one's anger and frustration,
 - b) It is a readiness to resist the urge to hurt someone back!
 - c) It allows for love to continue!
 - d) The opposites would be: to give in, indulge your feelings, yield to your anger towards someone that you are commanded to love
 - e) In other words, a Christian is commanded to Put up with each other, AND to stay in love with each other!
 - 5) To Forgive is:
 - a) To not exact payment. To treat people better than they deserve (Eph 4:32)!
 - b) When people wrong you, justice dictates that they OWE you, and you have the RIGHT to demand of them some kind of payment for all the suffering they have caused you
 - (i) Maybe an apology
 - (ii) Maybe some grovelling
 - (iii) Maybe JAIL
 - c) But if you forgive them you DON'T demand payment; you actually end up freely giving good for their evil
 - d) It will cost you to do those three!
5. Do you know what the Bible says we should do with all anger? Divorce ourselves from it and replace it with acts of compassion and love and forbearance, and forgiveness and pleasing!

F. Conclusion

1. What are the marks of being a child of God?
 - a. RIGHTEOUSNESS
2. What is another one?
 - a. LOVING THE BRETHREN
3. How do people start loving the brethren?
 - a. GETTING CONVERTED!
4. What are the dangers of anger?
5. What should you do with envy and anger?