

Know What's Real - Being a Child

1 John 2:28-29 (NKJV)

And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming. 29 If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him.

Yet again...little children. Do you think John is trying to deliver a message to the church? No matter how old you get you are still a child. God sees you as His child, a child who is constantly growing.

And because we are constantly growing, it's important to abide in Jesus, meaning to have an ongoing relationship with Him. We must remain connected to Him in order to grow to be more like Him.

We must be born of Jesus.... No one is "born" a Christian, you are born into sin and need to be born again, reconciled to God. This is the beauty of the cross, not just forgiveness but spiritual rebirth !

When we are born again, we become children of God and we change and grow through an ongoing relationship with Jesus.

John gives us a challenge here.....when Jesus appears, when He comes back for His church, will you have confidence or shame?

Since we are His children, think of it like a child acts when their parents appear....kids can get a little mouthy, act tough, show their butt, then mom or dad shows up. Then they get the "oh crap" look on their face... ashamed at their coming. Busted, caught red handed, there are going to be consequences.....

When we stand before Jesus, are we going to be ashamed, looking at the ground, apologizing...

OR are we going to have confidence, this confidence is one of security. I'm connected to Jesus. I know Him, He knows me. I've been looking forward to His appearing! Today I'm excited to see Him face to face and spend eternity with Him!

The goal here today is that EVERYONE in this place would have confidence in Jesus when He appears! Today is the day of salvation, restoration, healing and deliverance!

1 John 3:1 (NKJV)

Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.

BEHOLD - I love this word in the original Greek - eido (eye-dough) - to notice or discover, to turn the eyes, the mind, the attention to something.

- Notice what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us
- Discover what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us
- Turn your eyes, mind, attention to what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us

Do you know this love? Do you know the manner of it? Sorry I'm getting geeky today but the Greek word for manner is potapos (pot-tah-poss) - meaning from what country, nation, or tribe.

Have you noticed what country, nation, or tribe, this love of the Father is? Have you discovered where it comes from? It's NOT OF THIS WORLD!

A Christian man felt that he didn't have the love that he should towards the Lord in his heart. He talked to a close friend, and the friend said this to him: 'When I go home from here I'll take my little baby on my knee, I'll look into her sweet eyes and I'll love her with all my heart. Now she loves me very little, if at all, and if my heart were breaking it would not disturb her. If my body were aching with pain, it would not interrupt her play. If I were dead she probably would forget me in a few days. Besides this she never has given me any money, but she has been a constant expense to me, and I'm not rich - but there is not money enough in the world to buy my little baby!'. 'Why is that?', he said, 'Is it because she loves me, or because I love her? Do I dare withhold my love from her until I know that she loves me? Or is there something that she must do first before she can earn my love? Absolutely not!'. Then he looked into his friend's eyes and said: 'If you want to love God and let your love for God grow, don't focus on how much you love Him, focus on how much He loves you'.

In Ephesians 3:18, Paul speaks of this love we have when Jesus dwells in our hearts through faith, that we would be able to understand with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height of the love of Jesus which passes knowledge and that's where we will be filled with the all the fullness of God!

Notice, discover, turn your eyes to this otherworldly love the Father has granted you! It's by this love that you can be called children of God! He claims you as His own!

1 John 3:2 (NKJV)

Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

Anyone ever feel like you aren't good enough? Anyone ever disappointed in themselves?

"it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."

God sees us completed - as we will be, knows what you will look like at maturity.

See God knows why He created you. He knows the passions that are inside of you. He knows the characteristics you have and the personality that you have and He sees you in a much different light than you see yourself.

First, if you have placed your faith in Jesus, He sees you as forgiven and cleansed.

Second, He sees the beginning and the end. He knows not only your potential, but what will be.

1 John 3:3 (NKJV)

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

He is creating hope - we might not like where we are at and see a lot that needs to change but God sees you completed and you need to have hope!

- not in you but in Jesus
- not in where you are but in where you will be when He's done with you.

1 John 3:4 (NKJV)

Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness.

Lawlessness is not when there is no law, it's when there is no law beyond you. It's everyone doing what is right in their own eyes. It's when you don't submit yourself to any authority.

To not submit to God's authority is lawlessness.

God's laws are to protect His kids, not to keep us from fun.

1 John 3:15 (NKJV)

And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin.

Jesus didn't come to just forgive your sins but to take them away...When John the Baptist saw Jesus coming he proclaimed:

John 1:29 (NKJV)

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

Maybe you've heard of Yom Kippur or the Day of Atonement? The holiest day on the Jewish calendar. The high priest (Jesus) would go into the temple and intercede on behalf of the people. Then he would take 2 animals without blemish (sinless), these animals would be a substitute for the people. He would profess the sins of the people over the animals, one would be put to death so the penalty would be paid, sin would be forgiven, the other was the scapegoat. The scapegoat would live but would be sent out of town, if needed they would chase it out. They wanted their sins taken far away.

This is a picture of the work of Jesus who takes away the sins of the world. Jesus is the High Priest who mediates between man and God. Jesus is also the substitute that pays the penalty of our sin by dying....and He is the scapegoat who takes away the sins of the world.

Jesus forgives our sin and He takes it away!

Anything that is deadly and is taken away....leave it there....don't bring it back!

1 John 3:6 (NKJV)

Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him.

Does it mean a "real" Christian does not sin anymore?

The way we become like Him is to acknowledge we are not like Him and we need Him.

Keeps on sinning (esv) , a lifestyle that never changes...If you say you know Jesus but you don't want to stop living in sin and pursue righteousness, then you have not really met Jesus, you don't know Him.

1 John 3:7 (NKJV)

Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous.

Child of God....don't believe the lies...there's a lot of deception, lots of things being taught that say it's ok to sin, to rebel, just enjoy life....because God is loving and tolerant and forgiving and it doesn't really matter what you do...this just simply is not true!

Whoever practices righteousness is righteous (right standing with God)....not he who is perfect....he who practices....

This is not following a list of rules but following the example of Jesus

What is Jesus like? I strive to be like Him.

Jesus is the way we were supposed to be...without sin.

1 John 3:8 (NKJV)

He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil..

Again, one to lives a life of sin....keeps on sinning without change, without progress.

Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil. Not for us to just manage sin but to put it to death and to take it away....don't keep dragging it back into the camp!

1 John 3:9 (NKJV)

Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.

When you meet Jesus you change internally and it manifests externally and continues eternally.

1 John 3:10 (NKJV)

In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother.

Practicing righteousness and loving other Christians...

What changes has God made in your life?

We want God to change the world but He starts by changing us...

This is the evidence that you have met Jesus and you are a child of God

Practice righteousness - your character changes

The way you think changes

Desires change

Actions change

You love other Christians, you want to be together, pray together, study the Word together, genuine care for one another

Back in v9 John said if you have been born of God, His seed remains in you....the life of Jesus in your life takes root and grows and you begin to see fruit.

The Father puts the life of Jesus in His children so the character of Jesus starts to flourish through you and the evidence of that is love for God, love for others and a hatred for the sin that separates you from that love.

*

There's been a lot of stuff in this text today....

- Notice, discover, turn your eyes to the love of God that is not from the world
- Have you been living a life of lawlessness and sin because you've yet to submit to God?
- Have you given your life to Jesus but you struggle with a particular sin? Jesus wants to take it away but you've got to stop bringing it back...let Him destroy it
- Do you just need change but maybe you don't know what that looks like....God does....He sees you complete. He knows your end.
- Do you need this seed of Jesus and His love planted in your heart or do you have it and just want to see it flourish through you?

Today God just wants you to be a child. Let Him love you. Let Him help you.

So that on that day of Jesus' return you will stand confident and not ashamed!