

1John 2:28–3:3

The Successful, Saving Resolve of the Suffering Servant

Thursday, April 18, 2024 ▪ Read 1John 2:28–3:3

Questions from the Scripture text: What does the apostle call them (again) in v28? What does he tell them to do? How does this relate to their anointing from Christ (cf. v27)? What is He going to do? What will those who are abiding in Him have, when He appears? What won't they be? Before Whom? At what time? What do they know about Him (v29)? What is His righteousness the only explanation for? How do those who practice righteousness come to do so? With what command does 3:1 begin? What are they to behold about God's love? What does he call God, as a clue to what sort of love this is? With what verb does he describe the extension of this love from the Father to them? What does this love bring about—what does the bestowing of Fatherly love cause them to be called? Who do not know/acknowledge/understand them? Whom else does the world not know/acknowledge/understand? Now what does the apostle call them in v2? How does their name relate to their current status? What aspect of their adoption has not yet been appeared (cf. Rom 8:23)? But what do we know about that aspect at the time of His appearing? What will we be like? In order to do what? Again, in v3, what do all children/beloved already have? In Whom? What does each of them do to Himself? According to what standard?

What do God's children do? 1John 2:28–3:3 prepares us for the second serial reading in public worship on the Lord's Day. In these five verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **God's children abide in Christ and purify themselves as He is pure.**

There are two great commands here that produce the same result in the life of the believer. The commands are with respect to the Son and the Father, and each is sustained by a special work of the Holy Spirit.

Abide in the Son, v28–29. It is from out of the Son that we were born (end of v29), which is the only way that someone comes to practice (more literally, “work”) righteousness. We were originally born out of our first father, Adam, so we do not begin as those who work righteousness. But we know that Christ is righteous (v29a). *Everyone* who works righteousness has a new birth from Christ and in Christ. There is no other way that this happens, and no other working is “righteous.”

Those who have had this beginning of being born of Christ will have the sweet ending, at His coming, of not being ashamed before Him (v28). How extraordinary! It is one thing to be in a condition in which you will not be ashamed before men. But what is it to be in a condition in which we will not be ashamed before the glorified Jesus?! The only way that this can happen is to “abide in Him.” And we know from v27 how that happens. The anointing that we have received from Christ (His Holy Spirit) abides in us, teaches us, and makes us to abide in Him (cf. v27).

Behold the love of the Father, v1. More precisely than to behold the love itself, the command is to behold *what sort of* love it is. So, v1 is commanding not merely consideration but *wonder*: What sort of love is it? ▪ It is divine love—love that issues from the goodness of God and the fellowship of the Godhead. ▪ It is Fatherly love, the love of “the Father”—love that is from everlasting, with the divine Father as its fountain and the divine Son as its object; we have been brought into *that* love (cf. Eph 1:4–6). ▪ It is adopting love. It causes us to be called the children of God. ▪ It is gifted love—“bestowed,” not earned. ▪ It is consoling love. When the world refuses to acknowledge us and denounces us, it is a reminder that this is a consequence of having been brought into the family whose Head receives the same from them (end of v1). What sort of love is this? Behold what sort of love! As the Spirit makes us to cry “Abba, Father,” (cf. Rom 8:15; Gal 4:6), He is pouring out this sort of love in our hearts (cf. Rom 5:5).

Therefore, purify yourself, v2–3. Both instances of “revealed” in v2 are the same as “appears” in v28. Jesus will soon appear (v28). Only then will the full consequences of our adoption also appear (v28, cf. Rom 8:23). We already have status as children (v2a), and we already have the hope (v3, biblical/NT hope, i.e. “sure certainty”) that when He appears we shall be like Him and see Him as He is (end of v2). But we do not yet have the hoped-for things: glorified body and purified soul.

So, the hope makes a difference. We are unable to “work on” a glorified body, but sanctification is for keeps. And those who live out of this hope purify themselves as He is pure. This cuts two ways. First, He is the standard of our purification. His own purity gives purity its definition and extent. Second, His purity is the outcome of our purification. We labor as those who are sure to arrive at the goal—who are sure not to be ashamed, *even before Him* and *even at His* (glorious!) *coming*. Both the abiding in the Son that the Spirit teaches, and the love of Father that the Spirit pours out in our hearts, have this great effect: they drive us to purify ourselves. They compel sanctification!

By what means do you abide in Christ? How is “making your home in Christ” your goal as you attend upon those means? Who tells you to do this and gives to you to do this? With what sort of love has the Father loved you? What does this guarantee about your end? What does this hope drive you to do?

Sample prayer: Lord, if we were to stand before You in ourselves, or in our present condition, we would surely be ashamed. Forgive us, and cleanse us of our remaining sin, so that we will not be ashamed. Forgive us for how forgetful we are of abiding in You, and grant that we would rest in You and flourish spiritually. Forgive us for being too unimpressed with the greatness of the Father's love for us. And forgive us for desiring to be acknowledged by the world. Forgive us for not keeping our eyes upon the purifying that is necessary in order to see You as You are. And grant that we would have this hope and live in this hope, we ask through Christ, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP118A “Because He's Good, O Thank the Lord” or TPH461 “Blessed Are the Sons of God”

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

First John 2, verse 28, through 3 verse 3. These are God's words. And now little children. Abide in him that when he appears. We may have confidence and not be ashamed before him at his coming. If you know that he is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of him.

Behold, what manner of? The father has bestowed on. So we should be called children of God. Therefore, the world does not know us because it did not know. Loved. 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. And everyone who has this hope, in him purifies himself. Just as he is pure. So far the reading of God's inspired and tenerrant worked. The Apostle here is urging his readers to abide in Christ. And behold what sort of love? And God has given to us bestowed, upon us.

And these are the things that the Holy Spirit does. We've just heard or in which the Holy Spirit sustains us. Uh, we've just heard in verse 27, that the anointing which we have received from Christ. Spirit. As the anointing that teaches us, concerning, all things and is true and is not a lie.

And he says, just as it referring to the anointing, or his Spirit, just as it has taught you, you will abide in him. And then immediately he says and now little children abide in him. Abide in him by dependence upon the Holy Spirit abide in. By listening to what the scripture says and laying hold of what the scripture tells you about in your heart.

And especially that your heart would lay hold. Of the Lord Jesus himself. That you would depend upon him that you would rest in him. That you would make your home. Could you please close that door?

And so, we abide in him because the spirit Causes us to do so. Even the same Spirit is carrying the Apostle along. As he writes this and he gives the command We abide in him because this is how he Prevents our being ashamed is coming. Now, little children abide in him that when he appears We may have confidence and not be ashamed before him.

That is coming. But of course, when he appears those for whom, he died, those who are joined to him, those whom he loves and whom he has made to love him. When he appears they will have confidence as appearing. Uh, this is exactly the opposite of what the world links to who cry out for mountains to fall up on them and things like that as the opposite of confidence.

But he has saved us so that we would not be ashamed. When he appears when he comes. And this is the means, by which Um, abiding in him. Sorry And abiding in him. Is the means by which we are not ashamed is coming. So we abide in him. Because that's what the spirit sustains Us in and teaches us to do.

We abide in him? Because this is how he keeps us from being ashamed at his coming. And we abide in him because we know this is how we got our start. And so this is how we will make our finish. You see that in verse 29, If you know that he is righteous or better since you know that he is righteous, You know that everyone who works righteousness?

And there's another Greek word for practice. This one is more the word work. Everyone who works righteousness is born of him or from out of And so, If you have begotten in Christ and you are crucified with him and is no longer you who live? But he lives in you the life that you now live.

You live. By faith in him who loved you? And gave himself for you. Then continue. If you have been born from out of him, then surely you will continue. How can the one who is born from Christ lose that birth? Uh, or as he's gonna say, a few verses from now in verse 9.

Whoever has been born of God, does not sin for his that is God's seed remains in him, and he cannot sin because he has been born of God. Well, surely your new nature in Christ will win out. Over against that which remains from your former nature. That's not even your nature anymore.

And your new nature, in which you work righteousness, in which you practice righteousness. Now, if we translate it, like, The version says here. Your new nature will be all that remains. In the last. And so we abide in him. Because he is the one. Who in from out of whom we have received our new birth.

And he is the one. From whom we will have. The Holiness in which he and we both appear. In the last. So that's the first big command is to abide. The second big command is to hold Behold is a command. It's imperative behold not just Uh, that the father has loved us or the love of the father.

But that we would consider think about what sort of love. The father has given us. And bestowed is a good word. It's translating a word that means giving as a gift. Um, About what sort of love is it, is it? First of all, it's Divine love. It's love, that is an expression of that, which is between the father and the son from all eternity.

And so it's Divine love, it's Triune love. Secondly, it is fatherly. Love That just as the father has loved the From uh, from all eternities. So now Uh, he has Um loved us with the fatherly, love that he has for the son. And therefore it's not just Divine love and fatherly.

Love But, it's adopting love. It's love that has brought us into A new sunship. That corresponds to and participates. In a unity, a union with the Lord Jesus. So he's the only begotten son but we are all adopted children. So it's divine love, it's fatherly. Love, it's adopting love and we are to consider what sort of lovers to look at behold.

Gaze upon what sort of love. With the father has loved us. With whenever we call him, father, like the spirit trains to do whenever the spirit Pours out his love in our hearts. Just as the spirit is the one who makes us to abide in Christ. Like we heard in verse 27, So also the spirit is the one who makes us to behold.

What sort of love God has loved us with? This is what Romans 5 said, you remember. That his uh, his love is poured out. In our hearts by his holy, And so we are to behold. Uh, his love. And one of the things that makes us behold that love is when the world does not acknowledge us or understand us.

This helps us when we are so distinct from the world. Or if we fail to be distinct from the world which should send us flying back to God. Um, and repentance. And pleading. But when we are distinct from the world, that it doesn't acknowledge us, doesn't understand us despises us.

We say, well, this is why. Because I have been called a child of God. And, and since I'm called a child of God, The world does not know me. Because it did not know him. That's me. Coming into the family resemblance. Of my adopted status. That's you coming into the family resemblance of your adopted status.

And so, not only. Now, do we have the status of children? We are called the children of God verse one. That is the core of our identity. Our identity is now bound up. And his beloved. Now, we are Children. Of. This is one of the things that's so bad about.

When people use worldly categories. That. Make identity with sin. Uh, when they use those worldly categories of Believers, Uh, like people say, gay Christian or Um, Or something like that. Um, know your identity is over against your sin, it's one that the world doesn't even recognize, and so, don't be surprised that the world doesn't understand.

Um, Our identity is as God's children. So he says blood now. We are God's children. And this word uh revealed that is repeated twice here. Uh, in verse 2, it has not yet been revealed but we shall be, but we know that when he is Revealed it is the same word.

As. Um, appears. Way up in verse 28. And it may be helpful when to translate it that way throughout. So it has not yet appeared what we shall be, but we know that when he appears We shall be like unto him. For, we shall see him. As he is.

And so there are these appearances, we have the status of children, we have the identity of children but we have not yet. Come fully Into two aspects of our adoption. Uh, what we will appear like when he appears. Has not yet appeared. What we will be when he appears.

Has not yet appeared. Um, but there's nothing you can do to work on appearing, glorious. Uh, you know, all of the trips to the gym are not working on your resurrection body. But there is part of what we shall be, when he appears that we can work on. And that is, Um, That is where verse 3 takes us.

Uh, when he is revealed, we shall be like him for. We shall see him as he is now that is talking. Body and Soul. Um, But it's that Soul part. That verse 3 capitalizes upon it says everyone who has this hope and what's implied is everyone who has him?

Who is born of him? And will not be ashamed at the last day and has his Spirit making us to abide in him, pouring out his love. In our hearts, everyone who has this, hope and that describes something we already have. You know, the verb, there is a verb, that means to possess and it's something that is in the present tense.

You have the That you will be like him in the last day, Body and Soul. Not wishful thinking. Remember in the New Testament, the word hope is A future, certainty. A certainty of something. That is future. And so, every believer has this And so every believer because we have this certainty, Um, we do each one does this everyone who has this hope in him.

Purifies himself. Just as he is pure. So, that Jesus's Purity. Is the standard for how we purify ourselves. We purify ourselves putting that standard Because Jesus's Purity is the outcome. Of our purifying ourselves, we will be pure as he is pure. So since we will be glorious, like he is embody since we will be glorious.

Like he is in Soul. And since, Can't make your body glorious. But you are given by the spirit to abide in him now and abiding in him does produce increasing spiritual likeness to him. Increasing Purity. And so my dear children or little children, as the Apostle says also. Abide in Christ.

Have your life. Be a dwelling in him resting upon him. Walking with him drawing life from him abide in him. And behold what matter? Behold what sort of love? The father has shown unto you Divine love. Fatherly. Love. Adopting love. Both. The work of the spirit. It is the spirit who makes you abide in the That is the spirit who shows you and makes you to know the love of the father.

And so, there's marvelous. Trinitarian. And so there's a marvelous trinitarian character. To living the Christian Life as the Apostle teaches us to do. So here, The Lord Grant that we may. Let's pray Our Father in Heaven. We thank you that you have. Given unto us. To be adopted by you to be born from out of the sun.

To be indwelt by your spirit. We pray. That your spirit would indeed make us to abide in Christ. And that he would pour out your love in our hearts. And make us to behold to consider your love. As we abide in Christ. And that, by these two things. You are Triune God.

Sustain us and carry us. In purifying ourselves, as Jesus is pure. We do want the joy and the Wonder. Of beholding your love and abiding in Christ. Give it to us. We ask in his name. Amen.