

The Blessings of Abiding in Christ

1 John 2:28-3:3

Introduction

1. Family resemblance is a powerful evidence of family relationship. Children almost always: look like their parents, think like their parents, talk like their parents, and act like their parents. You see, it's in the genes, it is simply who they are.
2. Children of God are no different. Those who know God as Father are destined to look like the Savior, think like the Savior, talk like the Savior, and act like the Savior. You see, it's in the genes because as 1 John 2:29 teaches, we have been born of Him, born again, born from above.
3. Those who have been born of God will abide in God. Those who have been born of God will behave like God. The abiding life is the life of blessing.
4. John has challenged us to:
 - × walk in the Light – 1:5-2:2
 - × obey the commandments – 2:3-11
 - × know our spiritual status – 2:12-14
 - × beware of the enemies of the faith – 2:15-28

Now he says:

- × live like children of God.

And in 1 John 2:28-3:3 he puts 4 challenges before us related to this charge.

I. Be confident at His coming. 2:28-29

- Verse 28 is transitional connecting 2:18-27 and 2:29-3:3. Note the theme of abiding, which ties the two together.
- However, a new theme is introduced in verse 28 that will run throughout the remainder of the book. It is the theme of being “born of God.” Ten times in 2:29-5:21 John will use the word. This is remarkable when we consider the fact the word does not appear once in 1:1-2:28.
- John says we abide in Christ because we have been born of God. And because we have been born of God we can be confident at His coming.

1. Be confident because of your position. 2:28

- × And now – marks a new subject.
Little children – (*teknia*) – term of pastoral affection and personal concern.
Abide – (pre. imp.) – 23 in 1 John, 7 in 2:18-28. Speaks of union and communion, salvation and sanctification, a staying with and in Christ. The term of abiding reflects the influence of Jesus on John. *See John 15:4-11.
- × Abide so that when He appears ... confidence – all or free speech (4X in 1 John; 2:28; 3:21; 4:17; 5:14). Speaks of the attitude of a child coming to his father in contrast to a slave going to his master.
- × However, there is a 2nd possibility when He appears – not in confidence but in shame (only here in John's writings). The word means to shrink back in guilt or embarrassment.

- 1) It could mean “to be put to shame” [in final judgment].
Mark 8:38, “For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.”
- 2) It could also mean to be ashamed of yourself for failure to serve Christ in this life. If this is correct, the issue is not salvation, but sorrow.
***View #1 seems more likely given the context.**

2. **Be confident at His Parousia. 2:28**

- × Coming is *parousia*. It means coming, arrival and is used only here by John. It was sometimes used to describe the arrival of a king, ruler or official with open public splendor, dignity and respect. John anticipates the coming of our King Jesus.
- × When Christ comes what will it be for you? Will you be:
 - confident or cowardly
 - excited or embarrassed
 - thrilled or timid
 - rejoicing or regretful?

Hebrews 9:28 says, “So Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.”

3. **Be confident in your practice. 2:29**

- × The judge of verse 28 is the one who is righteous in verse 29.
- × Those who practice righteousness (cont.) give evidence of their spiritual birth in Him.
- × In the gospel John teaches us how to experience the new birth (John 1:12-13). In the epistle John teaches us about the evidences of the new birth (1 John 2:29). One evidence is righteous living.
- × Born of Him – can refer to the Father of Christ. No radical distinction is necessary.
- × Faith always precedes behavior, but right behavior will always follow faith. Our lives, as children of God, will resemble the character of our Father. Our practice is proof of our parentage. The righteous Father produces righteous children. The righteous Savior produces righteous saints.

II. **Be certain you are His child. 3:1**

John was overwhelmed at the love of God for sinners like us. Its wondrous nature filled his soul to overflowing. That God would bring us into His family and be our Father was something to shout about.

Behold (*idete*, aor. imp.) – look, see!

What manner of love – “how great” (*NIV*) – it conjures up a sense of wonder, awe, amazement, astonishment. The word meant originally “of what country.” God’s love is not of this world! What is the evidence of this amazing love? John notes three.

1. **You have a new Father.**

- × The Father has bestowed (*WAR*) – Father is placed last in Greek text for emphasis – this is Father love and this is forever love. Bestowed means to lavish, give freely with no thought of withdrawal.

- × “Amazing love how can it be, that you my King would die for me.”
- × **Galatians 4:4-6**, “But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, “Abba, Father!”

2. You have a new family.

- × Called children of God – we now bear His name, we have His nature. Once a slave to sin, now a child of God.
- × No need for an inferiority complex. Regardless of what the world says, God says this is my daughter. This is my son. You are my child.

Illustration

I am married to God’s daughter. Charlotte is married to God’s son.

3. You have a new foe.

- × The world (evil organized Satanic system in opposition to God) does not know us (recognize, understand, appreciate). Why? 2 reasons:
 - a. We are children of God not children of this world-system.
 - b. The world did not know Him (Father, Christ, God in Christ). Because we are now growing to be like Him, and since the world did not recognize or appreciate Him, we should not be surprised when they treat us in the same way they treated Him.
- × **John 15:18-19**, “If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.”
- × The world did not know Him 2000 years ago. The world will not, should not, know us today!
- × The old Negro spiritual captures the gist of this. “Sweet little Jesus boy, we didn’t know who you was!”

III. Be conformed to His character. 3:2

- John is again tender in his address (“beloved”), but powerful in his challenge. God saved us not just to take us to heaven. He saved us to make us like Jesus. John says it is a signed, sealed and settled issue in heaven. Three reasons again are given as to why this is so.

1. We have an indestructible position.

Now, this very moment we are children of God. John includes himself in this fabulous family. What confidence! What assurance! I am His and He is mine. I am His child and He is my Daddy!

2. There is an inevitable revelation.

- × Tension of the now and not yet of biblical eschatology.
- × “Blessed assurance Jesus is mine, oh what a foretaste of glory divine.”
- × What we will be is not clear (an apostolic confession of ignorance!).

- × But we know that when He is revealed... Not if but when. He is coming. You can bank on it. You can count on it.

“One day the trumpet will sound for His coming.
One day the skies with His glories will shine.
Wonderful day my beloved one bringing
Glorious Savior this Jesus is mine.”

3. **There will be an incredible transformation.**

- × We shall be like Him.
- × We shall see Him as He is.
Psalm 17:15, “As for me, I will see Your face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake in Your likeness.”
- × A missionary whose last name is Alexander recorded that when native converts came to this phrase, the scribe laid down his pen and exclaimed, “No! It is too much; let us write, “We shall kiss His feet” (Vaughn, p. 75).

IV. **Be committed to consecration. 3:3**

The wonderful promise that we will 1) see Him and 2) be like Him should have a present, immediate effect on each of us. Such a promise should motivate us to purity.

1. **Possess your glorious hope.**

- × Hope in Him (Christ not the believer).
- × Your heart is set on Jesus and no other. Your hope is set on Jesus and no other. Whatever Jesus can provide that is what you will receive.
- × All my hopes and dreams are riding totally on Him.

2. **Pursue godly holiness.**

- × Purifies (cont.) himself like Jesus is pure.
PURE – means free from contamination, to withdraw from the profane.
* Used of ceremonial cleansing – John 11:55
* Used of personal internal cleansing of the heart – James 4:8
* Used of the soul – 1 Peter 1:22
* Used of the total life here!!!
- × **C.S. Lewis**: “If you read history you will find that the Christians who did the most for the present world were just those who thought most of the next ... It is since Christians have largely ceased to think of the other world that they have become so ineffective in this. AIM at heaven and you will get earth “thrown in.” Aim at earth and you will get neither.”
- × **Colossians 3:1-4**, “If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.”
- × Hope for the future will produce holiness in the present. Be heavenly minded. It is the only way to be of any earthly good.

Conclusion

When Jesus Comes to Live With You

Adapted from Lois Blanchard

*If Jesus came to your house to spend His life with you –
If He came unexpectedly, I wonder what you'd do?
Would you give your nicest room to such an honored Guest,
And all the food you'd serve Him, would it be the very best?
Would you keep assuring Him you're glad to have Him there –
That serving Him with your life is joy beyond compare?*

*But – when you saw Him coming, would you meet Him at the door
With arms outstretched in welcome to your Heav'nly Visitor?
Or would you have to change your clothes before you let Him in,
Or hide some magazines and put the Bible where they had been?
Would you turn off the radio and hope He hadn't heard
And wish you hadn't uttered that last loud and angry word?*

*Would you hide your favorite music and put some others out?
Could you let Jesus walk right in, or would you rush about?
And I wonder – if the Savior came to spend His life with you,
Would you go right on doing the things you always do?
Would you keep right on saying the things you always say?
Would life for you continue as it does from day to day?*

*Would you sing the songs you always sing and read the books you read
And let Him know the things on which your mind and spirit feed?
Would you take Jesus with you everywhere you'd planned to go,
Or would you maybe change your plans because He might say, "no?"*

*Would you be glad to have Him meet your very closest friends,
Or would you hope they'd stay away because they might offend?
It might be interesting to know the things that you would do
If you knew Jesus in person had come to spend His life with you.*

- × To become like Jesus is the best thing in the world worth pursuing, for every other passion and ambition pales in comparison and is pure folly. Nicholas Von Zinzendorf, founder of the Moravians said it well, "I have one passion only: It is He [Jesus]!"
- × "We shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is!" Is this your hope? Then purify yourself just as He is pure!