

WALKING IN THE LIGHT:

Confident and Righteous Children of God: 1 John 2:28-3:3

March 18, 2018

2:28: *And now, dear children, continue in Him (remain in fellowship with Christ), so that when He appears, we may be confident (full of courage) and unashamed before Him (not shrink back from Him in shame) at His coming.*

29: *If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who does what is right has been born of Him (are God's children).*

3:1: *How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called **children of God!** And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know Him.*

2: *Dear friends, now we are **children of God**, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.*

3: *All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as He is pure (NIV – bracketed parts are from the NLT).*

A.CONFIDENT and RIGHTEOUS CHILDREN – 1 John 2:28-29

2:28: And now, dear children, continue in Him.

“Dear children,” is a strong term of endearment and it reveals how deep John’s loving concern was for these followers of Jesus. Again and again he said, “remain in Him, continue in Him abide in Him; don’t let anyone lead you away from Him” (P. W. Comfort and W. C. Hawley; Cornerstone Biblical Commentary, 1-3 John, 347).

Note how he ended verse 27: *remain in Him or abide in Him.*

Now we begin these verses with a similar thought: *And now dear children, continue in Him (NIV); remain in fellowship with Christ (NLT).*

If we continue in Him there will be a huge reward when He returns.

Continue in Him so that when He appears we may be confident and unashamed before Him at His coming.

For those who remain in Him, God has many promises and blessings that are sure and secure.

If that is the case why the need to command them to remain and to continue in Him?

These commands and exhortations are not meant to frighten the readers or to suggest that they are inadequate or failing to abide in Christ.

Just the opposite: these words are meant to encourage them to keep heading in the same faithful direction that they have been going – you are abiding - continue to do so.

Those who are children of God have confidence before God, a theme that comes up often in this letter. This repetition could well suggest that some of the believers lacked that confidence.

Illustration:

(I could use the name of one of the teenagers present). Picture your father going on a long trip. Your dad talks to you and asks you to be a big help to your mother while he is

gone. He also gives you several jobs that he wants you to get done before he gets home. You love your dad and you want to please him. Let's say you did all that your father asked you to do. You can look forward to your father's return with confidence and without any shame because you did what he asked you to do.

2:28: And now dear children, continue in Him, so that when He appears we may be confident and unashamed before Him at His coming.

What kind of shame is he talking about?

The shame of which the elder speaks is not the shame that ??? would feel if he disappointed his dad. It is not the shame that believers sometimes imagine that they will or ought to feel in the presence of One who is so holy and pure.

It is not embarrassment for something we have done wrong.

The shame that John is speaking about applies not to the believers, but to unbelievers. The shame that is spoken of here is the disgrace or rejection that unbelievers will experience when they come into judgement.

On the other hand the confidence that believers have is the boldness to approach God when the coming of Jesus signals judgement.

His Coming:

This word can also be translated "appearing," as well as "is revealed." This suggests an open and public revelation of Jesus.

At His first coming there was more of a hiddenness about it for not all received Him as or recognized Him as the Messiah and Son of God.

But at His second coming all will know who He really is – it will be publicly known.

When that happens those who have been faithful; those who have abided, may approach God openly and with great confidence. This is one of the huge privileges about being children of God – there is that frankness and openness. There is nothing that hinders their relationship with God.

For those who continue in their commitment to God, His promise is that nothing will bring them to shame in the judgement (Thompson, 84-86).

Jesus Christ is coming back. Are sure of your eternal future?

How different it will be for those who are not righteous.

SONG:

I dreamed that the great judgment morning
Had dawned, and the trumpet had blown;
I dreamed that the nations had gathered
To judgment before the white throne;
From the throne came a bright, shining angel,
And he stood on the land and the sea,
And he swore with his hand raised to Heaven,
That time was no longer to be.

o Refrain:

And, oh, what a weeping and wailing,

As the lost were told of their fate;
They cried for the rocks and the mountains,
They prayed, but their prayer was too late.

The moral man came to the judgment,
But his self-righteous rags would not do;
The men who had crucified Jesus
Had passed off as moral men, too;
The soul that had put off salvation,
“Not tonight; I’ll get saved by and by,
No time now to think of religion!”
At last they had found time to die.

Are you sure of your eternal future? Will you be ashamed or will you be confident?

2:29: Since we know that Christ is righteous, we also know that all who do what is right are God’s children (NLT).

God’s children, Born from above; born of the Spirit; the 2nd birth.

If we are born of Him that means we are part of His family – we have a relationship with Him - we are His children!

John’s thinking here is that God alone is truly righteous, and is therefore the source of righteousness. If a person’s actions are righteous, we know that they have acquired this righteousness from just one source – God Himself. God gives them a new nature.

Contrary to the belief of some of the false teachers, we do not become children of God by doing right. We do right because we are God’s children (Comfort and Hawley, 347).

Righteousness is not simply an intention or feeling, but is expressed in deed and truth. Righteousness is the responsibility of those privileged to be God’s children. Righteous behavior provides confirmation of our relationship with God (Thompson, 87).

Illustration:

As we observe children we sometimes say, they are a chip off the old block. They act like their dad or their mother – there is a family resemblance.

That ought to be the same for us, who are children of our Heavenly Father.

Our right actions point back to the One who is totally Righteous.

SONG: be like Jesus, this my song, in the home and in the throng, be like Jesus all day long; I would be like Jesus.

2:6: *Whoever claims to live in Him must walk as Jesus walked.*

If you and I claim to be in Him, then our actions should match our claim.

That is why John says in v.28 that if we continue in Him we will be unashamed at His coming. He assumes that those who remain in Him, will be like Him.

SO WHAT??!!

Do you do what is right? What are you like in your home; what are you and I like when we walk in our neighborhood and meet our neighbors.

Do our neighbors know we are righteous by our actions – what we do?

What kind of reputation do you have in the community you live in.

What kind of reputation does BCC have in the community?

You know that everyone who does what is right has been born of Him.

If we truly are born again that will show – their will be evidence.

QUOTE: If you were put on trial and accused of being a Follower of Jesus, would there be enough evidence to convict you?

B.A MIRACLE OF LOVE AND GRACE:

3:1: See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!

WE ARE CHILDREN OF GOD!!!

Are you kidding? Are you serious? God is our Father?

There are at least 3 NB thoughts about being children of God:

1. We didn't bring this relationship about, just like a new-born child didn't have anything to do with being born. It is by God's power and His initiative.
2. God has growth and maturity in mind. When God calls us children He is in it for the long haul. His goal isn't just to make us His children – He has our future good in mind. When a new-born baby lies in its parent's arms they are filled with hope about the future for this child.
3. The fact that we are God's children is evidence of God's active and creative love for us (Thompson, 87).

SONG:

My Father is omnipotent and that you can't deny.

A God of might and miracles, 'tis written in the sky.

It took a miracle to put the stars in place,

It took a miracle to hang the world in space,

But when He saved my soul, cleansed and made me whole/

It took a miracle of love and grace.

3:1: See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know Him.

The word behind the phrase “what great love,” is a term that speaks of something that has come from another country. In other words, it is “exotic, extraordinary. It could be translated: “Behold, what extraordinary love the Father has poured on us (Comfort and Hawley, 347).

Children of God: the word translated “children” emphasizes birth rather than infancy.

John is here calling attention to the wonderful fact, carried over from the last verse (2:29) that God has spiritually brought us into existence as His children (ibid.,).

The only way any of us can become children of God is because of the love of God.

Who did the lavishing? Our Father in heaven. We sure didn't. We were rebellious and heading our own way. We were deserving of God's wrath.

Isaiah 53:6: All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned each of us to our own way. And the LORD has laid on Him, the iniquity of us all.

Ephesians 2:3a-5:

Like the rest (of those who were disobedient), we were by nature objects of wrath. BUT because of His great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions – it is by grace you have been saved.

Totally! God intervened in our lives. We were rebellious, doing our own thing and heading for disastrous judgement. But God – see *what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God.*

SONG: Marvelous, infinite, matchless grace, freely bestowed on all who believe. You that are longing to see His face will you this moment His grace receive.

SONG: I stand amazed in the presence of Jesus the Nazarene, and wonder how He could love me a sinner, condemned, unclean. How marvelous, how wonderful and my song shall ever be; how marvelous, how wonderful, is my Saviour's love for me.

And that is what we are! - We are children of God!

I know it is hard to believe, I know I don't deserve it, I have a hard time grasping that this is possible. I belong to His family! He is my Father in heaven!

This marvelous, undeserved relationship makes me different than those who have not experienced this.

The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know Him.

Illustration:

We used to have a neighbour who was an electrical engineer. He was also a ham radio operator. When he got together with his ham buddies, you would think they were from a different planet talking in an unknown language. You would feel like you were in a different world.

The ways that Christians sometimes express their understanding of and their relationship to God, strikes non-Christians as weird, ludicrous and maybe even arrogant. To claim to know God might strike them as preposterous. And to claim that we are children of God – these folks must be from a different planet. After all how can people who are made of flesh and blood be children of some eternal Spirit or God. John affirms to his readers that they are children of God but with that privilege comes responsibility. It is in our conduct that we make our claims to be God's children believable. The integrity of our lives speaks more loudly than all the claims that we can make (M. M. Thompson, The IVP NT Commentary Series:1-3 John, 83).

The world consists of those who are not part of God's kingdom; they are not part of God's family. They are really under the rule and reign of the evil one.

They do not have a relationship with God, therefore they are in the dark about our relationship with God. They are not able to comprehend it.

John 17:14-15: *I have given them Your Word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. My prayer is not that You take them out of the world but that You protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it.*

The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know Him.

If we are God's children then we know Him – we have a relationship with Him. But the world does not have this relationship – therefore they do not know Him.

2 Corinthians 4:4: the god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

C.ONGOING TRANSFORMATION:

3:2:Dear friends, now we are **children of God**, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

NOW! We are children of God. Right now, we are His children.
Not only in the future when He returns, but right now!

Oh, dear children of mine. Have you realized it? Here and now we are God's children. We don't know what we shall become in the future. We only know that if reality were to break through, we should reflect His likeness, for we should see Him as He really is (Phillips).

Just as there will be a full revelation of who Jesus is when He returns (2:28), so there will be a full revelation of what we will be like when Christ returns.

We don't know all that will happen to us when Jesus' returns.

As God's children we are to reflect Him right now. Since we are promised that when we see Jesus that we will be like Him, we can assume that what we shall be someday, brings to fullness and completion the identity we now cherish as His children.

When Jesus appears we will be transformed.

Somehow that "seeing" is going to cause a greater transformation in us. We will know God more fully and intimately than is possible right now (Thompson, 89).

Seeing Christ is something that begins for us down here, before we get to heaven. The idea is not that we see Him physically down here, but that by constant gazing at Christ, we will become like Him and reflect His glory. As John said "we will see Him as He really is."

This means more than simply a physiological occurrence; it means "perceiving," "recognizing," even "appreciating." In order to know someone – to see them as they really are – you have to pass through similar experiences. Therefore, in order to see Jesus as He really is, we must experience the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings. This was Paul's longing. And this was also John's longing, as expressed in the next verse: *all who have this eager expectation will keep themselves pure, just as He is pure (NLT).*

D.HOPE MOTIVATES:

3:3 All who have this hope in Him purify themselves, just as He is pure (NIV).

This is an on-going purification process, which begins at rebirth and continues till the day we see Jesus. The more pure we become the clearer our view will be of Jesus, who is pure through and through (Comfort and Hawley, 348).

Those who have the hope of Jesus' coming purify themselves even as He is pure.

Hope itself makes us pure, because our hope is faith in Christ's purifying and cleansing work for us (Thompson, 90).

Why have believers through the centuries been prepared to die for their faith. Because they know that this life here is not the end of the story. They are convinced that there is an incredible place that God is preparing for them, where they will live forever without pain, or sorrow or parting.

In Matthew 5:10-12:

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

As followers of Jesus we should be living with the reality of Christ's return.

But how often do we really think about that?

God loves us so incredibly He wants us to be with Him. We get so wrapped up in this life, and it is like we have blinders on. This life is all we really know. The rest is really living by faith. We know the truth – that Jesus is coming back. This world is not our final home. Our citizenship is in heaven, from where we are awaiting our Saviour and King. That should be so real a reality that it should affect how we live here now.

We who has this hope in him, purifies ourselves because the One who died to make us holy was the only One able to bear our sin, so that we could be forgiven – so that we could be pure.

Conclusion:

The incredible privilege of being God's children also has a corresponding responsibility to live as Jesus lived.

This privilege also carries with it the promise that someday we shall know the invisible God more fully than we do now and when that time comes we shall also know that we are pure before Him (Thompson, 90),

We are Confident and Righteous Children who have experienced a Miracle of Love and Grace, an on-going Transformation and a Motivating Hope.

Blessed Assurance, Jesus is Mine

1. Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine! O what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God, born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.

CHORUS:

This is my story this is my song, praising me Saviour all the day long (repeat)

2. Perfect submission, perfect delight, Vision of rapture now burst on my sight;
Angels descending bring from above, echoes of mercy, whispers of love.

CHORUS:

3. Perfect submission, all is at rest, I in my Saviour am happy and blest;
Watching and waiting, looking above, filled with His goodness, lost in His love.

CHORUS