

THIS HOPE

1 JOHN 2:28 – 3:3

Text: 1 John 3:3

(1 John 3:3) "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

Introduction:

We have been looking at the subject of true fellowship as addressed by John in this first epistle. We have seen the conditions of true fellowship and what the conduct of true fellowship should be. Tonight we want to look at what he has to say concerning the characteristics of true fellowship.

John has much to say concerning this area of fellowship. First we want to consider the characteristics of fellowship in relation to our prospect.

1. OUR PRACTICE (2:28-29)

A. Abide in Christ.

1. This principle of the abiding life is repeated time and time again by John.

2. It is our obedience to His Word that maintains our fellowship with God.

3. This will bring confidence and not shame as we stand before our Lord at His coming.

B. Do Righteousness.

1. Knowing that Christ is righteous compels the one who abides in Him to exhibit righteousness in their lives.

2. John is not saying that all who are born again will do righteousness, because it is possible for a child of God to walk in darkness, out of fellowship with God.

3. He is saying that only those who are born again can do true righteousness.

2. OUR PRIVILEGE (3:1-2)

A. '...We are called the sons of God...'

1. Because of the manner of God's love.

2. Not because of the "Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of man".

a. By the natural aspect we are brothers because we are all descendants of Adam.

b. We are not all brothers spiritually though!

c. Jesus said of those who were not born again, in John 8:44, "Ye, are of your Father the Devil."

d. Paul wrote in Galatians, "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" cf Gal. 3:26

e. Two basic families exist today on this earth: The family of God and the family of Satan.

- One a family of life; the other of death.
- One a family of light; the other of darkness.
- One a family of righteousness; the other of wickedness.

f. The only way we pass from the family of Satan into the family of God is by the 'Grace of God'.

g. Grace is the unmerited and unearned favor of God.

John 1:12-13, "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

B. '...Therefore the world knoweth us not...'

1. Unbelievers do not understand why Christians live the way they do.

a. We are considered to be fanatics or crackpots.

b. Our intellects are often attacked because 'a person is ignorant to turn their back on worldly pleasures just for church and religion'.

c. Paul reminds us that the natural man cannot understand spiritual things. cf 1 Cor. 2:14

2. Unbelievers do not understand because they are not aware of what motivates u us.

a. Our first reason to serve God ought to be out of love for our Savior.

b. We should also want to serve Him because we wish to be obedient.

c. God has so much in store for those who faithfully serve Him.

Psalm 84:11, "For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly."

C. 'Because it knew Him not...'

John 1:10, "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not."

Galatians 6:14, "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

1. By way of illustration: We go into a mortuary where two dead men lie in their caskets: What fellowship do these two have?

2. NONE! and rightly so, the world is dead to a spiritually minded believer and he is dead unto the world.

3. Amos 3:3 asks, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?"

4. If we are true believers, walking in the light, the world does not know us and does not want to know us.

John 3:19, "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."

5. If you go back into the world it will not be because the world led you astray! It will be because you imposed yourself upon the world until it took you in.

D. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God..."

1. God is very specific here, He doesn't say we might be or we could be or that once we reach heaven; God says now!

2. Every truly born again believer is a son of God and the Holy Spirit dwells within him.

a. We are born of the Spirit. cf Jn. 3:5

(John 3:5) "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

b. We are baptized into the body of Christ by the Spirit. 1Co. 12:12-13

(1 Corinthians 12:12-13) "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. {13} For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."

c. We are led by the Spirit. Ro. 8:14

(Romans 8:14) "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

d. We are assured by the testimony of the Spirit. cf Ro. 8:16

(Romans 8:16) "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:"

e. We are sealed by the Spirit.
Ep.4:30

(Ephesians 4:30) "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."

E. "...And it doth not yet appear what we shall be..."

1. After the resurrection Jesus ascended to the Father and then returned to earth again (perhaps in just a matter of seconds).

2. His resurrection body was not bound by time, space, or matter: He vanished after talking with the two on the road to Emmaus.

3. He appeared in the midst of the disciples in the upper room through locked doors and yet His body had substance because Thomas felt the scars.

4. His body had the ability to eat earthly food whether or not it had the need.

5. Even if God had taken the time to explain such mysteries it is doubtful that we could comprehend.

F. "...But we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him: for we shall see Him as He is."

Philippians 3:20-21, "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."

1 Corinthians 15:51-52, "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."

John 20:29, "Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

3. OUR PROSPECT. 3:3

A. "And every man that hath this hope in him..."

1. What is 'this hope'?

a. Here the word "hope" does not have any shade of doubt upon it.

b. It means "favorable and confident expectation"

c. As it is used in the passage here it refers to verse two, looking for Jesus' return.

Titus 2:13, "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ;"

d. The second coming of Jesus Christ is as sure now as His first coming. The same prophets that foretold His first coming tells of His second coming!

2. Who is "every man" referring to?

a. Not to every man in the world, but to those in the previous verses that were called sons of God.

b. The "hope" is within them, if you are saved you have the Holy Spirit living within you.

c. If you are not looking for Jesus to come back just any day then you are going to be caught unprepared!

d. It will be too late then to do the things you know YOU should, too late to start witnessing, too late to start tithing, too late to give up your personal idols that stand in the way of you being an effective Christian here on earth.

B. "...And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as He is pure."

1. "Purifieth himself" is teaching works; not for salvation but for service.

2. The word means to cleanse from defilement.

3. James commands us to purify ourselves in Jas. 1:18-25.

John 15:3, "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you."

Ephesians 5:26, "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,"

4. "Even as He is pure" can only refer to Jesus.

a. He is our standard point of reference.

b. When you want to see how clean a glass is you hold it up to the light, and the light will reveal any places that need further cleansing.

c. Note: The old commercial for Joy dishwashing soap said, "Isn't that a nice reflection on you?"

d. Christian's whose lives have unconfessed sin aren't very nice reflections for Jesus either.

e. Cleanser will not clean if it is left sitting on a shelf; neither will God's spiritual cleanser, it must be applied!

5. This "hope within him purifieth".

a. Our hope is set upon seeing Christ and becoming like Him.

b. And our effort should be to live like Him right now.

Philippians 3:13-14, "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." The mere fact that we are looking for Jesus to return any moment should motivate us to want to purify ourselves for His return. Are we exhibiting the characteristics of true fellowship in our lives? Tonight we have considered our practice (to abide in Christ and do righteousness), our privilege (to be called the sons of God), and our prospect (to wait and look for the coming of Christ).