

Children Of God

1 John 3:1-12

Introduction: John said, **“These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.”**

John wrote about things necessary for Christians to know that they have eternal life. John now goes to one of his favorite topics—love. J. Noel Meredith said, “the epistle of First John places great emphasis on love...the word ‘love’ in its various forms occurs fifty-one times.

I. What Manner Of Love.

- A.** God’s love is remarkable for its greatness.
 - 1.** It is a love we do not deserve.
 - 2.** Yet in it we may delight.
- B.** We can be **“children of God” (v. 1).**
 - 1.** Sense in which all are **“offspring of God” (Acts 17:24-29).**
 - 2.** It is a privilege to be children of God (**Jn. 1:12**).
- C.** The world sees us as an enigma.
 - 1.** Reacts with opposition (**Jn. 15:8-9**).
 - 2.** Yet few object to Christians as neighbors, customers, employees, etc.
- D.** Verse 2 gives us a glimpse of the eternal life aspect.
 - 1.** Love of God promises we will be with Him (**Jn. 3:14-16**).
 - a.** God’s love sent His Son.
 - b.** He died for our sins (“was lifted up”).
 - c.** Eternal life if we believe in Him.
 - 2.** All revealed then, not now (**Jn. 17:24**).
 - 3.** Really enough for us to yearn for it.
 - a.** He is coming again.
 - b.** We shall see Him as He is.
 - c.** We shall be like Him.

II. Motivated To Excel.

- A.** A child of God purifies himself (**vv. 3-5**).
 - 1.** It is hope of being with Christ that motivates to purity.
 - 2.** The verb tense is present signifying continual action.
 - 3.** This is the one who **“practices righteousness” (v. 29).**
 - 4.** It is that we are not to continue in sin (**Rom. 6:1**).
- B.** A child of God does not sin (**vv. 6-9**).
 - 1.** This is also in present tense signifying continual action.

“That You May Know”

2. Not “total sanctification” where it is impossible to sin.
3. Deliberately engaging in sin is what is in view here.
4. The seed of God is in the child of God (**1 Peter 1:23**).
 - a. **“It is written”** kept Jesus from temptation and sin (**Matt. 4:1-11**).
 - b. What is written is to instruct us about sin and righteousness.

III. Children Are Manifest.

- A. Which are we? (**v. 10**).
 1. Children of God.
 - a. Loves his brethren (**v. 11**).
 - b. Commanded to do so (**Jn. 13:34-35; Heb. 13:1; 1 Peter 1:22**).
 2. Children of the devil.
 - a. Cain is a good example (**v. 12**).
 - b. Consider **Genesis 4:1-8**.
 - 1) Unacceptable sacrifice.
 - 2) Built up anger at Abel (Why not at God?).
 - 3) He killed Abel. Why?
 - a) Abel’s works were righteous.
 - b) Cain’s works were wicked.
 - 4) Instead of changing his life, he sought to destroy what was in contrast.
 - B. The most sobering aspect of this is that John was not writing about non-Christians vs. Christians. He was writing about Christians vs. Christians.

Conclusion: Yes, we should love God. We should also love our brethren. Both are necessary if heaven is to be our home.