

## THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

DECEMBER 28TH, 2025 // FIRST JOHN

### REMAIN IN HIM (1 JOHN 2:28-3:3) ARE WE ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL?

If we are **ashamed of Him** on this earth, **He will be ashamed of us** on the day of His coming (Luke 9:26).

- We are not to be offensive to people, but the gospel will offend those who are perishing (1 Corinthians 1:18). If we allow fear of man to stop us from sharing truth, then **we are showing that we are ashamed of it.**

### WE HAVE GREAT CONFIDENCE

John has just told his readers about the confidence that we have from the Holy Spirit's empowerment. John records Jesus as saying, **"When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth"** (John 16:13).

- It is truth that sets someone free, so **why would we withhold freedom from a person who desperately needs it?**

### BORN AGAIN

To be born of Him means that we are born again—we are brought from the sin nature that we were originally born into. By abiding in Him, we are **brought from spiritual death into spiritual life.**

- There will always be a resemblance when a person is born of someone else. **To be born of Him means we look like Him.**

### LOOKING INTENTLY AT GOD'S LOVE

John says we are to **"Behold"** (KJV) the love the Father has given us, meaning **"to look at"** and **"to study intently."**

- We are to take a good look at the love the Father has given us, which makes us children of God. We are all created by God, but **only those who are "born of Him" have the great benefit of being called God's children.**

### "WHAT WE WILL BE HAS NOT YET BEEN REVEALED"

The Holy Spirit gives us **inner assurance that we are children of God** (Romans 8:16).

- We should long to look like Jesus in this life. If we strive to be like Jesus now, when we see Him in His glory, we will be perfected in eternity. However, **if there is no desire to look like Him in this life, we will not be forced to be with Him in the next.**

### LAWLESSNESS (1 JOHN 3:4-10)

#### WE CANNOT ALLOW SIN TO GO UNCHECKED

When we sin, we are **practicing lawlessness**, which is a trait of the spirit of the "antichrist" (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4) and not what is expected of those claiming to be born of God.

- Sin must be addressed and cannot go unchecked. Jesus came not only to **offer forgiveness for sin, but to empower us to overcome our sinful nature.**

#### WILL WE BE SINLESS AND PERFECT?

When John says, **"everyone who remains in Him does not sin,"** and **"there is no sin in Him,"** it means that we can be set free from a lifestyle of sin.

- John already established that we have all sinned and will continue to fall short (1:8-2:1), but **it is unthinkable that a person truly abiding in Him could continue to live in open, unrepentant, and habitual sin.**

#### FIGHTING OUR FLESH

Paul makes it clear in Romans 7 that though we have adopted Christ's nature, **we still war with our flesh which is inclined towards evil.**

- It is when we give in to that pull that we live in sin and rebellion against God. James, the brother of Jesus, said, **"So it is sin to know the good and yet not do it"** (James 4:17).

#### WHAT DIRECTION ARE OUR ACTIONS TAKING US?

John says, **"God's children and the devil's children become obvious"** by how they live.

- We prove to be "children of the devil" **when we refuse to do what is right and refuse to love.** When we sin, we take part in Satan's plan for our lives, which is to steal, kill, and destroy (John 10). But when we are "born of Him," **we take part in His plan of redemption for our lives.**

### LOVE OTHERS (1 JOHN 3:11-18)

#### KNOWING WHAT LOVE IS AND IS NOT

John pointed to **what love is** based on Jesus' ministry and now uses the example of Cain, who murdered his brother, to point to **what love is not.**

- Obviously, we should not murder, but this passage looks at the heart behind the act. Cain committed murder because of the **resentment, jealousy, and disregard for righteousness** that began in his heart.

#### ANYONE WHO HATES ISN'T OF GOD

Though some may commit murder, even some professing to be Christians, **God will forgive them if they are genuine in their confession and repentance.**

- We may never need to be forgiven for physical murder, but **most of us have committed murder in our hearts by allowing hatred to creep in.** God can forgive this too, **if we confess and repent!**

#### WHAT CHARACTERIZES OUR LIVES?

Anyone who has **"passed from death to life"** will love their brothers and sisters, not hate them.

- In the same way that a person born of God cannot have habitual, unrepentant sin in their life, **a person who is born of God will not live a life characterized by hatred or murder.**

### LOVE "IN ACTION AND IN TRUTH" (V. 18)

The nature of God is true love, and **His love was revealed in action**, through Christ's willingness to lay down His life.

- The true test of a Christian's love for others is not what we say but our willingness to sacrifice for the sake of others with action and truth. Before using "word or speech," **we must first show people that we love them with our deeds.**

### CONFIDENCE (1 JOHN 3:19-24)

#### MISSING THE TARGET

V. 19 is most likely looking back instead of forward to say that **it is by our deeds of action and truth that we know we belong to truth.**

- We should desire to live with good moral character and deeds, but we will fall short of God's standards and our own. Though we may feel condemned in our hearts, **God has come to convict, teach, and save, not to condemn.**

#### HE KNOWS OUR HEARTS

We can rest in His presence because God knows everything. God knows **if we believe in Christ, strive to love others, and regret it when we fall short.**

- This is why we trust in Him who knows our hearts instead of trusting our hearts. **Our hearts will condemn and deceive us** (Jeremiah 17:9).

#### "RECEIVE WHATEVER WE ASK"

V. 22 does not mean that God will reward us with whatever we want because we keep His commands or do what is pleasing in His sight.

- John is saying **the confidence we have before God leads to fruitfulness in prayer.** When we grow close to God, **we start to want the things that God wants for us and pray in His will for our lives** (5:14).

#### TAKING INVENTORY

Remembering that proof is in action and not just word and speech, John is saying that we will know we are in Christ by the Spirit He has given us.

- To know if the Spirit is in us, we must only **look to see if the fruit of the Spirit** (Galatians 5) **is working in our lives and affecting those around us.**

#### CHILDREN OF GOD

- Have we become children of God? "But to all who did receive Him, **He gave them the right to be children of God, to those who believe in His name"** (John 1:12).
- If we are truly children of God, it will be shown in our likeness to Him from whom we are born and in our love for our "siblings."

#### GOD'S CHILDREN OR THE DEVIL'S

- John said it is "obvious" whether we are **God's children** or **the devil's** (v. 10).
- A child of God doesn't have a casual attitude towards **sin, repentance, and obedience.**
- A desire to sin is not part of being led by the Spirit and being born again. Anyone who has been born of God cannot stay in a lifestyle of willful, unrepentant sin.

#### CONFIDENCE OR CONDEMNATION

- What are we walking in right now? Do we walk in the confidence and assurance of God, or are we walking in condemnation?
- When we refuse to abide in Him, we stand condemned (John 3:18).
- To those of us who believe in His name and love God above all things, **we can walk in confidence that we are born of Him.**