

The Comfort and Confidence of Children # 8

1 John 3: 1-3

Our text this evening deals with the wonderful love of God and the eternal blessings bestowed on those who have been adopted into the family of God through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ our Lord. There is no greater comfort than knowing one has been accepted into the beloved and made a partaker of the divine inheritance.

As I considered this passage, I immediately thought of the love found within the home. When a home operates as God intended, love is felt and shown by all. The home is a place of comfort, security, hope, and love. It is a place where all are accepted because of who they are, not what they possess or perform. The home, surrounded by a loving family, is indeed a special place. It is proven that children excel and acclimate to life better within a stable home.

The benefits of the home and family are more than we can number, and being a part of God's family is no exception. Every believer belongs to the family of God. I want to examine the [certainties](#) revealed in the text regarding Christians as we consider: [The Comfort and Confidence of Children](#).

I. John Speaks of our Adoption (1) – [Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.](#) Consider:

A. The Reality – [Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed...](#) Take a moment to consider the abundance of that thought. Consider the manner of love that is offered to humanity from God the Father. This carries the idea of "*from what country and of which sort it is;*" it speaks of "*the character and quality possessed.*" The love that we enjoy is much greater than the love offered by the world. The love of God is not of the world; its character and very essence is much different than that known of the world.

- We know that love is one of the great attributes of God. This too speaks of Agape love, love that is unique to God. It is love without merit or boundary. It is love that exceeds all sin. It is God giving what we could never deserve, and maybe not even desired, but given freely. Oh what manner of love He has for us!

B. The Reception – [Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us.](#) Isn't that amazing when you think of it? God has bestowed such wonderful love on us. We are the

recipients of such love! This has the idea of “*giving of one’s own accord, with the intent of good will.*” God purposely chose to extend such love to us. He chose to love us of His own accord. He was not forced to do so, but willingly chose to love us!

- I stand amazed that such love has been freely given to me. I certainly am not worthy of such love. There is no way I could ever earn such love, and yet He chose to love me! When I consider all that God is, (and my mental capacity presents a feeble effort at best) I am amazed that God would love me. I am amazed that He would love sinful humanity, and yet He does!

C. The Relationship (1) – Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: Because of His great love and the sacrifice of His Son, the saved are now the children of God. We are literally and eternally part of God’s family.

- If I may, I would like to summarize the thoughts of John Phillips from his commentary of 1st John. He states there are three ways one can become part of the family. 1) We can be born into the family, the life principle. 2) We can be adopted into the family, the law principle. 3) We can marry into the family, the love principle. All the saved enjoy all three. We are born into the family: [John 3: 5-7](#). We are adopted into the family: [Rom.8: 14-15](#). We are married into the family: [Rom.7: 4](#).ⁱ

D. The Rejection (1b) – therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Our relationship with Christ is special, but sadly it is not universal. All do not enjoy kinship with Him, all do not belong to the family of God. We are not known, or embraced of the world because the world doesn’t know or embrace Christ.

- This reveals a sad truth that remains. Just as Jesus and the early believers were rejected, we too will be rejected. Just as many in Jesus’ day refused Him as the Messiah, the majority today deny Him as the Christ. Our spiritual family will endure for eternity, but sadly there will be separation from some whom we knew as family in this life. This ought to challenge us to do all we can to reach those apart from Christ before it is eternally too late!

II. John Speaks of our Presentation (2) – Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. Yet again, what comfort and confidence we find. Consider:

A. Our Position – Beloved, now are we the sons of God. John speaks of the current state of the believer. Right now we are the children of God. This isn’t something that we look forward to

becoming reality in the future; it isn't something we hope will one day transpire. Right now, even as we study this passage, we are the children of almighty God.

- This affords great comfort now, but it also brings security and confidence when we near death. Children do not have to wonder whether they will be welcome at home. I have been married for twenty three years, and I am still welcome at my mother's house. Why? Because I am family. The same is true for the Christian. We are currently God's children, and all the children will be welcomed home!

B. Our Anticipation (2) – [and it doth not yet appear what we shall be](#): Here John deals with an issue that we all have pondered from time to time. We have wondered what our Lord must've looked like. We wonder how He appears in His glorified body. We wonder what our bodies will be like when we get to heaven. The truth is we cannot know. John knew Christ personally and intimately and yet he didn't know for sure what the believer would be when we enter His glorious presence.

- This doesn't create cause for alarm or anxiety. There is much that we do not know, but we know that God is good. We know His love for us in immeasurable. We know the peace and joy we have in fellowship with Christ our Lord. Regardless of what we shall be, we will be in the presence of our Redeemer! It will all be joy when we meet the Lord and spend eternity with Him.

C. Our Transformation (2) – [but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him](#). At the moment of our salvation, we were spiritually resurrected a new creature in Christ. Spiritually the old man died and we were born again anew in the Lord. However, the flesh was not changed, and we continue to inhabit a body that is prone to sickness, disease, deterioration, and sin.

- As we grow and mature in the Lord, we are transformed into His image spiritually, but when the Lord appears in the clouds and calls for the church, we will be transformed physically as well. We will lay aside this old body of flesh and take on a new, glorified body. When Christ appears, all the saved, whether dead in the grave or yet alive, will be caught up to meet Him in the air, and receive our new bodies. [Phil.3:21 – 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 Cor.15:52 – [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.](#)

D. Our Jubilation (2) – [for we shall see him as he is](#). This will truly be shouting time for the believer. We cannot begin to imagine the joy we shall experience when we meet the Lord in the air,

clothed in a new, glorified body. (I know Paul confirms that to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. I am convinced the saved enter the very presence of the Lord when they leave this earth in death.) However, this will be a glorious time as the redeemed by grace meet the Lord, united in the air. We shall behold the One who bled and died for our sin. We will be eternally free from the presence of sin, Satan, and the hindrances of this life. What a day, glorious day, that will be!

III. John Speaks of our Sanctification (3) – [And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.](#) In light of all we've discussed, John leaves a challenge to seek a life of purity and righteousness. Consider:

A. The Confidence (3) – [And every man that hath this hope...](#)Much of what we have discussed is beyond our ability to comprehend. We cannot fully grasp all we shall experience as we meet the Lord in the air. We are assured of our current position and love from the Lord as His children. Even though we can't fully comprehend it, we can still rejoice. Our hope is settled in the Lord. He is the Anchor of our soul. Complete victory was won as He died upon the cross and rose victoriously from the grave. Although I can't grasp it or explain it all, I am more certain and confident of my future with the Lord than anything I know. I am more confident of my eternal state than I am the next five minutes!

B. The Charge (3) – [And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself.](#) All who possess such marvelous hope are challenged to purify themselves before the Lord. That is not to say we will never sin or come short of what the Lord desires of us, but we will earnestly seek to live in a way that pleases the Lord. Those who are born again in Christ, walking in fellowship with Him, cannot sin and enjoy it. Children are chastised for sin, and we are called to heed the guidance of the Spirit. As the Spirit guides, we are to follow, seeking a life of purity!

C. The Comparison (3) – [even as he is pure.](#) Christ is our example. He set the standard we are to follow. As much as humanly possible, we are to imitate the life of Christ. He is the standard of excellence in righteousness. There was no fault or sin found in Him. Just as Christ is pure, we too are to seek His righteousness.

- That really brings a proper perspective. As I compare my life to the life of Christ, I realize I have failed miserably. There is much work to be done. I will never achieve the level of righteousness He possesses, but it serves as a standard to pursue. There is always room for improvement. I pray we all seek to become more like Christ as we seek to serve Him!

Conclusion: This is a comforting passage that brings great confidence to the children of God. We have received much more than our minds can comprehend. I do know I belong to the Lord and have been positioned within the family of God. I know that I will meet the Lord in the air one day, receiving a new, glorified body. As I consider all that we have discussed, I am challenged in my walk with the Lord and pursuit of purity. I want to honor Him with the life I live. I want to resemble the Lord I serve.

This passage deals with reality. The position of believers and guarantee of our future is more certain than anything we experience in this physical realm. We are assured a place in heaven throughout eternity because of our relationship with Christ. He is the only way to obtain such comfort and confidence. Eternity awaits, but apart from Christ, it will be just as dreadful for those who have denied Christ as it is joyful for those who have received Him. Where do you stand today? If the Lord were to call for the church right now, are you certain you would meet Him in the air, accepted as one of the family? If not, seek Him while He may be found. Come as the Lord leads you today!

¹ Phillips, John *The John Phillips Commentary Series – Exploring The Epistles of John*. Michigan: Kregel Publications, 1995.