

Purity Perfected
1 John 2:28 – 3:3
The Laurel Center
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Main Idea: We practice a pure lifestyle out of love for Jesus and expectation of his return.

Introduction

I have been church all my life. I have heard about most of the things anybody will ever sure about when it comes to Christianity. Sure, there are some things I will still surprise me. But for the most part, I am very well-versed, at least in the subject matter of Christianity, God and the Bible. One of the most interesting topics is that of the end times. The Bible teaches us as Christians to wait for the coming of the Lord, and hope and faith.

But what does it mean to wait for the Lord's return? Does that mean we just tread water until he returns? Or is there work to be done? Throughout the New Testament, the writers have given us clear understanding about what is expected of us while we wait. John is going to outline one of the key principles about waiting in the end times. Let's take a look at why we must keep pure for Christ's return.

Text –1 John 2:28–3:3

28 And now, little children, abide in him, so that when he appears we may have confidence and not shrink from him in shame at his coming. **29** If you know that he is righteous, you may be sure that everyone who practices righteousness has been born of him. **1** See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. **2** Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. **3** And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

I. Righteousness will be the connection between true believers in Jesus (vv. 28 – 29).

A When Jesus returns, he will recognize the righteous only.

- 1 Jesus is coming back again to take his own to heaven with him. We call this the second coming. But John raises an interesting point about the second coming.
- 2 Jesus said himself in the Gospels, "when the Son of Man returns, will he find faith on the earth?" John puts it this way: we prepare for Jesus' coming by living a righteous life.

- 3 One of John's favorite words, abide, is used again here in the beginning of our section. This word has such a rich theological meaning and practical meaning for each of us.
- 4 To abide in Christ is first a continuous action. It is a regular and active relationship that we have with Jesus. Through obedience to his commands. We enjoy a connection to Jesus that gives us spiritual vibrance and strength.
- 5 To abide is to remain in Christ, or to stay with him. Through thick and thin, and every trial. We hold on to the one who holds tomorrow. We receive our spiritual and physical sustenance from him.
- 6 Our abiding in him does not just give us strength and endurance in this here and now, but it also prepares us for his return. Because we remain righteous and maintain our connection to Jesus, we will be ready when we see him return for us.
- 7 Living without sin on a regular basis prepares us for him because we do not know exactly when he will return. Since we are not given this information, living a righteous life in Christ will mean that we are always ready for his return.
- 8 Staying connected to Jesus in our relationship means that he will recognize us. When he returns. He will not have to search for us, but will see us among the righteous because he is righteous. Jesus will recognize his own and we are his own. If we live the way that he did when he was on the earth.
- 9 Knowing that we are living like Jesus did, gives us the confidence to see him. When he arrives. We will not shrink back because we will not be afraid of his judgment.
- 10 **Illustration:** when I was growing up I always heard about the second coming of Christ. There were times when I would be sitting in my room and realize house had gotten very quiet. I would begin the search every room for my family, my parents and my sister's, hoping that they were still around somewhere. If the house was completely empty and the cars were not in the driveway. I would become worried that I had missed the rapture! Not seeing anyone around and being the only one in the house made me wonder if I was not righteous enough to go with them.

B Those who practice righteousness will recognize one another.

- 1 Not only are we hoping that Jesus will recognize us because we have remained in him and maintain a vibrant relationship with him, but we can recognize those who are righteous among us.

- 2 According to verse 29, we know who is righteous because we can see the righteous life that they continuously laid before us. We can be sure that Jesus himself is righteous.
- 3 Since we know this, we also know that he is searching for the righteous among the earth in his return. We do not have to be afraid about the rapture because we know that we belong to Christ, and he is coming for us.
- 4 The rapture is not a judgment against the righteous because Jesus is returning for us. If we were not righteous. And we did not know Jesus, the rapture would be an indictment upon us.
- 5 At the same time, those around us who also practice a regular righteous life will not only go with us. When Jesus returns, but we can recognize them here and now with us.
- 6 We have an automatic and enduring relationship with those who practice righteousness. We share in fellowship with all of those who are looking like Jesus more and more each day.
- 7 We share the common desire to be like Jesus, and to please the Lord by living like him and representing him until his return. Unlike those who are of the world, we seek to turn from sin and live for God.
- 8 It is our desire to glorify God, with every action, thought and word. We strive to be righteous, not on her own account, but because Jesus has made us righteous and is working his holiness into our hearts.
- 9 **Application:** because we yearn to be like Jesus, we have this desire in common with other believers. As we wait for the Lord, we seek to be righteous as Jesus is righteous. We also have a warm fellowship amongst one another because we share the school. We can also share in life's trials, sorrows in victories because we understand the suffering and the joy that each one of us goes through. We have a unique insight into each other's lives and desires because we share them. Unlike those of the world.

II. Purity marks the life of a believer in Jesus (vv. 1 – 3).

A God's love is our motive to be pure.

- 1 Not only do we seek to be righteous because Jesus' return can happen at any moment and we want to go with him when he comes for us, but we also seek to BP were because of our love for God and one another.
- 2 Verse one of chapter 3 strikes the same remarkable cord as John 3:16. John often speaks of the unconditional love of God for the whole world. But his love for his people demonstrates how his people should act forward the world and one another.

- 3 This unconditional love is demonstrated by all believers, or rather it should be. We do not always succeed in living up to our Lord's unconditional commitment to us.
- 4 Because God loves us so much. He provided a way through Jesus, his son for us to know him and B and relationship with him. As John will explain a little bit later on, God taught us how to love.
- 5 Trusting in Jesus' second place brings us into a new relationship with God, restored from before the fall of humanity when we chose sin over love.
- 6 Not only does God call us his children, but we really are becoming his children. **Illustration:** there is a common phrase that is true. At the beginning of our salvation. Have you ever heard anyone say, "I am a sinner saved by grace"? Sometimes this can be used by sinning believers as an excuse to sin. But it is God's intention that we not sin. We used to be a sinner, and now that we are saved by God's grace, we are called Saints.
- 7 The word for a saint is the same root that is used for the Holy Spirit. This word is the root word for holy in the New Testament. When Paul talks to Christians. He does not call them sinner saved by grace.
- 8 When you read any of Paul's letters, they are not written to the sinner saved by grace in Galatia. They are written to the Saints in Galatia, or whatever audience. Paul is addressing.
- 9 We are in the business of becoming more and more like Jesus. He is world conforming us to his image. This is why John says that we are not only called God's children, but we really are God's children.

B Righteousness and purity will help us recognize Jesus and ourselves.

- 1 Because we look so much more like Jesus than we used to look as we lived in the world and were of the world, the world no longer recognizes us as it used to.
- 2 We have become strangers in a foreign land and our home is no longer here, but it is with God and his people. Just as the world did not recognize Jesus when he came into it to save it, it does not recognize us because we are more like him.
- 3 God is working this new look for his people into each one of us. This takes time and we call it sent a vacation. This is the process of becoming more and more like Jesus, as we remain here on this earth.
- 4 God has a glorious and brilliant plan for each one of us. When we go out with Jesus in the clouds at the rapture, we will be changed in an instant. And yet at the same time, this remains a mystery, what we will look like in our new bodies.

- 5 This is the mystery that John hints at in verse two. Paul also talks about this mystery in 1 Corinthians 15. At the appearing of Jesus, or the second coming, we will appear differently than we are now.
- 6 Although it is a mystery as to what we will look like when our bodies are changed into Jesus' glory, it is not a mystery as to what we will look like. We will look like Jesus in righteousness and purity. We share this with Jesus.
- 7 Righteousness can be defined as doing what is right for every person in each situation. Purity can be defined as not being defiled or in mixed with the world and its image and passions.
- 8 **Illustration:** if you take a glass of water that is full and dump it out up to half so that there is only half of the water in it and then take some oil of any kind and dump half it in the glass and then stir it, it will not change. The oil will stay on top of the water. At no point will the two mix. This is an excellent image of what it means to be pure and the earth.
- 9 We seek to purify ourselves. First of all because we love Jesus. Second of all, we do this because we want to be like him, and he is pure. Finally, we do this because when he returns he will be able to see us as he sees himself.
- 10 **Application:** one of the hardest things we do as Christians is to remain for in a world that seeks to tempt us to return to the old life we used to have. At every turn, there could be dangerous to maintaining ourselves as born-again and the new creation that God has made. But being poor means remaining free of mixing ourselves with the world. What the world has to offer is passing away as John is told us. It is old business for us. We have something better than what the world can offer.

Conclusion

we remain in Christ and abide in him because he can help us to remain righteous and pure before him. Jesus is coming back soon. But as we wait for his return, we do not just sit around. We can be an example of Jesus and his image to this world. We can present something different than what the world offers itself. But we cannot do this on her own. We need Jesus to clothe us with his righteousness, and to keep us pure.

This does not make us snobbish to the world. More than that, we want to see your friends and family come to know Christ, so that they do not miss out on the grace that God is given to us. We do not do these two look better than the world, but rather to show the world that there is something better than what they had already. Jesus is coming soon! Let us live in such a way that he will recognize us, when he comes. And we will show this world, the love of God.