

1 John Chapter Three

The Greatness of God's Love (v. 1)

VERSE 1 See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are (ἴδετε ποταπὴν ἀγάπην δέδωκεν ἡμῖν ὁ πατήρ, ἵνα τέκνα θεοῦ κληθῶμεν, καὶ ἐσμέν. [aor.act.imper.2p. eidon see + adj.acc.f.s. potapos what sort of; “how great” + noun acc.f.s. agape love + pf.act.ind.3s. didomi give; “has bestowed” + pro.dat.p. ego + d.a.w/noun nom.m.s. pater + conj hina that + noun nom.nt.p. teknon child + noun gen.m.s. theos + aor.pass.subj.1p. kaleo call + conj kai + pres.act.ind.1p. eimi]).

For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him (διὰ τοῦτο ὁ κόσμος οὐ γινώσκει ἡμᾶς, ὅτι οὐκ ἔγνω αὐτόν [conj dia + pro.acc.nt.s. houtos “For this reason” + d.a.w/noun nom.m.s. kosmos + neg ou + pres.act.ind.3s. ginosko know + pro.acc.p. ego + conj hoti “because” + neg ouk + aor.act.ind.3s. ginosko + pro.acc.m.s. autos]).

ANALYSIS: VERSE 1

1. John proceeds to bring together the concepts of the new birth and ultimate sanctification.
2. He extols the wonder of the present status of believers as God's own children.
3. God's love is awesome considering the objects of His love—sinners saved by grace.
4. The divine attribute of love makes it possible for believers to “be designated/called children of God.”
5. Elsewhere “sons of God” (Matt. 5:9; Lk. 20:36; Rom. 8:14, 19; Gal. 3:26).
6. For “children of God” see Jn. 1:12; 11:52; Acts 17:29; Rom. 8:16, 21; 9:8; Phil. 2:15; 1 Jn. 3:1, 2, 10; 5:2).
7. “Children of God” stand over against “children of the devil” (1 Jn. 3:10; cp. Matt. 13:38 “sons of the evil one”).
8. In order to be a member of God's family one must be born again.
9. Jesus evangelized Nicodemus when He taught him about the new birth in John 3.
10. This was followed with a statement about God's love in Jn. 3:16.
11. Through salvation we have overcome the evil one who was previously our spiritual father through natural birth.

12. The unbelieving cosmos is prisoner to the evil one and will share in his destiny (1 Jn. 5:19).
13. The phrase translated “See how great” can be translated “See what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us.”
14. God the Father is viewed as the author of salvation.
15. God the Son is the agent of salvation.
16. And God the Holy Spirit is the revealer of salvation and the One who activates salvation via regeneration (new birth).
17. John calls these believers to contemplate this love using an imperative of the verb ‘see.’
18. This verb is followed by the adjective *potapis* which literally is ‘what kind’/‘what manner’/‘what sort’ (Matt. 8:27; Mk. 13:1; Lk. 1:29; 7:39; 2 Pet. 3:11 and here).
19. The verb “bestowed” (pf.ind. *didomi* give) indicates that salvation is a gift (cf. Jn. 4:10; Rom. 6:23; Eph. 2:8).
20. Through simple faith in Christ (only legit object) we have been granted the authority to be called “children of God” as per Jn. 1:12 (“But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right/authority to become children of God, even to those who believe (mechanic) in His name.”).
21. This status is a present reality as noted in the words “and we are.”
22. This is no fiction and lest anyone think otherwise, John asserts that we really are children of God.
23. John proceeds to point out that the cosmos does not so recognizes us as such.
24. The reason: the cosmos did not so recognize Jesus for who and what he was (cf. 1 Cor. 2:8 “*the wisdom* which none of the rulers of this age has understood, for it they had understood it they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.”).
25. Our status before God is completely lost on the cosmos or they would join us.

The Present Reality and The Future Assurance (v. 2)

VERSE 2 Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet

what we will be (Ἀγαπητοί, νῦν τέκνα θεοῦ ἐσμεν, καὶ οὐπω ἐφανερώθη τί ἐσόμεθα.

[*adj.voc.m.p. agapegtos beloved + adv nun now + noun nom.nt.p. teknon + noun gen.m.s. theos*

+ *pres.act.ind.1p. eimi + conj kai + adv. oupo not yet + aor.pass.ind.3s. phaneroo appear +*

indef.pro.nom.nt.s. tis what + fut.dep.ind.1p. eimi]).

We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just

as He is (οἶδαμεν ὅτι ἐὰν φανερωθῆ, ὅμοιοι αὐτῷ ἐσόμεθα, ὅτι ὁψόμεθα αὐτὸν καθὼς ἐστὶν [pf.act.ind.1p. oida + conj hoti that + part ean if, when + aor.pass.subj.3s. phaneroo appear + adj.nom.m.p. homoios of the same nature; “like” + pro.dat.s. autos + fut.dep.ind.1s. eimi + conj. hoti because, for + fut.dep.ind.1s. horao see + pro.acc.m.s. autos him + conj kathos just as + pres.act.ind.3s. eimi]).

ANALYSIS: VERSE 2

1. Again, John repeats the truth that “we are children of God.”
2. And he does so in terms that are not prospective, but a reality that is right now (adds the adverb *nun*)!
3. John’s purpose in this verse is to our present status as children of God with our Ph 3 status via ultimate sanctification.
4. Ultimate sanctification is defined in 1 Thess. 5:23 “Now my the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely, and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”)
5. In the presentation of this future blessing that result from our birth right, John presents the unknown and the known.
6. The unknown is: “it has not appeared as het what we shall be.”
7. This refers to the mystery concerning the exact make-up of the resurrection body.
8. We have no frame of reference for the dynamics the make the resurrection body what it is.
9. “When He appears” refers to the Rapture which concludes the Church Age.
10. We have a break-down of the event itself in 1 Thess. 4:15-17.
11. As for the eternal resurrection body we have to wait the get the details (cf. 1 Cor. 15:40-57; also note 2 Cor. 5:1-5).
12. What we do know is that when Jesus appears we will be just like Him.
13. As children of God we will possess a resurrection body just like the one Jesus received when He was raised from the death.
14. The study of the post-resurrection appearances of Jesus to His disciples gives us some insights into the resurrection body.
15. The fact that we can see Him as He is indicates that we will be just like Him.
16. The effect of seeing Jesus is to make us like Him.

The Present Effect of this Hope (v. 3)

VERSE 3 And everyone who has this hope *fixed* on Him purifies himself, just as

He is pure (καὶ πᾶς ὁ ἔχων τὴν ἐλπίδα ταύτην ἐπ’ αὐτῷ ἀγνίζει ἑαυτὸν, καθὼς ἐκεῖνος ἀγνός ἐστιν [*conj kai + adj.nom.m.s. pas “everywone”, all + d.a.w/pres.act.part.nom.m.s. echo have + d.a.w/noun acc.f.s. elpis hope + demonstr.pro.acc.f.s. houtos this + prep en + pro.loc.m.s. autos him + pres.act.ind.3s. agnizo purify + pro.acc.m.s. heautou himself + conj kathos just as + pro.nom.m.s. ekeinos that one + adj.nom.m.s. agnos pure + pres.act.ind.3s. eimi*]).

ANALYSIS: VERSE 3

1. An upshot of having this doctrine firmly established in the soul follows in v. 3.
2. “This hope” refers to the promise of future resurrection matching the resurrection of Christ.
3. “Hope” found only here in 1st John refers to the blessings of ultimate sanctification.
4. The believer who has learned and held fast to the promise of future glory in a resurrection body “purifies himself.”
5. Ph 2 sanctification (experiential) is the product of Rebound and the maturity adjustments.
6. Preoccupation with “the blessed hope” (Titus 2:13 looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus.) naturally motivates the positive believer to self-purification which excludes love of the cosmos.
7. It follows that since He is pure, so should we be.
8. God has given us the tools to be pure as He is pure (note the previous reference to Christ being righteous in 1 Jn. 2:1, 29)
9. For the verb ‘to purify’ in this connection note Jam. 4:6; 1 Pet. 1:22.