

Rob Mathis
Rose Hill Church
10.8.23
10am Service
Sermon: Our Confidence

My message to you this morning is from 1 John 3:1-10;

Let's pray

Though I will be talking about more than these, I have three primary points I want you to grab a hold of today from our reading of these Scriptures;

First, we who love Jesus Christ are, in fact, God's children, and as such, He loves us marvelously.

Second, we have an incredible future to look forward to with God for eternity.

Third, we must push back against sin and the devil's influence in our lives.

Let's get started in looking at our passage today:

3 See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!

1-See, take note, stand up and look! Literally, turn the eyes, the mind, and senses toward knowing; to discern, discover; This is an

active and ongoing action; even to become skilled in this activity, as to something pursued and cherished over time.

2-**what great love-not just any love, not even great human love; but this love is agape'**, a special love of benevolence; a God love, that is far superior to anything humans can generate on our own;

3-**The Father has lavished on us; lavish is to give freely; it is one-sided.** It is a sense of God acting in an incredibly generous fashion.

4-**That we should be called children of God:** The greatness of this love is shown in that by it, we are called children of God. God bestows on us a familiarity, a deep and abiding faithful cherishing of His creation. And **He dares to call us His children in front of the whole world.** In front of a doubting, critical and even hateful world.

By the way, I think it is important to understand that when Scripture talks about God's children, it is not talking about the whole of creation, of all of humanity. For everyone in the world is not his child in the way the Apostle John is talking. Yes, the Triune God shows His grace, mercy

and love to all creatures, and **God so loved the world that He gave His only Son for the sins of the world (John 3:16)**, but Jesus's death, resurrection and ascension do not automatically make all people the **children of God** in the manner that John is talking about. No, John is specifically talking only of those who have received God's free gift of eternal life, given through the forgiveness of sins offered only by way of Jesus' propitiation for our sins. John is lasering in on a very specific humanity, who are living in fellowship with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Going on in this verse: The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know Him.

Ultimately, we should expect the world to treat us as it treated Him – rejecting Jesus and crucifying Him. While it is true that Jesus loved sinners and they, recognizing that love, and many flocked to Him, **we must also remember that it was the world that cried out “Crucify Him!”**

Verse 2 Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears,^[a] we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

Here again John is telling us that we are children of God! He is comforting the Church with the knowledge that indeed we are in God's family. And we can have an assurance within our hearts that we are His. Romans 8:16 tells us, *The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.* If you are a child of God, you can have an inward assurance of this. Now, hit the pause button momentarily here; there is a significant amount of harm that I believe has been served up to Christians about the idea of knowing, having the feeling and the assurance of God in our lives. There is not one word of truth to the idea that to be pleasing to God, to be His child, to be a Christian in right standing with God, you have to feel Him. There are times in our lives when we do not. There are times when we are suffering with depression, anxiety, and a host of other things, or maybe we are sick. No matter. Regardless of how we feel or what is going on, we are HIS!

Okay, so back to verse 2. We do not know what we will be, or what eternity will be like; but I Corinthians 2:9 tells us;

“What eye has not seen, and ear has not heard,
and what has not entered the human heart,
what God has prepared for those who love him,”

The Bible speaks of God’s great plan for our lives like this: *For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren (Romans 8:29).*

God’s ultimate goal in our lives is to make us like Jesus, and here, John speaks of the fulfillment of that purpose.

³ All who have this hope in Him purify themselves, just as He is pure.

I think John here is pointing us toward heaven, and the expectation of what it will mean to be prepared to meet Jesus one day! So, when we get a glimpse of what God is up to here on earth, and where He is

leading us one day, it is staggering. It is amazing, beyond our wildest dreams. But if we are lax in our faith walk, which happens to us all at times; but if we find ourselves complacent, bored, dabbling in the ways of the world; this is the time for a big wake up call. We do not want to miss what Jesus has been preparing for us!

⁴Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness.

Sin is lawlessness: John is here calling sin out at its most basic level.

To sin is to have a disregard for the law of God, which is a fundamental disregard for the One Who is the law *Maker*, God Himself.

How many times do we refuse to call sin for what it is? And in so doing we often find ourselves failing in the battle against sin because we do not want to accept sin as a transgression against God Almighty.

The late John Stott, an Anglican Priest, theologian and great writer of Christian works, called out sin this way; “The first step towards holy living is to recognize the true nature and wickedness of sin.”

⁵ But you know that He appeared so that He might take away our sins. And in Him is no sin.

The Apostle John is here bringing God's purpose for sending Jesus into the world into the most basic of explanations; this is it folks.

Jesus Christ came to unburden humanity of the dark, heavy, unbearable weight of our depravity. Remember leading up to the Christmas story, the angel Gabriel promised Joseph, betrothed to Mary, who would be Jesus' mother, regarding the ministry of Jesus: ***“You shall call His name JESUS, for He shall save His people from their sin (Matthew 1:21).*** If you step back and look at the world as it is, those who put their hope in Jesus Christ are the only ones with any hope at all, for only Jesus Christ can lift us out of the despair of this lost world. Only Jesus can save us from the devil and ourselves. Period.

⁶ No one who lives in Him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen Him or known Him.

Friends, if you were dozing off up to now, I think you need to sit up and take notice. I think that the misunderstanding of what John is saying here has caused so many people to find discouragement in our Christian faith rather than hope and caused some to even shipwreck their faith.

Here is why: John has already told us in [1 John 1:8](#) “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”

All of us, every single one of us, is a sinner. We sin, we fail, we fall.

So, when we look at the Greek grammar in this 1 John 1 verse, he is talking about occasional acts of sin. None of us are sinless here on earth.

Meanwhile, the grammar used in chapter 3 is very different. This is specifically talking about a continual lifestyle of sin. It means to be “settled” in sin; to have forms set up around deep and abiding sin. When Jan and I had the privilege of spending some time in rural Switzerland, we stayed near a road construction project and got to see how the Swiss make their roadside curbing. They actually use small rectangular concrete blocks, laid end to end. The workers we saw were using long,

stout boards, that we would call “forms”, to guide their work, so that it was exactly straight. These forms, like for use with our poured concrete, solidly hold things in place, in fact making it near impossible to change the direction once in place. Likewise, the sin John is discussing in his third chapter is a very fixed, deeply engrained way of living. This is someone living a very willful, lawless, and disobedient lifestyle.

⁷Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. The one who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous.

Back in John’s time there were many voices clamoring to give their view of Christianity. Gnosticism, a repudiation of the material world and a confusing denial of Jesus’ divinity, was rampant during John’s Day. He was calling them back from heresies that had crept into the early Church, leading some to perversion and great disobedience. And he was clearly saying that how we live and behave matters in this faith walk.

⁸The one who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.

Herein lies a huge truth at the end of verse 8;

The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.

We could spend the entire hour talking about this point alone. In fact, books could be filled with what the Bible tells us about the devil, Satan, the Great Deceiver, the serpent. Truthfully, for those of you new in the faith, or as a review for others, it is critical to understand that in this world there is a real devil, he has worked tirelessly since the dawn of humanity to destroy us, to discredit the Holy Trinity, and to ruin God's perfect plan for creating a people to be HIS People forever! **In John Chapter 10, verse 10, John, the same John as is writing here, quotes Jesus, "The thief (the devil), comes only to steal, kill, and destroy. But I came that you might have life and have it abundantly."**

9-10 No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in them; they cannot go on sinning, because they have been born of God. 10 This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not God's child, nor is anyone who does not love their brother and sister.

The change from being *of the devil* to being *children of God* comes as we are *born of God*; when this happens, our old nature, patterned after the instinctive rebellion of Adam, dies – and we are given a new nature, patterned after the instinctive obedience of Jesus Christ.

As the Apostle John did in chapter 3 of his Gospel, he is here talking about a believer being Born Again. It means that a massive, life-altering *change* comes into our lives – it is a change that must be worked out in every single part of our lives, yet these changes will begin to have incalculable effects on everything we think, say, and do for eternity.

In ending, let us take note that what John is saying in these last verses is that there is an absolute, genuine attack going on all the time in the world; And this attack, fomented by the devil and often carried out by those enticed away by him, is an attack against those trying to walk in

relationship to Jesus Christ and to walk in love with other believers.

These two massively important aspects of a Christian faith walk are at the very foundation of what it means to be HIS child and to live in His family. For to be righteous is to be led by His Holy Spirit. **Matthew 6:33** says, **“Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.”** And, as we walk in Him, we will follow Him, and His commandments. And that will bring us to a place of loving one another and desiring to do His will. And that, my friends, is the confidence we can have today, no matter where we find ourselves, if in fact we yield ourselves to Jesus Christ, the undeniable Lord of the Universe and lover of each of us!

So remember,

- having given your life to Jesus Christ, you are indeed a child of God
- As such, you have an unbelievable future in His love.
- And, finally, it is so very important to guard what has been entrusted to you, fight the good fight, and walk in obedience to Him, all by His grace freely given to you.