

Adopted By God

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1 John 3:1-3

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Read 1 John 2:28-3:3

Pray – Title

As we consider these verses from 1st John together, it is quite difficult to get passed that first phrase without pulling over and admiring the beauty of it and the comfort it brings to us as believers. The beauty and comfort of God's love for His Children.

It is obvious as you read his writings, that the Apostle was enamored with and overtaken by the love of God. Specifically, he was consumed by the thought *that God loves Him*.

1 John 4:7–10

⁷ Beloved, let us love one another, for **love is of God**; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸ He who does not love does not know God, **for God is love**. ⁹ In this **the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world**, that we might live through Him. ¹⁰ In this is love, **not that we loved God**, but that **He loved us** and **sent His Son to be** the propitiation for our sins.

It was like John couldn't help it! If you were to cut him, he would bleed the love of God. If you could look into his mind, he would be thinking of the Love of God. Or into his heart, he knew and had experienced the love of God.

In the Gospel that John authored, he refers to himself 5x as *"the disciple whom Jesus loved."*

John 13:23

²³ Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, **whom Jesus loved**.

When John wrote his Gospel, he was younger (respectively). But now, as he writes 1 John, he is an old and aged saint. **But he never lost sight of God's love for him**, but rather, it seems that **the recognition of it grew with time**.

As you've gotten older in Christ, have you lost sight of God's love for you?

Have you grown cold, or numb, to hearing about how God loves you?

Has it lost its effect? Does it not excite you like it used to?

Or has the recognition of it grown with time? What astonished John the most was the fact that God loved *him*. It's easy for me to tell you that God loves you, but for me to believe it about me? That's hard. Why? ***Because I know me...***

So, my hope that today serves as a **reminder** and **encouragement** for each of us who call on the Lord Jesus. That today you would be confronted with the love of God not simply as *information*, but for *motivation*.

Charles Spurgeon

*See how truly our Lord rejoiceth in us. **Is not this unparalleled love!** We have heard of princes who have been smitten by the beauty of a peasant's daughter, but what of that? Here is the Son of God doting (excessive fondness) upon a worm, looking with eyes of admiration upon a poor child of Adam, and listening with joy to the lispsings of poor flesh and blood. **Ought we not to be exceedingly charmed by such matchless condescension? And should not our hearts as much delight in Him as He doth in us?** O surprising truth! Christ Jesus rejoices over His poor, tempted, tried, and erring people.*

This love God has is not theoretical, but active.

This is a love that made a son or daughter out of an enemy.

Romans 5:8

⁸ But **God demonstrates His own love toward us**, in that **while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.**

This is a love that is not earned, but given.

Titus 3:4–6

⁴ But when the kindness and **the love of God** our Savior toward man appeared, ⁵ **not by works of righteousness which we have done**, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, ⁶ whom He poured out on us abundantly **through Jesus Christ our Savior**

This love is not temporary, but eternal. Meaning as God's child, you cannot lose this love.

Romans 8:38–39

³⁸ For **I am persuaded** that **neither** death **nor** life, **nor** angels **nor** principalities **nor** powers, **nor** things present **nor** things to come, ³⁹ **nor** height **nor** depth, **nor any other created thing**, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

It was the love of God that sent Jesus into the world and the love of Jesus that motivated Him to come, it is because of this love that you and I have placed our faith in Christ and have been **Adopted By God.**

Galatians 4:4–5

⁴ But when the fullness of the time had come, **God sent forth His Son**, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵ **to redeem** those who were under the law, **that we might receive the adoption as sons.**

John was more than just moved by the Love of God towards him, he was *transformed by it*. And from this moment of praise, John will give us **3 Benefits of being Adopted By God**.

1. A Brand New Home (1)

1 John 3:1

¹ **Behold** what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.

Notice: There in the middle of the verse, it says, *“the world does not know us”* ...Why? Well because we no longer belong to this world, **our home is heaven.**

John 14:2–3

² **In My Father’s house** are many mansions; if *it were* not so, I would have told you. **I go to prepare a place for you.** ³ **And if I go and prepare a place for you,** I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, *there* you may be also.

You and I have **a new home**, prepared by Jesus, in the Father’s house...in verse 1, we see 3 things about this new home. The first thing we notice about this **new home** is this:

1. A Brand New Home (1)

1a. With a New Father (1a)

Interesting to note, that God is referred to as **Father** in every N.T. Book except 3 John, communicating the importance of this for us.

Verse 1a:

Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us...

If you were to read the passage as we did, you would recognize that this sentence doesn’t quite follow the flow of thought. I believe that this is a **parenthetical insert of praise**. John hit the topic of the new birth at the end of 2:29, and bursts forth in praise.

Behold – to *stare at*, i.e. to *discern* clearly; to *attend to*; by Hebraism to *experience*; to *appear*:—behold, perceive, see, take heed, to gaze upon.

What Manner – Adjective: D Edmond Hierbert says it *“implies a reaction of astonishment, and usually of admiration...”* and he goes on to say it implies **BOTH** quality and quantity: *“What glorious, measureless love!”*

So that we are to *gaze upon* and *experience* the “*glorious, immeasurable*” **love of God**. This is the love that was *bestowed on us...*

Bestowed – Give, Bestow, Commit, Deliver (Perfect-Active-Indicative)

- Signifying that this was an action completed in the past but effecting the present.

Before time began, this love was wrapped up in the heart of God. Before He created a thing He knew you, He loved you, and He bestowed His love upon you before you were even born.

This is a love that you and I can know!

Ephesians 3:14, 17-19

¹⁴ For this reason I bow my knees **to the Father** of our Lord Jesus Christ... ¹⁷ that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸ **may be able to comprehend** with all the saints what is the **width** and **length** and **depth** and **height**—¹⁹ **to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge**; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

To *know* that *which passes knowledge* seems like a contradiction. But it means that we would know *experientially* that which can never be fully exhausted.

Imagine moving the ocean 1 bucket at a time. Could you move it? Yes and no. You could certainly move as much as you get your hands on, but in reality, you can spend 1,000 lifetimes and never *really* move the ocean.

The love of God can be experienced, but it will never be exhausted. By this love, we are his children, He is our Father.

1. A Brand New Home (1)

1b. With a New Name (1b)

You and I are no longer children of the world, the devil, or Adam, but notice:

Verse 1b:

that we should be called children of God!

John goes on in chapter 3 to contrast the children of the world/devil and the children of heaven/God. But here, this is an exclamation of adoption! That we are now **God’s children!** Now we bear **His name**.

John Phillips

There are three ways that one can get into a family. One can be **born into the family** in the usual way, which might be called the **life principle**...Or one can **be adopted**, whereby one becomes a member of a family through the **law principle**. Or one can **be married into a family** by means of **the love principle**, whereby one falls in love with a member of the opposite sex, marries that person, and each marriage partner becomes **thereafter a member of the other's family**. **To make triply sure that we are really and truly placed in His family, God employs all three principles.**

Life = Born again.

Law = Adopted by God.

Love = The bride of Christ, the church.

When you enter into the **brand new home** God has prepared for you, you get **a new name**:

When writing to the churches of Asia in Revelation, Jesus tells those believers in Pergamos that those who overcome will be **given a new name**.

Revelation 2:17

¹⁷ "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And **I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it.**" '

Historically, during the Grecian games, the winners would receive a **white stone** with their **name** engraved upon it. It was their reward or prize for winning, but this **white stone** also served as their entry into the awards banquet.

You and I who have believed in Jesus will receive a **white stone** from the Lord Jesus with **a new name**. No longer a worldly name, but a unique name fit for heaven.

A new Father. A new Name... and...

1. A Brand New Home (1)

1c. With a New Address (1c)

The child of God can no longer enjoy this world like they once did, or like one who has not placed their faith in Christ. Earlier I mentioned the **parenthetical inserts of praise**, this is where John picks up his train of thought from 2:29.

Verse 1c:

Therefore (In light of being born again-v.29) *the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.*

Just a few verses later (13), he says: **“Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you.”**

The very moment you were born again, you were made brand new. You had a new way of seeing things. It was as if God had downloaded a whole new operating system into you that *caused you to see as God sees*, and no longer as the world sees.

But You and I, having been **Adopted by God**, have **a new address**. We are living as temporary residents, passing through.

Philippians 3:20

²⁰ **For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ**

Yes, we live in the world, but we are not to be of the world. We are citizens of heaven, heavenly ambassadors waiting for our King to take us home.

Hebrews 11:13, 16

¹³ These all died in faith, not having received **the promises**, but having seen **them** afar off were assured of **them**, embraced **them** and **confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth...** ¹⁶ But now they desire a better, that is, **a heavenly country**. Therefore **God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.**

This new country, new city, is our **new address**, we belong to heaven, we belong to the Father, **A Brand New Home**. This is the **1st benefit** of being **Adopted by God**. Let's consider the 2nd.

2. A Brand New Hope (2)

1 John 3:2

² Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

This is the ultimate hope we have as believers in Christ, that one day we will be with Him and we will be like Him.

2. A Brand New Hope (2)

2a. Reserved For His Children (2a)

Verse 2a:

Beloved, now we are children of God...

Beloved – John uses this word 4 more time in this letter. Same root word as **love** in v. 1, from Agape.

I think it's plainly obvious that John is expressing his love for the fellow believers, but I see this as another reminder of God's love for them. It is as though he says, *beloved – BY GOD – now we are children of God.*

Notice: This is a present-tense blessing! He says, *now*. That is, at the very moment of conversion you are as much a Child of God as you will ever be!

I know it sounds nice to say, “*we’re all children of God after all...*” but The Bible says only those who are in the family by **life, law, and love** are God's children.

We do not and can not lose this *child status*. The transaction is final, and the Holy Spirit is the agent by which God accomplishes your adoption!

Romans 8:15–16

¹⁵ For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, **but you received the Spirit of adoption** by whom we cry out, “**Abba, Father.**” ¹⁶ **The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.**

The moment you got saved; the Spirit of God moved inside. You're not *waiting* to be God's child, you **ARE children of God.**

*Are you a child of God?
(If you are) Are you living like a child of God?*

This **hope** of resurrection and heaven is reserved for God's kids...

2. A Brand New Hope (2)

2b. Reserved By Faith (2b)

The hope of eternal life must be **reserved by faith.**

Verse 2b:

and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be

John speaks here that though the adoption is finalized, it's not quite complete (*if I can put it that way...*) What I mean is that there is **more to come!**

Revealed – To render apparent, Appear, Manifest, Declare, Show, Make clear (This is the same word in 2:28 speaking of Jesus’ appearing)

God has revealed a lot about heaven, but there are more mysteries than answers! Paul even said it would be a crime to speak of what he saw of heaven!

And so, for us, we look forward to that day with eyes of faith. That for the moment we are here, but a day is coming that we will be with Him and like Him!

1 Peter 1:3–5

³ Blessed *be* the **God** and **Father** of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again **to a living hope** through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to an **inheritance incorruptible** and **undefiled** and **that does not fade away**, **reserved in heaven for you,** ⁵ who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Our *new hope*, is a *living hope, reserved in heaven...through faith*.

2. A Brand New Hope (2)

2c. Reserved For The Future (2c)

Verse 2c:

but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

This sentence comes with the power and brightness of a lightning bolt! The Christian’s hope of heaven is far more than “*Oh, I hope so.*” It’s “*I know so!*”

Remember who’s writing, **John**. **John** walked with Jesus. **John** was in the courtyard of the high priest after Jesus was arrested. **John** stood at the Cross. **John** visited the empty tomb. **John** ate, drank, and fellowshiped with Jesus after the resurrection. **John’s** hope was the hope of assurance. So is ours!

So, John says, *but we know...we...We know Him. We’ve read His Word. We’ve known His Spirit. We’ve seen Him work in us! We’ve been convinced. We know...what do we know?*

Verse 2c:

that when – NOT IF – He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

John reminds these troubled, weary, persecuted believers of their **FUTURE!** That when Christ is revealed, **we will be made like Him**. No matter what difficulties may arise in this life, the believer looks to the future with hope-filled anticipation. We will be found in His likeness and His presence.

Colossians 3:4

⁴ **When Christ *who is our life* appears** [same word as revealed], then you also will appear with Him in glory.

Philippians 3:21a – *(When Jesus comes, He will...)*

²¹ **who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body**

This is the moment in 1 Corinthians 15 where Paul says that we will all be changed, this corruptible body will “*put on incorruption.*” That is when we will finally see our Lord in His unveiled Glory.

Do you long for the return of Christ?

Be reminded saint, He is coming. The difficulties of life have an expiration date.

These remarkable truths are worthy of a lifetime of meditation. As one **Adopted By God**, you and I have a **brand new hope**.

But John doesn't end here. He turns and applies it to our lives. The Love of God has so affected John, that his life was given new direction.

3. A New Heading (3)

Within the realm of navigation, your *heading* is the direction that the front of the ship or plane pointing.

This is where our passage gets **intensely practical**. That **if you and I have been Adopted by God, then our life has A New Heading**. We have a new direction.

1 John 3:3

³ And **everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.**

*If we genuinely have this hope in us,
it will change us!*

Ephesians 2:1–4a

¹ And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, ² in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, ³ among whom **also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath,** just as the others. ⁴ **But God...**

God intervened when we were living in the world, like the world as a part of the world. Now we have a ***new heading***, what does this look like?

3. A New Heading (3)

3a. Following Hope (3a)

This is not optional. This is not for *super-saints* and the *really committed*. No, look at what he says:

Verse 3a:

everyone who has this hope in Him

We need not spend too much time here because we studied it in verse 2. That is the ***hope*** John refers to. This is a loaded statement from the Apostle, why? Because it is as though he says...*does verse 2 apply to you? Great! To have the promise means you have responsibility.*

Titus 2:11–13

¹¹ For **the grace of God that brings salvation** has appeared to all men, ¹² **teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly** in the present age, ¹³ **looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ**

Our life in Christ as children of God has **real implications**. That everyone who has received **the grace of God unto salvation**, also has **the grace of God unto sanctification**.

***There is no such thing as an unchanged Christian.
Has the hope of heaven changed you on earth?***

Our new heading is following after hope!

3. A New Heading (3)

3b. Following Sanctification (3b)

Sanctification is the process of you being made more like Jesus in real time. This is you and I actively becoming *Christ-like* in our conduct and life.

Verse 3b:

purifies himself

Purifies – To make clean, Sanctify, Purify. *Root = Innocent, Clean Holy.*

This word is in the *active* voice, indicating that this is our part in *sanctification*. That means **our response to the hope in us and the love of God for us is a purified life**. A life that over time becomes more and more like Jesus.

This can be illustrated with how we wash our hands. Assuming you use some kind of soap, I would ask what is actually doing the cleaning? Is it the soap? Is it the water? Or is it me actually taking the soap, the water, and my hands and getting involved in the process?

*Is this happening to you?
Do you look more like Jesus now than you did last month?
Last year? 2 years ago? 5 Years ago?*

Matthew Henry

*It is a contradiction to such hope to indulge sin and impurity. And therefore, as we are sanctified by faith, we must be **sanctified by Hope**. That we may be saved by hope we must be **purified by hope**. It is the hope of hypocrites, and not the sons of God, that makes an **allowance** for the gratification of impure desires, and lust.*

Paul put it this way:

Ephesians 4:20–24

²⁰ But **you have not so learned Christ**, ²¹ **if** indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, **as the truth is in Jesus**: ²² **that you put off**, concerning your former conduct, **the old man which grows corrupt** according to the deceitful lusts, ²³ and **be renewed in the spirit of your mind**, ²⁴ and **that you put on the new man** which was created according to God, in true **righteousness and holiness**.

*Has the hope of heaven transformed your life?
Your home? Your marriage? Your work? You when you're alone?*

There is no doubt that the motive for the purification and sanctification of our lives is for the glory and honor of God, but don't forget about verse 1. I believe the greatest motivation for forsaking sin and being sanctified is **the love of God**.

God's love realized ought to be our greatest motivation for Holy living.

Warren Wiersbe

An unbeliever who sins is a creature singing against his Creator. A Christian who sins is a child sinning against his Father. The unbeliever sins against law; the believer sins against love.

When God's love for you causes you to love Him, **the forsaking of sin** becomes a small price to pay for such a loving Father.

John 14:15–16

¹⁵ **"If you love Me, keep My commandments.** ¹⁶ **And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—**

God has given **the power of His Spirit within you** to move sanctification, but you also must be willing and active in the process.

We as those who know and have experienced the love of God must purify ourselves, but also, we want to. Of course, there is grace for when we fall short, we all do. But do you have **a new heading...are you following sanctification?**

3. A New Heading (3)

3c. Following Jesus (3c)

Verse 3c:

just as He is pure.

Our **new heading**, our new direction, is to follow Jesus. To know what a purified life actually looks like, we must look to Christ. When He returns, we will finally and fully be like Him.

May you and I live in such a way that we could confidently say with John, **"Even so, come, Lord Jesus."**

2 Corinthians 7:1

¹ Therefore, **having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.**

We have...

*A Brand New Home
A Brand New Hope
A Brand New Heading*