

## **Review**

We pick up this morning with 1 John 2:28...

### **2:28-29 Abide In Him And Practice Righteousness**

John gives us a great reminder of what he's written to us already:

First: Abide in Him. If you abide in Him, you won't be ashamed when Christ comes for you.

Second: Because Jesus is righteous, we are called to live righteously as well. It the strongest evidence we have that we've been born again.

### **3:1-3 Children Of God**

In a demonstration of his incredible love, God has adopted us (Rom. 8:15) as His children. When you adopt a child, you don't have the "advantage" of them turning out to look like you physically. They don't have your DNA, your genetics. (Of course, for some of us, that's probably a good thing!) But while the child you adopt may not take on your physical characteristics, because of the years and closeness too you, they will often take on your spiritual and personal characteristics.

We have a promise that when God appears, we adopted children are going to be just like Him. But in the meantime, as we wait for that appearing and spend time with Him, we are expected to be taking on His characteristics. We are to purify ourselves because He is pure.

### **3:4-10 The One Who Practices Sin**

John reiterates the point that the person who continues in unrepentant sin does not know God. That person shows they are disregarding the sacrifice Christ made to pay for their sins. Those who would rather behave like the devil prove that they are of the devil.

People often are confused by verse nine. Reading that the one who is born of God cannot sin leads some to think that since they are born of God, they don't sin. Others come to the conclusion that since they sin, they must not be born again.

But in reality, John is talking about continual sin - the regular practice of unrepentant sin. That is more obvious in the original Greek,

where the verb tense of "sin" describes a continuing action.

And John believes this also bears repeating: if you don't love your brothers and sisters in Christ, you're not of God. He'll talk more about this in the following verses...

### **3:11-15 The World Hates The Righteous**

John points out that the world hates us for the same reason Cain hated Abel: because his deeds were evil, while his brother's were righteous.

You're probably familiar with the event: Adam and Eve had two sons, named Cain and Abel. When the time came to make offerings to the Lord for their sin,

**Gen. 4:3-5 ...Cain brought an offering to the LORD of the fruit of the ground. Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and for his offering; but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard...**

Abel had done righteously, but Cain had done unrighteously. Why? Because their parents had told them what had happened between them and God. The conversation probably went something like this:

"Kids, after our eyes were opened, we knew that we were naked. So we sewed fig leaves together and made loin coverings for ourselves. But God made proper coverings for us instead - by killing an animal and putting its skin on us. By doing this, God had established that fact that the works of our hands could never cover our sins. He demonstrated that

**Hebr. 9:22 ...without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.**

"Boys, make sure you never forget that. The only way your sin can be dealt with is through the offering of blood to God."

Abel had done as Mom and Dad had instructed, but Cain disregarded the precedent God had set. His deeds were evil, and he hated his brother for being righteous. Sadly, Cain ended up killing his brother Abel.

So, John tells us, if you live righteously, don't be surprised if the unrighteous people of the world hate you. It's been that way since the

second generation of mankind.

For our part though, we need to continue in love. Love one another, love the brethren. How? John tells us to follow Christ's example...

### **3:16-18 Brothers In Need**

This is how to love: love like Jesus did. Paul wrote that...

**Rom. 5:8 ...God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.**

Jesus showed He loved us by dying to save our lives. And we are called to do the same - the proverbial "pushing someone out of the way of the speeding bus."

Of course, most people aren't presented with those kinds of opportunities very often. But what we are frequently faced with is seeing our Christian brothers and sisters in need. John says that if we turn our backs on them without offering real help, we're showing that we don't have love for them.

And he says, "Don't just give the situation lip service. Anybody can do that, but it's totally empty and costs you nothing." James made the identical point when he said,

**James 2:15-17 If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and be filled," and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that? Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself.**

### **3:19-24 By This We Know**

How can we know we are of the truth? What gives us assurance that we're saved, even when our hearts are condemning us? John says it's "By this." By what? By what we've been talking about - a life of loving the brethren. Of practically meeting one another's needs. Some people might complain that this sounds like a "works-based" salvation. Please understand that these works are not what saves us, but they are what assures us that we are really saved.

And in any event, while works don't save us, they do greatly affect

our lives as saved people. Notice that John shows that our works directly effect whether many of our prayers are even answered:

**1John 3:22 and whatever we ask we receive from Him, BECAUSE WE KEEP His commandments AND DO the things that are pleasing in His sight.**

In context of the passage, we see the likelihood that if God hasn't been answering a lot of our requests, it's quite possibly because we haven't been meeting the needs of Christians that we've seen!

At very least, we've read in the Scriptures today that loving one another is a requirement in the Body of Christ. It's what reassures us that we really do abide in Him, and Him in us.