

That You May Know – 1 John 2:28-3:3

*“We pursue being a disciple making family: surrendered to Jesus, transformed by the gospel, and **saturated in His word.**”*

John takes some time in these verses to help us find confidence in our relationship with Christ. He also points out how we may have security as a believer and not doubt the work of Christ in our life. This text is such a great passage to commit to memory and to help us examine our walk with Christ on a daily basis. The promise of eternal life that we looked at last week in verse 27 is the bedrock of this text today. We can be sure we have eternal life and not always afraid we have done something to lose our salvation. Because of the work of Jesus on the cross and His resurrection we have a relationship with the Father. We see here that this relationship pours out of His love.

Discussion Questions* – *do not feel the pressure to cover them all

1. John writes from a shepherd's heart of love and is calling the believers to abide in Christ. This is to continually follow the teaching of Christ and to allow God to transform them to look more like Christ through their obedience. John makes a crucial point that should shape our lives and that is “when he appears.” He is referring to the return of Christ. John speaks to how one may have confidence at the appearing of Christ and also that one would not be ashamed. Take a moment and reflect on the return of Christ. How should this very truth impact all of our lives? (i.e. our decisions, our daily routines, our marriages, our motivations, our family, our worship, etc.). Discuss how much this really directs your life. What hinders us in this area? How might we grow in this?
2. We have all had moments where we lacked confidence in being accepted by God and being restored in relationship. What has caused this? Even after becoming a Christian, we may find ourselves struggling in our old nature. John is pointing out that abiding in Christ will give us confidence at His appearing. He also points out that abiding in Christ will not lead us to shrink back in shame at Christ's return. As you think and reflect on the return of Christ, are there any areas of your life right now that you would find shameful upon His return? They may even be good things that have become ultimate things (i.e. work, kids, religion, health, finances, etc.).
3. We know that it is by grace we have been saved through faith and not of works (Eph 2:8-9) so we will not experience the judgment between heaven and hell. For those in Christ Jesus that judgment was placed on Christ to give us heaven. However, the way we live our lives after we are rescued has purpose and meaning. We will be judged on how we live for the glory of God (1 Corinthians 3:11-13). It will be judged not for salvation but for reward. It is a call to purity.

How do we make sure we live our lives with God's glory and eternal purpose in mind? How should this mindset impact the gathering of believers?

4. John writes, "how great a love the Father has lavished on us that we should be called children of God and that we are." This is an extraordinary message. This is an "out of this world" type love that God has for us. While we were yet sinners He gave us a rescue through Christ. He brought us into the family. Everything begins with the love of the Father. John points out that this love is "lavished" on us. Take a moment and let that sink in. The God of the universe loves you. What is your response? We "should" be called children of God. We should reflect the Father, in character and name. The amazing privilege to be called to be a part of His family. Does this resonate as loudly for you as it should? Do you find it hard to really celebrate this because deep down we wonder, "why wouldn't God love me, look at me?" How does this truth humble us as believers? How does this truth lead us to worship Him? How does this truth lead us to love others the way we have been loved?
5. We find hope in the love of the Father and the return of Christ. This is the "promise" of eternal life that was mentioned in v.27. We shall see Christ when He appears and be like Him. We don't completely understand or know all of what this entails but we know that it will be amazing. We will be like Him. There will be no more sin, sorrow, death, lying, stealing, betrayal, etc. What are some of our hope substitutes? When do you find your hope in God to begin to wane the most? How might you fuel the hope that Christ gives us? Who do you know right now that needs to know this God given hope? Pray for them and pray for opportunity this week to share with them.