

“What Kind of Love”

1 John 3:1-3

INTRODUCTION

1. Chapter 3 begins Part 2 of John’s letter.

- Part 1: (chapters 1 & 2) God is light (truth and righteousness); ‘Let’s clarify what the heresy is.’
- Part 2: God is Father. ‘Let’s clarify the developing spiritual life of believers.’

2. John begins this 2nd section by focusing on relationship: God is our Father, we are His children.

→ What kind of love is this?

AN ADOPTING LOVE. v.1a

1. God’s adopting love is astonishing: See what kind of love. NAS: *See how great a love...* NKJV: *Behold...*

- “Behold” = See this with amazement! It is meant to be seen and admired. Idea is: “Look at that!” (Mk 13:1)
- ‘Of what kind’ = Gk. lit “of what country”

2. God’s adopting love is a gift: ...the Father has given to us. Rom 5:15-17; 6:23; Eph 2:8; 1 Pet 3:7

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

3. God’s adopting love makes us members of His family. ...that we should be called children of God.

- God could have called us any number of things—He chose to make us His children.
- And it is REAL: *...and so we are.* → Why does John include this phrase?

AN ALIENATING LOVE. v.1b

1. God’s great love alienates us from the world: ...the world does not know us.

- We are estranged from the world because of who we are as children of God.
- Every person is in conflict—either against God or against the world. Eph. 2:11-19. *Which are you?*

2. God’s great love alienates Christ from the world too: ...it did not know him.

- Jesus Christ is estranged from the world because of who He is as the Son of God and because of His love.
- John 1:10-12: *He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God...*

AN IDENTITY-CHANGING LOVE. v.2

1. God’s great love changes our identity—now: Beloved, we are God’s children NOW... Ref. Rom. 8:14-16

- Note repeated emphasis. v.1: *...and so we are;* v.2: *Beloved, we are God’s children now.*

2. Our identity as His children is not yet fully revealed. ...and what we will be has NOT YET appeared...

- It is genuine; it is real—but it is not fully shown yet.

3. Our identity as His children will one day be full revealed. ...when he appears, WE SHALL BE like him...

→ Summary of Paul’s message in NT to Christians—‘Become who you already are.’

A SANCTIFYING LOVE. v.3

1. God’s great adopting love purifies us to be like Him.

- God’s purifying love does not leave us in our sins. “Like father, like son.”
- Heb. 2:11: *For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers.*

2. God’s purifying love is for everyone who believes: Everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself...

- No one is left out.