

**Text: 1 John 3:1-13**

Section 1

*1See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. (1 John 3:1)*

God loves us so much that He sent His Son Jesus to die as punishment for our sins, and then rise again so that we have the same hope, and all in fulfillment of Scripture!

**1Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, 2by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. 3For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, (1 Corinthians 15:1-4)**

In saving us, He has called us to a life of service, but also to a life of friendship and communion.

**15"No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you. 16" You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you. (John 15:15-16)**

But, even more amazingly, besides being **friends** of God the Son, we have been adopted **as sons** by God the Father, and heirs with Christ of the hope of eternal life.

**14For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. 15For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" 16The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, 17and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him. (Romans 8:14-17)**

Yet, the world does not know or recognize our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and thinks God's—the ways of its creator—are foolish. If we are like Him, the world won't accept us, either.

**10He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. 11He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. 12But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, 13who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. (John 1:10-13)**

**14But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. (1 Corinthians 2:14)**

Section 2

*2Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. (1 John 3:2)*

Jesus will appear, coming again in power and glory. Those of us that have died will rise again, and all that believe will, like him, receive glorified, immortal bodies.

**13But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. 14For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. 15For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17Then we who are alive and remain**

**will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. 18Therefore comfort one another with these words.**

**50Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. 51Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, 52in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. 53For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP in victory. 55"O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?" 56The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; 57but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 58Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord. (1 Corinthians 15:50-58)**

### Section 3

*3And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure. 4Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness. 5You know that He appeared in order to take away sins; and in Him there is no sin. 6No one who abides in Him sins; no one who sins has seen Him or knows Him. 7Little children, make sure no one deceives you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous; 8the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil. 9No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. 10By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother. (1 John 3:3-10)*

Commentators agree that in verse 6 when John says *No one who abides in Him sins*, He means sin “as a habit or rule of life, and without remorse.” This must be so, for the Bible elsewhere is plain that everyone sins, even believers after they are saved. Remember, John wrote about this earlier in this same letter!

**8If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. 9If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us. (1 John 1:8-10)**

In this section, John talks repeatedly about the practice of righteousness being necessary for those born of God. Do not take this as teaching salvation by works—the Word is plain in teaching that we are saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, and that those attempting to gain salvation by following the Law are, in fact, **curse**d.

**16"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. (John 3:16)**

**25Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, 26and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?" (John 11:25-26)**

**10For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO DOES NOT ABIDE BY ALL THINGS WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE LAW, TO PERFORM THEM." 11Now that no one is justified by the Law before God is evident; for, "THE RIGHTEOUS MAN SHALL LIVE BY FAITH." (Galatians 3:10-11)**

**8For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. 10For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them. (Ephesians 2:8-10)**

Yet, even the last passage says that we are saved by grace through faith, to do good works. As we discussed last week, Jesus tells us to “abide” or “stand firm” in Him, and that we do so through obedience. We are not saved by our works, but good works in obedience to Christ are a necessary byproduct that always accompanies salvation.

**1"I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. 2"Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit. 3"You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. 4"Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. 5"I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. 6"If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned. 7"If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. 8"My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to**

**be My disciples. 9" Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. 10" If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. 11" These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full. (John 15:1-11)**

As we read last week, check your "fruit." The unregenerate person will have one set of behaviors and attitudes, and the saved will have another. Again, our works do not save us, but they do give a good indication of whether or not we are truly saved. The Bible knows nothing of the "carnal Christian," at least as a continuing mode of life and conduct.

**19 Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, 20 idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, 21 envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. 24 Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. (Galatians 5:19-24)**

Finally, James warned us emphatically that **faith without works is dead**, and has no power to save.

**14 What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but he has no works? Can that faith save him? 15 If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, 16 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? 17 Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself. 18 But someone may well say, "You have faith and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works." 19 You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder. 20 But are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that faith without works is useless? 21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar? 22 You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected; 23 and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "AND ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS," and he was called the friend of God. 24 You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone. 25 In the same way, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? 26 For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead. (James 2:14-25)**

#### Section 4

*11 For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another; 12 not as Cain, who was of the evil one and slew his brother. And for what reason did he slay him? Because his deeds were evil, and his brother's were righteous. 13 Do not be surprised, brethren, if the world hates you. (1 John 3:11-13)*

To love one another is, except for loving God, the most important commandment in the Law, according to the Lord Jesus.

**36 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" 37 And He said to him, " 'YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.' 38 "This is the great and foremost commandment. 39 "The second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' 40 "On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets." (Matthew 22:36-40)**

**On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.** The basic statement of God's Law, the Ten Commandments, is usually interpreted as having two "tables," the first (1-4) relating to how we should behave toward God, and the second (5-10) how we should behave toward one another. Thus, the two commandments Jesus mentioned in the previous passage are in effect a summary of the Ten Commandments. How do we love God and our neighbor? It's not just a feeling—behave toward them in the way prescribed in the Ten Commandments and you will be well on your way to doing so.

**1 Then God spoke all these words, saying, 2 "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. 3 "You shall have no other gods before Me. 4 "You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. 5 "You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, 6 but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments. 7 "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain. 8 "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9 "Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. 11 "For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy. 12 "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the LORD your God gives you. 13 "You shall not murder. 14 "You shall not commit adultery. 15 "You shall not steal. 16 "You shall not**

**bear false witness against your neighbor. 17" You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor." (Exodus 20:1-17)**

Cain killed Abel out of jealousy for Abel's acceptance in God's sight, as if this would make Cain's position better!

**1**Now the man had relations with his wife Eve, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain, and she said, "I have gotten a manchild with the help of the LORD." **2**Again, she gave birth to his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of flocks, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. **3**So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the LORD of the fruit of the ground. **4**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; **5**but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell. **6**Then the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? **7**"If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it." **8**Cain told Abel his brother. And it came about when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him. **9**Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" And he said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?" **10**He said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to Me from the ground. **11**"Now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. **12**"When you cultivate the ground, it will no longer yield its strength to you; you will be a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth."(Genesis 4:1-12)

Did Cain perhaps think that his poor sacrifice would be accepted if it were the best available (after Abel's removal)? The erroneous worldview of relativism, which is so prevalent today, behaves much like Cain, believing in no absolute right or wrong, but only comparisons and "situational ethics." Even some professing believers really don't get it—"I think I'm going to Heaven because I'm not too bad, or the good outweighs it. I mean, I'm not perfect, but I don't steal or cheat on my wife; I behave better than most of the folks I see around, and I'm certainly no Hitler!" Remember, though, God's standard is perfection, not "better than," and the punishment for any and all sin is death!

**23**For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 6:23)

Unbelievers, like Cain, reject God for a false god of their own making. The true God is holy and perfect, and demands our perfect allegiance and obedience (which we can't provide without Christ). Those that reject God will experience His wrath!

**18**For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, **19**because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. **20**For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. **21**For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. **22**Professing to be wise, they became fools, **23**and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures. (Romans 1:18-23)

John says the world will hate us if we follow Christ. That's ok. Jesus also said this would happen, and said to **take courage**. As we've already read today, those that believe in Him look forward to a better world, a better Kingdom, a better life—a life of everlasting service and communion with God Himself!

**32**"Behold, an hour is coming, and has already come, for you to be scattered, each to his own home, and to leave Me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. **33**"These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world." (John 16:32-33)

**1**Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. **2**And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. **3**And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, **4**and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away." **5**And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new " And He said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true." **6**Then He said to me, "It is done I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost. **7**"He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son. **8**"But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." **9**Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, "Come here, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb." **10**And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, **11**having the glory of God Her brilliance was like a very costly stone, as a stone of crystal-clear jasper. **12**It had a great and high wall, with

twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and names were written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel. 13There were three gates on the east and three gates on the north and three gates on the south and three gates on the west. 14And the wall of the city had twelve foundation stones, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. 15The one who spoke with me had a gold measuring rod to measure the city, and its gates and its wall. 16The city is laid out as a square, and its length is as great as the width; and he measured the city with the rod, fifteen hundred miles; its length and width and height are equal. 17And he measured its wall, seventy-two yards, according to human measurements, which are also angelic measurements. 18The material of the wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass.

19The foundation stones of the city wall were adorned with every kind of precious stone The first foundation stone was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald; 20the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst. 21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was a single pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass. 22I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. 23And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb. 24The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. 25In the daytime (for there will be no night there) its gates will never be closed; 26and they will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it; 27and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

1Then he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, 2in the middle of its street On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. 3There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him; 4they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads. 5And there will no longer be any night; and they will not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illumine them; and they will reign forever and ever. (Revelation 21:1-22:6)