

Children of God or Children of the devil – John said the difference is Obvious

“Children of God or Children of the Devil” – Obvious or Not?

*(“The Last Eyewitness”- A Study of the First Epistle of John
– Message Three)*

Review of Messages One and Two:

Lesson One Highlights: The Last Eyewitness

- John was the oldest and last surviving disciple, now called apostles.
- Eyewitness to (or still alive when this occurred):
- Jesus miracles and ministry on earth (one of the first four disciples chosen.)
- Jesus’ crucifixion, burial, resurrection, and ascension into Heaven
- Witnessed the overpowering descent of the Holy Spirit on them at Pentecost
- Peter changed from denier of Jesus to one of the leaders of His church
- The death of James, his brother, by King Herod- the first disciple martyred
- Persecution of Christians by and salvation of Saul-Paul
- Deaths of all his fellow apostles
- The birth of the Christian church and its struggles to survive
- Exiled, with “criminals”, on Patmos, an island in the Aegean Sea, for preaching the Gospel.
- Moved to Ephesus to spend the rest of his life preaching and exhorting the church.
- Like Paul, he battled Gnostics who were challenging the Truth of the Gospel.

- We saw the importance of personal **testimonies** to reach people for Christ – including ours.
- We learned the biblical meaning of the word **fellowship** and what it looks like.
- John said Jesus was the **propitiation** (appeasement) for our sins. We studied the meaning.

Lesson Two Highlights: Five Evidences from the life of a Christian

- Obedience
- Love (no one born of Christ can hate)
- Hating sin and not loving the world
- Evidence against – being a pretender or antichrist
- The Anointing of the Holy Spirit

"See 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. Beloved, 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. And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure." 1 John 3: 1-3

As we move into Chapter 3, John gave a great word of encouragement for those who are truly born-again in Christ. He spoke of the great love of God our Father that we have become children of God. Fully adopted into His family. The Apostle Paul said it beautifully,

"For 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!"" Romans 8: 15

John restated a key point that Jesus made, *the world does not know us because it did not know Him.* He first made that point

in the opening verses of his Gospel account.

In Him (Jesus) was life, and the life was the Light of men. The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it...He (Jesus) was in the world...and the world did not know Him. He came to His own (Jews), and those who were His own did not receive Him.” from John 1: 4, 5, 10, 11

John spoke of the Rapture (the first part of Jesus' Second Coming) and reminded us of the promise that we will be made like Jesus – this is our eternal hope. So then we should live pure and holy lives in obedience to Christ's commands.

Then John quickly transitioned back to sin and those who practice it (live in sin) with no remorse or repentance. He did not mince words and brings us to our message title today.

*“Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness. You know that He (Jesus) **appeared in order to take away sins; and in Him there is no sin. No one who abides in Him sins; no one who sins has seen Him or knows Him.** Little children, make sure no one deceives you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous; the 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.** No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. By 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: 4-10

Children of God

- If we abide in Jesus, we do not **practice** sin (live in sin or a sinful lifestyle)
- Practices righteousness.

- We obey His commands
- We live as He lived
- We love as He loved

Children of the devil

- Abide or live in sin (practice sin) with no remorse or repentance.
- Do not practice the righteousness of Christ
- Do not love their brothers (Many lost people say they love everyone and Christians are the haters.)

The Good News is that Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil and He did. Laying down His life (blood sacrifice) and conquering death (resurrection) He offers salvation to all who **repent** of their sins and receive Him as Savior. To refuse Him is to remain a child of the devil—no matter how good you think you are.

The Love Reminder

For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another; 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. Do not be surprised, brethren, if the world hates you. 1 John 3: 11 – 13

Evidence

We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death. Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? Little children, let us not love with word or

with tongue, but in deed and truth. We will know by this that we are of the truth” 1 John 3: 14 – 19a

Confidence, and Answered Prayers

*and will assure our heart before Him in whatever our heart condemns us; for God is greater than our heart and knows all things. Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have **confidence** before God; and whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight. 1 John 3: 19b – 22*

Restating the commandments as laid out in these first three chapters.

*This is His commandment, that we **believe** in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and **love** one another, just as He commanded us. The one who **keeps His commandments** abides in Him, and He in him. We know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us. 1 John 3: 23 – 24*

- Believe
- Love
- Obey

His promise is to abide in us thru the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, Who enables and empowers us to carry out the above—that which is impossible on our own (in the flesh).

My dear brothers and sisters, we have been taught so much truth in this short epistle:

*how to live and love like Jesus and know with certainty we are born-again as **children of God** thru Christ, and what living lost and apart from Him (children of the devil) looks like and produces.*

Thank you for hanging in there with me as I teach these difficult and very unpopular things— knowing the world hates reading or hearing it just as Jesus said they would. I keep

doing so believing some will be awakened to these truths and receive Christ as Savior.

For Christ's sake,

Walter