

Living as children of God: 1 John 3.1-10

A palindrome today (12.1.21) — and a great TFTD from Kate on one of my favourite verses:

See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called the children of God; and that is what we are. beloved, we are God's children now; what we shall be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

Living as Children of God

According to this passage, John is giving an encouragement that Christian life is a process of becoming more and more like Christ. This process will not be complete until we see Christ Jesus face to face; but knowing that it is our ultimate destiny should motivate us to purify ourselves. The focus is not on one's self-image, needs or ego. The focus is on the glory of God. *He must increase, and I must decrease* (John 3:30). The other is to love others as ourselves. This beautiful gift of God to us is so important because God's love enables us to live a life that reflects the image of God in us and also we are able to share that love of God in us with others.

God's lavishing love (1 John 3:1) – When John writes about our becoming children of God, he is not thinking mainly in terms of adoption. Rather how we become children of God through Christ. There is no comparison between human adoption and our being made children of God for example, in human a parent adopting a child cannot cause the child to be born again. They take their adopted child and love him/her with the personality and temperament that he/she has from their biological parents. Although they will influence with love, they can't get into the very nature of the person and change it. Whereas according to John, God's love for us is not like human adoption rather God moves in by his spirit and plants in us the seed that resembles his characteristics.

Here John continues to emphasise that anyone who is born of God must not continue in practising sin because the seed of God lives in them. ([1 John 3:9](#))

Paul likewise emphasise this theme of God's plan long before the world was made. ([Romans 8:29](#)) And that is why as God's children, we have been given the very nature of God, since God's seed is in us. That is similar to saying that His holy DNA is placed in us when we place our faith in Him.

This is so important for us to understand or we will never live the life we were meant to live.

A great illustration is from the Chronicles of Narnia - we are like Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy after they have gone to Narnia and found out their identity as the kings and queens of the land. When they return to London no one thinks of them as royalty, they are seen as ordinary children. They are not highly respected or treated differently, but for them, life is never the same again because now they know their true identity.

We too desperately need the same type of understanding of our identity. We are children of God. We are not just people who are trying to 'be good' we don't just have certain beliefs and go through certain rituals and ceremonies dictated by the church, we have become new creations. We have been transformed. We have been purchased by God with the precious blood of Christ. We have been adopted by the Almighty. Ephesians 2:10 says, "For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago."

John's point of course, is that as children of the Heavenly Father, as ambassadors for Christ, our lives should look dramatically different and the focus of our lives should be on such a higher plan that the things of this world aren't even tempting.

How does this biblical understanding of our identity as God's children help us to live righteously? If we would look at this vision that God has placed before us – this understanding that we are His precious children who have an extraordinary purpose for our brief time here on earth — we would be able to stop worrying about the circumstances that happen to us and focus instead on how he is shaping us for what he has planned for our future (we are destined for glory). In other words, John explained that as children of God we will share in Jesus' glory one day (Col. 3:4).

In the context of sinning (1 John. 3:4-7), John explains that sin is lawlessness. It is the breaking of God's law. Sin is rebellion against God. That is the very essence of sin. John points out in *verse 5* that Jesus came to take away our sins. Then, in *verse 8* he reminds us that Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil. And vice versa, we cannot take sin lightly, because when we participate in sin we are participating in things opposite of the reason for which Jesus came.

Finally, as children of God it is important that we strive to be like the one who saved us — the author and perfecter of our faith — Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The great I am, who is all mighty, all powerful, all merciful, all gracious, all knowing, all sufficient, all loving, he is all in all and he is all that you need.

God bless, Kate

© Kate Komepwaisiho

12th January 2021