

WHAT MANNER OF LOVE IS THIS? (Scripture Reading: 1 John 3:1-3)

Introduction: The Bible is one long love story. God created the earth and the heavens for the humans to live comfortably. He delighted ADAM and Eve with His creative power. He walked with them daily as their friend. Yet what happened? They rejected His way of life, and they were bent upon choosing their own life style without God. Once they rejected God, their entire generation became wicked. We all know the Noah's story and how God destroyed those wicked generations through flood. We all know the history of Israel, and how they rejected Him, and went after the foreign idols again and again. Yet God did not give up. He kept on calling them back. Still they never listened. Then God decided to talk to them one last time through His Son Jesus Christ. They crucified Him also. Yet His shed blood became an atoning blood for the whole world. Anyone believed in His sacrifice would not perish but have eternal life.

1 John 3:1 tells us more of His love!

1Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.

Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ not only redeemed us through His precious blood, He not only gave us eternal life, but now He has adopted us into His family as His own children that we should be called His children of God. Note it is no more 'adopted children' but His own children now. The word adoption needs to be used only in the beginning of process, but once that process is done, we become His own children forever. We should never be identified ever again as adopted but His own children united and bonded by the pure, sinless blood of Christ.

We are born of the Holy Spirit, not of the flesh anymore. That's why this world does not know us. They do not understand anything about this Spirit. They cannot touch or see or feel this Spirit. They cannot understand the actions and words of the people who are born of the Spirit.

We, as the children of God are bonded by the blood of the Son of God Himself. We are born of the Holy Spirit, and united as a body of Christ and as His bride. We are chosen as the royal vessels to be the priests and kings of His kingdom. We are raised from just a clay of dust to the eternal gold dust of eternal life.

We are indeed brothers and sisters in the church. Church is our extended family. It is an honor to be a part of this family, to worship, fellowship and work together every week. When we do that, we reap the blessing of God in our own family. He that honors the church, the Lord will honor their family.

Countless blessings for the children of God. But it does not stop with that. The next verse pronounces much more blessings when Christ returns!

1 John 3:2 2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

We are already redeemed by the blood of Christ! We are adopted into His family as His own children. We are filled by His Holy Spirit, and blessed with His constant, continued presence in our life. We are promised the everlasting, eternal life!

But when Christ returns, we shall receive more blessings! **In the twinkling of an eye our fleshly body will turn into an incorruptible spiritual body! In the twinkling of an eye...** We will see Him face to face! We shall become like Him. Whatever body He has, we will have the same body. It has to be a spiritual body, because, flesh and blood cannot enter the Kingdom of God. With a shout of an angel, we will be caught up in heaven, and join our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. There will be no more sorrow, no more tears! We will be rejoicing in the Lord forever ruling the universe with Him as priests and kings!

1 John 3:3.

3 And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

This verse connects with the previous chapter:

1 John 2:28, 29.

28 Now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming.

29 If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone also who practices righteousness is born of Him.

This is an awesome call. We must remain faithful to His calling. Our Lord Jesus will not have any pleasure over unfaithful servants who don't care about Him. He wants us to abide in His Spirit so that we may not be ashamed when He returns! We live in righteousness when we abide in His Spirit. Anyone who believes that Jesus Christ can return any moment, will keep himself pure from immoral life! There is an easy way to keep ourselves pure all the time: **just abide in Him always!** Not wander off His presence, and become worldly.

Just imagine how marvelous it is to be called the child of the Supreme Majesty of the Universe, of the Supreme intelligence and Power that created all things. There is no greater privilege than to be a child of God!

No man is a child of God because of any merit or work of his own! Man actually became hostile toward God. He ignored, disbelieved God's promises, rejected God, disobeyed God, and even cursed God! This is what makes God's love so amazing! In spite of all that despicable behavior, God bestowed His love upon us! (ROM. 5:8). While we were yet enemies, He died for us. Should we not show this kind of love to our

spouse, our children, our family members, our friends, and our enemies? **If we do not forgive others, how are we going to stand before God with an unforgiving heart?**

Note that God's love is the giving of His Son to the whole world. God bestowed His love upon us by giving His Son to die for our sins. We know God loves us because He gave His Son to die for us. It is the death of Jesus Christ that makes it possible for us to become children of God. How?

- ─ When Jesus Christ took our sins upon Himself, our sins were removed from us.
- ─ When Jesus Christ died and paid the penalty for our sins, the penalty was removed from us.

Therefore, God is able to receive us as righteous men and women, as being free of sin. Therefore, God is able to accept us into His family, the family of God!

The world does not know nor understand believers. This explains why believers are ridiculed, mocked, ignored, opposed, abused, rejected, and persecuted by the world. The persecution may come at work, school, in the neighborhood, or anywhere else; the world just does not understand why believers act and live the way they do.

The world does not understand:

- ─ Why believers separate themselves from the pleasures, and the things of the world?
- ─ Why believers deny themselves, and live sacrificial so that they can carry the message of Christ to the world and meet the needs of the desperate?.
- ─ Why believers do not forsake the assembling of the brethren?.

The world does not understand us because the world did not know Jesus Christ. God's very own Son came into the world, but the world did not know Him.

If they rejected God's own Son, expect them to reject us also. If they do this to a green tree and crucified the Lamb of God, do you think, they will spare dry trees like us? No way!

We know what we are now but it does not appear what we shall be...when He shall appear.

- ─ The body is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption.

- It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory
- It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power.

A scholar makes an excellent remark on this point!

“What we shall be hereafter is not fully revealed, but we know that we are the Sons of God now and that we are predestined to be conformed to the image of His dear Son (ROM. 8:29). ‘We shall be like HIM.’ What is involved in this tremendous declaration we do not fully know now, and even if God had seen fit to explain it to us, we would not be able to understand it with our poor, limited, finite minds!”

We shall be conformed to the image of His Son. Just as Christ is we shall all be!

Keep our eyes upon the great glory that lies ahead, it stirs us to live pure lives. God loves us so much we must purify ourselves also out of gratitude and appreciation. Are we stirred to live pure lives because of His incredible love for us? Are we???

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