

***Sermon: 1 John 3:1-10***



We Are Children Of God!

# Intro: Family Resemblance



## Family analogy for relationship w. God



- † **2:29 “Born out of God”**
  - John 3:3-7 “born again”
  - 1 Peter 1:3 “...God the Father... in accordance with His abundance of mercy, re-birthed us into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.”
- † **3:1 “You are” “Children of God”**
  - Ezek 16:21 “My children,”
  - Isa 43:6 “My sons... my daughters”
- † **3:2 “We will be like (ὅμοιοι ) Him”**
  - Resemblance will become perfect at His future return

•“Born” is mentioned twice in this verse, both times in the Perfect, Passive, Indicative form. “The Perfect marks not only the single act but the continuous presence of its efficacy” (Westcott 107). The Passive voice tells us that we were not active in this birth; it is entirely God's doing to make us “born again,” not the result of our decisions and actions.

• God calls His people His “children” even in the OT

• We will be like – not just like, but similar to: Homoi means “similar” – Homo means the same.

## Family analogy for relationship w. God



† 2:29 “Born out of God” 3:1 “Children of God” 3:2 “like Him”

† 3:9 “His seed remains in”

**Luke 8:11** “...the seed is the **word** of God... **Matt. 13:37** “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man, (NASB)

**1 Peter 1:23** y’all were not regenerated from a perishable seed, but an imperishable one, through the living [eternal] **word** of God...

**Gen. 3:15** “her seed will crush [Satan’s] head” Gen 12:3 “In your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” Gal. 3:16 “the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his ‘seed’ ... [singular] that is, **Christ.**”

**1 John 3:24** “...by this we know that He is remaining in us, through the **Spirit** which He gave to us.”

**Rom. 8:14-16** “For all who are being led by the **Spirit** of God, these are sons of God. For you ... have received a **spirit** of adoption as sons by which we cry out, ‘Abba!...’ The **Spirit**... testifies with our spirit that we are...” (NASB)

**Galatians 4:4-6** “...God sent forth His Son... that He might redeem... that we might receive the adoption as sons. Because you are sons, God has sent forth the **Spirit** of His Son into our hearts, crying, ‘Abba! Father!’” (NASB)

•So, what is this "seed" that remains in us? John doesn't make it clear in this verse, but let me suggest that it is what we would call the DNA of someone, the organic instructions for making a replica of the parent. What is the DNA of God that remains in us to make us like Christ?

•James 1:18, I Peter 1:23, and Luke 3:11 all refer to the word of God as "seed.”

•Jesus is also called “the Word of God” and is closely associated with the scriptures.

•But there is also the Holy Spirit who personally remains with us...

**NOTE:** The Fatherhood of God and the Sonship of Christ are not copied from earthly family relationships, rather earthly fatherhood and sonship are a dim reflection of the ultimate and original Father-Son relationship within the Godhead. ~Joel Beke

## The Standard of Comparison is Christ



Verse	Us	Comparative	Christ
3:1	world does not know us	Because	It did not know Him
3:2	we will be we will see	Like Just as	He is
3:3	purifying self	Just as	He is pure
3:5	sins removed	And	Sin does not exist in Him
3:6	Not continuing to sin	(because)	seen, known, abiding in Him
3:7	Righteous... doing right	Just as	He is righteous

## Family Relationships

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- † Father “called” (v.1)
- † Son “revealed that He might remove our sins” (v.5)  
and “destroy the works of the devil” (v.8)
- † Spirit “remains in” (v.9)
- † World “doesn’t know/is not familiar” (v.1)
- † You love “brothers” (v.10)

Father: Election

Son: Justification

Spirit: Sanctification

Adoption means breaking family association with the old family – usually the blood-parents rights are terminated or renounced.

You also have family on earth – the church!

## Characteristics of God's Children



- † Knows God (2:3-4, 13-14, 3:6)
- † Has seen God (3:6-*implied*), Jesus revealed (3:8)
- † Will see Him (future) and be like Him (3:2)
- † Sanctifies himself as He is holy (3:3 cf. 1:7)

The verb "purifies/sanctifies" (v.3) is in the present tense, which specifies, not a one-time act, but a continuing process. Thank God we have the Holy Spirit helping us in this process of sanctification!

It is also interesting to note the words for "pure" which John chose. John did not chose the word καθαριζω referring to a "simple state" of cleanness made "by outward means," but rather chose the word αγνιζει, which refers to the "inward effort" of "personally... shrinking from contamination." The believer "disciplines and trains himself that he may more surely walk among the defilements of the world." The wording referring to Christ, however, is different. John chose the phrase εστιν αγνος indicating that Jesus "is pure" absolutely. This further shows us the distance between the way we are and the way He is, and hints at the change to come in our nature when we see Him. He is absolutely holy and is not in a process of becoming more righteous or pure, because His nature has always been completely that way already. Can you imagine how awesome it will be to arrive at that point when we see Him "as He is" and are changed into a nature that IS pure and is no longer involved in the process of training and sanctifying? This hope of Christ's coming isn't so much believing in Christ as it is resting on His character.

We can recognize who has this hope and who doesn't by whether or not they are going through the personal disciplines of growing in God's holiness and purity.

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- † Sanctifies himself as He is holy (3:3 cf. 1:7)
- † Guilt does not exist just as it does not exist in Him (3:5)
- † Not continuing to break His laws (3:4&6)
- † Practices righteousness... as He is righteous (3:7, 10)
- † Not committing sin & not able to be sinning (3:9)
- † Loves other Christians (3:10ff)

We should avoid sin for yet another reason, says John: because sin is out of character for a child of God. A child of God loves the law of God, but a sinner can not. No non-Christian wants to have a divine standard of law telling him what is right and what is wrong; he wants to be a law unto himself. The Greek word *anomia* means literally "not-law," which is why all the modern English versions render the word "lawlessness." The law defines what sin is, and sin is disregarding God's laws. We must never look to ourselves to decide what is right and wrong; the only good standard is the Bible.

It is also totally out-of-character for someone striving to be like Jesus to pursue the sin which Jesus came to "remove." Verse 5 refers back to Jesus' death on the cross: the perfect man was punished for sin in order that we may be forgiven of our sin. It was because He is "pure" and "without sin" that He could do that one-time act of justification on the cross, legally removing our sin.

The verb I rendered "remove" refers to a one-time act and literally means to "take up/lift up/raise." The object of the verb is "sins"—sins in particular, not just the punishment for sins--and some Greek texts add the word "our"--our sins.

So, if it was Christ's mission to take away sin, we have no business sinning! And Christ's mission didn't leave him dead, He was resurrected and lives today. That's why John used the present tense "in Him there IS no sin;" and that's why we can abide in Him.

I plan to get into loving others in the next sermon, but let's make sure we get straight what it means to not sin...

## Not able to be sinning? (v.9)



- † Present tense verb in Greek indicates continuous action, not a one-off action
  - V.6 πᾶς ὁ ἐν αὐτῷ μένων οὐχ ἁμαρτάνει
  - V.9 Πᾶς ὁ γεγεν-νημένος ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἁμαρτίαν οὐ ποιεῖ
- † "The ideas of divine sonship and sin are mutually exclusive. As long as the relationship with God is real sinful acts are but accidents" ~Westcott
- † This "sinning" is "a state rather than an action. The apostle affirms that a Christian can never be a sinner. He will start to be one, will take the first step by committing this or that sin, but he stops short of the condition of being a sinner. To be 'in Christ' is not to be at once perfect, but whenever such a one disgraces himself, his actions never permanently remove him from that mystical union which is unbreakable" ~Hanna
- † "Purpose and inclination in one direction are incompatible with purpose and inclination in the contrary direction" ~Shedd
- † Which direction is the direction of your life?

If we are abiding in Him, we are not sinning. The word for "sinning" is not teaching that we will never commit a single sin; (John would have used a Greek Aorist verb instead of a Present tense verb if he meant that), rather the Present tense here "describes a character, a prevailing habit... each separate sinful act does, as such interrupt the fellowship, and yet, so far as it is foreign to the character of the man and removed from him (2:1) it leaves his character unchanged" (Westcott 104). This is essentially repeating verse three (*everyone who has his hope purifies himself*) and 2:29 (*everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him*), only in the negative (*everyone who is remaining in Him is not sinning*). In every case, the sanctifying/purifying, being born, and not sinning is a description of what the one who has the hope/does righteousness/remains in Him, is like in his being.

-QUOTES

If you have been born out of God, you will be heading in the same direction as our God did--taking away and destroying sin, practicing righteousness, and shunning sin.

## The Command: “Behold” (3:1)



1 **Look** at **what** (manner<sup>KJV</sup>/ kind<sup>ESV</sup>/how great<sup>NAS,NIV</sup>) a love the Father **has given** (bestowed<sup>KJV</sup>) to us so that we might be called [to be] children of God...

Ἴδετε ποταπὴν ἀγάπην δέδωκεν ἡμῖν ὁ πατήρ ἵνα τέκνα Θεοῦ κληθῶμεν

**John 3:16** For God so loved the world that He **gave** His only-begotten Son...

- † True father-love is “given” not earned
- † Parents have the power to “name” children “born” to them (Sarai)
- † “Contemplate” this love – especially the cross!
- † If you can “see” it, you “know” God as “Father,” and you can be sure you “are” His “children”! (Don’t expect the world to get it.-v6)
- † The only other command in this passage is v.7 “let no one deceive you” You won’t be deceived if you are looking at this!

The main command is the very first word – Y’all look! Look at what?

1. Given, not earned
2. “Called” a name: Tell story of Sarai Gloria Maria’s adoption
3. Behold. (Col 3:1 Since you have died with Christ, set your mind on things above where Christ is)
4. Seeing this relationship with God is crucial for knowing that you have it:  
3:6 “everyone who is sinning has not seen Him and has not known Him.”

The only other command comes in v.7 ...

The word in v.10, translated "obvious" (NASV), "know" (NIV), and "manifest" (KJV), is from the same word translated "revealed" in relation to Christ earlier and could also be translated "apparent, clear, conspicuous" (Pershbacher). Some well-meaning people say that we should not judge each other, but here God's own word instructs us in judging the spiritual fatherhood of people!

If you don’t get it; pray for God to bestow it upon you!

If you do get it; rejoice and keep looking at Christ and keep beholding what manner of love the Father has given to you!

And don’t let yourself get led astray by anyone who isn’t part of God’s family and doesn’t have the family traits!

Greek NT	NAW
<p>1 Ἴδετε ποταπὴν ἀγάπην δέδωκεν ἡμῖν ὁ πατήρ ἵνα τέκνα Θεοῦ κληθῶμεν. [καὶ εσμεν<sup>-Maj</sup>] διὰ τοῦτο ὁ κόσμος οὐ γινώσκει ἡμᾶς<sup>LI</sup>, ὅτι οὐκ ἔγνω αὐτόν.</p>	<p>1 Look at <b>what</b> (man-ner<sup>KJV</sup>/ kind<sup>ESV</sup>/how great<sup>NAS,NIV</sup>) a love the Father <b>has given</b> (bestow--ed<sup>KJV</sup>) to us so that we might be called [to be] children of God--and we ARE! On account of this, the world does not know <b>us</b>: (The reason is<sup>NIV</sup>) be-cause it did not know Him.</p>
<p>2 Ἀγαπητοί, νῦν τέκνα Θεοῦ ἐσμεν, καὶ οὐπω ἐφανερωθῆ τι ἐσόμεθα. οἶδα-μεν [δε<sup>TR,Maj</sup>] ὅτι ἐάν φανερωθῆ, ὅμοιοι αὐτῷ ἐσόμεθα, ὅτι ὁψόμεθα αὐτόν καθὼς ἐστί.</p>	<p>3:2 Loved ones, now we are children of God, and what we will be [in the future] has not yet (appeared<sup>KJV,NAS</sup>) <b>been brought to light</b>. We know that whenever it is <b>brought to light</b>, we will be <b>similar to</b> (like<sup>Eng</sup>) Him because we will see Him just as He is.</p>
<p>3 καὶ πᾶς ὁ ἔχων τὴν ἐλπίδα ταύτην ἐπ' αὐτῷ ἀγνίζει ἑαυτόν, καθὼς ἐκεῖνος ἀγνός ἐστι.</p>	<p>3:3 And every one who has this hope in (on) Him is purifying himself just as He is pure.</p>
<p>4 Πᾶς ὁ ποιῶν τὴν ἀμαρτίαν καὶ τὴν ἀνομίαν ποιεῖ, καὶ ἡ ἀμαρτία ἐστὶν ἡ ἀνομία.</p>	<p>3:4 Everyone who <b>is com-mitting</b> (practicing) <b>sin</b> is also <b>committing a violation of law</b>; sin is (lawless-ness<sup>NASB,NIV</sup>) the violation (transgress-sion<sup>KJV</sup>) of law.</p>
<p>5 καὶ οἶδατε ὅτι ἐκεῖνος ἐφανερώθη ἵνα τὰς ἀμαρτίας ἡμῶν<sup>A,B</sup> ἄρῃ, καὶ ἀμαρτία ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἐστί.</p>	<p>3:5 And y'all know that He <b>was revealed</b> (appear-ed<sup>NAS,NIV</sup>/was manifest-ed<sup>KJV</sup>) so that He might (take away<sup>Eng</sup>) <b>re-move</b> our<sup>NAS,ESV</sup> sins, and sin does not <b>exist</b> in Him.</p>

<sup>LI</sup> The pronoun was copied differently as "you" (plural) in a number of manuscripts. (The first time the pronoun occurs in this verse, the Vaticanus and four other manuscripts of lesser antiquity copied it "you," and the second time that it occurs in the verse, it is the Sinaiticus, Ephraemi Rescriptus, and the Majority of all other Greek manuscripts which read "you," but since the critical editions and the Textus Receptus agree on "us" both times, with the support of Papyrus<sup>74</sup> and of all the ancient versions, I think it is best to keep it that way. It doesn't make a theological difference, however, because the love of God for John and the antipathy of the world toward John can easily be proved even if he didn't include himself in these statements to his readers by saying "us."



6	πᾶς ὁ ἐν αὐτῷ μένων οὐχ ἁμαρτάνει· πᾶς ὁ ἁμαρτάνων οὐχ ἑώρακεν αὐτὸν οὐδὲ ἔγνωκεν αὐτόν.	3:6 Everyone who is remaining (abiding <sup>KJV</sup> ) in Him is not sinning; everyone who is sinning (continues to <sup>NIV</sup> /keeps on <sup>ESV</sup> ) has not seen Him and has not known Him.
7	Τεκνία, μηδεὶς πλανᾷτω ὑμᾶς· ὁ ποιῶν τὴν δικαιοσύνην δίκαιος ἐστί, καθὼς ἐκεῖνος δίκαιος ἐστίν·	3:7 Dear (Little <sup>KJV</sup> ) children, no one must (deceive <sup>KJV</sup> ) lead you astray; the one who (practices <sup>NAS</sup> ) is doing the right is righteous, just as He is righteous;
8	ὁ ποιῶν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ἐκ τοῦ διαβόλου ἐστίν, ὅτι ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ὁ διάβολος ἁμαρτάνει. εἰς τοῦτο ἐφανερώθη ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἵνα λύσῃ τὰ ἔργα τοῦ διαβόλου	3:8 the one who (practices <sup>NAS</sup> ) is committing sin is out of the devil, because, from the beginning, the devil is sinning. Into this [situation(reason <sup>NAS</sup> /purpose <sup>KJV</sup> )] the son of God was revealed in order that He might destroy the works of the devil.
9	Πᾶς ὁ γεγεννημένος ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἁμαρτίαν οὐ ποιεῖ, ὅτι σπέρμα αὐτοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ μένει· καὶ οὐ δύναται ἁμαρτάνειν, ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ γεγέννηται.	3:9 All who have been born out of God are not committing sin, because His seed is remaining (abides <sup>NAS</sup> ) in him and he is not able (to go on <sup>NIV</sup> /keep on <sup>ESV</sup> ) to be sinning because he has been given birth out of God.
10	ἐν τούτῳ φανερά ἐστί τὰ τέκνα τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ τὰ τέκνα τοῦ διαβόλου· πᾶς ὁ μὴ ποιῶν δικαιοσύνην οὐκ ἐστίν ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ ὁ μὴ ἀγαπῶν τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ.	3:10 By this is the children of God and the children of the devil knowable (manifest <sup>KJV</sup> /obvious <sup>NAS</sup> /evident <sup>ESV</sup> ): everyone who isn't doing righteousness is not out of God, neither is the one who is not loving his brother.