

**A Practical Study of 1 JOHN
“Fellowship With The Father”
Study Number Six**

1 John 2:28-3:3

Fellowship is a Rehearsal for the Future

**In the little book of 1 John we have been talking about
FELLOWSHIP WITH THE FATHER.**

**Study #1 - FELLOWSHIP IS RESTORED BY JESUS
CHRIST**

Study #2 - FELLOWSHIP IS BROKEN BY SIN

**Study #3 - FELLOWSHIP IS NOURISHED BY
OBEDIENCE**

**Study #4 - FELLOWSHIP IS ESCALATED BY
GROWTH**

**Study #5 - FELLOWSHIP IS BEING EDUCATED BY
HIS SPIRIT**

And then today’s study:

**Study #6 – FELLOWSHIP IS A REHEARSAL FOR
THE FUTURE**

**I want to begin my exposition of these verses with some
verses from Isaiah.**

Isaiah 40:29-31

He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

I believe that one of the sweetest experiences for a Christian is fellowship with the Father and then out of that to begin to ascertain just a little bit of what the Lord is trying to do in our lives.

In a way I believe that the people who are the most triumphant when a crisis comes in their lives are the people who are in fellowship with the Lord. It is almost like God is just lovingly preparing them for the death of the mate or the loss of a job or the death of a child or some other traumatic set of circumstances and sovereign God that He is lovingly preparing His child along the way and providing adequate grace so when the moment comes of crisis they can look back and say, “you know God has been preparing me for this.”

So what am I saying? Do not get behind in your homework. Do not miss a day. Just decide, this is the most important priority in my life. Nothing takes priority over audience with the king of Kings. I must spend time with Him.

Now as we come to chapter 3 there is one new thought that is brought into the study here at the end of chapter 2. And that thought is how can we be having confidence before the Lord in His coming? He is going to come. How can we be those who have confidence before Him?

Well the answer is obvious. The answer is you are going to have confidence with the Lord when He comes if you were talking to Him this morning before He got here this afternoon. If you are not spending time with Him, then He does come, you are going to be embarrassed, you are going to feel terrible because you have not made that a priority. And that is basically what he is trying to say to us in this very first verse.

Our first verse today is a really strong verse.

v. 28 And now, little children, keep on abiding in Him, in order that whenever He is revealed, we might have boldness and not shrink away in shame from Him in His coming.

“LITTLE CHILDREN” a COMMAND.

“KEEP ON ABIDING IN HIM”

Now what does that mean?

You are **DRAWING** upon all that He is,

You are **DEPENDING** upon all that He can do,

and you are **DEVELOPING** into His image.

“KEEP ON ABIDING IN HIM” is in the present tense. That means do it now, do it yesterday, do it tomorrow. Keep on doing it. It is just something you put into your schedule.

You keep on doing what John says so that you are ready.

And he says the **REASON** that you want to do that is:

“IN ORDER THAT WHENEVER HE IS REVEALED, WE MIGHT HAVE BOLDNESS.”

William Barclay wrote the study Bible and that little daily study Bible is the best little commentary for your money. You can get it in paperback and boy I mean it is dynamite. I read it for everything I do. He was a great, great scholar. And he makes excellent word studies. Listen to what he says about this:

“By far the best way to be ready for the coming of Christ is to live with Him every day. If we do that, His coming will be not shock to us, it will simply be the entry into the nearer presence of One with whom we have lived for so long. The best way to prepare for the coming of Christ is never to forget the presence of Christ.”

“IN ORDER THAT WHENEVER HE IS REVEALED.”

He is going to come again and be revealed, so we are going to see Him as He is.

“IN ORDER THAT WHENEVER HE IS REVEALED,” that is future time. When he does and is revealed, we should be abiding in Him so that **“WE MIGHT HAVE BOLDNESS.”**

Now this is **BOLDNESS** in the sense that I have a freedom of speech.

It is a boldness in the sense that I can feel comfortable talking with the Lord. It is the word used in

Ephesians 3:12

in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him.

The little word boldness is going to come out three more times in the epistle.

Down in **1 John 3:21** we are going to read:

Beloved ones; if our heart is not condemning us, we are having boldness toward God.

1 John 4:17

In this the love has been brought to completion which is in us, that as a result we are having boldness in the day of judgment; because just as that one is, also we ourselves are in this world.

1 John 5:14

And this is the boldness (confidence) which we are having toward Him, that if we are asking anything according to His will, He is hearing us.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary as I was queuing it up on the computer says this:

If the readers would maintain their fellowship with God, they would enjoy a genuine boldness of speech when they would meet their Lord.

In other words, you would just continue to carry on the conversations that you have had during all these years of His absence as you have been obedient and you have spent time with Him so that you will “NOT SHRINK AWAY IN SHAME” when He comes.

Now why would you “SHRINK AWAY IN SHAME” at His coming?

I think the best story that Jesus tells is the story of the talents. Remember the guy has one talent, another guy has two and another guy has five. The five talent guy

gets five more, two talent guy gets two more and the one talent guy buried his. And what happens? When he comes back he is known as the unprofitable servant who had buried his talent and as a result of that he is very defensive, blames the Lord and of course is in a very, very sad, sad place because he did not do what the Lord had asked him to do.

Do you remember Matthew 22:12 where the story is told about the guy who is at the wedding feast without the wedding garment and of course the Lord comes into the wedding feast?

Matthew 22:12

and he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without wedding clothes?' And [*the text says*] he was speechless.

You know what is it going to be like to meet the Savior who took the crown of thorns, who took the cross and with pierced hands and with pierced feet you would meet Him and it would be an embarrassment? That is really what John is talking about. If there is no other reason for you to have daily communion and fellowship with your Lord and getting to know Him better on a daily basis, that is the bottom line friend. I mean you are talking about eternal things now. You are talking about the most important thing in the whole world.

Stephen Covey in *Principle-Centered Leadership* says:

“Some habits of ineffectiveness are rooted in our social conditioning toward quick-fix, short-term thinking. In school many of us procrastinate and then successfully cram for tests. But does cramming work on a farm? Can you go two weeks without milking the cow and then get out there and milk like crazy? Can you “forget” to plant in the spring or goof off all summer and then hit the ground real hard in the fall to bring in the harvest? We might laugh at such ludicrous approaches in agriculture, but then in an academic environment we might cram to get the grades and degrees we need to get the jobs we want, even if we fail to get a good general education.”

I like the illustration. Man, you are sowing on a daily basis.

And that is Galatians 6:7 my friend.

God is not laughed at, whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.

And if you want to sow to the flesh you are going to reap corruption. If you want to sow to the spirit you are going to reap life eternal. And that just does not happen by cramming for the final exam.

You see John so lovingly wants them to be ready for this so they will not have to experience it.

Barbara Johnson says:

Recently I saw a picture of an Indiana license plate bearing the “two forbidden words”:

IF ONLY

Saying, “IF ONLY I had done this,” “IF ONLY I had gone there,” or “IF ONLY I had done that,” can lead to all kinds of situations, most of them bad.

IF ONLY can fill your stomach with ulcers.

IF ONLY can give you high blood pressure.

IF ONLY can deprive you of fun in your profession.

IF ONLY can take the zing out of your marriage.

IF ONLY can depress you to the point of suicide.

You see, yesterday is gone forever and tomorrow may never come. TODAY IS IT! So give it your best shot, and at the end of the road you will be at the place of your choice instead of being haunted by IF ONLY, IF ONLY, IF ONLY. . . .

Now I take it from this verse, my good friends that it is very possible to have this happen. I am not saying that you lose your salvation. I am saying that you are going to have a lot of regret when you stand in the presence of the one who gave everything He had because He loved you and you did not match that with any gratitude or any sense of awareness that God had a wonderful plan to use you too if you had just been sensitive enough to reach out to Him.

You see that is why the command at the first of the verse is so important.

“KEEP ON ABIDING IN HIM”

You see when a student is faithful in studying for the exam, he can come with boldness and confidence and as a result not have to shrink away from the professor in a lack of diligence.

Okay now since that is true there are 3 QUALITIES that delight my Father’s heart and I want these to be a part of my life so that when I meet Him face to face this will not happen. Here are the 3 things:

- 1. FELLOWSHIP – I want to maintain that fellowship above everything else.**
- 2. FAITHFULNESS.**

Lamentations 3:22, 23

It is of the Lord’s mercies we are not consumed because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning. Great is Thy faithfulness.

So you have to be there every morning to get it.

- 3. and FRUIT – Fruit born in the lives of other people. Not only just in our own lives but when touching other people for Jesus Christ.**

Those are the three things that are going to prepare you for a time of being confident when you die and you walk in to the presence of the Lord.

“KEEP ON ABIDING IN HIM, IN ORDER THAT WHENEVER HE IS REVEALED,” you are not going to have to shrink away.

Now when is He going to be revealed? Well we learned last time that what? It is the LAST HOUR. And since it is the last hour, He can come. And He is coming. The only thing is that you oftentimes think there is a little buffer zone there so you do not have to quite let it all hang out yet. You do not have to press toward the mark. You do not have to get serious. I am telling you. Get serious!

1 Corinthians 15:51 says:

Behold I show you a mystery, we shall not all sleep but we shall all be changed in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye.

It could happen right now and you do not have time to get ready.

And 1 Thessalonians 4 says the Lord is going to descend from heaven with a shout.

I believe He is going to say “that is enough” and bring it to the house. Every believer is going to be snatched up into the presence of the Lord. And the Corinthians

passage teaches me that it is in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.

Listen, you do not know when it that is going to happen and I do not know either. But I know one thing. We are 2,000 years closer to the time of His coming than we were when the promise was originally made. And that tells me we are awfully close. And that also tells me that you do not know when you are going to die either physically. We are living in very dangerous times. And we are going to see a great deal of suffering among Christian believers and you do not know when your time is going to run out. And the best thing that you can do is right now use the time you got and buy up your opportunity and get serious and get on with the program so you do not have to experience what he is describing here in this difficult passage.

v.29 If you know that He is righteous, you are knowing also that everyone who is doing righteousness has been born of Him.

Now we know that the FBI has:

Our fingerprints,

our ID,

our dental records,

our driver's license,

our credit cards,

our social security number.

They have a sketch of us. They know us well.

For the Christian, God's sketch of the born again believer, is righteousness flowing from his life. And if that is happening, that will prepare you for what is in verse 28 so that you will "NOT SHRINK AWAY IN SHAME".

But how do you identify a victorious Christian believer? Well sometimes we identify them by:

the cross they wear around their neck,

or the Bible they are carrying,

or their membership in a certain church,

or their Bible knowledge.

You know that is not it. The real result of fellowship on a daily basis with a righteous God is going to be righteous acts that flow from that life. That is all he is telling you here in verse 29. Jesus Christ is righteous and abiding in Him, you in turn are going to be righteous as well.

Matthew 7:20

By their fruits you shall know them.

You know as we look at these verses we recognize the fact that command is the most important piece of advice. “KEEP ON ABIDING IN HIM.”

Now we move to Chapter 3 verse 1

3:v. 1 Behold how glorious a love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and we are. For this reason the world is not knowing us, because it knew Him not.

“Behold” John is emphatic. That is a statement of “wake up, I want to show you something.” It is a command.

“BEHOLD HOW GLORIOUS A LOVE THE FATHER HAS GIVEN TO US.”

Romans 5:8

God commanded His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

John 15:13

Greater love hath no man than this, than a man would lay down his life for his friends.

Now that phrase can be translated in several different ways.

“BEHOLD WHAT MANNER OF LOVE THE FATHER HAS GIVEN TO US,

Now here is another possibility.

“BEHOLD HOW GLORIOUS A LOVE THE FATHER HAS GIVEN TO US,”

or

“BEHOLD HOW GREAT A LOVE THE FATHER HAS GIVEN TO US,”

or

“BEHOLD HOW WONDERFUL A LOVE THE FATHER HAS GIVEN TO US.”

Those are all variant readings of the Greek word involved and could actually be an expression of what John is trying to tell us here in chapter 3, verse 1.

You see why he is focusing on this? He is focusing on that because he just got through focusing on the fact that back over here in the earlier part we saw that when love is not honored and love is betrayed we shrink away in shame. And now he wants to remind them again of this love that we should be called the children of God and we are when we come to Christ.

We are taken out of Adam and we are placed into Christ and we are the children of God. We have been born into His family.

“FOR THIS REASON” then John goes on to say **“THE WORLD IS NOT KNOWING US, BECAUSE IT KNEW HIM NOT.”**

The world and we are worlds apart. That is the satanic world system and we who are believers. They do not know us and we are not supposed to be spending time knowing them either in that regard.

“Beloved one” boy, isn't he intimate here? Here is our **KEY VERSE** to the **STUDY**.

v. 2 Beloved ones, now we are the children of God, and not yet has it been made visible what we shall be. We are knowing [*present tense*] that, whenever He is made visible, like ones to Him we shall be, because we shall see Him just as He is.

“BELOVED ONES” isn't John intimate here? Here is our **KEY VERSE** to the **STUDY**.

“FELLOWSHIP IS A REHEARSAL FOR THE FUTURE.”

Again, this “son of thunder” cannot believe the change in his life, that he has now become a “beloved one.”

“WE ARE THE CHILDREN OF GOD”

And then he says “it hasn’t been made visible yet, what we shall be,” we don’t know all the answers. We don’t know exactly how it’s all going to happen, the transformation and everything else. In the past we’ve experienced the new birth, in the present we’re the children of God and as far as the future is concerned that hasn’t been made known to us. But we do know this we are knowing that whenever He is made visible, like ones to Him we shall be, because we will see Him just as He is.”

Does that excite you? Does that hit a string in your heart that you are going to get to see someone you love? That you are going to get to actually see Jesus Christ face to face?

Your communion as it gets deeper and deeper with the Lord, you are just going to start looking more like Him.

“BECAUSE WE SHALL SEE HIM JUST AS HE IS.”

Yes.

**Face to Face with Christ my Savior.
Face to Face what will it be?
When, with Rapture I behold him,
Jesus Christ, who died for me.**

Sandi Patty’s song “We Shall Behold Him” really grabs you doesn’t it?

The sky shall unfold,
Preparing His entrance;
The stars shall applaud Him
With thunders of praise.
The sweet light in His eyes shall
Enhance those awaiting;
And we shall behold Him
Then face to face.

Now do you understand why FELLOWSHIP IS A REHEARSAL FOR THE FUTURE?

Why I am trying to build on this premise with you. Why it is so important because time spent with Him is conforming you to the image of Christ which He is wanting to do. And out of that likeness to Jesus there is going to be fruit that is going to come out of your life that is going to bring you a lot of joy. So spend time with Him. Above all, find time and then give it freely to Him.

v. 3 And everyone who is having this hope on Him is purifying himself, even as that one is pure.

When you spend time in the presence of purity and the light of the presence of the Lord shines upon those things in our lives that are not pleasing to Him we are in a purifying mold.

2 Corinthians 7:1

Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

How about Matthew 5:8

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

How about 2 Corinthians 6:17, 18

Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate,” says the Lord. “And touch not the unclean thing; And I will welcome you. And I will be a father to you, And you shall be sons and daughters to Me,” Says the Lord Almighty.

What does the Lord want to do? He wants to present us as the bride, spotless, holy, blameless before Him. And so as intimate fellowship takes place the Holy Spirit shines His light upon these areas of our lives then our guilty hearts are cleansed and we are in the process of preparing to meet the One who is perfectly holy.

Why do you want to be purified? So that you do not shrink away in shame from Him at His coming. It is the things that you are carrying with you that are going to be the most difficult.

So in the process of your fellowship you are praying with David “test me, O Lord, and try me; search me, O

God, and know me” so that I might be a person who being in the process of being purified will stand in His presence with confidence.

Fear also speaks about that.

1 Peter 1:6, 7

In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

1 Peter 4:12, 13

You see suffering is part of the purifying process.

Beloved, do not be surprised when the fiery ordeal comes among you, as though some strange thing is happening unto you; but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing.

Yes, suffering purifies the heart and is part of working out His will in our lives that we might be those who are ready to meet Him.

I would like to suggest to you at this moment 3 THINGS that God uses in the purifying process in your life so you can see whether or not you are in the process of

being purified.

1. Number one and the top of the list and you are not surprised, THE SCRIPTURES, they just purify us, don't they?

Where with all shall a young man cleanse his way?

Thy Word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against Thee.

The Scriptures.

2. SUFFERING. Boy it is amazing how your priorities change and how quick we are to think when the crisis comes, how things really shorten up. It is like one old gentleman says “when a man knows he is going to be hanged in a fortnight it consecrates him wonderfully.” You know it does that when you know you have a very short time. Suffering is a part of that.

3. Then the third thing is SERVANTHOOD. If you really want to know some of the purifying process in your life, in your selfishness, just commit yourself to a life of servanthood.

Someone said, “How can you tell that you have become a servant?” And the answer to that was when you are treated like one. And there is nothing more humbling than to have to serve

others. But I do not like the word “have” I like the words “get to” because that is the greatest joy in the world to bring happiness and blessing into the lives of others by being a servant. It helps in the purifying process to get involved in serving others.

THE SCRIPTURES, SUFFERING and SERVANTHOOD are part of the purifying process.

Are you allowing the Sovereign God to work in His way in preparing you for the future?

There is an old sea tale of a sole survivor of a shipwreck who was cast upon an uninhabited island. After anxiously praying to God for deliverance he painstakingly collected whatever he could salvage from the wreck. With the pieces of the wreckage he constructed a crude hut and stored the few bits of valuables he had saved. Each day, he scanned the horizon for sign of a passing vessel, which he could hail. God seemed to have abandoned him, however, for he sighted nothing. One day, when he returned from a search for food he discovered that his hut was in flames. Everything was destroyed. The worst had happened and his situation was hopeless. Angrily, the seaman cursed God. The next day, however, a ship arrived. “We saw your smoke signals,” the rescuing skipper told the shipwrecked man.

So many times in our lives God is doing a purifying work and He is preparing us for the future and we are those who get so close and yet we end up in bitterness

instead of being better. We end up accusing God. May I challenge you with the fact that the King is coming. We do not know when. But I hope that you know Jesus Christ and you are walking in fellowship with Him. I hope your religious experiences are more than church membership, I hope it is more than just going through the motions, I hope it is a relationship that is changing your life.

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

LESSON #1: John repeats the command to “keep on abiding in Him.”

LESSON #2: When we are in fellowship and abiding in Him, we have boldness and a freedom in His presence.

LESSON #3: Staying in the word on a daily basis keeps us from getting behind on our homework.

LESSON #4: We are abiding in Him when we are drawing upon all that He is, depending upon all that He can do, and developing into His image.

LESSON #5: Fellowship, faithfulness, and fruit are the three elements of the abundant life.

LESSON #6: Righteousness will result from intimate communion with a righteous God.

LESSON #7: Flowing from my life will be evidences that I am His child.

LESSON #8: Our fellowship with the Father increases our anticipation of eternity.

LESSON #9: Soon we shall be like Him because we shall see Him just as He is.

LESSON #10: Every believer is experiencing a purifying

process as he walks with God.

LESSON #11: The purifying process is hastened by the scriptures, by suffering, and by servanthood.

STUDY NUMBER SIX – 1 JOHN 2:28-3:3

FELLOWSHIP IS A REHEARSAL FOR THE FUTURE

KEY VERSE 3:2

v. 28 And now, little children, keep on abiding in Him, in order that whenever He is revealed, we might have boldness and not shrink away in shame from Him in His coming.

v. 29 If you know that He is righteous, you are knowing also that everyone who is doing righteousness has been born of Him.

3:v. 1 Behold how glorious a love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and we are. For this reason the world is not knowing us, because it knew Him not.

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v. 3 And everyone who is having this hope on Him is purifying himself, even as that one is pure.

NOTES

QUESTIONS:

1. Read 1 John 2:28-3:3 and in your own words pull out the main thought of this passage.

2. Why are we asked to be “abiding” in Jesus Christ in verse 28?

3. What does John mean by the phrase “born of Him” in verse 29?

4. What is our relationship to God, according to verse 1?

5. How is our relationship to the world described in verse 1?

6. What hope is described for us in verse 2?

7. What is the result of this hope, according to verse 3?

8. Are there things in your life that would make you ashamed if Jesus should come today?

9. Which verse in the study has meant the most to you?

10. What lesson have you learned from this study?

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