

11.08.20 ~ 1John 2:28-3:3, Our Hope is in Christ...

Last week (**1John 2:18-27**) we were exhorted to remain in the truth and not to be led astray by false teachers, false religions, cults and doctrines that deceive and lead people away from the forgiveness and eternal life provided in and through Jesus Christ, for He is (**John 14:6**) the only Way to receive God's Salvation, the only revealed Embodiment of God's Truth, and the only source of Eternal Life from God.

The world we live in is hopeless apart from Jesus Christ and God's love expressed in and through Him to all those who believe; and those who have this hope are able to experience the great joy of forgiveness and the eternal security made effectual by the Spirit of God, through Whom we are able to prayerfully come into the throne room of God in heaven, and to have fellowship on earth with our brothers and sisters in Christ, purposing to offer ourselves as a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, *which is* our spiritual service of worship.

The hope we have received is a gift of God's grace that cannot be earned or acquired; it is (**Titus 1:2**), "the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago," (**Romans 15:4**), "Whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope."

1Peter 1:3, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."

John 11:25-26, Jesus said to Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life; the one who believes in Me will live, even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die."

1Corinthians 15:1-4, "Now I make known to you, brothers and sisters, the gospel which I preached to you, which you also received, in which you also stand, by which you also are saved, if you hold firmly to the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. For I handed down to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures."

Romans 15:13, "Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

Read 1John 2:28... To "abide in [Christ]" means to persevere in the faith we receive at the moment of salvation: abide [Gk. *men-o*, meaning 'to remain' or 'to stay'], i.e., we stay true to Christ, remaining in Christ, so that when "He appears" [Gk. *in His presence*], most likely talking about the Rapture, because that is when John's audience and future believers will be joined with Christ, having been made perfect (see **John 14:1-3; 1Corinthians 15:51-54; 1Thessalonians 4:16-18**).

There are some commentators who say this is talking about the Lord's Return to the earth, at the Second Coming; but I'm sure not going to support that claim, as I believe the Greek words and their syntax, here in **1John 2:28**, do not allow such an interpretation.

As I study to show my self approved to God (**2Timothy 2:15**), as a worker who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth, I try to seek the most accurate, clear, contextually coherent, concise yet comprehensive meaning in such cases.

I believe the priority of this verse is that our hope (our confidence) in Christ's return should encourage and even exhort us to live in a manner that honors God and aligns with His Word.

Our hope is in Christ, not in ourselves, or our works, or in our religious performance; Jesus alone is righteous and only through Him are we made acceptable to God, now and forever (see **Romans 3:10-12, 23-26; 2Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 2:1-10**).

But then, what does the phrase (**1John 2:28**), "we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming [lit., in His presence] mean? We are convinced of our salvation, the forgiveness of sins, and we are confident of Christ's return, so we continue to do that which pleases Him, according to His Word. Why? He gave His life for us, took our punishment for sin; and so we belong to God, having been purchased with the very blood of Christ.

What if, at the time of the rapture, you are involved in committing a sin, or at the very least, you are doing something that is not pleasing to God at that moment, then you are immediately caught up, transformed, perfected in Christ. I believe anyone who genuinely loves the Lord would hate to be doing something that did not honor Him, at the moment of the Rapture.

Read 1John 2:29... Everyone who genuinely belongs to Christ will seek to find out what pleases Him and attempt to do it! When we express our desire to please and obey God, we are showing that we are "in Christ," and have indeed been born again by God's Spirit.

When Jesus Christ returns to receive those who belong to Him, we can be confident of our acceptance by Him, because He loves us, and He loses none of those who belong to Him (see **John 10:27-28; Romans 8:24-25, 28-30**).

Read 1John 3:1... God calls us, forgives us, and saves us; and when Christ returns all true Christians will be brought together with God. God is the one who initiated our salvation and He will see it through to our glorification.

John 15:16, "You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and *that* your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you."

Why God the Father should love us so much as to sacrifice His own Son, we'll never fully understand (cf. **John 3:16**). But one thing we do know; if we belong

to Him, we will want to live our life on earth in a way that exemplifies Christ, and this will be totally foreign and most likely objectionable to those who aren't saved.

No wonder Christians are described as aliens and strangers among those who live on the earth. God's divine nature should be seen in and through the lives of those who belong to Him (see **1Peter 2:11-12**, "Beloved, I urge *you* as foreigners and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts, which wage war against the soul. Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe *them*, glorify God on the day of visitation." **15**, "For such is the will of God, that by doing right you silence the ignorance of foolish people."

2Peter 1:3-4, "Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, for His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. Through these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of *the* divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world on account of lust."

Read 1John 3:2... From the very moment of salvation, every Christian should begin to exhibit saving faith through a desire to know and to obey God's Word.

John 1:12-13, "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of a man, but of God."

John 3:5-8, Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless someone is born of water and *the* Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which has been born of the flesh is flesh, and that which has been born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be amazed that I said to you, You must be born again. The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it is coming from and where it is going; so is everyone who has been born of the Spirit."

Romans 8:12-16, "So then, brothers *and* sisters, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh— for if you are living in accord with the flesh, you are going to die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons *and* daughters of God. For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons *and* daughters by which we cry out, 'Abba! Father!' The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God."

The presence and power of God is to be seen in our life, as God's Holy Spirit works to conform us into the nature of Christ while we serve Him on this earth.

I don't believe anyone can really understand, let alone describe, what it will be like for mortal man to put on immortality and live in heaven with God. And yet, that is what the Bible says will happen!

1Corinthians 2:9, "Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, And which have not entered the human heart, All that God has prepared for those who

love Him” [pp. Isaiah 64:4, Isaiah 65:17]. **10**, “To us God revealed *them* through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God.”

We are to live as if the hope we have of Christ’s return makes a difference right now, right here; as we live in accordance to His Word in conformity to His nature, we give testimony that we are continuing in Him; we are to be exemplifying Him (**1John 2:6**), “the one who says that he remains in Him ought, himself also, to walk in the same manner as He walked.”

Read 1John 3:3. Those who genuinely belong to God will live in a manner that brings honor and glory to Him; exemplary of the character and nature of Jesus Christ, the full embodiment of the Godhead, in the flesh.

Do Christians sin (**1John 1:8-9**), “If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous, so that He will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

Often we fail to obey God’s Word, and at times we even turn a deaf ear [spiritually] to God’s Spirit nudging us to do what is right (**Romans 8:6-9**), “For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able *to do so*, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.”

Paul offers a test (**2Corinthians 13:5**), “Test yourselves *to see* if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize *this about* yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you—unless indeed you fail the test?”

This is a simple Pass/Fail test! If you haven’t repented and you are not trusting Jesus Christ to provide forgiveness (for all your sins: past, present and future) then you “fail” the test, and you have not received eternal life.

If you are seeking to live in obedience to God’s Word, allowing God’s Spirit to conform you to the image of God’s Son, as you wait expectantly for Christ’s Return, then you will have full confidence that you “pass” the test!

1John 5:11-13, “The testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. The one who has the Son has the life; the one who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.”

All our hope rests in Jesus Christ, God’s Son, Lord and Savior: Crucified, Resurrected, and Coming Again, to take all those who belong to Him to be with Him in heaven, forever.

Pastor Mike
>'(((><