

**God's Great Love**

Vs1

Vs1 "How great is the love the father has lavished on us..."

This statement follows John's warning against the anti-Christ, who would not have shown any sort of real love. On the other hand God's love is beyond comprehension.

- An incredible quality of love - sacrificial, exotic, foreign to human beings
- Lavished on us permanently, in abundance. John 3:16; 1 John 3:16; 4:9-10; Romans 5:8
- An act of unbelievable grace - totally undeserved. Ephesians 2:4-9

**The Extra Dimension to this Love - Children of God**

Vs1

Vs1b "that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!"

Not only have Christians been saved from sin and given eternal life, but we become part of God's family, his very own children.

We are not just his subjects or servants, **but children, children of God!** This involves a relationship of love, security, stability and sharing. This is indeed incredible love.

John 1:11-12; Galatians 3:26, 4:4-7; Ephesians 1:3-8

**The Results****Alien From the World**

Vs1c

Vs1c "The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him." Earlier in Chapter 2:15-17 John has warned Christians not to love the world, and now he looks at this from another angle. The world does not know us as Christians because they do not know Jesus. Because people of this world don't know Jesus, they don't understand Christian morals, ethics, behaviour or thinking.

Commenting on this statement, Glenn W Barker says, "Because the believers are the children of God, the author warns them that the world is unable to recognize them or relate to them. That should not surprise them because neither did the world recognize God. The failure of the world to know God is one of the basic themes of John's Gospel (John 15:18-19; 16:1-3; 17:14-16). Those who belong to the world live in darkness. They cannot come to the light but must inevitably hate it. This "belonging to the world" becomes also a matter of choice; i.e., they refuse to acknowledge God in their hearts.

Then Barker makes this challenging statement, which we need to think about, even if we don't agree with him.

"The author wants his readers to know that approval by the world is to be feared, not desired. To be hated by the world may be unpleasant, but ultimately it should reassure the members of the community of faith that they are loved by God, which is far more important than the world's hatred." (The Expositor's Bible Commentary)

**Like Christ When He Appears**

V2-3

Vs2-3 "Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, **we shall be like him**, for we shall see him as he is. <sup>3</sup>Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure."

- What a hope! What an eager expectation. What an incentive for purity. Ephesians 5:25-27
- This is the ultimate goal for Christians. See Romans 8:28-29, 1 Corinthians 15:49, 2 Corinthians 3:18

**Righteous Living - Purity**

Vs4-10

Vs4-6 "Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness. <sup>5</sup>But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin. <sup>6</sup>No one who lives in him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him." The word used for sin here literally means "transgression of God's law," and "lawlessness" literally means "rebellion against God."

Righteous and pure living then is an indication that we truly are children of God, not a means to becoming children of God. It is not total sinlessness, but a changed attitude to sin, because of our relationship with Jesus. No longer under sin's total power and control, not our normal bent, not our habitual way of living. It also involves a deep hatred of sin.

Vs5 makes it plain that Christ "appeared so that he might take away our sins." See also 1 Peter 1:14-15; 2:24. This, together with our position of being children of God should be a great incentive for holiness.

**Love For our Brothers & Sisters**

Vs10

Vs10 "So now we can tell who are children of God and who are children of the devil. Anyone who does not live righteously and does not love other believers does not belong to God." See also John 13:34-35; 1 John 2:9-10; 3:11-17; 4:19

Glenn W Barker "The author is not stressing absolute moral conformity or "sinless perfection" but the one requirement by which all other requirements are measured--love for one's brother. For this there is no substitute, its violation allows for no excuse, its application permits no compromise. Here there are no gray areas, no third possibilities. One either loves his brother and proves he is God's child or does not love his brother and proves he belongs to the devil."

This truth is so important that John repeats it continually throughout his epistle and it is the theme of the following verses which we will look at next week.