

Christian Nature

1 John 3:4-8

I. Introduction:

A. Illustration

1. Personal story: Sharing the gospel.
2. Eagerness & willingness to openly defy the word & character of God by own's lifestyle contradicts verbal confession of salvation by faith in Jesus.

B. Christian Nature

1. In this passage John tells of a man's nature that didn't reflect a saving relationship with Jesus. The man's nature was more like a lost world's than the righteous God of heaven.
2. Warning: His life choices were indicative of one who does not know the Lord.
3. The child of God, the Christian nature of God, leads us to holiness, not wickedness.

C. Context

(1) – Abiding in Christ (1 John 2:28-29)

- a. Abiding in Christ means dwelling in Him, continuing in relationship & fellowship.
- b. We abide in His word, the Bible. We abide in communication through prayer.
- c. We abide in the fellowship of the church. We abide in the power of the Holy Spirit.
- d. When we abide in Christ, we're conformed more & more into His image by the power of the Holy Spirit. Our life choices are progressively more righteous.
- e. This process of righteousness is the outward evidence that we are saved.

(2) – We are children of God.

- a. Children take on the character of their parents.
- b. God the Father is holy and righteous. As His child we should be like Him.
- c. Jesus will return one day and rapture His church.
- d. The children of God expect His return & will purify themselves. (1 John 3:3)

D. Spiritual Families

(1) – The family of God

- a. Those saved by faith in Jesus are adopted in God's family & are thus God's children.
- b. God the Father is our Heavenly Father and we are His children.
- c. All who are in the family of God will bear some degree of resemblance to Him.

(2) – The family of Satan

- a. All who are lost in their sin are children of Satan.
- b. The lost will demonstrate the nature of the one who is their spiritual father.
- c. Lost people will live life with some degree of sinfulness and rebellion.

II. Sin defined (1 John 3:4)

A. The transgression of God's law

1. Sin is breaking God's law which isn't limited to mosaic law or Ten commandments.
2. The breaking of God's law means to transgress against the will of God or to ignore what God has revealed and to choose to do our will.
3. God's will is connected to His perfect character. Thus, every sin is an offense against the holy, righteous, & perfect character of God. All sin's a transgression of God's will.

III. Connection to the child of God (1 John 3:5-6)

A. He was manifested to take away our sin.

- *Jesus left heaven, took on servant's form, and died on the cross to take away our sin.*

- *Jesus did three things with regard to taking away our sin.*
 1. – He removed the guilt.
 - a. Jesus took the penalty of our sin upon Himself and suffered in our place.
 - b. By faith in Jesus the guilt of our sin is removed from our account.
 - c. Moment of salvation, our sin account before God the Father is marked “paid in full.”
 - d. The child of God is no longer under the judgment of God for sin. (**Romans 8:1a**)
 2. – Enable compliance with a new nature
 - a. The flesh is unable to obey God, but as God’s child we have a new nature in Jesus.
 - b. We have Holy Spirit residing in us & empowering us to live in obedience to God.
 - c. Degree of practical obedience to God is directly proportional to degree of surrender
 3. – Serves as our example
 - a. The more Holy Spirit conforms us to the image of Jesus, the less we will sin.
 - b. Jesus is our example of what it looks like to be in perfect obedience to the Father.
 - c. We’ll never attain sinless perfection in this life, but the more we are surrendered to the power of the Holy Spirit, the more we will be enabled to live righteously.

B. Verse 6 (1 John 3:6)

1. John is not saying practical sinless perfection is required or attainable in this life.
2. John states such preponderance in other passages in the Bible. **See (1 John 1:8-10)**
3. John wrote this letter to Christians; he is not speaking to lost people.
4. Attempt to understand this verse in immediate & broader context in which we read it.
5. The key phrase is, “**whoever abides in Him.**” We know Jesus is sinless, perfectly righteous; therefore, all who abide in Him are likewise perfectly righteous. **2** applications:
 - (1) – Positionally
 - a. We are positionally sinless in Jesus. It’s because we’re in Jesus that we’re part of the family of God. Jesus has made us sinless before the Father.
 - (2) – Practically
 - a. The context of the passage, however, is in the practical realm.
 - b. While in this life we will continue to experience genuine struggles with our sinful flesh but, the more we practice abiding in Jesus, the less we will sin.
 - c. To the degree we abide in Christ practically, there is no sin. When we submit to a temptation, in that moment we are not abiding in Christ and thus we sin.

IV. The seriousness of sin (1 John 3:7-8)

A. Let no one deceive you.

1. There were false teachers in the 1st century who treated sin lightly, as no big deal.
2. John encouraged these Christians to not be deceived.
3. Truth: He who practices righteousness shows he knows the one who’s righteous, Jesus.
4. He who sins is of the devil. There’s no middle ground. **2** spiritual families in the world:
 - (1) – The family of God: all who are saved by faith in Jesus.
 - a. God’s family is characterized by righteousness. Our Heavenly Father is righteous.
 - b. Those truly in the family of God have a Holy Spirit induced conviction over sin.
 - (2) – The family of Satan:
 - a. The lost live habitual lives of sin because they are of their father the devil.
 - b. The devil has been a sinner from the beginning.
 - c. He was the 1st one to bring sin into God’s universe.
 - d. Those who’re in the family of Satan have no desire for righteousness.