



**VERSE BY VERSE MINISTRY**  
INTERNATIONAL

*TEACHING THE WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD*

# 1 John 3A

## Chapter 3:1-10

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- Review of Chapter 1
  - The Word of Life is Jesus from beginning of creation.
  - Jesus brought the way to have fellowship with God producing eternal life.
  - The apostles were eye witnesses to Jesus' physical resurrection.
  - Believers have sin but should avoid sin.
- Chapter 2:
  - Jesus is our propitiation.
  - A person can not love the things of the world and God at the same time.
  - Antichrists deny Jesus is the Christ.
  - The truth leading to eternal life is found in Christ which leads us to love others and practice righteousness vs. the lie which denies Christ's deity and practice sin.
  - Be prepared to deal with false teaching and false teachers in the church.
- What are the five basic tenets of Gnosticism discussed?
  - 1. Knowledge superior to virtue
  - 2. Non-literal scripture only a select few could interpret
  - 3. God is not only creator because He couldn't create a world with sin
  - 4. Deity can't exist in flesh
  - 5. No resurrection
- Let's begin 1 John Chapter 3

**1John 3:1 See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.**

**1John 3:2 Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.**

**1John 3:3 And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.**

- v.1 What has God done for believers? (See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us,)
  - What does 'bestowed' mean? (presented as a gift or privilege)
  - How did God demonstrate His outpouring of love for believers? (that we would be called children of God;)
  - We are not just called children of God we are actually what? (and *such* we are)
    - In the present time we are children of God.
  - What is the result of being a child of God? (For this reason the world does not know us,)
  - Why is this true? (because it did not know Him.)

- What is 'it' referring to? (the world)
- What is true about the world? (did not know Him)
- Who is being described as the world who did not know Him? (Unbelievers)
  - The world does not know God and therefore cannot know believers as children of God.
  - Unbelievers do not have any comprehension of what this relationship is we have with God.
- v.2 What is true for believers now? (Beloved, now we are children of God,)
  - We know we are children of God now.
  - What don't we now know about this state of being children of God? (and it has not appeared as yet what we will be)
    - What does 'appeared' mean? (*to make visible, show, display or reveal*)
    - What is the 'it' referring to? (what we will be)
- Right now we do not know what it will look like to be children of God in the future.
  - The full extent of the benefit of being children of God is not displayed yet.
- What are believers waiting for? (We know that when He appears,)
  - Who is the 'He'? (Jesus)
  - When will Jesus appear to believers? (When He returns for us)
  - When does Jesus return for us? (The rapture also known as our resurrection)
- v.2 When He appears what will happen? (we will be like Him,)
  - Why is this true? (because we will see Him just as He is.)
  - How would we describe the state Jesus is in now? (Resurrected)
  - Do we see Jesus in His resurrected form now? (no)
    - John explains when we finally see Jesus in His resurrected form then we will also be in our resurrected form. See 1 Corinthians 15:51-53, Philippians 3:20-21.

**1Cor. 15:51** Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed,

**1Cor. 15:52** in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.

**1Cor. 15:53** For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality.

**Phil. 3:20** For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;

**Phil. 3:21** who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

- What do we learn about the resurrected body? (We will be changed to imperishable and immortal, fully transformed to be like Jesus is now.)
  - The bodies we receive at the resurrection (rapture) are imperishable and immortal.
  - Our bodies will not deteriorate and will be ours forever!
    - This is the blessed hope only the Christian has about the future.
- John is directly refuting the Gnostic teaching of deity not dwelling in flesh as he declares Jesus is in human resurrected form now.
  - John is also contending with the teaching there will be no resurrection by declaring clearly “we will be like Him”; we will be resurrected as well.
- v.3 How does John continue? (And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.)
  - What is “this hope” referring back to? (v.2 We will be like Him when He appears)
    - This hope is in resurrection.
  - This hope is rooted in what? (fixed on Him)
    - Who is the Him? (Jesus)
  - Fixed on what about Him? (He is resurrected and through belief in the gospel believers will also be resurrected as v.2 says “We will be like Him when He appears”)
- v.3 When a believer lives with this hope what happens to him? (purifies himself)
  - What comparison does John use to demonstrate how pure the believer is? (just as He is pure.)
    - Who is the “He”? (Jesus)
  - When we believe in the gospel of Jesus Christ what part of a believer is purified, or without sin? (Our spirit)
    - We receive the Holy Spirit. See Ephesians 1:13-14.

**Eph. 1:13 In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation — having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise,**

**Eph. 1:14 who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God’s own possession, to the praise of His glory.**

- Before we received the Holy Spirit we lived with a dead spirit.
  - This dead spirit we inherited from Adam; when Adam sinned his spirit became dead.

**Gen. 2:16 The LORD God commanded the man, saying, “From any tree of the garden you may eat freely;**

**Gen. 2:17 but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die.”**

- Adam’s physical body did not die that day but his spirit died that day.
  - This is the dead spirit every person descended from Adam inherits.
  - When Adam sinned his spirit became dead and broken fellowship with God occurred.
- God provides the way to correct this dead spirit and make our spirit pure. See Titus 3:4-7.

**Titus 3:4** But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared,

**Titus 3:5** He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit,

**Titus 3:6** whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,

**Titus 3:7** so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

- v.4 When did the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appear? (The gift of Jesus)
  - v.5 God saved us how? (by the Holy Spirit)
  - v.6 God saves through who? (Jesus Christ our Savior)
  - v.7 What did God do through His Grace? (We are justified)
    - When justified we are what? (heirs)
    - What are heirs? (children of God, those who inherit what the Father has)
    - What are we promised as heirs? (eternal life)
- Let us reread Titus replacing pronouns with God.

**Titus 3:4** But when the kindness of God our Savior and GOD’s love for mankind appeared,

**Titus 3:5** GOD saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to GOD’s mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit,

**Titus 3:6** when GOD poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,

**Titus 3:7** so that being justified by GOD’s grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

- We see over again that God is the actor
  - When someone believes in the gospel the Holy Spirit regenerates the sin nature or dead spirit to a living and eternal spirit.
    - 1John 3:3 describes this as “purified”; this is how we know John is talking about sin in the context of the spirit and not the flesh.
- Continuing in 1 John 3:4-10

**1John 3:4** Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness.

**1John 3:5** You know that He appeared in order to take away sins; and in Him there is no sin.

**1John 3:6** No one who abides in Him sins; no one who sins has seen Him or knows Him.

**1John 3:7** Little children, make sure no one deceives you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous;

**1John 3:8** the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil.

**1John 3:9** No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

**1John 3:10** By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother.

- v.4 What is the contrast given to one who purifies himself? (Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness.)
  - The Greek word translated "lawlessness" (*anosmia*) carries an implication of wickedness; a brazen opposition to God and rejection of God's law.
  - This is again a discussion of the position of the false teachers John has been addressing.
    - Virtue is more important to God than knowledge, a dead spirit still living in its sin nature precludes virtue.
- v.5 What is Jesus' response to sin? (You know that He appeared in order to take away sins;)
  - Jesus came in the flesh and appeared to men for the express purpose of taking away sin.

**John 1:29** The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

- 1 John 3:5 Jesus accomplished this and yet what is true for Him? (and in Him there is no sin.)
  - How did Jesus avoid being born with this inherited sin nature?
    - Jesus was not born with a sin nature, because He was conceived of the Holy Spirit not the "seed of men", which is the significance of the virgin birth of Jesus. See Matthew 1:18-21.

**Matt. 1:18** Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: when His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit.

**Matt. 1:19** And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man and not wanting to

disgrace her, planned to send her away secretly.

**Matt. 1:20** But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.

**Matt. 1:21** “She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.”

- Jesus did not inherit a sin nature from Adam.
  - Jesus also never committed a sin in His life. See 2 Corinthians 5:21, 1 Peter 2:21-24, Hebrews 7:26-27.

**2Cor. 5:21** He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

**1Pet. 2:21** For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps,

**1Pet. 2:22** WHO COMMITTED NO SIN, NOR WAS ANY DECEIT FOUND IN HIS MOUTH;

**1Pet. 2:23** and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously;

**1Pet. 2:24** and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.

**Heb. 7:26** For it was fitting for us to have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens;

**Heb. 7:27** who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the sins of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.

- These verses testify to the fact Jesus did not commit any sin in His life; He was holy, innocent, undefiled.
- 1 John 3:6 Because of what Jesus accomplished what is true for the believer? (No one who abides in Him sins;)
  - Jesus came to take away our sin.
    - He bore our sins in His body on the cross.
    - He bore the consequences of our sins which was the wrath of God.
  - He offered up Himself as the sacrifice for our sins so we might become the righteousness of God in Him.
    - This righteousness is seen in the Holy Spirit in us when we become believers.
  - Our spirit is now sinless since it is the Holy Spirit. Galatians 3:13-14

**Gal. 3:13** Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us — for it is written, “CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE” — **Gal. 3:14** in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we would receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

- As a believer you have this perfect Holy Spirit in you now.
  - Your spirit is regenerated.
- v.6 What is the contrast of having this Holy Spirit according to John? (no one who sins has seen Him or knows Him.)
  - What sins is John talking about?
    - These sins would need to be what keeps a person from having seen Him or knowing Him. See 1 Corinthians 2:14

**1Cor. 2:14** But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.

- When one abides in Him they receive the promise of the Spirit in faith and through the Spirit of God cannot sin in His spirit.
  - When one does not abide in Him the opposite is true, he does not have the Spirit of God and only the dead spirit reigns in him and thus can only sin.
- 1 John 3:7 How does John continue to address this topic? (Little children, make sure no one deceives you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous;)
  - How does John address the believers? (Little children)
  - What is John’s focus? (make sure no one deceives you;)
    - John is again warning against those who were bringing false teaching to the church.
- What truth does John establish first? (the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous;)
  - The believer can practice righteousness because Jesus is righteous, we can only practice what we have received from Him.
    - It might have been the false teachers were saying believers could not be righteous, or practice righteousness now.
    - John wants to make it perfectly clear that believers can practice righteousness now because they are righteous by virtue of the Holy Spirit they received and it is possible because Jesus is righteous.
- v.8 What is the contrast to those who practice righteousness from Jesus? (the one who practices sin is of the devil;)
  - There are only two kinds of people in the world; believers and unbelievers, those who are children of God and those of the devil.
    - Those of the devil will practice sin.



- What is true about the devil? (for the devil has sinned from the beginning.)
- This is confirmed by Jesus as recorded in John 8:43-44.

**John 8:43** “Why do you not understand what I am saying? It is because you cannot hear My word.

**John 8:44** “You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

- John recorded these words of Jesus in the gospel of John and he repeats it in this letter as well.
- 1 John 3:8 What did Jesus do because of the sin of the devil? (The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil.)
  - The works of the devil are too many to list but we have confirmation of the worst of his works. See Hebrews 2:14-15.

**Heb. 2:14** Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil,

**Heb. 2:15** and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives.

- The devil sinned from the beginning, the devil was a murderer from the beginning, the devil is a liar, the devil had the power of death.
  - Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil.
  - The devil no longer has the power of death.
- Do Christians still physically die? (yes)
  - What death does a Christian not experience? (Spiritual death)
  - Why are we not to fear the physical death? (We have the promise of resurrection)
- 1 John 3:9 What does John say is now true for believers because of what Jesus did? (No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.)
  - What does it mean “His seed abides in him”?
    - When one becomes a believer what abides in you? (The Holy Spirit)
  - What does it mean “one is born of God”? (Spiritually born of God, often referred to as “born again”)
    - Read John 3:1-21. Jesus speaking with Nicodemus about being born again.

**John 3:1** Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews;

**John 3:2** this man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, “Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher; for no one can do these signs that

**You do unless God is with him.”**

**John 3:3** Jesus answered and said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

**John 3:4** Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born, can he?”

**John 3:5** Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

**John 3:6** “That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

**John 3:7** “Do not be amazed that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’

**John 3:8** “The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

**John 3:9** Nicodemus said to Him, “How can these things be?”

**John 3:10** Jesus answered and said to him, “Are you the teacher of Israel and do not understand these things?

**John 3:11** “Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know and testify of what we have seen, and you do not accept our testimony.

**John 3:12** “If I told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?

**John 3:13** “No one has ascended into heaven, but He who descended from heaven: the Son of Man.

**John 3:14** “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up;

**John 3:15** so that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life.

**John 3:16** “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

**John 3:17** “For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.

**John 3:18** “He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

**John 3:19** “This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil.

**John 3:20** “For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed.

**John 3:21** “But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God.”

- Jesus explains to Nicodemus to be “born again” is a reference to the spiritual birth of a person.
- 1 John 3:10 John establishes it is possible for the readers of this letter to know what? (By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious:)
  - John declares the first measurement of unbelievers how? (anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God,)

- Those claiming to be Children of God, but do not practice righteousness can be identified as unbelievers.
- What is the second measurement of unbelievers? (nor the one who does not love his brother.)
  - When someone does not demonstrate love of other believers this is also a sign they are not believers.
    - John covered this earlier in this same correspondence. See 1 John 2:9

**1John 2:9 The one who says he is in the Light and yet hates his brother is in the darkness until now.**

- It is clear the false teachers were doing things to demonstrate hatred towards other believers.
  - This hatred was probably focused towards the apostles and anyone who was standing against their false teaching.
  - It was a clear sign they were not of God and contrary to what they were professing they did not truly know God.
- Knowledge of God was clearly not the most important thing to achieve if it did not lead to knowing God which was demonstrated in actions.
  - This was John again dealing with this false tenet of Gnosticism.
- A believer's conduct manifests in relationship with God, in avoiding sin, and in loving fellow believers:
  - Do you KNOW God?
  - Do you have this relationship with God?
  - Do you avoid sin knowing the Holy Spirit is in you and witnesses all you think and do?
  - Do you seek forgiveness from God when you do sin?
  - Do you demonstrate love to fellow believers?