

NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH BIBLE STUDY INSTITUTE

REV. JEFFERY D. BELL SR. PASTOR/TEACHER

“THE PRETENDERS “

I JOHN 3 VS 1-10

INTRO: THE UNITED STATES TREASURY DEPARTMENT HAS A SPECIAL GROUP OF MEN WHOSE JOB IT IS TO TRACK COUNTERFEITERS. NATURALLY, THESE MAN NEED TO KNOW A COUNTERFEIT BILL WHEN THEY SEE IT. HOW DO THEY LEARN TO IDENTIFY FAKE BILLS? ODDLY ENOUGH, THEY ARE NOT TRAINED BY SPENDING HOURS EXAMINING COUNTERFEIT MONEY. SO HOW DO THEY IDENTIFY A FAKE BILL?

BY STUDYING THE REAL THING – THEY BECOME SO FAMILIAR WITH AUTHENTIC BILLS THAT THEY CAN SPOT A COUNTERFEIT BY LOOKING AT IT, OR OFTEN, SIMPLY FEELING IT.

THIS IS THE APPROACH IN ***I JOHN 3***, WHICH WARNS US THAT IN TODAY’S WORLD THERE ARE COUNTERFEIT CHRISTIANS- “CHILDREN OF THE DEVIL “(***I JOHN 3 VS 10***). BUT INSTEAD OF LISTING THE EVIL CHARACTERISTICS OF SATAN’S CHILDREN, THE SCRIPTURE GIVES US A CLEAR DESCRIPTION OF GOD’S CHILDREN. THE CONTRAST BETWEEN THE TWO IS OBVIOUS.

THE KEY VERSE OF THIS CHAPTER IS ***I JOHN 3 VS 10***: A TRUE CHILD OF GOD PRACTICES RIGHTEOUSNESS AND LOVES OTHER CHRISTIANS DESPITE DIFFERENCES.

I JOHN 3 VS 1-10 – DEALS WITH THE FIRST TOPIC – ***PRACTICING RIGHTEOUSNESS***

I JOHN 3 11 – 24 – DEALS WITH THE SECOND TOPIC – ***LOVING THE BRETHEREN***

THESE TWO IMPORTANT SUBJECTS ARE TREATED IN THE FIRST TWO CHAPTERS OF THIS EPISTLE, BUT IN I JOHN 3 THE APPROACH IS DIFFERENT. IN THE FIRST TWO CHAPTERS EMPHASIS WAS ON FELLOWSHIP CHRISTIAN WHO IS IN FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD WILL PRACTICE RIGHTEOUSNESS AND WILL LOVE THE BRETHEREN. BUT IN I JOHN 3-5, THE EMPHASIS IS ON SONSHIP: BECAUSE A CHRISTIAN IS “***BORN OF GOD***, “HE WILL PRACTICE RIGHTEOUSNESS AND WILL LOVE THE BRETHEREN.

“BORN OF GOD “IS THE IDEAL THAT IS BASIC TO THESE CHAPTERS (***I JOHN 2 VS 29; 3 VS 9; 4 VS 7; 5 VS 1, 4, 18***)

WHEN YOU READ I JOHN 3 VS 1-10 IN THE AUTHORIZED VERSION, YOU MAY BE STARTLED BY I JOHN 3 VS 6 AND 9, WHICH SEEM TO CONTRADICT I JOHN I VS 8-9. THE AUTHOTIZED TRANSLATION OF THE VERB IS NOT ACCURATE. WHAT THE GREEK TEXT REALLY SAYS IS “ NO ONE WHO ABIDES IN HIM PRACTICES SIN; NO ONE WHO PRACTICES SIN HAS SEEN OR KNOWS

HIM “ (I JOHN 3 VS 6). “ NO ONE BORN OF GOD PRACTICES SIN... HE CANNOT BECAUSE HE IS BORN OF GOD” (I JOHN 3 VS 9)

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO PRACTICE SIN?

MEANS TO SIN CONSISTENTLY AND AS A WAY OF LIFE – IT DOES NOT REFER TO

- **COMMITTING A SIN ON OCCASION**
- **NO CHRISTIAN IS SINLESS (I JOHN 1 VS 8-10)**
- **SIN LESS NOT HABITUALLY**

SOME GREAT PERSONS MENTIONED IN THE BIBLE THAT HAVE SINNED

- **ABRAHAM** (GEN 12 VS 10-20) _____
- **MOSES** (NUM 20 VS 13) _____
- **PETER** (MAT 26 VS 69-75 _____

BUT SIN WAS NOT CONTINUAL OR HABITUAL; IT WAS AN INCIDENT IN THEIR LIVES, TOTALLY CONTRARY TO THEIR NORMAL HABITS. WHEN THEY SINNED THEY:

- **THEY ADMITTED IT**
- **ASK FOR FORGIVENESS**

NOTE: AN UNSAVED PERSON (EVEN IF HE PROFESSES TO BE A CHRISTIAN BUT IS A COUNTERFEIT) LIVES A LIFE OF HABITUAL SIN. SIN- ESPECIALLY THE SIN OF UNBELIEF – IS THE NORMAL THING IN HIS LIFE (EPHESIANS 2 VS 1-3). HE HAS NO DIVINE RESOURCES TO DRAW ON. HIS PROFESSION OF FAITH, IF ANY, IS NOT REAL. THIS IS THE DISTINCTION IN VIEW IN I JOHN 3 VS 1-10- A TRUE BELIEVER DOES NOT LIVE IN HABITUAL SIN. HE MAY COMMIT SIN – AN OCCASION WRONG ACT- BUT HE WILL NOT PRACTICE SIN- MAKE A SETTLED HABIT OF IT.

THE DIFFERENCE IS THAT A TRUE CHRISTIAN KNOWS GOD. A COUNTERFEIT CHRISTIAN MAY TALK ABOUT GOD AND GET INVOLVED IN “RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES, “BUT HE DOES NOT REALLY KNOW GOD. THE PERSON WHO HAS BEEN “BORN OF GOD “THROUGH FAITH IN CHRIST KNOWS GOD THE FATHER, GOD AND THE SON, AND GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT. AND BECAUSE HE KNOWS THEM, HE LIVES A LIFE OF OBEDIENCE: HE DOES NOT PRACTICE SIN.

JOHN GIVES US THREE REASONS FOR A HOLY LIFE:

I. GOD THE FATHER LOVES US (I JOHN 3 VS 1-3) GOD’S LOVE FOR US IS UNIQUE.

“BEHOLD, WHAT PECULIAR, OUT-OF-THIS WORLD KIND OF LOVE THE FATHER HAS BESTOWED ON US. “ WHILE WE WERE HIS ENEMIES GOD LOVED US AND SENT HIS SON TO DIE FOR US! THE WHOLE WONDERFUL PLAN OF SALVATION BEGINS WITH THE LOVE OF GOD.

NOTE; “SONS OF GOD “IS NOT JUST A HIGH SOUNDING NAME THAT WE BARE, IT IS REALITY! WE ARE CHILDREN OF GOD! WE DO NOT EXPECT THE WORLD TO UNDERSTAND THIS THRILLING RELATIONSHIP, BECAUSE IT DOES NOT EVEN UNDERSTAND GOD. ONLY A PERSON WHO KNOWS

GOD THROUGH CHRIST CAN FULLY APPRECIATE WHAT IT MEANS TO BE CALLED A CHILD OF GOD.

I JOHN 3 VS 1- **TELLS US WHAT WE ARE**

I JOHN 3 VS 2 – **TELLS US WHAT WE SHALL BE** REFERRING TO CHRISIT COMING FOR HIS CHURCH THIS SHOULD BE AN INCENTIVE FOR HOLY LIVING (I JOHN 2 VS 28)

I JOHN 3 VS 3 – **TELLS US WHAT WE SHOULD BE IN** LIGHT OF CHRIST RETURN WE SHOULD KEEP OUR LIVES CLEAN

ALL THIS IS TO REMIND US OF THE FATHERS LOVE. BECAUSE THE FATHER LOVED US AND SENT HIS SON TO DIE FOR US, WE ARE CHILDREN OF GOD. BECAUSE GOD LOVES US, HE WANTS US TO LIVE WITH HIM ONE DAY. SALVATION FROM START TO FINISH IS AN EXPRESSION OF THE LOVE OF GOD. WE ARE SAVED BY THE GRACE OF GOD BUT THE PROVISION OF OUR SALVATION ORIGINATED IN THE LOVE OF GOD, AND SINCE WE HAVE EXPERIENCED THE LOVE OF THE FATHER WE HAVE NO DESIRE TO SIN.

II. GOD THE SON DIED FOR US (I JOHN 3 VS 4 – 8) JOHN TURNED

- **THE FUTURE APPEARING OF JESUS TO THE (I JOHN 3 VS 2)**
- **THE PAST APPEARING OF JESUS (I JOHN 3 VS 5)** THE WORD MANIFEST MEANS APPEAR

TWO REASONS WHY JESUS CAME AND DIED

- **TO TAKE AWAY OUR SINS (I JOHN 3 VS 4-7)**
- **DESTROY THE WORKS OF THE DEVIL (I JOHN 3 VS 7-8)**

NOTE: FOR A CHILD OF GOD TO SIN INDICATES THAT HE DOES NOT UNDERSTAND OR APPRECIATE WHAT JESUS DID FOR HIM ON THE CROSS.

III. CHRIST APPEARED TO TAKE AWAY OUR SIN (I JOHN 3 VS 4-6) THERE ARE SEVERAL DEFINITIONS OF SIN IN THE BIBLE:

1. ROMANS 14 VS 23 “ **WHOSOEVER IS NOT OF FAITH IS SIN** ”
2. PROV 24 VS 9 “ **THE THOUGHT OF FOOLISHNESS IS SIN** ”
3. JAMES 4 VS17 “ **THEREFORE TO HIM THAT KNOWETH TO DO GOOD, AND DOETH NOT, TO HIM IT IS SIN** “
4. I JOHN 5 VS 17 “ **ALL UNRIGHTEOUSNESS IS SIN** “

BUT JOHN’S EPISTLE DEFINES SIN AS LAWLESSNESS (***I JOHN 3 VS 4***) THE FACT THAT GOD IS LOVE DOES NOT MEAN THAT HE HAS NO RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR HIS FAMILY. “AND HEREBY WE KNOW THAT THAT WE KNOW HIM, IF WE KEEP HIS COMMANDMENT, AND DO THOSE THINGS THAT ARE PLEASING IN HIS SIGHT “ (***I JOHN 2 VS 3***) (***I JOHN 3 VS 22***) (***I JOHN 5 VS2***) BUT HERE HE VIEWS IT AS DEFIANCE

GODS CHILDREN ARE NOT IN BONDAGE TO THE OLD TESTAMENT (VS 4) CHRIST HAS SET US FREE AND HAS GIVEN US LIBERTY (**GAL 5 VS 1-6**).

BUT GOD'S CHILDREN ARE NOT TO BE LAWLESS, EITHER! THEY ARE "NOT WITHOUT LAW TO GOD" BUT UNDER THE LAW OF CHRIST. (I COR 9 VS 21) SIN BASICALLY IS A MATTER OF THE WILL. FOR US TO ASSERT OUR WILL AGAINST GOD'S WILL IS REBELLION AND REBELLION IS THE ROOT OF SIN. IT IS NOT SIMPLY THAT SIN REVEALS ITSELF IN LAWLESSNESS BEHAVIOR, BUT THAT THE VERY ESSENCE OF SIN IS LAWLESSNESS. NO MATTER WHAT HIS OUTWARD ACTION MAY BE, A SINNER'S INWARD ATTITUDE IS ONE OF REBELLION.

EXAMPLE: LITTLE JUDY WAS RIDING IN THE CAR WITH HER FATHER. SHE DECIDED TO STAND UP IN THE FRONT SEAT. HER FATHER COMMANDED HER TO SIT DOWN AND TO PUT ON THE SEATBELT, BUT SHE DECLINED. HE TOLD HER A SECOND TIME, BUT AGAIN SHE REFUSED.

IF YOU DON'T SIT DOWN IMMEDIATELY I WILL PULL OVER TO THE SIDE OF THE ROAD AND SPANK YOU! AND THE LITTLE GIRL OBEYED. BUT IN A QUIET VOICE AFTER AWHILE SHE SAID, "DADDY I AM STILL STANDING ON THE INSIDE."

LAWLESSNESS! REBELLION! EVEN THOUGH THERE WERE CONSTRAINTS FROM THE OUTSIDE, THERE IS STILL REBELLION ON THE INSIDE, AND THIS ATTITUDE IS THE ESSENCE OF SIN.

BUT AFTER A PERSON HAS BECOME A CHILD OF GOD, BORN AGAIN BY FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST, HE CANNOT PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS! WHY:

- **JESUS CHRIST WAS WITHOUT SIN** – AND TO ABIDE IN HIM MEANS TO BE IDENTIFIED WITH THE ONE WHO IS SINLESS
- **CHRIST DIED TO TAKE AWAY SIN** – IF WE KNOW THE PERSON OF CHRIST, AND IF WE SHARED IN THE BLESSING OF HIS DEATH, WE CANNOT DELIBERATELY DISOBEY GOD

NOTE: THE WHOLE WORK OF THE CROSS IS DENIED WHEN A PROFESSED CHRISTIAN PRACTICES DELIBERATE SIN. THIS IS ONE REASON WHY PAUL CALLED SUCH PEOPLE "ENEMIES OF THE CROSS OF JESUS CHRIST" (**PHIL 3 VS 18-19**)

I JOHN 3 VS 6 ABIDE WAS ONE OF JOHNS FAVORITE WORDS. TO ABIDE IN CHRIST MEANS TO BE IN FELLOWSHIP WITH HIM, TO ALLOW NOTHING TO COME BETWEEN OURSELVES AND CHRIST.

- SONSHIP -**BRINGS ABOUT OUR UNION WITH CHRIST**
- FELLOWSHIP- **MAKES POSSIBLE OUR COMMUNION WITH CHRIST** - IT IS THIS COMMUNION (ABIDING) THAT KEEPS US FROM DELIBERATELY DISOBEYING HIS WORD.

CLOSE : A PERSON THAT DELIBERATELY AND HABITUALLY SINS IS PROVING THAT HE DOES NOT KNOW CHRIST AND THEREFORE CANNOT BE ABIDING IN HIM. THERE IS MORE IN THE DEATH OF CHRIST ON THE CROSS THAN SIMPLY OUR SALVATION FROM JUDGMENT, AS WONDERFUL AS THAT IS. THROUGH HIS DEATH, CHRIST BROKE THE POWER OF THE SIN

PRINCIPLE IN OUR LIVES. THE THEME OF ROMANS 6-8 IS THIS IDENTIFICATION WITH CHRIST IN HIS DEATH AND RESURRECTION. CHRIST NOT ONLY DIED FOR ME, BUT I DIED WITH CHRIST! NOW I CAN YIELD MYSELF TO HIM AND SIN WILL NOT HAVE DOMINION OVER ME.