

Intro: In 1914 a fire broke out in the film factory of Edison Labs. Before it was done 13 of his buildings were destroyed, and explosions caused other fires more than 5 blocks away. As he stood there watching his life's work go up in flame his son said he walked over to him and said, "Go get your mother and her friends...they will never see another fire like this one!"

Look at that...you have NEVER seen anything like it! That is what John says in Ch 3 and verse 1

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God:" KJV

Up until this point in his letter John's theme has been: Having Fellowship with God: Now Being a Child of God

Notice how John begins ch 3. Behold: Imperative: **LOOK AT THAT!!!!** Behold: Gaze at, Focus on, Pay Attention

4 Important Elements of the Transition

~LOOK: Look at this amazing love that God has poured out in abundance...that we should be called...

~LOVE: The amazing out of the world never before seen kind of love

~LAVISHED: To be poured out in Abundance

~CALLED: Named as a child of God: Not a "generic" name...but a specific, personal, known by the Father name

John, as he begins to make the transition, seems to be almost overwhelmed by the work of God in making us His own. He says it...and then John begins to unpack what it means to BE A CHILD OF GOD:

3 Things He says we are to Look At

1. Look at What You Are!

Ch 3:1 (Position: A Child Of God!)

Do you? Do you KNOW what it really means to be "A Child of God?"

Because you ARE a child of God, there are some specific things that come along with that!

Illus: Every Position has its privileges: Pastor: No one is surprised when I stand up and preach:
If I was Chef, walk into kitchen, grab apron and knife, no one question me

What are the privileges that come with being a child of God?

- **Forgiveness:** Mk 11:25 "forgive...so that your father in heaven may forgive your sins." (If we confess our sins...)
- **Called and Kept:** Jude 1:1 "...those who have been called, who are loved by God the Father and kept by Jesus Christ:"
- **Gives Eternal Life:** John 6:40: "My Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life,
- **Listening Ear:** Psm 40:1: "I waited patiently for the LORD; he turned to me and heard my cry." (Bent down close)
- **Access to Father:** Eph 2:8 "For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit." (Kanye: Afraid to pray)
- **Makes Himself Known:** 1Jn 2:13 "I write to you, dear children, because you have known the Father." (World doesn't know)
- **Answered Prayers:** Mt 6:8 "your Father knows what you need before you ask him.... (Our Father)
- **Every Good Gift:** James 1:7 "every good and perfect gift comes from above, Father" (All you need!)
- **Welcome Home:** Lk 15:20 "While he was still a long way off..." (no matter how far you go...")
- **Discipline:** Heb 12:6 "Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons." (keeps you in His love)

As John begins to turn his mind and heart to being a Child of God, it is almost as if he is overwhelmed by the amazing things God has done on our behalf...seeing just a small portion of those things he writes:

Look! Gaze at that...It will blow your mind!

Applic: Know WHO You Are: You are a Child of God!

2. Look at What You Will Be!

Ch 3:2

Position: Now (Promise: Be Like Him!)

After John talks about what we ARE he moves on to what we are GOING to be:

First was Our Position: Now God's Promise

Vs 2: "When He appears we will be like Him!"

Right now we are in process...but the day is coming when we will be like Him! Not just spiritually...but in EVERY way

That is the promise of God...this struggle we have with the world, with this body, with sin and sickness...with ourselves: OVER

- **We will be changed:** Php 3:21 (Jesus) by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.
~ 1 Cor 15:42-52: We Will be CHANGED! We will have a glorified body
- **We will be with Him:** Ro 6:5 If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection."
~ 1 Cor 13:9-12: We will see Him Clearly (In part...)
We will KNOW Him Fully

That is why John is writing...Behold! LOOK at this...This will blow your mind...you have never SEEN anything like this!
Part of what it means to be a child of God is that we have the privileges of a child...and the Promise of being changed!

And, because that is true...Because of What God has done: Notice what John says WE DO! Our Response

3. Look At How You Should Live.

Ch 3:3

(Purify yourself)

You see, John always comes back to the practical.

He began by telling us What God has done. Then he tells us what God will Do. Finishes by Saying: **THIS** is how you respond

- Purify: *to make clean, to sanctify, to be morally pure; to be practically and ethically free from sin*
- Yourself: This is something that YOU have responsibility for! Don't wait, Not Automatic, You take action!

What Do You Do?

- **Right Help You Seek**

Phil 2:12-13 *"Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed-- not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence-- continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose."*

~Notice the joint participation

Things YOU do

Things you ask GOD to do that you can't

- **Right Actions You Take**

Jas 4:8 Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

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|------------------------------|--|----------------------|
| ~Come Near: | Lit = <i>to approach, to come close: Don't Hide!</i> | Action |
| ~Confess your sin | Lit = <i>to agree with Him about your wrongs</i> | Attitude |
| ~Ask Him to clean your heart | Lit = <i>to cleanse; to sanctify or set apart</i> | Ask for help w/heart |

John makes a major transition in these few verses. He began his letter telling the church, I'm writing to you to help you KNOW you have fellowship with the Father. It is all about fellowship...and how you can KNOW you have eternal life.

Now, he takes a different tack and transitions to a new thought. Not about Fellowship...but Sonship!

As he does that he says...Wow...Look at what God has done...and promised

Made you His child

Promised you eternity...and transformation

Doesn't that make you want to LIVE for Him!

CONCL: So, what does all that mean for us today?

1. Are you SURE you are a Child of God?

Amazing benefits...but they only come to one that is part of the family

If you aren't...or you aren't sure...you can be sure today

2. Are you missing out on what God has for you? Have you left the best He has for you behind?

You can come home...Just like the prodigal son...there is always a place for you in the kingdom.

He will HELP you start that process of transformation...you don't have to wait until he come

But...He will not do it without you. You have to make the decision, You have start the process, You ask for Help

3. Are you living in response to God's amazing work in your life.

We don't earn our relationship with God...

But it is ours for the asking.

Do you need to do that today?

Are there some things you need to purify...purge...Cleanse from your mind, heart and hands

If so, come, pray...Do your Part

And, ask God to do what only He can do