**Love of the Father**

Based on [1 John 3](https://biblia.com/books/esv/1Jn3)

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Lenten Midweek 3

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First John is a profound and richly composed letter written by John the apostle. He writes, not just as a teacher, or as a leader of the church. **John writes and speaks to the church as a loving Father speaks to children.** He even calls them “my little children” and encourages them toward maturity in faith. He instructs them in how faithful children of God walk or “live” in the world. Chapter 3 of this letter begins by giving us to consider what it means to walk in the love of God.

John writes, “**See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God, and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him**.”

There is no greater consolation in this world than when we consider the love that God has given to us. His love is His grace; and we know his love because he has called us His children. Jesus has invited us to pray this way, “Our ***Father*** who art in heaven.”

The love of God is the grace of God; and the grace of God is that He loves. When a stranger passes you by on the street and looks at you, you do not know him, and you do not expect anything from him. **But when a friend sees you, he knows you and you know him, and you expect him to greet you, care for you, inquire about you, help you if you are in need.** When someone calls you a friend, that means that they love you. How much more when God calls you His child are you confident to know that he is concerned for you, will help you and give you what you need? And if you are lacking any Good thing, a Father is eager to give his child what he needs.

As children of God we live in the grace of God. And we know with certainty that He will not forsake us, but will always provide for our good. Jesus says, “**What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”**

The world does not know of the Father’s love, because they do not know God to be their Father. And because they do not know the Father, they do not know us, nor understand us. They have no hope or security, and cannot see how we--God’s children—walk. Because they cannot see our hope they call us blind. But they are blind because they cannot see the Father’s love. And since they cannot see the Father’s love, they cannot see who we are or what we will become when he appears.

“**Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.”**

The children of God are purified by the hope in what they do not see. **We do not see the love of the Father, but we know it because we know the Son who has come to show the love of the Father.** And our purity is not seen, because we still have sin. But when the sinless Son of God appears again in the world, the purity we have now through our hope will be a purity seen by all. When that day comes we shall appear as he is, without sin. //

No one who sees the love of the Father makes a practice of sinning. No one who abides in the Son keeps on sinning. John writes, “**Little children, let no one deceive you, Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous. Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning.”** Those who abide in the Son are purified by hope and their sins are forgiven. But anyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness. The Father loves his children, gives good gifts to his children or else he is no Father. And the children *love* the Father, *give obedience and honour* to the Father, *listen to* the Father and make a practice of his instructions, or else they are not his children. Those who would live without the Fathers instruction do not know the Father and are not born of Him.

And the instruction that the Father gives is that we should love our brothers, as he loves us. “**By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers**.” No one who loves his brother closes his heart to him, but gives him good gifts as the Father gives. We show that we know the Fathers love when we love, not just in talk, but in deed and truth.

We love in deed and truth because we keep God’s commandments and do what pleases him. **And this is his commandment: that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another**. In this our hearts are reassured of the Father’s love. Whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. What is lacking in our love, he provides through belief in the Son who has removed our guilt and given us his Spirit. **For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure** (Phil. 2:13). As little children you need not fear, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom (Luke 12:32).