

1 John 3:2-3: We Shall Be Like Him

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

Exposition

We are children of God

What are the logical consequences of being a child of God?

Carrying on with verse 1 from the last lesson John reiterates that the believers are children of God. Paul writes about this in Galatians 4:6 and gives us a wonderful consequence: we get the relationship, which is empowered by the Spirit of His Son, that indwells us. In reality there are many consequences, but this is intimately tied in with the identification truths (and is one of them). We should not discount the significance of our relationship with the Father as it is something that points to the breaking of the bondage of sin and being descendents of Adam.

Cf: Galatians 4:6, Ephesians 3:14-19

It has not appeared as yet what we will be

How have you heard heaven described by the world?

How does the world describe what we'll look like and do in eternity?

What is their source of authority on these concepts?

John speaks of an exciting doctrine: our eternal heavenly existence as children of God in the heavenly state. John speaks of the exciting mystery that is before us as believers. We know that there will be something new for those who have died in and to Adam, but we don't know the full implications of what that will be.

Cf: 1 Corinthians 2:9, 1 Corinthians 13:12, 2 Corinthians 4:17, Romans 8:29, 1 Corinthians 15:49, Philippians 3:21

We know that when He appears, we will be like Him because we will see Him just as He is

When will Christ appear?

What is the implication of this passage in regards to the limitation of earthly perceptions of an infinite God?

Why do we need to shed this 'mortal coil' and take on a new heavenly type?

What are qualities of the bride of Christ?

When the Lord created Adam and had him name the animals in Genesis 2:19-23 it was found that none of the types of animals were suitable helpers. The Lord then put Adam into a deep sleep and created Eve from Adam's type. The qualities of being a human are defined by the type of creation we are. While we are created after God's image and likeness, it was corrupted by sin. Moving forward to the Messiah we find the hypostatic union: Jesus the God-man (Colossians 2:9), required as a sacrifice that would be a propitiation for all sin (Romans 3:25). Once Christ was crucified, dead, buried, and then resurrected He became the firstborn from the dead (Colossians 1:18, 2:12). In Him we are being transformed into His image. We're not going to continue in this present, earthly image, but will instead be transformed to the new type, of which Christ is the first.

Being a new creation in Christ means we're prepared to leave these earthly bodies with an earthly type and embrace a new creation that is beyond what we can imagine. It is a new creation that is not tainted by sin, and one in which Christ will reign for eternity and the Lord will show us His grace infinitely (Ephesians 2:7). We will see Christ as He is – without any of the finite limitations that we now wrestle with in the time-space continuum.

Cf: Colossians 3:4, 2 Corinthians 3:18, Hebrews 7:26, Hebrews 9:28

Everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure

Who is purifying themselves?

How pure can you become of your own accord?

Why would John tell us to purify ourselves?

In an impossible task John suggests that we would purify ourselves. On the surface this appears to be works, but John points out that the believer is abiding (or fixing their hope on Him) and this always leads to Holy Spirit empowered reckoning (Romans 6:11). The result of this is a purity that is His purity being manifested.

Cf: 2 Corinthians 7:1, Hebrews 12:14, 2 Peter 1:4, 2 Peter 3:14, 1 John 2:6, 1 John 4:17