

The University Heights Messenger

May 23, 2010

Thoughts on 1 John

3:1-3

“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 because it did not know him. 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.”

There is a man who regularly stands on the corner near the grocery where Jaclyn and I do most of our shopping. He stands there with a small sign requesting aid from those passing him. I see folks helping him from time to time by giving him money and food. It’s encouraging to see that not all folks have become so callous and unconcerned to just pass the troubled and world weary man without a thought or glance.

One thing that I’ve never considered doing for the man, and folks would call me crazy if I did, is pick him up, take him to my house, cleanse him, clothe him, feed him, care for him, and make him part of my family. That’s a crazy thought, isn’t it? It vastly exceeds my duty to him, doesn’t it?

It is precisely what God did for me!

John begins his thoughts in 1 John 3 by simply marveling at the scope and breadth of God’s love. He could have pitied us, He could have decided to show mercy, He could have devised a plan to save us, and stopped after that. Had He done so we would still be infinitely blessed! However, he went even further and invited us to become members of His family. I believe that John the apostle is the author of this

epistle. Though he held an incredibly rare and lofty position in the church, one that only a small handful of men would ever hold, he knew that it was not for that reason he was exceedingly blessed. It was because he was counted a family member of God!

John states that we are God’s children right now. Having said that, Christians appear to be about as ordinary a people as exist, don’t we? The vast majority of Christians the world over find themselves in the middle class or lower. Generally we do not hold lofty positions or offices of vast influence. Generally we are not the power broker type, able to wield giant sums of money to influence and direct the course of cities, states, or countries. No, we are an ordinary people trying to get from one day to the next during the years of our sojourning here. John makes the point that nothing about us seems extraordinary when he says “what we will be has not yet appeared.” Our Lord lived a life of humility and mockery by those in high positions during His time on earth. We experience the same during ours.

While there is nothing about us right now that would cause anyone in the world to assume anything grand in us by our appearance alone, such will not be the case forever. John went on to say, “but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.” Take a moment to read passages that seem to make similar claims (Colossians 3:4; Romans 8:19, 23; Philippians 3:21, 2 Corinthians 3:18). As I read these passages, an image comes to my mind. When faithful saints, past and present, see the Lord coming *as He is*, in all of His glory and with nothing held back, that image will bring about the change that will come over

whatever shell contains our soul and we will be transformed into something glorious. At that point all people will know that there truly is something special about those who are members of the family of God. Brethren, I do not know if that is exactly how it will happen, if simply viewing the unconcealed glory of Jesus Christ will bring about the transformation of the faithful, but I do know that I want to be a part of the process when it begins. It is that desire that led John to writer verse 3.

“And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.” Hope needs to inspire us to purity and determination. Over and over John encourages us to the only life that can be pleasing to the Father, a life of righteousness and purity. In fact, John habitually points us to the greatest example of righteousness and purity in the person of Jesus Christ (1 John 2:6, 3:3, etc.).

As Christians we are members of the household of God. We are part of His family. With souls blackened by sin and hearts scarred by transgression, God found a way to do more than simply love us, He invited us to become a part of His family. In taking advantage of that offer, the great hope of becoming as the glorified Jesus Christ belongs to the Christian. It is just that hope that moves us to greater determination in living lives of purity and godliness.

IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

Esmeralda Agustin continues struggling spiritually.

Glenn Kimberlin thanks everyone for their concerns and prayers. She will be shut-in for some time.

Gail Stein and Shannon Gilbert continue treatments for breast cancer.

Robert Brundige, Richard’s brother, is in Parkside Manor in Cynthiana dealing with some issues. **Sarah** Brundige, Richard’s mother, is in Cambridge Place Nursing Home and in need of our prayer.

Reid Braswell’s situation remains dire as we await word of his visit to Atlanta and the results of tests done there.

Let’s also remember **David Day and his wife, Michelle Oxendine, Ron Catchen, Chuck McDavitt, and David Blakeman.**

UPCOMING EVENTS:

The informational meeting will be today at 5 followed by a quick men’s meeting.

BIBLE READING SCHEDULE FOR 5/23-5/29:

Sunday: Josh 21-22, Ps 105:26-45, Rom 3-4

Monday: Josh 23-24, Ps 106:1-23, Rom 5-6

Tuesday: Judg 1, Ps 106:24-48, Rom 7

Wednesday: Judg 2-3, Ps 107:1-22, Rom 8

Thursday: Judg 4-5, Ps 107:23-43, Rom 9-11

Friday: Judg 6-7, Ps 108, Rom 12-13

Saturday: Judg 8, Ps 109, Rom 14-15

SERMON TOPICS:

Sunday AM. Practical Implications Of Indwelling

Sunday PM.

CLASS INFORMATION:

Lesson 16, section IV, letter C