



# CAPITOL COMMISSION™

## “AND SUCH WE ARE!” - 1 JOHN 3:1 COLORADO APRIL 9, 2019

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*John does not write these verses to scare nor to assure Christians. He writes to show the incongruity of the attitude of indifference to sin. It is not acceptable for Christians to sin. For us believers, sin must be the exception and not the rule. We must be hating sin and sin fighting. And while we have sinful patterns or habits, our new habits of holiness are our prevailing lifestyle. Real and radical change has happened inwardly and outwardly. We have made a decisive break. Our way of life is not characterized by a life of sin, but a life of loving obedience for we “practice righteousness”. We are loved by God and saved by Christ’s cross. And holiness matters to a holy God. God is our Father and we are a reflection of our Father. Therefore, we live as God’s offspring now. Make a fresh effort to pursue holiness.<sup>1</sup>*

### I. “AND SUCH WE ARE!” - 1 JOHN 3:1

*“See how great a love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.” 1 John 3:1*

The opening verses of 1 John 3 are some of the most encouraging and reassuring verses in all of Scripture as John introduces us to the summit of all God’s blessings to His people in Christ!<sup>2</sup>

### A. “SEE HOW GREAT A LOVE...” - 1 JOHN 3:1A

John begins with “See”. This is both a command and an exclamation as John writes in an outburst of wonder!

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“See” Greek “*idete*” means to pay close attention, an imperative to take a look at this, take time to contemplate.

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John summons us to stop, contemplate and wonder at the fact that we should actually be children of God. John can hardly take it in as he writes.

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“how great” Greek “*potapen*” means what manner, or from what country is this, implies a reaction of astonishment and usually admiration upon viewing some person or thing. Used only 7 times in the New Testament.

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John is saying what glorious and measureless love that the Father has. He uses a very expressive word here to convey the extraordinary nature of this love the Father has. It is so foreign that John is saying, “From what country is this love?” God’s love is out of this world. The Father’s love is so foreign to this world that John wonders what country it may come from.<sup>3</sup>

Look, take time to wonder and be amazed at what sort of love the Father has given us!

John is saying that it is impossible to articulate this love in any human language because it is so foreign to any human experience or understanding. He summons us to stop, contemplate and wonder at the fact that we should be children of God, adopted into God’s family. He can hardly take in the wonder that we who are by nature, children of God’s wrath, (Ephesians 2:3) have been loved by God (lavished with His love) and called His children.

What is there in us that was appealing or desirable to God that He should want to adopt us. Nothing. We are rebel sinners, deserving of God’s judgement and condemnation. Yet, John brings us to focus on this wonder of how great the Father’s love is for us. This is God’s volitional love that He of His own free choice has “bestowed on us”.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, John bursts into praise to God for the greatness of His love in making us His children.

God’s love cannot be earned or deserved. God freely lavishes it on us. This is the bedrock of Christian assurance. We are lavished with everlasting love that is so foreign to this world. The love of God is unparalleled in any human experience and beyond explanation.

Do as John says here. Stop, contemplate and wonder at the glorious and measureless love the Father has for us!

### B. “THE FATHER HAS BESTOWED ON US...” - 1 JOHN 3:1B

It is this love of the Father’s where He seeks, at great cost, to give freely to all believers in Jesus Christ.

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“bestowed” Greek “*dedoken*” given freely for the benefit of another, even if that one is not worthy of such an expression, given and can’t be earned or purchased, permanent gift that can’t be withdrawn.

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It is this specific and unique love of God for His own that stands as one of the unshakeable foundations of eternal hope. God lavishes His love on us and declares that this love is a permanent love, a permanent gift that cannot be earned but a gift that will never be withdrawn from believers in Jesus Christ.<sup>5</sup> And John includes himself among the recipients of this amazing love as he says “us”.

## BIBLE STUDIES

LEGISLATORS, GOVERNOR & SPOUSES: TUESDAY AT 7:15AM, CAPITOL BASEMENT, ROOM 0109

STAFF, LOBBYISTS, JOURNALISTS & SERGEANTS: TUESDAYS AT NOON, [SSB 1525 SHERMAN, RM #603- ACROSS COLFAX FROM CAPITOL](#)

# Colorado

## 1 JOHN 3:1 – “AND SUCH WE ARE!”

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### C. “THAT WE SHOULD BE CALLED CHILDREN OF GOD...” - 1 JOHN 3:1C

The result of this great love is that we are called children of God. Believers have experienced God’s love in an eternal and saving way. We have been adopted into His family (Romans 8:16) and we are called children of God. (1 John 1:12, 2 Peter 1:4) We are children of His only because He chose to lavish His love on us. This is a gracious, unmerited, sovereign love given apart from any human merit. This is a love that cannot be explained. May we praise God and give thanks to our Father for His unspeakable goodness to us.

This is an immense privilege. God Himself has chosen us to be His family. John 1:12-13 describes that we are children born not of natural decent into God’s family, nor of any human decision, but we are born of God. As an outcome of God’s love lavished on us, we are children of God. And as God’s children, we not only have our sins forgiven, but we are adopted into God’s family, His own family! And we have the right to call Him Father, our Father! (Hebrews 2:12) and His Heaven our home! (1 Peter 1:4)

### D. “AND SUCH WE ARE.” - 1 JOHN 3:1D

John emphasizes the reality of our status. We are children of God the Father Himself! Only by His grace! This is no empty hope or wish, but a certainty. God has indeed loved us and made us His children. It is almost impossible to have any sense of what it means to be a child of God. “*And such we are*” John emphasizes. A fact that is not by nature or entitlement, but only by God’s grace!

### E. “FOR THIS REASON THE WORLD DOES NOT KNOW US” - 1 JOHN 3:1E

The “*world*” is used 23 times in 1 John and refers to the following:

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“*world*” Greek “*kosmos*” refers to the unbelieving world, opposed to God and those who believe in His Son and they are under the power of the evil one. (1 John 3:13, 4:5, 5:19)

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It is this “*world*” that does not know us and did not know Him. We are so different from each other (the “*world*”) that in fact the world does not know us. (1 Corinthians 2:15-16)<sup>6</sup> At least we should be different from the world. John has camped on that for a while.

### F. “BECAUSE IT DID NOT KNOW HIM.” - 1 JOHN 3:1F

John records the historical fact of the world’s failure to understand Divine reality. 1 Corinthians 1:21 says that the world through its own wisdom does not know God. And since the world does not know God, the world does not know us.

Because Christians are so different from the world around them, having been transformed by the Father Who adopted them, the New Testament describes believers as “*strangers and exiles*” (Hebrews 11:13) and “*aliens*” (1 Peter 1:11). And the amazing thing is that God is not ashamed to be called our God. (Hebrews 11:16) In addition, He has prepared a city for them. For us!

So why does the world not recognize Christians for what they are? Children of God? The world does not know who we are because the world did not know Who Jesus was. Sin and its master Satan blinds the minds of unbelievers as 2 Corinthians 4:4 says. And we must keep in mind that Christians will share in our Savior’s rejection by the world. Just as He was despised and rejected, (Isaiah 53:8), so we will be too. Because of our union with the Son of God, we will share His rejection by the world. The world will not like us any more than the world liked Christ.

Keep John’s main point in mind here in this verse! “*And such we are*”, God’s own children! Not by nature or entitlement, but only by God’s grace! This is an immense privilege. God Himself has chosen us to be His family. As John 1:12-13 describes, we are children born not of natural decent into God’s family, nor of any human decision, but we are born of God. As an outcome of God’s love lavished on us, we are children of His. Take time to meditate on that! Contemplate and wonder that we are called children of God! And give our Father thanks!

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<sup>1</sup> O’Donnell, Douglas Sean, *Reformed Expository Commentary: 1-3 John*. P&R Publishing Company: Phillipsburg, NJ, 2015. Pg. 99.

<sup>2</sup> Hamilton, Ian, *Let’s Study the Letters of John*. The Banner of Truth Trust: Edinburgh, UK, 2008. Pg. 33.

<sup>3</sup> Hamilton, Ian, *Let’s Study the Letters of John*. The Banner of Truth Trust: Edinburgh, UK, 2008. Pg. 33.

<sup>4</sup> MacArthur, John, *MacArthur Commentary Series on 1-3 John*. Moody Press: Chicago, IL, 2007. Pg. 115.

<sup>5</sup> MacArthur, John, *MacArthur Commentary Series on 1-3 John*. Moody Press: Chicago, IL, 2007. Pg. 115.

<sup>6</sup> Kruse, Collin G., *The Pillar New Testament Commentary: The Letters of John*. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company: Grand Rapids, MI, 2000. Pg. 115.