

King James Bible Study Correspondence Course
An Outreach of Highway Evangelistic Ministries
5311 Windridge lane ~ Lockhart, Florida 32810 ~ USA

I John Lesson 7

I John 2:28-3:3

return pages 6 & 7 only

When He Shall Appear

Christ's coming should produce confidence and commitment.

Related reading: John 15; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; 2 Timothy 2:15

How do you feel just before an important meeting or a visit from a significant person in your life? That all depends on how prepared you are! If you are fully ready for the meeting, you can go into it with confidence. If the house is clean and orderly, the visit is welcomed.

On the other hand, going into a meeting without adequate preparation can lead to disastrous results. In the same way, a surprise visit to a messy house can make the host ashamed.

As Christians, we are looking forward to the return of Christ. That will be a glorious occasion when we will see Him in His glory. When Christ came to earth the first time, He came in humility to die for our sins. When He comes again, He will be seen as the Bridegroom, as He comes seeking HIS Bride. His people, those who have believed in Him and have become children of God, will share in His glory when He returns. (1 Thes. 4:16-18)

First John 2:28-3:3 challenges believers to prepare for the appearance of Christ. If we abide in Him through faithful commitment to obedience, we will be confident when He appears. On the other hand, those who disobey God's Word will be ashamed at His coming.

The Bible is clear in teaching that Jesus will come again. The question is whether we will be ready for His return. If we are, it will be a time of great rejoicing for us, but if we are unprepared, we will be embarrassed to see Him.

Abiding in Confidence

Perhaps you have seen a child who has surprised her parents by cleaning her room or baking some cookies. She can hardly wait until they get home because she is confident they will be pleased.

On the other hand, maybe as a child you had the unpleasant experience of waiting for your parents to arrive, knowing they would soon find out about the window or dish that you broke. You knew that you would be disciplined, so you dreaded their appearing.

How we anticipate someone's arrival is determined by how we have been living. If we are doing what is pleasing, we can look forward in

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confidence, but if we are doing what is displeasing, we are ashamed to face him.



Scripture Memorization

1 Jn 3:2

2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

(KJV)

- Belief in JESUS CHRIST makes us GOD's children
- The best for Christians is still to come

As John wrote to his Christian friends, he challenged them again to abide in Christ (2:28). Knowing that they were genuine Christians, he called them "little children." Not all Christians, however, are faithful in living for God. John wanted to encourage them to continue in Christ, rather than slip into the error and disobedience promoted by the false teachers.

Abiding in Christ means walking as He walked (2:6). In other words, the abiding life is the obedient life.

Those who are not abiding in Christ have lives characterized by disobedience to His Word. For them, the coming of Christ will be a time of embarrassment. Careless living today will result in shame when Christ returns. Only those who are truly living for Christ can wholeheartedly welcome His appearing again.

Following Christ's Example

It is often fascinating to observe how children bear a striking resemblance to their parents. Children imitate their parents in many obvious ways as well. To a great extent, their attitudes, perspectives, and values are shaped by their family lives. In fact, schoolteachers have often noted that they can predict election results simply by taking a poll of their students. Without fully realizing it, children reflect what their parents believe.

In verse 29 (1 John 2) John explained if people have truly been born of God, they would manifest godliness in their lives. Just as children typically resemble the parents to whom they were born, Christians should bear the resemblance of their spiritual family.

John had already taught in 2:1 that Jesus Christ is righteous. That term means that He lives up to the standard of God's holiness. The quality of

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righteousness should mark every person in the family of God. Consequently, John said literally, "Everyone that has a lifestyle of righteousness has been begotten by God."

John was not saying that we become children of God by doing righteous deeds; any more than one becomes a child of a person by learning to imitate his lifestyle. We can live up to God's standard only after we have been born into God's family by faith in Jesus Christ. Then God's Holy Spirit comes to indwell our lives, to enable us to live in a way that pleases Him.

Nevertheless, righteous living is not automatic for God's children. We have to choose to obey God if we are going to abide in Christ. Obedience is not just an option for Christians to consider; it is an obligation for God's children. Only faithful commitment to obedience will produce Christ-likeness in our lives. It is by obeying God's Word that Christians manifest the family trait of righteousness.

Born into God's Family

Several times in this letter of 1 John, the apostle referred to Christians as children. He was not referring to the immaturity of his readers, but rather to the wonderful truth that they were the children of God. In 3:1 John described how Christians have been born into God's family and what they can expect to experience as God's children.

In God's design, human children are the fruit of the love of a husband and a wife. This physical experience of love's producing children is a visible picture of God's spiritual family. Because of His immeasurable love, God took the initiative to bring undeserving sinners into a family relationship with Him. John 1:12 teaches that all those who receive Christ as their Savior have the authority to be called the children of God. We are able to know God as our Father and to enjoy all the blessings that belong to those in His family. We know that in the physical realm the birth of a child is due totally to what the parents have done. In the same way, being born again into God's family is accomplished totally by the gracious work of God. We cannot enter into the family of God by our own efforts. This is a gift of God that simply needs to be accepted by faith and with gratitude.

Becoming a member of God's family also means that the world will misunderstand us. We need to expect the same kind of mistreatment that Jesus Christ endured when He came to earth. Christ came to His own, but His own did not receive Him (John 1:11). Non-Christians do not belong to God's family. They are unable to understand spiritual truth, and they are unwilling to accept those who do. The world rejected and crucified Christ, and it will likely ridicule and criticize Christians. Coming to know God will usually mean that we will be unknown, unappreciated, and misunderstood by the world.

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Better Days Ahead

As Christians, we have much for which we can thank God. As we look to the past, we can rejoice in God's love that provided salvation for us. Because of that immeasurable love, now we are the children of God - (1 John 3:2). We do not have to wonder about our spiritual identity. We can know beyond a shadow of a doubt that we belong to God's family.

That, however, is not the end of the good news. John pointed us to our glorious future. He explained that today we cannot even imagine all that God has in store for us. Just as loving parents plan to surprise and delight their children, so God the Father has wonderful things in mind for Christians. In other words, being born into God's family is just the start of God's good gifts for His children.

John could not describe these blessings in detail, but he gave us a general picture of what we can expect. John said to his readers, "we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." When we see Christ, we will be transformed to be like Him by the gracious work of our Father. Christians will be revealed in their identity as the children of God.

A Challenge for Today

As Christians, we need to look back at what God has done for us in the past. By His great love, God the Father has provided His gift of salvation to those who believe in JESUS CHRIST. By accepting this gift, we have been saved from our sins and have become part of God's family. We are now the children of God.

Likewise, we can look ahead to the wonderful future that God has promised to His children. When Christ appears, we will be like Him. That future prospect goes beyond anything that we can even imagine.

With our past salvation and our future glorification in mind, John gave Christians a challenge for today. We cannot live in the past, and we must not be preoccupied with the future. Instead, each day provides us with a fresh, special opportunity to live for God.

Salvation is a one-time event that permanently brings us into God's family. Nevertheless, that is just the beginning of what God wants to do in our lives. Just as a newborn child grows steadily into adulthood, so God wants His children to grow up in spiritual maturity. Just as children come to imitate their parents, so God the Father wants us to become increasingly like His Son Jesus Christ.

We all have to decide what standard we will have for our lives. The standard for Christians is JESUS CHRIST. As Christ is pure, so we need to become pure, rather than adopting the impure values and behaviors of the

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world. As we look forward to the blessed future hope, we need to commit ourselves to growing in Christ-likeness today.

notes

KJV

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1 John Lesson 7

Name _____

1. Why can those who are walking in obedience look forward to Christ's appearing?
2. What is the key verse in this Lesson?
3. Why is it important to model our lives after the life of JESUS CHRIST?
4. Are all people GOD's children?
5. When JESUS CHRIST returns to get HIS bride, where will we meet HIM?
6. What are some obvious ways in which children resemble their parents?
7. According to Romans 3:10-12, how do we know that no one can become a child of God by doing righteous deeds?
8. What does the hope of Christ's return and our future glorification do for us, according to I John 3:3?
9. How does one become a child of GOD?
10. What will happen to those Christians that are not ready to meet the LORD at His coming?
11. Why would someone be ashamed at HIS coming?
12. What is meant by abiding in CHRIST?
13. Can we lose our salvation if we do not abide in CHRIST?
14. What was the purpose of this Lesson?

True/False

- True Christians may well pass through troubled times?

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- When He appears in the clouds, He will right all of the wrongs that afflict life on earth?
- Christians who are ridiculed today will then be recognized as God's children?
- Salvation includes far more than just deliverance from the penalty of sin?



Scripture memorization (write out these verses on the back of this page)
1 John 3:2; 1 John 2:28-29; 2 Timothy 2:15

Any questions?