WEAVER BOOKS

BIBLICAL STUDIES

The Reasons
We Are Different

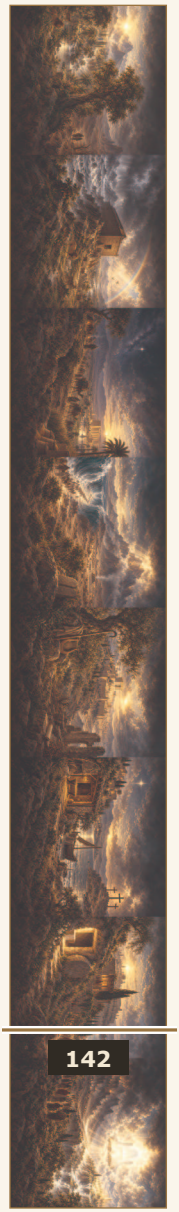
"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet,
and a light unto my path."

PSALM 119:105



JOHN WEAVER

WEAVER BIBLE COLLEGE



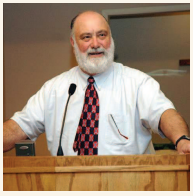
Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.

1 JOHN 3:1, EXCERPT

The Christian's difference is rooted in belonging to God rather than a desire to stand apart. John Weaver considers sonship, holiness, and the pressures of conformity through these messages. Readers are invited to examine the relationship between their identity in Christ and the conduct that should accompany it.

“Because we've been called unto obedience, we've been called unto holiness.”

JOHN WEAVER



John Weaver

John Weaver's sermons form the teaching collection presented by Weaver Bible College. This volume gathers his teaching from that collection.

BOOK 142

WEAVER BOOKS

The Reasons We Are Different

New Testament Studies

John Weaver

Weaver Bible College

LIBRARY BOOK 142

The Reasons We Are Different

John Weaver

Weaver Books
Weaver Bible College

Edited from the sermon corpus of John Weaver.

Contents

Chapter 1: The Reasons We Are Different - Part One of Two 5

Introduction: The Pressure to Conform 5

The Meaning of 'Behold' 8

The Manner of Love 9

The Measure of Love: Called Sons of God 12

The Quality of Love: Loved While Sinners 12

Made Meet and Accepted in Christ 13

The Misapprehension 16

The Misapprehension of the World 17

Applications: Expect Opposition and Be Wary of Worldly Praise 20

Chapter 2: The Reasons we are Different - Part Two of Two 23

Review of Part 1: Manner, Measure, and Misapprehension 23

The Manifestation 24

The Manifestation: Present Reality as Sons of God 25

The Manifestation: Future Uncertainty and Glorified Bodies 28

The Manifestation: We Shall Be Like Him and See Him 32

The Mission: Purification Motivated by Hope 36

Application: The Necessity of Obedience and Holiness 40

Topical Index 45

Scripture Index 47

Study Guide Link 49

CHAPTER 1

The Reasons We Are Different

Part One of Two

The title of the message is “The Reasons We Are Different.” This is the first part of a two-part message, so it will not be finished until next Sunday.

“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God? Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. 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. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he is pure.”

Introduction: The Pressure to Conform

It seems as if, in our day and time, no one wishes to differ from others. There is much peer pressure today, exerted not only upon children but also upon adults. The pressure is to conform to certain

ideas, rules, ideologies, and manners of life. This takes place not only in the workplaces and vocations, but yes, in churches as well, where conformity is basically demanded. You can certainly see the conformity that was demanded during the COVID pandemic. Think about every area of life where we are being pressured to conform, and look at public education. Instead of saying education, we should say indoctrination, because that is exactly what they are doing, really pressuring these kids to conform to a certain way of thinking.

Conformity is not bad as long as it is conformity to the Lord Jesus Christ and to the Word of God. In fact, the truth of the matter is that God the Father commands us to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ.

In Romans chapter 8 and verse 29, the Bible says, “For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.” Note that we are to be conformed to the image of his Son. The Greek word for conformed there is summorphos. Summa, of course, is a preposition which means with or unto. Morphos is where we get our word more from, or morphe is another Greek word there, which means to the image or to the likeness of. So the word actually means that we are to be conformed unto Jesus Christ, fashioned unto Jesus Christ or like Jesus Christ, or brought into the same form.

Years ago, when we got real milk, Alice used to make butter. Once she had made it, she would form it in her hand, press it into a mold, and put it in the refrigerator. When the butter hardened and she took it out, it was in the same shape as the mold.

This is exactly what God is telling us: we are to be conformed, molded, or fashioned like the Lord Jesus Christ. Listen to 1 John 4:17: “Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment.” Stop and think about that. Would you like to be bold when you face God? Our love is made perfect so that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, because “as he is, so are we in this world.” In other words, we have been conformed to Him. We are living like Him, thinking like Him, and acting as He would have us act.

The Scripture commands us to be conformed to the image of the Lord Jesus Christ, or to the Word of God. On the other hand, the Word of God forbids us to be conformed to the world and to the wicked, all of which is contrary to the Word of God. Romans 12:1-2 says, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

The word conformed in Romans 12:2 is the Greek word syschematizo. It means to conform or fashion oneself, or to pattern oneself, one's mind, or one's thinking. We are not to pattern ourselves, our thinking, or our way of life after the world. Rather, we are to be transformed. The word transformed is the Greek word from which we get our English word metamorphosis.

Like a butterfly goes through changes, Romans 12:2 tells us that we are not to be conformed to this world, but we are to be metamorphosized; that is, we are to be changed by the renewing of our minds.

In 1 Peter chapter 1, beginning in verse 13, we find the same Greek word used in Romans 12:2: "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."

"As obedient children." What do obedient children do? Obedient children conform themselves to Jesus Christ and to the Word of God. They do not fashion or conform themselves according to the former lusts of their ignorance. Clearly, then, he is telling us once again that we are not to fashion ourselves according to the world or our fleshly lust.

There is a vast difference between the saved and the unsaved, and that difference can be explained in what you and I would call

conformity. The child of God is seeking to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ by obedience to the Word of God, whereas the unsaved man is trying to conform to his lusts, the world's ideology, and that which the world demands.

There is a passage in 1 Corinthians 4 and verse 7 that asks this question: "For who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" In other words, who made us to differ? Why is it that we are not conforming ourselves to the world and to our fleshly lust? Who made us to differ? The truth of the matter is, it is God in His grace and mercy.

The Meaning of 'Behold'

Look back in 1 John 3, because we are covering verse 1 today, and see the impact of the very first word in the very first verse: behold. When we hear the word behold, we automatically stop and look around. We understand that it means stop and see, stop and look, pay attention, or stand in awe. There is something in front of you that you need to perceive, grasp, and understand.

The Greek word for behold is oida, which means "I know," and is closely connected to eido, which means "I see." When you look at this word, behold, it means that you are to perceive, see, grasp, and understand something. It means that you are to discern by fastening your eyes upon whatever you are beholding.

Let me give you an illustration. Hold 1 John 3, but look back in your Bibles to the Gospel of John—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—and look in John 20. You know the story of how Thomas has denied, or not really denied, our Lord. What he said was, "Except I see the prints of the nails in his hand and thrust my hand in the spear wound in the side, I will not believe." Therefore, he is called Doubting Thomas.

In John 20, our Lord appears to the disciples, and Thomas happens to be there. In verse 26 we read, "And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them." The first time He appeared, Thomas was not with them. Then, "Then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto

you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, …and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing."

The word behold is exactly the same word used in 1 John 3:1. When He says to Thomas, "behold my hands," He is inviting Thomas to see and to know—to perceive, discern, and understand that He is in reality the crucified, resurrected Son of God. The word behold means: you see, you hear, you pay attention, you learn, and you grasp. So, when we return to 1 John 3:1, he begins by saying, "Behold." What is it that we are to behold in our text?

The Manner of Love

The first thing that we are to behold is the manner—the manner of love. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us." When he says "behold," he is telling us to stop, discern, look, see, and lay hold of this. He is speaking about the quality of God's love, not its quantity. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us" is what we would call a qualitative interrogatory. He is asking us to discern the quality of God's love. He is not asking us at this point to discern its quantity. There is a difference between quantity and quality.

When you buy something, especially when you pay a cheaper price and receive more of whatever you want, you may later discover that it is vastly inferior. When you buy quality and pay more, you may have less because quality costs more to produce. I want to show you the difference between the quantity and the quality of God's love. The truth is, we cannot really conceive either one in its fullness.

Paul prays for the Ephesian Christians: "That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." Have you ever contemplated the breadth, length, depth, and height of the love of God? Have you ever understood that the love of God surpasses all knowledge?

If we cannot truly discern the quantity of God's love, how do we expect to comprehend, even a little, the quality of God's love? Thankfully, He reveals an illustration through which we can perceive it. In 1 John 3:1, he says again, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us." The word manner is very important. It is the Greek word potapos, and it refers to quality—what manner, what kind, or what quality the Father has bestowed upon us. "Behold, what manner of love the Father bestowed upon us."

So I want to give you three verses in the New Testament where we have the same exact Greek word. I want you to see how the word "behold" is used, because it is used the same way in this passage as well. I want you to look first of all at Luke chapter 1, where the angel Gabriel comes to Mary. Let us begin reading there with verse 26. "And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary."

"And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women." Now look at this next verse. "And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God." And he goes on. But now notice, if you would, the Bible said she was troubled at this saying and cast in her mind. What? Who is this? Why is he saying this? Is this supposed to be a blessing? What is happening? So I suppose that we would be questioning something as well if an angel just happened to appear to us and spoke to us in an unusual frame like Gabriel did to Mary. But what manner of salutation is this? What does this mean? What is the quality of this? What is the kind of this?

Now go to 2 Peter chapter 3, beginning with verse 10. He says, "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." We are talking about the end of the world. Look at verse 11: "Seeing then that all these things shall be

dissolved," here is the question: "What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" What kind, what quality of person should you be? The end of the world is near. The end of the world is coming is what he is saying. What kind of quality of person should you be? Wow. Well, that is the manner.

Now, one more. In Matthew chapter 8, our Lord has healed—not healed. Well, He did heal, but He calmed the storm. He calmed the sea. He calmed the winds. Notice in Matthew chapter 8 and verse 26, He is speaking to His disciples.

"And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm. But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!" What manner of man is this? What kind is he? Obviously, he is more than a man. He is the God-man, God incarnate, God in the flesh.

That is what they are asking. A normal, ordinary man could not calm the wind or the sea. So, what manner of man? This is exactly what John is asking in 1 John 3:1: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us."

The only way that we can understand the quality of God's love is by an illustration. What is the illustration? It is in verse 16: "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."

Now, "hereby perceive we." The word perceive is the Greek word ginosko, which means I know. Ginosko means literally to know, to perceive, to understand, to learn, to get a knowledge of, to get a grasp of, or, as we would say, to get a handle to it. In other words, it is something that we can pick up, see, and understand. He says, "...hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us."

When you stop and think about this, it is the Lord Jesus Christ who was our sacrifice, who gave himself on our behalf. The Bible says, "Hereby perceive we the love of God because he laid down his life for us," which means that Jesus Christ is God. He is God in the flesh. That is what 1 Timothy 3:16 tells us: "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh; seen

of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."

Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh. He is now giving us an illustration of how we can grasp the quality of his love: He laid down his life for us. But there is even more. Go back to verse 1 of 1 John 3: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us."

The Measure of Love: Called Sons of God

So now you have the measure: “What manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.” The Bible is telling us that He loved us with the quality of a father’s love, making us His children.

First, consider the word bestowed. It is the Greek word didomi, which means that it is a gift—something given. We did not earn it or merit it. He simply bestowed it; He gave it to us. Moreover, although it is normally a gift, in the Greek this is known as a perfect active indicative. That means it happened at one time, but it always continues. When God bestowed His love upon us and made us His children, it happened at one time, but it constantly and continually continues. It never stops.

When he says, “Behold, what manner of love the Father bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God,” the word sons is teknon, meaning the children of God, including sons and daughters. Teknon expresses the bonds of love, trust, and friendship between parents and children. Scripture is telling us that we are not merely the friends of God or of the Lord Jesus Christ; we are the children of God and the children of the Lord Jesus Christ. We are still considering the quality of His love.

The Quality of Love: Loved While Sinners

Hold 1 John, but turn back in your Bibles to Ephesians, chapter 2. As you turn there, consider this illustration. Suppose Alice and I are out, and I look up to see a man with a pistol pointed at Alice just as he presses the trigger. What do I do? I jump in front of her and take the bullet for her. That is what I should do, because I am to love her,

protect her, and give my life for her. You might say, “That would make you a hero.” No, it would not make me a hero. It would simply be doing what I am supposed to do.

You've been married for sixty-two years. I understand that. But let me change the picture. Suppose Alice were not my wife, but a woman who absolutely hated and despised me—who lied about me, slandered me, and did everything she could to destroy me. If I saw a man aiming a pistol at her and, just as he pressed the trigger, jumped in front of her and took the bullet for this woman who hated my guts, that would be a different picture, wouldn't it? It is one thing to love my wife; it is another thing to love someone who hates and despises me.

Ephesians 2:1-3 describes us as dead in trespasses and sins, walking according to the course of this world and the prince of the power of the air. We had our conversation in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

Here is the fact: when God loved us, we were unlovely. We were full of sin, wickedness, and rebellion. We hated Him and despised Him. Romans 5:8 says, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." He did not die for us when we were holy, righteous, and pure. He died for us while we were sinners. You are talking about the quality of God's love. He loved us when we were unlovely. He chose us when we were unlovely. He adopted us and gave us to Christ when we were unlovely.

Made Meet and Accepted in Christ

We are still considering the quality of His love. Colossians 1:12-13 says, "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." The Bible tells us to give thanks unto the Lord because He has translated us out of the kingdom of darkness and put us into the kingdom of His own dear Son.

You remember in the Old Testament, David was asked to be the king's son-in-law. The reason he was asked was because Saul wanted him dead. Saul promised to give him one of his two daughters, Merab or Michal. When it came time for Merab to be given to him, however, she was given to somebody else. Saul then said, “Well, I'll tell you what: don't let my hand be upon him; let the hand of the Philistines.” He had his men come to David and say, “The king delights in you, and he wants you to be his son-in-law.” David said, “Seemeth it to you a light thing to be a king's son-in-law?” Why? He said, “I'm the least in my family, and my family is least in our tribe.” What? Who would expect me to be the king's son-in-law?

If David thought it was something to be the son-in-law of a king, what about being the son and daughter of the King of kings, and Lord of lords, and God of gods? We should stop and think about this. Have you ever meditated upon the fact that you are, by the grace and mercy of God, a child of God? You are His son or you are His daughter. Have you ever thought about the quality—not just the quantity, but the quality—of His love in the fact that He regenerated you? He converted you. He drew you to Himself. He gave you repentance. He gave you faith. He brought you into His family. He worked in you that which would make you suitable to be a child of God.

Now, let me show you. Since we're in the book of Colossians, go back, if you would, to verse 12 of chapter 1. He says, “Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.” Wow. The word “meet” is from the Greek word hikanoo, and it literally means to make sufficient, to render fit, and to equip one with that which is necessary.

Now, wait a minute. He made us meet. He equipped us. He gave us what was necessary to make us a child of God. I want you to turn right back to the book of Ephesians and look in chapter 1 at verse 6. Let me show you what it means to make someone meet, to make someone suitable, to make someone fit, to make someone with everything necessary to be the Son of God. In Ephesians 1 and verse 6, the Bible says this. Let's read verse 5.

“Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the

praise of the glory of his grace," wherein "he hath made us accepted in the beloved." So the Bible says that God has made us accepted in the Beloved.

The word accepted in Ephesians 1:6 is charitoo in the Greek. The noun charis means grace. Charitoo means to make us gracious, acceptable, lovely, charming, agreeable, and highly favored. What did God do in making us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light? He made us gracious and kind and loving and charming and agreeable, when in reality all we were were wicked, rotten, hellish sinners. By the way, this is why I never ask sinners to accept Jesus Christ.

I don't look at me like I'm stupid. But think about this: Jesus Christ does not have to be made gracious, loving, kind, and wonderful. He already is that. What we have to do is receive Him as He is, fully and freely offered in the Gospel. He has to make us acceptable. He already is acceptable with God. That is why God raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His own right hand. We must receive Him as He is fully and freely offered us in the Gospel. He has made us acceptable because He has washed us in His own blood.

The Bible tells us that He has made us acceptable in Jesus Christ. He has made us meet to be partakers with the inheritance of the saints in light. He has made us His children. I would challenge you, especially, to read through the New Testament and discover and underline how many times we are called the sons of God.

Romans 8:14 says, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." The Spirit itself "beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." "If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."

The Bible says that we are the sons of God. We have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, "Abba, Father." Do you remember what the word Abba means? Papa. It was just a term of endearment to every grandfather. I thought about this when my

oldest grandson, at four or five years old, would call me on the phone and say, “Papa, I need.” Then he would tell me whatever he wanted, but he never said, “I want”; he would say, “I need.”

I asked my son, “Have you talked to your mother and father about this?” He said yes. When I asked what they had said, he replied, “They said to call Papa.” Translated, that meant Mom and Dad were not going to buy it, but Papa would. The truth is, I love to hear them say, “Papa.” This is what God is saying.

This is a term of endearment, a term of intimacy, where you can call the sovereign God of heaven and earth your Papa, your Father. He tells us that we are the sons of God. Romans 8:19 says, “For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.” The whole world has been placed under a curse, and when we are set at full liberty in Jesus Christ, so will the world. Notice that he again calls us the sons of God.

Second Corinthians 6:17-18 says, “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” God said, “I’m willing to be your Father. You’ll be my son. You’ll be my daughter.”

Galatians 4:4-6 gives this blessed truth again: “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.” Note the words, “and because ye are sons.”

Now look back to 1 John 3:1: “What manner, what quality of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.” When you stop and think about the quality of God’s love, He loved us when we were wicked, vile, and ungodly.

The Misapprehension

He delivered us from the power of darkness. He delivered us out of the kingdom of the enemy and took us into the kingdom of His own dear Son. He adopted us, made us His children, and allows us to call

Him Papa. So you have the manner; you have the measure. Here is the last point today: the misapprehension. Look at verse 1: “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.”

The Misapprehension of the World

“Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.” We are all fallen but saved sinners, and we should know something about misunderstanding and misapprehension. I have heard husbands say, “My wife doesn’t understand me,” and wives say, “My husband doesn’t understand me.” I have heard complaints between Christians and family members. Nobody ever seems to understand anybody.

Misunderstanding is easy to find. Oftentimes, though, you will also find misapprehension—not only in your family and among your friends, but in the church as well. We understand the word misunderstand. I could say something to Steve, thinking I was speaking plainly and making everything exceedingly clear, and he would not understand what I said. He misunderstood. It was not clear in his mind, or I did not make it clear enough for him. But misapprehend simply means to get the wrong idea or the wrong impression about something. It is not that you do not understand what was said; you understood it, but you got the wrong idea and the wrong impression concerning it.

Let me give you an illustration. When I have a class, especially if there are many young women present, I usually say at the beginning, “If I call you honey, sugar, or sweetheart, please understand that I am not flirting with you.” I am not, because I have called my wife that for almost sixty-two years, and I have called my four daughters that all their lives. I have even caught myself saying it to married women and had to correct myself immediately. Alice can testify that one day I was talking to my father and called him sweetheart. He certainly balked at that, and I had to say, “No, Dad, I don’t mean you are my sweetheart; it is just a habit.” At my age, sometimes it is easier to refer to a young woman as sweetheart than to try to remember her name.

An old man and his wife invited another elderly couple to their house for dinner. After dinner, the ladies got up and went to the kitchen to take care of the dishes. The man said to his friend, “My wife and I ate at a wonderful restaurant last week. The food was really delicious.” His friend asked, “What restaurant was that?”

He said, “Oh, I can’t think of that. What’s the name of that flower that’s got thorns?” The man said, “Rose.” He said, “That’s right. Rose. Rose, honey, what was the name of that restaurant?”

This is what I’m talking about: misapprehension. One would think, if he would just stop and think, that the world would really appreciate someone who was honest and hardworking. You would think the world would appreciate truthfulness and faithfulness, someone trying to live right and do what is right, pleasing, and acceptable unto God. But that’s not true. The world does not appreciate that.

If you don’t believe that, just become a whistleblower on the federal government or the state government. Or become a whistleblower on the corruption of a business or an organization. The world misapprehends and misunderstands us because it cannot, does not, and will not recognize the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, it will not recognize that we differ from the world, and it does not like that difference. The world does not understand our principles, our conduct, our suffering, or our source of joy and comfort.

In fact, they think that we are strange. Look in your Bibles at 1 Peter chapter 4, verse 3. It tells us what we used to be like before God saved us: “For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries.” That’s what we used to do.

“Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you.” In other words, you do not act as they act or do what they do, and now they think you are strange. The word strange is xenizo in the Greek, and it literally means shocked, surprised, astonished. They are shocked and astonished that you are different—that you do not like to get drunk, whore around, defraud, deceive, or be deceitful. They think it is

strange and therefore speak evil of you because you are not like them. You are different.

So look in verse 12. Again, our Lord says this, using the same Greek word: “Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you.” You have to understand that if they persecuted Jesus Christ, they are going to persecute you. Do not think that strange whatsoever.

Now I want you to follow me. I am going to show you why the world does not like the fact that we are different. Our Lord says, “If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name’s sake, because they know not him that sent me.” So our Lord said, if they hated Him, they are going to hate you. If they despised Him, they are going to despise you.

In John chapter 16, our Lord said, “These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.” They do not like it because we are different. The reason we are different is because of the grace and mercy of God.

In Matthew chapter 10, our Lord said, “The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?” If they curse Christ, they are going to curse us. If they said Christ is of the devil, they will say we are the devil. “Fear them not therefore. For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known.” The disciple is going to be as his master, and the servant as his lord. It is just that simple.

Here is a good quote from John Calvin, talking about the world:

"It is a trial that grievously assaults our faith, that we are not so much regarded as God's children, or that no mark of so great an excellency appears in us, but that on the contrary, almost the whole world treats us with ridicule and contempt. Hence it can hardly be inferred from our present state that God is a father to us, for the devil so contrives all things to obscure this benefit. He obviates the offense by saying that we are not as yet acknowledged to be such as we are, because the world knows not God."

A remarkable example of this very thing is found in Isaac and Jacob. For though both were chosen by God, yet Ishmael persecuted the former, that is Isaac, with laughter and taunts, and Esau persecuted Jacob with threats and with the sword. However, we may be oppressed by the world; still, our salvation remains safe and secure. And that is true.

Applications: Expect Opposition and Be Wary of Worldly Praise

Let me make a couple of applications. First, it should be no surprise to us that the world does not love us. It should be no surprise that the world will not rush to praise us, recognize us, or bestow admiration upon us. They did not look upon Jesus Christ with admiration. They did not recognize Him as the Messiah, as the Son of God. Certainly, they are not going to look upon us as anything other than strange, and they are astonished that we do not do what they do.

We should expect to be lied about and slandered. We should expect that the world will misunderstand and misapprehend. Over sixty years of preaching, I have had people lie about me and slander me, and the strange thing is that I do not even know some of them. I have never met them or talked to them. Yet some go around telling people what I believe, though I have never spoken to them in my entire life. You would think that if somebody is going to say something about you, they would at least have the courtesy and character to call and ask, "Do you believe this or say this?" But that does not matter. You need to expect to be misunderstood and misapprehended. They are going to put a wrong impression upon it

and take everything the wrong way. It does not matter what you say, and our Lord is telling us this now in light of this truth.

That brings me to the second application: we should be wary whenever the world begins to recognize us, admire us, and praise us. Our Lord said, “Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.” “Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.”

Notice His next word: falsely. Do not let it be true. It has to be false if you are going to be blessed. You can expect to be lied about. If the world is praising you, recognizing you, and admiring you, something is wrong somewhere. We have to be wary about this.

Think about this: “Behold.” Stop, think, look, pay attention, know, and discern. “What manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.” Think this week about the quality of God's love, and not just the quantity of it. Think about God as your Father, who loved you and gave Himself for you.

“Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us.” This is how we lay a handle on it. We understand, to some degree, the quality of God's love. Behold. Think about it. What manner of love? It is a gracious, merciful, and eternal love.

Father, thank You again today for the Lord Jesus Christ, for His grace and mercy to us. We love Thee today, and we thank Thee for Thy great love. May we think about the quality of that love, and not just the quantity. We need to know the height, breadth, depth, and length, but we need to know the quality as well. Give us some apprehension and understanding—not a bad apprehension, but may we apprehend and understand, to some degree, the quality of Your love, as well as the quantity of it. In the name of Jesus Christ, we ask and pray. Amen.

CHAPTER 2

The Reasons we are Different

Part Two of Two

In 1 John chapter 3, we read the first three verses: “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God. 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. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.”

Review of Part 1: Manner, Measure, and Misapprehension

The last time we dealt with this passage, I only made it through the very first verse. We looked first at the manner of love when he said, “Behold, what manner of love.” In fact, it is talking about a qualitative love, not a quantitative love. The word “behold” means stop and think, stop and meditate, take notice of this—take notice of the manner of love.

The Bible tells us that we really cannot even perceive the quantitative love of God, because Paul prayed in Ephesians chapter 3 that the saints might grasp in some manner the height and the depth and the breadth of the love of God. But here he is talking about the manner of God's love. So he says, “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us.” It has to be a very quality love. In fact, it is actually a qualitative interrogatory that is being presented here.

Secondly, notice the measure we covered: “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.” Here is the measure of the love: He made us the sons of God; we are now being called the sons of God.

The third point covered in the first message was a misapprehension, which we see in the latter part of verse 1: “Therefore, the world knoweth us not because it knew him not.” A misapprehension is a little different from a misunderstanding. It is not that you misunderstand what was said; you simply put the wrong interpretation upon it. You think things that are not true based upon that which you heard. The world is not going to be our friend. It misapprehends us.

The Manifestation

The fact is, the world does not appreciate honesty, purity, morality, or ethics. Since the world despises Jesus Christ, it also despises us. The reason is that we are different. We are peculiar, at odds with the world system and those who love and support it. There is no fellowship between righteousness and unrighteousness.

There is no agreement with the temple of God and infidel or an idol's temple. If you read 2 Corinthians chapter 6, the Apostle Paul makes it exceedingly clear that there are great differences between those who believe and those who believe not. We are never going to be able to get along with the world—that is, the world system—and the world system is not going to get along with us. They may hate us, persecute us, prosecute us, or even try to eliminate us, but they are going to fail.

There is a hope within us that enables us to persevere in spite of everything the world can throw at us. In fact, there is a hope within us and a hope without us as well. What is that hope? Look in verses 2 and 3: “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear, but we shall be. But we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.”

The Manifestation: Present Reality as Sons of God

This brings us to our fourth point: the manifestation. We have seen the manner, the measure, and the misapprehension. In verse 2 he says, “Beloved, now are we the sons of God.” Many important truths are revealed in this verse, but I will emphasize one particularly. First of all, there is a reality: “Beloved, now are we the sons of God.” I want to call your attention to the word “now.” We normally do not think much about that word, but it is very important. It is the Greek word nun, N-U-N.

We would pronounce it “noon,” but it actually means now, at this time, right now in the present. Look at what he is saying: “Beloved, right now, in this time, in the present, in time in history, we are the sons of God.” Let that thought sink in: we are now the sons of God.

The word “sons” in verse 2 is the Greek word teknon, the same as in verse 1, which simply means that we are the children of God. We are the offspring of God. We are now His children. We do not become the children of God in eternity. If you are not a child of God now, in time and history, you are not going to be a child of God in eternity. Because now, he says, are we the sons of God. It is in time and history that God makes us His children. The world may not recognize us as the children of God, but that does not change the reality of this truth.

This absolute reality has a grave implication: if we are His children, His sons and daughters, then we must display evidence and manifest the characteristics of His children now, in time and history. God has given us a present dignity—He has made us His sons—and a present duty: we are to act like His children.

Children usually look like and act like their father. Two of my grandsons have sons of their own, and when you see our great-grandchildren, they look exactly like their father. They talk and act like him as well. This is exactly what the Scripture tells us.

Our Lord said, “But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless those that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you. Why? That you may be the children of your Father who is in heaven. For he maketh the sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth the rain on the just and the unjust. Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” He tells us very clearly that, if we are His children, we must take on the characteristics of our Father.

In Matthew chapter 10, verse 20, when our Lord is telling us how to respond when we are being prosecuted, He says, “Don’t necessarily think about what we’re going to say,” and then, “for it is not you that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speak within you.” In Luke 6:36, He says, “Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.”

We are now the sons of God in time and history. The fact that we are not perfect should not distract us from this present reality. God has bestowed upon us the honor and dignity of being His children. He has regenerated us, converted us, given us repentance and faith, drawn us to Himself, and begotten us. We are His children. Therefore, we have a responsibility to bring our lives into conformity to the image of our Father.

The truth of the matter is that we may still struggle with our flesh, vain thoughts, the pride of life, and many other things. But the reality is that God has saved us; He has made us His children.

John Calvin writes: “He comes now to what everyone knows and feels himself. For though the ungodly may not entice us to give up our hope, yet our present condition is very short of the glory of God’s children.” In other words, we are not where we ought to be, and we know it.

We're not shining forth the way we should shine forth. He goes on, "For as to our body, we are dust and shadow, and death is always before our eyes. We're also subject to thousands of miseries, and the

soul is exposed to innumerable evils, so that we also find a hell within us."

He says, "The more necessary it is that all of our thoughts should be withdrawn from the present view of things, lest the miseries that are on every side of us surrounded and almost overwhelmed should shake our faith in that felicity which as yet lies hidden. For the apostles' meaning is this, that we act very foolishly when we estimate what God has bestowed upon us according to the present state of things, but that we ought with undoubting faith hold to that which does not yet appear."

So what he is saying is very clear. We have fights within ourselves. We want that which is right. We want that which is holy. And yet we find our flesh longing for that which is unholy and that which is not right. Sometimes we begin to berate ourselves and condemn ourselves and think, well, I must not be saved. But no, this is the hell within us. We are fighting. It's what it amounts to. There is a battle, and it's going to continue like that.

So here is the present reality: "Beloved. Now are we the sons of God." We are, regardless of our faults and regardless of our failures, regardless of our sins. We are now, in time and history, the sons of God.

Here is the second reality: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be." I cannot give you every detail about our glorified bodies, but we know that we're going to have a glorified body. We know that we're going to be able to serve and worship our Father without ignorance and without sin. We know that our state will be one of eternal happiness. We do not know exactly what our glorified bodies are going to be, but God gives us some great information.

He said, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God." We're now the sons of God, "and it doth not yet appear what we shall be."

SCRIPTURE READING - 2 Corinthians 5:1-9 (KJV)

The Manifestation: Future Uncertainty and Glorified Bodies

> So we're talking about our bodies. "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." We know that when this old body drops off and we go to be with the Lord, we are going to have a new house, a new tabernacle.
>
> "For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.
>
> "Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him."
>
> So he is telling us very plainly: we're going to have a brand new body, a new house, so to speak, a new tabernacle. And it's going to be totally different from the one that we have now.

In 1 Corinthians 15, beginning with verse 35, the apostle makes a contrast between what we are now and what we will be: “But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die.”

Here is a principle we do not like, but it is true: you cannot receive a new glorified body until you drop off this old, deceitful, wicked, fleshly body. We have to die to receive a glorified body. Then, in verse 37, he says, “And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that

body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain."

He is using the illustration of a garden: "But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body. All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds. There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead." Notice carefully: "So also is the resurrection of the dead."

"It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." We do not know exactly what our glorified bodies will be, but we will not be some little spirit floating around somewhere in the universe. We will have a glorified body.

The Bible tells us plainly that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. Therefore, our new glorified bodies will not be flesh and blood, but they will be flesh and bone. Verse 50 says, "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."

We are still talking about our glorified bodies. He said it doth not yet appear what we're going to be. But watch this. In John chapter 20, verse 24, we read:

"But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and

thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

I want you to know that Jesus Christ had a real body. He had hands, and He had feet. He told Thomas, "Feel my hands, thrust your hand into my side, see that it is I myself." This was not merely a vision or an appearance without substance. Thomas was directed to see and handle the very body of the risen Christ.

In Luke chapter 24, verse 39, our Lord said, "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself." Then He said, "Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have."

Jesus was already resurrected from the dead. He had been raised. He had a glorified body. It was flesh and bones. It was a real, genuine body. The risen Lord Himself declared that a spirit does not have flesh and bones as they saw Him have. Understand this: in this new glorified body, which is flesh and bone, Jesus Christ remained truly bodily present after His resurrection. His glorified body was not an abstraction, but a real body with hands, feet, flesh, and bones.

We will still be able to eat and enjoy food. I love fish. In fact, I usually tell people I'd rather have fresh fish than a T-bone steak. I prefer fish over steak any day of the week.

Luke chapter 24, beginning with verse 36, says, "And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you."

"But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet."

"And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them."

So our Lord now is eating, and very plainly, fish and honeycomb. John chapter 21, beginning with verse 7, says, "Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea. And the other disciples came in a little ship; (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits,) dragging the net with fishes."

"As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread. Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught. Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken. Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine."

None of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord. Jesus then came, took bread, and gave them, and fish likewise. This was the third time that Jesus showed himself to his disciples after he was risen from the dead. So He has a body—flesh and bones, something that you can handle. He has a body that can still enjoy food.

By the way, I hope you also note that there is going to be plenty of fruit in eternity, because Revelation 22:2 says, "In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." Yes, we will be able to eat in that glorified body as well.

Moreover, the Bible tells us that we shall know even as we are known. I have been asked so many times, "Pastor, do you think we're going to know each other in heaven?" My stock answer is very simple: yes, we will know each other. We're not going to be any more stupid there than we are here. If we know each other here, then obviously we're going to know each other there.

Peter, James, and John went with our Lord in Matthew 17 to the Mount of Transfiguration. Jesus was transfigured before them, and there appeared with Him Moses and Elijah. Peter, James, and John had never met Moses or Elijah. Yet when Peter saw them, he said,

"Lord, it is good for us to be here: let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias."

A great cloud came over them, and the Father spoke from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." But Jesus Christ did not say, "Moses, I'd like to introduce you to Peter. Peter, I'd like to introduce you to Moses. And also, Peter, this is Elijah." No, Peter automatically knew who it was. So yes, we're going to know even as we are known.

That is what the Apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 13:12: "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face." "Now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." Yes, we're going to know each other, and we're going to know everything about each other.

Go back to 1 John chapter 3, because I am still dealing with this present reality: we are now the sons of God. Associated with that is the fact that we are not sure exactly what kind of glorified body we are going to have, but we know we are going to have a glorified body. Notice now the third and fourth realities involved in this manifestation.

The Manifestation: We Shall Be Like Him and See Him

Verse 2 says, “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be.” Here is the third one: “But we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him.” Here is the fourth: “For we shall see him as he is.” Pay attention to the latter part of the verse: “but we know.” We perceive, understand, and grasp this reality that when he appears, first, we shall be like him, and secondly, we shall see him as he is.

His manifestation brings our manifestation to fruition. Romans 8:29 says, “For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.” This is the purpose of our salvation. God saved us and predestinated us to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ.

Contrary to what some people have thought and said, I do not think this means that everybody is going to be a thirty-three-year-old male, or that there are no women in heaven because everybody will be a thirty-three-year-old male. The word “like,” when he says, “we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him,” is homoios in the Greek, meaning similar, resembling, or corresponding to a thing.

Our bodies will correspond to his body; our minds and hearts will correspond to his mind and heart. His image will be perfected in us, and we will no longer be defaced in any manner. We will be perfect, holy, undefiled, and righteous, and we will have and know the blessedness of God the Father. We will have immortality, incorruption, power, glory, spirituality, and freedom from all imperfections, sorrows, afflictions, and death, so that we may worship and glorify him forever. God will also give us a perfect understanding and knowledge of everything.

Now that does not mean that we're going to grasp God and know him. In order to grasp God, we would have to be God ourselves, which is impossible. But it does mean that our understanding will be perfect. Our knowledge will be perfect as well.

Hold 1 John chapter 3 in mind as we look at Philippians chapter 3, verse 21. Look carefully now, because we're still talking about the manifestation: “for we shall see him.” He says, “Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.” So he is going to change our vile body to make it like unto his glorious body.

In verse 2, we read, “But we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him.” How are we going to be like him? Because he is going to change our vile body like unto his glorious body.

We must have a glorified body in order for our Lord’s prayer to be answered. John chapter 17 is the high priestly prayer of our Lord, and there is one request that he made in verse 24: “Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory.” “That they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.” The only way that we could ever behold the glory of our Lord

is with a glorified body. We could not behold His glory without the perfection, holiness, and righteousness which He gives and brings us unto. So clearly then, “when he shall appear, we shall be like him.”

In all probability, this is our real transformation. This also brings us to the fourth reality or the fourth truth in connection with this present reality: “For we shall see him as he is.” Stop and think about that. We shall see him as he is. This passage clearly implies that there will be an influence in beholding the Savior as he is, which will tend to make us like him and transform us into his likeness.

Peter referred to our love for Jesus Christ now, even though we have not seen him: “Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.” If we can love him without seeing him, and our love can be to the extent that we joy in him and are full of glory, what in the world do you think it will be like when we see him as he is?

In all of His regal, royal splendor, majesty, holiness, sovereignty, and power, our Lord's flesh, in one sense, was hiding His deity. You remember on the Mount of Transfiguration in Matthew chapter 17? His whole countenance was changed, and He was glistening. You remember Isaiah 53; the Bible said, "when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him." But on the Mount of Transfiguration, all of His glory, all of His deity, and all its affections shone through.

Therefore, Peter, James, and John understood something of this beautiful, wonderful Lord that we have now. The Bible is saying that when we see Him, we will understand all of this. I want you to notice another truth in light of this that we should comprehend. Look at 2 Corinthians chapter 3, verse 18: "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

This is why you should be reading the Scripture every day. This is why you should be studying the Scripture every day. This is why you should be meditating and thinking about the Scripture every day. Paul is speaking of the change in us in the present, that is, in this

time in history on earth—the change in us as we behold Him in His Word by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Albert Barnes, speaking about being changed into His image in 2 Corinthians 3:18, said, "It is possible that there may be an allusion here to the effect which was produced by looking into an ancient mirror."

Such mirrors were made of burnished metal, and reflections from them would be intense. If a strong light were thrown on them, the rays would be cast by reflection on the face of him that looked on the mirror, and it would be strongly illuminated. The idea may be that the glory of God, the splendor of the divine perfections, was thrown on the gospel, so to speak, like a bright light on a polished mirror, and that the glory was reflected from the gospel on him who contemplated it, so that he appeared to be transformed into the same image. Locke renders it, “we are changed into his very image by a continued succession of glory as it were streaming upon us from the Lord.” By placing ourselves within the light of the gospel and contemplating the glory that shines there, we become changed into the likeness of the same glory and conform to that which shines there with so much splendor. By contemplating the resplendent face of the blessed Redeemer, we are changed into something of the same image.

In other words, His image will be reflected on us. We will imbibe His sentiments, catch His feelings, and be molded into the image of His own purity. Thus, if we want to be pure and holy and change more and more into His image here on earth, in time and history, we need to behold Him and His truth in His Word. That explains the illustration about the mirror.

Most of you know I have an old Dodge Ram pickup. Right in the middle of the windshield, up high, there is an image of a Ram. It is a little cow that is, I suppose, stuck on the windshield. Claiborne, our pit bull, always sits on the seat beside me when he rides in the truck, looking straight ahead. Sometimes Alice has been in the passenger seat, and I have said, “Would you look at Claiborne’s head?” The sun shines on that decal of the ram, and the decal is reflected right on Claiborne’s forehead.

I mean, you can see it there. And I always look at him and say, "No, no, no, Claiborne, we don't do tattoos," you know, but I know it's not a tattoo. But the point is, it was reflecting right on him. And this is what the Bible is teaching us. When we look in the word and the Holy Spirit of God shows us what is in the word, it comes and reflects upon us and changes us. Now, I didn't change Claiborne into a ram, but at least there was the appearance of that ram on his forehead. So the Bible is telling us here we have the change.

Now, I want you to note so far what we've covered in this passage. Look back, if you would, in 1 John 3. In verse 1, we saw the manner. In verse 1, we saw the measure. In verse 1, we saw the misapprehension. In verse 2, we have seen the manifestation, the present reality. OK, then only we're sons of God and we know we're going to have a glorified body. We don't know what it's going to be like exactly, but we know that when he appears, we're going to be like him and we shall see him as he is.

Now, that brings me to the fifth point, and that is the mission. Look in verse 3. "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

The Mission: Purification Motivated by Hope

Now, let me just tell you up front. Verse 3 is indeed the application of the doctrine that has been taught in verses 1 and 2. So if you understand the doctrine in verses 1 and 2, you're now going to understand the application or the mission that is given to us in verse 3, when he says, "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." In other words, the manifestation will bring to us this mission. And this mission is going to be one of purity, holiness and obedience. Now, he said in verse 3, "And every man that hath this hope in him." Well, what hope is he talking about? Well, it's the hope of seeing our Lord in his splendor, in his beauty, in his honor, in his glory. It is the hope of being transformed completely and entirely by His grace and by His mercy. It is the hope that, moreover, will motivate us to mortification and to purity in life. It is the true hope that runs us into holiness.

Faith and hope purge us and work in us a suitableness of soul to follow after holiness and righteousness. We are to be pure,

qualitatively, as He is pure. We cannot be pure quantitatively as He is pure, but we can be pure qualitatively.

Remember Ephesians 5:25, where it says, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." "Even as" means equally, or just as. Obviously, no man has the power or ability to love his wife quantitatively the way Christ loves the church, but he can love her qualitatively. It is to be the same manner of love, the same thing being discussed in 1 John 3:1, where "what manner of love" speaks of quality.

If we have this hope in us, it will purify us. Look at 1 John 2:6: "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." We not only have a dignity given to us—we are the sons of God—we also have a duty given to us: we are to walk even as He walked. We are to be pure even as He is pure. Then, looking back at 1 John 3:3, the Bible says, "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself."

It just so happens that this verb is a present active indicative. It is happening now; it is something that is continually happening. It is not that I simply come and say, "Well, Lord, I'm purifying myself right now." No, I have to purify myself by the grace of God. It is something that continues going on and on. In other words, it is a continual purification.

This is not saying that we save ourselves or anything like that, but it is pointing out our duty and our responsibility to be holy. We can only purify ourselves by the word of God and by the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ said in John 17, "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." He also talked about how, in Ephesians chapter 5, we are clean through the washing of the water of the word. The Apostle Paul said, "I die daily." We must be renewed in the spirit of our mind, sometimes a zillion times a day, it seems like. The point is very simple.

Every man that hath this hope in himself is continually and constantly purifying himself, even as he is pure. In other words, he is fighting the good fight of faith.

Matthew Poole, speaking about "purifieth himself," said, "It is not only here obliged, but by the efficacious influence of this hope, if it

be of the same kind, that lively hope which Christians are said to be begotten into in 1 Peter 1 in verse 3, is daily more and more transformed through a continual intention of the mind towards a holy God upon whom that hope is set. For it is said to be hope in Him rather than upon Him, into the image of the divine purity, knowing also, which must be a potent inducement to be very earnest in this way, that our future conformity to God in glory and blessedness hereafter depends upon our present vigorous and effectual pursuit of conformity to him in holiness here."

He said that our future conformity to God in glory depends upon our present vigorous and effectual pursuit of conformity to him in holiness here. We have to be holy now in time in history if we expect to be holy in eternity. He is not saying that we are saving ourselves or working our way into heaven. What he is saying is the truth of Hebrews 12 and verse 14: "Follow peace with all men, and holiness."

"Without which no man shall see the Lord." If you are not interested in being holy in this life, you will not be interested in being holy in the next life, because you will not make it to the place where you could be holy. Now it is our duty and obligation to live a holy, godly, obedient life.

Adam Clarke, commenting on verse 3, writes: "And every man that hath this hope in him, all who have the hope of seeing Christ as he is, that is of enjoying him in his own glory, purifieth himself, abstains from all evil and keeps himself from all that is in the world, that is, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life."

"God, having purified his heart, it is his business to keep himself in the love of God, looking for that mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. The apostle does not here speak of any man purifying his own heart, because that is impossible, but of persevering in the state of purity of which the Lord has brought him. The words, however, may be understood of a man's anxiously using all the means that lead to purity and imploring God for the sanctifying Spirit to cleanse the thoughts of a heart by its inspiration that he may perfectly love him and worthily magnify his name."

I thought about another verse, in 1 Chronicles chapter 4, concerning a man named Jabez. The Bible says that Jabez was more honorable than his brethren. He was more honorable because he prayed, "Lord, that thou mightest bless me indeed, that thy hand would be upon me, that thou wouldst enlarge my coast, and that thou wouldst keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me." The next verse says, "And God granted him that which he requested." Have you ever prayed that the Lord would keep you from evil, that it might not grieve you? I always try to add this thought: "Lord, keep me from evil that I might not grieve thee."

But this is what these men are talking about: Lord God has purified our hearts by faith. That's what the apostle said in the book of Acts. Once he has purified our hearts by faith, it is our duty and responsibility to continue therein. Jude, verse 21, says, "Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." How do you keep yourselves in the love of God? The love of God is not some abstract thing floating around in the universe somewhere. What did our Lord say? "And this is the love of God, that ye keep my commandments."

"He that loveth me keepeth my sayings. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings. And this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous." We keep our hearts in the love of God by obeying him and bringing our lives into conformity to his word.

2 Corinthians chapter 7, verse 1, says, "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." It is not that we cleanse ourselves only from drunkenness, fornication, adultery, stealing, and lying—the sins of the flesh. We cleanse ourselves of the spirit also. We are not to walk around with a bitter spirit, an angry spirit, or a haughty spirit; we are not to walk around vindictively or with a bitter, hateful attitude. We are to be clean and pure physically, mentally, and emotionally as well.

The passage in 1 Peter chapter 1, verses 13 through 16, is applicable to this as well: "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

“As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.” So he that hath this hope in himself purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

That is our mission: to be as holy and as pure as we can be by His grace and mercy, using the means that He has ordained—prayer, studying the Word, fellowshipping with people who can teach us and help us, keeping ourselves in the love of God, and keeping ourselves obedient to His Word.

Application: The Necessity of Obedience and Holiness

Is your hope strong enough, biblical enough, and godly enough to drive you to mortify the deeds of the flesh and walk pleasing unto the Lord? Is your hope strong enough and biblical enough to drive you to read the Scriptures every day, meditate upon the Scriptures, seek the Lord, and ask Him to teach you, show you the way, and show you how to walk and glorify Him? Is your hope strong enough to motivate you to walk in the Spirit and not in the flesh, and to walk by faith and not by sight? Does your hope motivate you to obedience, worship, adoration, praise, and the glorifying of our God?

Stop and think about this. If your hope is a biblical hope, you will also be obedient. Verse 3 was the application—the application of the doctrine taught in verses 1 and 2. If you want to turn to the book of Hebrews, chapter 5, I want you to see these last two verses in light of this message. I think this is the only passage in Scripture that has the two words “eternal salvation” in reference to Jesus Christ. Look, if you would please, at verse 8.

"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him. He is not the author of eternal salvation to those who disobey Him. He is the author of eternal salvation to those that obey Him. "If ye love me, keep my commandments," He said. The proof that we love him, the proof that we are in him, the proof that we are genuinely converted by his grace and mercy is that we're obedient. No, our obedience is not perfect,

but we are obedient and we do want to purify ourselves even as he is pure. We want to strive for holiness, obedience, and purity.

And when we are not what we should be, it grieves us and hurts us. Oftentimes I have a thought flash through my mind. I think, "Lord, where in the world did that thought come from?" And I think of that passage when David said, "I hate vain thoughts: but thy law do I love." We have to learn to hate those things and refuse them and reject them and refuse to even entertain them in our minds. Why? Because we've been called unto obedience, we've been called unto holiness.

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. 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. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

So if you have the hope of being made into the image of Jesus Christ, if you have the hope of seeing him in glory, you will purify yourself and live as obediently and holily as you can by the grace of God.

Father, we do ask for your blessing, we ask for your help, and Lord, that you would make us holy, godly, and obedient. Make us more and more conformed to the image of Jesus Christ now, in time, in history, as well as eternity, where we will there be made perfectly into his image. Give us your grace, we pray in Christ's name, amen.

Source Notes

Chapter 1: The Reasons We Are Different Part 1of 2
JW00077 | SermonAudio

Chapter 2: The Reasons we are Different - Part 2 of 2
JW01782 | YouTube

Topical Index

Chapter titles and section headings are listed with the pages on which they begin.

A

Application: The Necessity of Obedience and Holiness p. 40

Applications: Expect Opposition and Be Wary of Worldly Praise p. 20

I

Introduction: The Pressure to Conform p. 5

M

Made Meet and Accepted in Christ p. 13

R

Review of Part 1: Manner, Measure, and Misapprehension p. 23

T

The Manifestation p. 24

The Manifestation: Future Uncertainty and Glorified Bodies p. 28

The Manifestation: Present Reality as Sons of God p. 25

The Manifestation: We Shall Be Like Him and See Him p. 32

The Manner of Love p. 9

The Meaning of 'Behold' p. 8

The Measure of Love: Called Sons of God p. 12

The Misapprehension p. 16

The Misapprehension of the World p. 17

The Mission: Purification Motivated by Hope p. 36

The Quality of Love: Loved While Sinners p. 12

The Reasons We Are Different p. 5

The Reasons we are Different - Part 2 of 2 p. 23

The Reasons We Are Different Part 1of 2 p. 5

Scripture Index

Scripture references identified in chapter readings, headings, and manuscript text are listed with their page locations.

Isaiah

Isaiah 53 p. 34

Matthew

Matthew 17 p. 31, p. 32

Luke

Luke 6:36 p. 26

John

John 17 p. 37

John 20 p. 8, p. 9

Romans

Romans 5:8 p. 13

Romans 8:14 p. 15

Romans 8:19 p. 16

Romans 8:29 p. 32

Romans 12:1-2 p. 7

Romans 12:2 p. 7

1 Corinthians

1 Corinthians 4 p. 8

1 Corinthians 13:12 p. 32

1 Corinthians 15 p. 28

2 Corinthians

2 Corinthians 3:18 p. 35

2 Corinthians 5:1-9 p. 28

2 Corinthians 6:17-18 p. 16

Galatians

Galatians 4:4-6 p. 16

Ephesians

Ephesians 1 p. 14

Ephesians 1:6 p. 15

Ephesians 2:1-3 p. 13

Ephesians 5:25 p. 37

Colossians

Colossians 1:12-13 p. 13

1 Timothy

1 Timothy 3:16 p. 11, p. 12

Hebrews

Hebrews 12 p. 38

1 Peter

1 Peter 1 p. 37, p. 38

1 John

1 John 2:6 p. 37

1 John 3 p. 8, p. 12, p. 36

1 John 3:1 p. 9, p. 10, p. 11, p. 16, p. 37

1 John 3:3 p. 37

1 John 4:17 p. 6

Revelation

Revelation 22:2 p. 31

WEAVER BIBLE COLLEGE

Your companion study guide

The Reasons We Are Different

Follow the Scripture references, reflect on each lesson,
and use the written-response space to apply what you learn.



Scan to open the matching study guide

Downloadable PDF | 8.5 x 11 inches
No sign-in required

studyguides.weaverbiblecollege.com

If you cannot scan the code, visit the address above
and search for this book by title.