

Sent: Thursday, October 22, 2015 3:23 PM  
Subject: Tuesday Nite's (October 20th) MOB Study

In our text for Tuesday nite (1 John 3:1-10), John begins with a "burst of wonder" about the out-of-this world kind of love that God the Father has "bestowed" (love that word!) upon us as believers--that we should be called "children of God"! And most Bible versions follow it with the affirmation: "And such we are!"

But John continues: "Beloved, now are we the children 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, because we shall see Him as He is! And everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, even as He is pure!" And so, we are told who we are, what we shall be--and, therefore, what we should be!

In this text John develops the point that genuine believers have a change that takes place in their lives (at the time they are "born of God," and then through a process known as "sanctification")--and, in verse 10, he says that it eventually becomes "obvious"! They no longer "practice" sin! They practice righteous living! And they have a desire to please their Father! In our small group session, Charlie Hopper referred to the way the Amplified New Testament translates verse 9: "No one born (begotten) of God deliberately and knowingly or habitually practices sin, for God's nature abides in him--His principle of life, the divine sperm, remains permanently within him--and he cannot practice sinning because he is born (begotten) of God!"

It doesn't mean, however, that genuine believers don't continue to struggle with sin in this life! Remember, back in chapter 1, verses 8-9, where John--addressing believers--writes that "if we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us!" But, "if we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness!"

Wiersbe calls this text the "The Pretenders"--and suggests that John is writing about some who "professed" that they were believers but continued to "practice" sin--and with "pretense"--thus giving evidence that they were not truly "born of God."

Once again we saw a connection between the message of this lesson and Jesse's sermon on Sunday about King David! Jesse talked about how that, in bringing back the ark of God--which represented the glorious presence of the Lord--to Jerusalem, David danced with unbridled joy and worship before the Lord, "putting aside all pretense." Jesse made the distinction between true worship and "performance" for people, calling David's public worship "an audience of one!"

In the same context, Jesse also talked about how the more a believer grows, the more aware he (or she) becomes of his sin, and the more aware of sin, the more he is humbled, and the more he is humbled, the more aware he becomes of God's love for him!

Well it's clear, according to John, that while genuine believers don't live sinless lives, they don't live in habitual sin! And they don't practice pretense! They just can't, knowing who they are, and what God has done for them, through Christ! In doctrinal terms, they've been "born of God" ("born again)--experienced "regeneration" and "justification." And now they're undergoing the process of "sanctification"! And one day, when Christ appears, they'll be like Him! Freed from the allurements and power of sin and all its consequences!

John wants us to understand that genuine believers desire and strive to live pure and holy lives--and that they actually have the resources they need to do it--when they realize that:

- 1--God the Father loves them (3:1-3);
- 2--God the Son died for them (3:4-8); and
- 3--God the Holy Spirit dwells within them (3:9)!

John doesn't stop here! Next week's lesson (1 John 3:11-24) offers more evidence of genuine belief!

Have a great week, men!  
Lowell