

A Purifying Promise **I John 2:28-3:3**

Please open your Bible to John 14:26. The night before Jesus went to the cross He shared a meal with His disciples in order to prepare them for His death and to encourage them. In John 14:26 Jesus tells them about the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives. Read verse. Notice what Jesus says the Holy Spirit will do in their lives – The Helper will have a two-fold teaching role: teaching and reminding the disciples. The first aspect, teaching is a straightforward verb indicating the imparting of information to the disciples. The Holy Spirit would provide the information they needed to understand the events of Jesus’ ministry, death, and resurrection, as well as the truth needed to fulfill their mission as witnesses.

Second, the Holy Spirit would bring to their remembrance what Jesus said during his earthly ministry. John makes it clear in the gospel of John that the disciples did not grasp the significance of much that Christ taught them. It is the job of the Holy Spirit to bring these teachings back to the memories of the disciples and make the truth of them plain. This will enable them to accurately spread the word about Jesus.

The disciples would soon be thrust into the task of declaring to the world the truth about the Messiah that had come. In their sinful humanness and limitations they had misunderstood many things Jesus had said to them. The Holy Spirit would be sent in order to teach them the truth and remind them of what Jesus had said—to “pull it all together” for them.

That isn’t all Jesus taught them about the role of the Holy Spirit. Look over at John 16:13-14. Here Jesus says the Holy Spirit will guide them into truth and will enable them to glorify Christ. When did the Holy Spirit come on these men? Acts 2. What happened? The apostle Peter stood up and proclaimed the truths of salvation in Jesus Christ from all the Scriptures.

What does the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the lives of Jesus’ original followers have to do with us this morning? The same Holy Spirit who helped Jesus’ original followers remember the events of Jesus’ ministry, death, and resurrection inspired the Bible in such a way that we have all

we need in the Word of God for salvation and for living a life that pleases God. Turn over to 2 Timothy 3:14-17. Notice the two things God's inspired Word does for us – Scripture provides the wisdom we need for salvation and Scripture provides the truth we need to live a righteous life and walk in the good works God has planned for each of our lives.

Why is the sufficiency of Scripture for salvation and for Christian living an important truth to understand? Turn over to I John 2 and I want us to read I John 2:18-24 as a reminder of why the sufficiency of Scripture is so important for our lives. What does Jesus mean in I John 2:18 when he reminds this church that they were living in the last hour? John MacArthur, "The phrase refers to the time period between the first and second comings of Christ." All of us this morning are living in the last hour. We are living in the time between Jesus' first coming and His second coming.

During this time God's word says that many false teachers are going to arise who go outside of the boundaries of the Word of God and false teachers are going to deceive people. Their deception will only prove that they were never really Christians to begin with, but the key for us, as we read in these verses is to abide in the truths of God's Word. We don't have to allow false teaching to infiltrate our lives because we know the truth. John MacArthur, "Christian truth is fixed and unalterable. If we stay faithful to the truth, we continue to experience intimate communion with God and Christ and persevere to the full eternal life."

Last week we looked at I John 2:25-27. We were reminded about the amazing promise God made to us in the Bible – the promise of eternal life. We looked at a number of verses that show us eternal life is a gift from God. We also looked at some verses that show us that those who receive the gift of eternal life can never be lost. Those two truths are summarized well in John 10:27-28 where Jesus said, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of my hand."

Eternal life and eternal security are both gifts of God. I want us to look at the role each member of the Trinity plays in our salvation and in

securing us unto salvation. Let's start with the securing work of the Father.

Securing Work of the Father

Believers are eternally secure because the Father has chosen them unto salvation from eternity past (Ephesians 1:4). The Father predestined believers to come to the status of sonship in Christ (Ephesians 1:5). The Father has the power to keep believers secure in their salvation (Romans 8:28-30). The ones the Father foreknew, predestined, called, and justified are the same ones He brings to glorification in the future. None are lost in the process. The Father's love for believer's guarantees their security (Romans 5:7-10).

Securing Work of the Son

The Son has redeemed the believer (Ephesians 1:7), removed the wrath of God from the believer (Romans 3:25), justified the believer (Romans 5:1), provided forgiveness (Colossians 2:13), and sanctified the believer (Colossians 1:2). Moreover, Christ prays for the believer to be with Him (John 17:24); He continues to be their Advocate (I John 2:1); and He continues to make intercession as the believer's High Priest (Hebrews 7:25). If a believer could be lost it would imply Christ is ineffective in His work as the believer's Mediator.

Securing Work of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit has regenerated the believer, giving him life (Titus 3:5); the Holy Spirit indwells the believer forever (Ephesians 1:13-14). He has sealed the believer for the day of redemption (Ephesians 4:30), the sealing being a down payment, guaranteeing our future inheritance; the believer is baptized into union with Christ and into the body of believers (I Corinthians 12:13).

Paul Enns, "The key issue in the discussion of the believer's security concerns the issue of who does the saving. If man is responsible for securing his salvation, then he can be lost; if God secures the person's salvation, then the person is forever secure."

Why is it a big deal to understand salvation and eternal security biblically? How important is a solid foundation to building a home?

Why don't they pour cement for the foundation of a house when its raining? A solid foundation is critical to a build a good house, right? Even so, the entire Christian life is built on the foundation of a right understanding of salvation and a right understanding of how God's promises contained in His word apply to our lives.

Here's the thing with I John – I John is written to a group of believers who had a great foundation. They knew the basics of salvation and yet they were in the process of dealing with false teachers who were going outside of the boundaries of Scripture and teaching strange things about Christ, about sin and about the need to love believers biblically. In I John 2:26-27 John reminds these believers that they don't need to listen to anyone who calls themselves a teacher but goes beyond the boundaries of Scripture. They have eternal life, they have the Holy Spirit and they have the word of God to guide them into a life that pleases God.

This morning we are going to learn two more differences eternal life is supposed to make in our daily lives. We are going to learn what our lives should look like if we have received the gift of eternal life and we are abiding in God's Word and abiding in the truths of our Savior. read I John 2:28-3:3.

There are two main truths I want you to see in these verses. First, the promise of Jesus' return. Second, what our lives should look like because we know Jesus is coming back. Let's start with the promise of Jesus' return.

Notice I John 3:2 uses the phrase when He appears. John is clearly looking forward to the return of Jesus Christ. The greek word for appears means cause to be seen, disclose, make known, reveal. Another truth Jesus made clear in the upper room with His disciples is that His death would not be the end of the story. He spent much of His time talking with them about what would happen after He died on the cross. Look back at John 14:1-6. Jesus told the disciples that after His death he was going to prepare a place for them and that He would come again to receive them unto Himself.

That same promise is extended to us as well. Look over at I Thessalonians 4:13-18. Paul uses the second coming and the promises

of Christ's return as a way of encouraging the Thessalonian believers. Acts 1:9-11 shows us the final conversation Jesus had with His disciples before He ascended into heaven, "And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And as they were gazing intently into sky while He was going, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them. They also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven."

Jesus and the apostles used the second coming of Christ to teach believers how to live. Paul uses the truth of the second coming of Christ and the resurrection as an incentive for holy living in I Corinthians 15:50-58, "Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP in victory. O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not *in vain* in the Lord." Notice the therefore in I Corinthians 15:58 connecting the command to serve Christ faithfully with a reminder of His return.

Paul does the same thing with Titus in Titus 2:11-14. Let's turn and look at these verses connecting the hope we have in Christ's second coming with how we should live our lives on earth. While we wait for the blessed hope of Christ's appearing the gospel ought to be changing us from people who live ungodly lives focused on the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the boastful pride of life, to people who are self controlled upright and godly.

How do we stand confidently before Christ and not shrink away in shame? By pursuing righteousness and taking our sin serious in order to mortify it by the power of the Holy Spirit. Look at I John 2:29 and I John 3:3. We know what is true of someone who is born again and we know what is going to happen to us in the future when we see Jesus and we are transformed into His image.

Those who are truly born again, those in whom the Holy Spirit dwells who have been united to Christ pursue righteousness. "To be righteous is the equivalent of being holy. It implies doing the will of God, obeying His commands, and loving Him and one's neighbor. In short, righteous is a term that stands for being free from sin.

Blake White, "Part of what it means to abide in Christ is to practice righteousness. To practice righteousness is to do what is right. It refers to correct moral behavior, acceptable to God. We practice righteousness because we are born of Him who is righteous. We are to strive to be like Jesus, the righteous One."

Ephesians 4:20-24 shows us how to pursue a life of holiness. Starts with receiving the truth of Christ, learning Christ savingly. Becoming holy doesn't start with anything we do, but what we believe. Once we believe the war with sin begins. Before salvation we are slaves to our sin. Salvation is freedom from being a slave to sin. For the first time in our lives we can really pursue holiness for the right reasons and we can really please God with our lives by getting rid of our sin, renewing our minds in God's Word and replacing sin with righteousness as we are being transformed into the image of Christ in righteousness and holiness.

Most of you know that I was saved during my third year of college. Growing up outside of Christ, I was a slave of sin. One of the ways my sinful nature revealed itself during my teen years was having people over to my house when my parents were out of town against their permission. One thing I remember about those days is that because I knew my parents were coming back home at a specific time I would work hard to get the house back in order before they got home. I tried to cover up my disobedience in such a way that what I had done would hopefully go unnoticed.

Here's the difference between my parents and Christ – Christ knows everything and I will give a complete account of my life to Jesus Christ and so will you. 2 Corinthians 5:9-10, "Therefore we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad." I can't hide anything I do from Christ – He knows all and sees all.

Sadly, when I was living in sin I didn't want my parents to come back. I wanted to continue in my sin. It shouldn't be that way for a believer and Christ. We should want Christ to return. Actually, our entire hope in this world should be fixed on His return. I Peter 1:13, "Fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

"The critical question for our generation--- and for every generation--- is this: If you could have heaven, with no sickness, and with all the friends you ever had on earth, and all the food you ever liked, and all the leisure activities you ever enjoyed, and all the natural beauties you ever saw, all the physical pleasures you ever tasted, and no human conflict or any natural disasters, could you be satisfied with heaven, if Christ was not there?" – John Piper

The primary reason we should want Christ to come back is that He is our all in all. Philippians 1:21, "For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain." It's gain because we will see Him as he is, be made like Him and have unbroken fellowship with Him forever. If the promise of eternal life doesn't create in us a longing for righteousness, a longing to purify our lives from sin and a longing for His return then we may need to go back and make sure we're really trusting in Christ the way we should. The apostle John stood in awe that he was a child of God. He stood in awe that he would one day see Jesus and be transformed into His image and those promises had a purifying effect on his life. I hope they do in ours as well. Let's pray.

Application Questions

1. What encouragement did Jesus give His disciples in John 14:26 and John 16:13-14 concerning the role of the Holy Spirit in their lives?
2. How do these truths build confidence in the reliability of Scripture?
3. 2 Timothy 3:15-17 shows us Scripture is all we need for two important things – What are they?
4. Why is it important to know the truth of Scripture in the day in which we live according to I John 2:18-24?
5. What amazing promise has God made us in His Word according to I John 2:25?
6. Once a person is truly born again through faith in Jesus Christ, can that person lose their salvation?
7. How does John explain a person who abandons the faith in I John 2:19? Were they ever saved to begin with?
8. What role do the three Persons of the Trinity play in our salvation and in securing the believer?
9. What teachers do we need to stay away from according to I John 2:26-27?
10. How do we know if someone is teaching something contrary to Scripture?
11. What Scriptures teach that Christ is coming back?
12. Do we know when Jesus is coming back? Who knows according to Acts 1:6-8?
13. What should our lives look like as we wait for Jesus' return?
14. How are you pursuing righteousness and getting rid of sin?