Series: That You May Know

Inductive Bible Study Guide: 1 John

Inductive Bible Study of 1 John 2:28-3:10

John calls believers to remain in Christ so they can face His return with confidence. The Father's love has made us His children, and the hope of becoming like Jesus should shape the way we live now. Because Jesus came to take away sin and destroy the works of the devil, those born of God cannot remain comfortable with a life defined by sin.

Step 1 – Observation: *What does the passage say?*

Read 1 John 2:28-3:10 slowly at least three times, using more than one translation if possible. Pay attention to what John repeats, the contrasts he makes, and the reasons he gives for Jesus appearing.

Observation Prompts

- What words or ideas are repeated?
- What is said about Jesus appearing?
- How are the children of God described?
- What contrasts do you notice between righteousness and sin?
- What reasons are given for the Son of God appearing?
- What evidence distinguishes the children of God from the children of the devil?

Read the Passage and Record What You See

1. What command and expected result appear in 1 John 2:28?

2. What does verse 29 connect with being born of God?

3. What has the Father's love made believers, and why does the world not know them?

4. According to 3:2, what do believers know and what has not yet been revealed?

5. What does verse 3 say everyone who has this hope does?

6. How does John define sin in verse 4, and what does verse 5 say about Jesus and sin?

7. What contrasts do you see between abiding in Christ, practicing righteousness, and continuing in sin in verses 6-7?

8. What does verse 8 say about the devil and the reason the Son of God appeared?

9. Record everything verse 9 says about someone who has been born of God.

10. According to verse 10, what makes the children of God and the children of the devil evident?

Step 2 – Interpretation: *What does the passage mean?*

John is not teaching that genuine Christians reach a point where they never sin. Earlier he said that believers must confess their sins and that Jesus is our Advocate when we fail. Here John contrasts the continuing direction and practice of two different kinds of lives.

Being born of God does not produce instant perfection, but it does produce a new identity, new desires, and a new direction. A child of God may stumble, but cannot make peace with sin as the settled pattern of life. Jesus came not only to forgive sin, but to break its power.

Questions to Explore

1. What does it mean to abide in Christ? How does abiding prepare believers to face His return with confidence?

2. Is practicing righteousness the cause of being born of God or evidence of it? How does the wording of verse 29 guide your answer?

3. What does it mean to be called a child of God? How should this identity shape the way believers see themselves?

4. What does John mean when he says believers will be like Jesus because they will see Him as He is?

5. How should our future hope of seeing Jesus and becoming like Him lead us to purity in the present?

6. What does the statement sin is lawlessness reveal about the nature and seriousness of sin?

7. How should 1 John 3:6 and 3:9 be understood alongside 1 John 1:8-2:2? Why can these verses not mean sinless perfection?

8. What is the difference between committing a sin and allowing sin to become the continuing, unresisted pattern of a person's life?

9. What might God's seed abiding in a believer mean? How do righteousness and love reveal the new life God has begun?

Word Study Suggestions

- **Abide or remain:** Greek meno - to remain, continue, stay, or dwell.
- **Confidence:** Greek parresia - boldness, openness, or freedom to approach without fear.
- **Appear:** Greek phaneroo - to make visible, reveal, or become openly known.
- **Practice or do:** Greek poieo - to do, make, or carry out; here repeated conduct reveals the direction of a person's life.
- **Lawlessness:** Greek anomia - disregard for or rebellion against God's law and authority.
- **Seed:** Greek sperma - seed or offspring; John uses it as a picture of God's life-giving work remaining in those born of Him.

Step 3 – Application: *How should I respond?*

John invites us to live from the identity the Father has given us in Christ. We are already His children, and we are becoming more like Jesus. That hope should not make us passive; it should lead us to pursue purity and righteousness now.

This passage also calls for honest examination. The question is not whether we have ever failed, but whether we are bringing our sin into the light and allowing Jesus to change the direction of our lives.

Personal Reflection

1. If Jesus returned today, would you approach Him with confidence or shrink back in shame? Why?

2. How does knowing that you are a deeply loved child of God change the way you see yourself?

3. How should the hope of becoming like Jesus affect one decision or relationship in your life right now?

4. Is there a sin you have been excusing, hiding, or allowing to become an accepted pattern?

5. Where do you need to trust Jesus to destroy the work of the enemy and break sin's influence in your life?

6. What specific step of righteousness or love is God calling you to take this week?

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Summary Truths

- Abiding in Christ prepares us to meet Him with confidence when He returns.
- The Father's love has made believers His children; this identity is received, not earned.
- The hope of seeing Jesus and becoming like Him should lead us toward purity now.
- Jesus is without sin, and He appeared to take away sin and destroy the works of the devil.
- John does not teach sinless perfection. New birth changes the settled direction of life, so a child of God cannot remain comfortable in ongoing, unrepentant sin.
- Practicing righteousness and loving other believers are evidence of God's life at work within us.

Optional Memory Verse

"See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are." **1 John 3:1a ESV**

For Further Study

- **John 15:1-10**
  - What does abiding in Jesus produce in a believer's life?
- **Romans 8:14-17**
  - What does the Holy Spirit confirm about our identity as God's children?
- **Philippians 3:20-21**
  - What will Jesus do when He returns, and how does this connect with 1 John 3:2?
- **Romans 6:1-14**
  - How does union with Christ change a believer's relationship with sin?

Homework for next week

Read 1 John again

- Notice how John connects knowing God with belief, righteousness, and love.

Prepare for the next lesson

- Read 1 John 3:11-24 and watch for love, brother, Cain, heart, confidence, commandment, abide, and Spirit.