

LOVE FIRST: 2012 Summer Messages from 1 John

July 8: "Love Lavished on Us" I John 3:1-10

Intro: Loving people is mandatory. Loving stuff, systems, and sin can be a deadly trap. Loving people is Christian. Loving the stuff and the pleasures is antichristian.

God lavishes us with his love by making us his children.

I. Confident and Unashamed: *And now, dear children, continue in him, so that when he appears we may be confident and unashamed before him at his coming (1 John 2:28)*

A. Confident and Unashamed: Such a great place to be:

1. confidence—"to speak frankly, without concealment or ambiguity; free and fearless; cheerful courage"
2. unashamed—"not disfigured, not dishonored, not covered with shame"

B. "Before him at his coming"

1. The appearing of the Lord Jesus is mentioned repeatedly in this passage. So we have not left the theme of the end, the last hour, the consummation of all things

2. To be unashamed and confident BEFORE HIM would be the greatest thing in the world. That would mean that we are giving our report as a "good and faithful servant."

II. Lavished with Love: *How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! (1 John 3:1)*

A. Called "children of God." It is a truth that God speaks and publishes.

1. This is public
2. This is affection
3. This is identification
4. This is protection

B. Known by God, not known by the world

1. We want to be known—who we really are.

***"Bridges of Madison County" the wife leaves behind the record of her affair with a professional photographer so that her children will know her better. And it is a moment of sorrowful emotion because their mother felt trapped by her marriage and her children in a life that was not really consistent with who she wished to be. The movie intends to say, "She was more than this." But what it actually says is, "She was less than this" as well. Her children live not only with her unfulfilled hopes but with her evident failures—the inadequacy of motherhood and parenthood as a reason for her to be in the world.

C. Sufficient for the mystery of our heavenly existence—"what we will be has not yet been made known"—
v2

1. His love says, "What you know is enough."
2. His love says, "You will see me like I am, and you will be like me."

III. Purified in Hope: *Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure (1 John 3:3).*

A. Purity is a running theme through this letter of love.

1. John is dealing with the daily life of the believer.
2. They are dealing with believers in the church whose behavior does not conform to their profession—what a shock!

B. Godly behavior falls by the wayside for THREE REASONS:

1. We love God too little. We are not motivated to conform our lives to his appearing. Usually this is evidence of Self-Righteousness, spiritual pride in our own character and behavior. If we truly love God, then we are like the BRIDE that prepares for the GROOM. We do not want our wedding dress to be dirty. We do not want our hair to be disheveled. We want to be a glowing, pure, and spotless bride for the one we love.

2. We love ourselves too little. We do not feel worthy of the lavish love of God, so we go "looking for love in all the wrong places." We do not feel that we deserve the forgiveness of God. This is low self-esteem, high shame and guilt, combined with a distrust of the Father's love for us.

3. We love our brother too little: SLOTH that lives a life undisciplined by love. We have not embraced either the full extent of our own sinfulness or the depth of God's grace in his kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. Believing we have made the grade, so to speak, we judge others rather than loving them.

C. THE HOPE OF SEEING JESUS, BEING LIKE HIM, motivates us to a behavior in the world.

Called Children of God

What we will be has not yet been made known

When he appears we shall be like him

Hope Purifies

Appeared so that he might take away our sins

Appeared to destroy the devil's work

Born of God

IV. Doing right, loving brother: *Anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God; nor is anyone who does not love his brother* (1John 3:10)

A. He appeared to take away our sins (v5).

1. That is the forgiveness of our sins—their cleansing from our souls.

2. That is the purifying of our behavior—the sanctification of our lives.

B. He appeared to destroy the devil's work (v8).

C. We are born of God. This is REGENERATION. John writes about it in John 3 in the story of Nicodemus: *No one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again* (John 3:3).

D. Doing right is the outcome of being born of God. It is the outcome of reconciliation—being made right with God. And it is the outcome of justification—being pronounced righteous.

E. Loving our brother is the POSITIVE ASPECT OF PURITY.