



Growth Group Questions

January 18, 2026

“Children of God”

CONTEXT

John begins with an imperative “*See/Behold*” *what great love the Father has lavished on us...* This is designed to get our attention. The phrase “what great” conveys astonishment and wonder. The love John is talking about grants believers the status of God’s children which should be seen as extraordinary and unexpected. The love of God is a qualitatively different kind of love that we are not worthy of receiving.

The language of “lavished” or “bestowed” points to the permanence of the gift. God’s love is not merely displayed momentarily but given in a way that endures. John’s reference to “the Father” (not “God”) reminds us of the relational nature of the work God has done. The “fatherhood” of God is not an abstract idea but the theological basis for the believer’s new identity as a child of God.

Believers are God’s children “now,” yet what we will be one day has yet to be seen. Although the precise nature of that future state is not detailed, John knows two things. First, Christ will appear, and secondly believers will be like him because they will see him “as he is.” This future hope has ethical implications for today. The expectation of conformity to Christ is the motive for a life of ongoing righteousness, with Christ’s life serving as the standard.

John moves from celebrating God’s love to drawing a sharp line between two ways of life. He says that sin is not as a minor flaw or an accidental misstep, but a willful resistance toward God’s moral order. Sin is never morally neutral, and no one can claim to be above accountability. The issue is whether a person’s life is moving with God or resisting God.

If someone is genuinely living in close fellowship with Christ, that relationship cannot coexist with a habitual pattern of sin. This is more than likely the main heresy or false teaching John is addressing in this letter. His concern is not with the reality that people will sin, but with a prevailing practice of sin that people do not feel they need to confess or seek to overcome. John argues that in the end, our words and actions reveal who we ultimately serve.

SCRIPTURE

1 John 3:1-10

¹See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. ²Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears,^[a] we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. ³All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

⁴Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness. ⁵But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin. ⁶No one who lives in him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him.

⁷Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. The one who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous. ⁸The one who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work. ⁹No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in them; they cannot go on sinning, because they have been born of God. ¹⁰This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not God's child, nor is anyone who does not love their brother and sister.

Psalm 77:7-15

⁷"Will the Lord reject forever?

 Will he never show his favor again?

⁸Has his unfailing love vanished forever?

 Has his promise failed for all time?

⁹Has God forgotten to be merciful?

 Has he in anger withheld his compassion?"

¹⁰Then I thought, "To this I will appeal:

 the years when the Most High stretched out his right hand.

¹¹I will remember the deeds of the LORD;

 yes, I will remember your miracles of long ago.

¹²I will consider all your works

 and meditate on all your mighty deeds."

¹³Your ways, God, are holy.

 What god is as great as our God?

¹⁴You are the God who performs miracles;

 you display your power among the peoples.

¹⁵With your mighty arm you redeemed your people,

 the descendants of Jacob and Joseph.

Galatians 4:4-7

⁴But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship.^[a] ⁶Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba,^[b] Father." ⁷So you are no longer a slave, but God's child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir.

CS Lewis – Paraphrased from *Mere Christianity*

“...It is impossible for God to show Himself to a person whose whole mind and character are in the wrong condition. Just as sunlight, though it has no favorites, cannot be reflected in a dusty mirror as clearly as in a clean one. If a person’s self is not kept clean and bright, his or her glimpse of God will be blurred—like the Moon seen through a dirty telescope.” - CS Lewis – *Mere Christianity*

QUESTIONS

1. This week’s sermon is titled “Children of God.” What does it mean to be a “child of God”?
2. In 1 John 3:1, what does it mean that “the world does not know us.”
3. Pastor Paul said that when we become children of God, God “inserts Himself into our story.” What do you think that means?
4. The reality is that Christians sin daily. How do we reconcile this with the statements John makes in 1 John 3:6 and 1 John 3:9?
5. In speaking about the indifference to sin that was being taught by false teachers in the churches to which John was writing his letters, Pastor Paul said that “when we minimize sin, we minimize Jesus.” What does it mean to “minimize sin”? What are some of the ways in which we as Christians may minimize the sins in our lives?
6. How does the minimizing of sin in our lives, minimize Jesus?
7. Carefully read through the quote from *Mere Christianity* that Pastor Paul paraphrased. What does that paraphrased quote say to you?
8. In 1 John 3:9, the Apostle John says: “No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God’s seed remains in them; they cannot go on sinning, because they have been born of God.” What is the “seed” to which John is referring?
9. What are some practical ways in which we can help to nourish this seed so that our lives can be fruitful and reflect God’s love?

PASTOR PAUL’S SERMON QUESTIONS

1. What do you do to remember God’s faithfulness when you’re “stuck in a rut”?
2. How does being “adopted as God’s child” impact the way you think about your potential and the way you live your life?