

Striving for Pure Love

***Key Verse: Beloved,
now are we the
sons 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; for we
shall see him
as he is.”
—I John 3:2***

***Selected Scripture:
I John 3***

GOD’S SPECIAL LOVE FOR his children who have devoted their lives to follow Jesus Christ is astounding. It is identical to the love he has for the Savior. “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; . . . I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.”—John 17:20,23

Our Key Verse asserts that God accepts all who have come to him through Christ as sons, and upon the faithful completion of their sacrificial course, these saints will experience the reality of seeing and being with their all-glorious Lord and Head. What a prospect!

A Christian who engages in the process of purification through the cleansing power of the Holy Spirit will endeavor to bring his heart and mind into full accord with the principles of righteousness as taught by the Master and the apostles. Those who habitually and willingly sin by opposing God’s law, and fail to come into harmony with the Heavenly Father through the merit of Christ’s sacrifice, identify themselves as being aligned with the Devil.—I John 3:3-8

The Apostle John continues to emphasize the impossibility for believers having received the Holy Spirit to continue sinful behavior as a lifestyle, because that spiritual influence and power comes from the Heavenly Father. (vs. 9) Another test regarding membership in God's family requires believers to have fervent and sympathetic love for each other. "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother. For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another."—vss. 10,11

"Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you. We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death." (vss. 13,14) The searching import of these two verses enables believers to determine whether or not they have received the Holy Spirit in their lives. The type of love that the saints will manifest towards each other will prompt them to symbolically 'wash one another's feet' to benefit their brethren, in either temporal or spiritual matters, even as Christ furnished such an example. "We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."—vs. 16

"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth." (vs. 18) The sincerity of brotherly love is evidenced by kind deeds. If such manifestations towards others are genuine, the believer's conscience will not condemn him. Additionally, because of the Christian's sincerity, he will enjoy the privilege of communing with God in prayer, and have the assurance of a vitalized relationship with the Creator as one of his dear children. Faithfulness in obeying the Divine commandments will insure that the believer will remain in the Heavenly Father's favor. (vss. 20-24) "Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."—Jude 21 ■