

1 John 3:1-3 Amazing Love

Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. ² Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. ³ And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

I would like to begin our study today by sharing with you 3 short stories –

A) 3 people who have achieved incredible feats in their respective fields- but who each share a common struggle

B) The Common struggle I think will be easy to spot

C) We will start with Malala Yousafzai

Malala who at the age of 17 became the youngest Nobel peace prize winner ever, she won the award in 2014 for her work in advocating for girls education in the Taliban run Pakistan.

Despite the oppressive environment she grew up in, Malala's father encouraged her to pursue learning. As Malala became a vocal advocate for education, she found herself caught between two worlds: the conservative traditions of her community and the global stage, where her voice resonated with millions.

After surviving a Taliban assassination attempt in 2012, Malala sought refuge in the UK, where she struggled with feelings of displacement and longing for her homeland.

While she was celebrated worldwide, her sense of belonging remained tied to the idea of fighting for her community's right to education.

Her journey highlights how belonging often requires balancing personal identity with the demands of larger movements.

The Story of Michael Phelps

Michael Phelps is the most decorated Olympian of all time. Despite his incredible success in the pool Michael has always struggled to belong. From a young age, Phelps faced challenges fitting in.

Diagnosed with ADHD, he often felt different from his peers and turned to swimming as an outlet for his energy and emotions. While he excelled athletically, the intense focus on his training left him feeling isolated and disconnected from a typical childhood and social life.

After achieving global fame, Phelps struggled with the pressures of being a public figure and the expectations tied to his legendary accomplishments. Following the 2012 Olympics, where he won four gold medals but fell short of his own high standards, he experienced severe depression and questioned his purpose.

"I thought the world would just be better off without me," he later admitted in interviews, describing a period when he felt profoundly lost and alone.

Over time, therapy, his family, and his advocacy for mental health awareness helped him find a new sense of purpose beyond competition.

The Story of Lady Gaga

Lady Gaga, born Stefani Germanotta, is now one of the most celebrated musicians and performers in the world, but her rise to fame was shaped by a lifelong struggle to belong.

Growing up in New York City, Gaga often felt like an outsider. She faced bullying in school for being "too eccentric" and for her unconventional appearance and personality. In interviews, she's shared stories of classmates mocking her ambition and throwing her in a trash can, telling her she'd never make it.

Her early days in the music industry were no easier. She struggled to find her place as record labels rejected her for being "too theatrical" and not fitting into a conventional pop star mold.

Even after achieving fame, Gaga has admitted to feeling like she didn't belong in the celebrity world. She has been open about her battles with mental

health, saying that despite her success, she often felt lonely and out of place.

Did you catch the common struggle? – The Struggle to belong

A)Recent studies indicate that 1 in 5 Americans struggle to belong – affects all ages

B)Though highly connected online – a significant number of Millennials struggle with belonging – and feeling disconnected

C)It is even worse with Gen Z – Gen Z's struggles with belonging have labeled them the loneliest Generation

1)studies indicating 73% experience feelings of loneliness sometimes or always.

For everyone who struggles to belong!

A)The Apostle John has great news for you God made a way for you to belong in his family.

B)Through God's magnificent love – Outsiders become insiders

C)Get this it has nothing to do with who you are – your achievements – your credentials

D)It is completely connected NOT TO WHO you are but to WHO'S you are

1)NOT what you have done but through what JESUS DID FOR YOU

E)It has all been done through the Magnificent Love of God –

1)we are going to take a deep dive into that love today.

In these 3 verses of 1 John 3 the Apostle John tells us:

A)What we are in V.1 - What we shall be in V.2 and What we should be now in V.3

B)Outline for today.

- The Magnitude of God's Love V.1
- The Hope this Love brings V.2
- The Response to God's Love and Hope V.3

C)Begin with #1 The Magnitude of God's Love

Behold: Put this under the microscope – long look. Study

A)There is an excitement in John's voice – The word BEHOLD – denotes an attitude of astonishment

B)Today if we were writing this we might say: Check this out and be prepared to be amazed. Blown away!

1)What I am about to tell you is that incredible.

C)The follow up phrase – what manner – Behold what manner speaks of something foreign other worldly – not normal.

D)John is saying I am about to tell you something that is really beyond worldly comprehension.

E)I am telling you about a Love that is measureless
1)it cannot be quantified by earthly measures

For those of you who are married do you remember when your spouse first caught your eye.

A)Something about him/her – stood out – Denise a camp – first hired as a youth pastor

B)Brightness about her – This smile – Worship she glowed – touching God –

1)Talked her love for Jesus made her radiate even more – Who is this girl

C)Then I saw her in a bathing suit by the pool – that didn't hurt either 😊

I doubt when you first when your spouse first caught your attention – it wasn't when he was filthy dirty from work

A)It wasn't when she had curls in her hair – cold crème on her face

B)But you know what the Bible says about – God Loved us –

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8

C)In other words – God saw us at our very Worst – 1)and said – I am going to do everything I can to win him/her – LOVE THEM!

Notice that John doesn't say: Behold what manner of love that God has bestowed on us – Accurate

A)Or Behold what THE KING – he is a king Or Behold..... our CREATOR – yes He is that

B)John doesn't use that phrase – He uses the term father

C)This was a foreign concept in the mind of Jew, who so revered God

1)they would not even utter his name.

But when the Disciples asked Jesus “Lord teach us to pray” –

A)remember what he said: Say Our Father... Heaven

B)Jesus was not seeking to down play the majesty of Almighty God

C)But he was seeking to highlight the intimate relationship that God desires with his children. –

1)Call me Dad

If you were at our home when my kids were younger – and if my kids addressed me as MR. Salvato –

A)Something wrong there right?

B)You expect Kids to address their Father as Dad – Mother as Mom – Mommy

1)Terms of endearment – less formal – more intimate – Close relationship –

C)I call my wife Denise – Babe – if I addressed her as MRS Salvato – you would think –

1)they have a weird relationship.

C)John is highlighting the closeness of our relationship with God

1)and the Magnitude of his Love – A Fathers Love

Now I meet people all the time who because they had a lousy human father –

A)They have a hard time relating to the idea of God as their father

B)I often say to them: Have you ever imagined what you wished your dad would have been like?

1)Yes of Course

C)Well Multiply that by 10K – begin to get a glimpse of your heavenly father.

D)We could spend the rest of the day: **Describing traits of our heavenly Father's love**

1)But for the sake of time I want to zero in on 4 traits

1st It is a Love that speaks of Acceptance.

A)When a Baby is born – the minute it comes into the World – Accepted –

B)Mom and Dad embrace – This is our son/ daughter

C)Listen the minute you were born again – Accepted into the family of God – My son, My daughter

John 1:12 As many as received him (Jesus) he gave them the right to become Children of God

C)Paul put it this way Ephesians 1:6 Been accepted into the beloved.

Now we were loved by God prior to being born again: For God so loved the World.

A)But Prior to putting your faith in Jesus – God was your Creator – not your Father –

B)He is only Father to those who are born again! –

C)Through faith in Jesus you have been accepted in the beloved.

1)IPhone – Your pic

It is a love that speaks of Acceptance –

2nd It is also a love that speaks of Sacrifice

¹⁰ For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. Romans 5:10

A)God so wanted you to be in his family – He did the unthinkable – Only Begotten son

³¹ What then shall we say to these things? If God *is* for us, who *can be* against us? ³² He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Romans 8:31-32

There is nothing that can separate us from the Love of God which is found in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 8:39

B)A love that speaks of Acceptance, a Love that speaks of Sacrifice,

3rd A Love that speaks of Faithfulness

In the 1992 Barcelona Olympics Derek Redmond of Britain was favored win 400 meter race!

A)But Halfway through semifinal heat, a fiery pain seared through right leg – hamstring and crumpled on to the track Pic of Derek lying down

B)As medical attendants approaching - Redmond fought to his feet Pushing away coaches –
1)medical people - determined to finish race!

C)When he reached the home stretch, a big man wearing a t-shirt read "Have you hugged your child today?" and a hat that challenged Just do it!

D)Fought through crowd and security on to track ran after Derek
1)the man was Derek's Dad Jim Pic of Jim Running toward Derek

When Jim reached his son – He said to Derek – You don't have to do this.

A)Derek weeping said: Yes I do dad – I have to finish the race!

B)Well then Jim said: We are going to finish it together –

C)With his arm around his son the two crossed the finish line Pic of Jim and Derek together
1)In what has become one of the most touching moments in Olympic history

You know that God saw us crumpled on the track of life – broken by our own sin and wrong choices –

A)He ran to us – THE PRODIGAL

B)He continues to come to our aid – every time we fall – We mess up

C)The Bible says: When we are faithless – He remains Faithful

D)He that has begun a good work in us – will be faithful to complete it
1)He is going to get you to the finish line.

In fact notice again the wording John uses here
A)He says The Father's love has been bestowed on us - That is a very interesting way of putting it.

B)John does not merely say the father has shown His love to us, nor that He has revealed it or manifested it or indicated it.

C)He says it has been bestowed on us – meaning: God has put his love into us!

The love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us. Romans 5:5

D)God's nature is love, and He has put His nature into us so that we have the love of God. To Help us

E)Love into us – so it can be poured out of us!

D)A Father's Love

- ◆ A love that speaks of Acceptance
- ◆ A love that speaks of Sacrifice
- ◆ A love that speaks of Faithfulness

4th A love that speaks of Protection

A)Because he loves you – he seeks to protect you.

B)Greg Laurie asked the question: “What do you think God's love is? Do you envision a permissive love that allows you to do whatever you want? That doesn't describe the love of God. You see, God loves you enough to put restrictions in your life.” – Greg Laurie

C)He loves you enough to say, “Do this. It will HELP you. And don't do this. It's bad for you.”

If a child asks his mother, “Mommy, can I play in the busy street?”

A)Of course she would say, “No, you may not.

B)I love you and don't want you to be in a place where you would be endangered.

C)In the same way: Our Loving heavenly father puts limits in the pages of his Word
1)to protect us from the dangers in this world

One of the things I loved to do when my kids were younger was to watch them sleep. –
A)Fussy all day – hard day – A day filled with drama

Aa)Night sleep – peaceful – totally at Rest

B)In a similar way I think our heavenly father loves to see His Children at Rest in his love –
1)Smile on his face.

C)The more we grasp the Love of our heavenly father – the easier it is for us to rest in his love.

Those in the World don't understand that –

A)John means here- The world doesn't get us – because they don't know Him!

B)You get the bad diagnosis – Peace – Resting in his love – The World asks How? I would be freaking out

C)You get laid off – after initial shock – Peace – How? My Father's got me

D)That Kind of Confidence – peace –

1)Joy in the midst of Chaos is only found in those who are secure in the father's love

That leads us to point #2 The Hope this Love brings V.2

² Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

God's ultimate goal is to make us like Jesus –

A)1 John 3:2 speaks of the fulfillment of this goal

B)"This does not mean that we cease to be ourselves, full of the distinct personality and character God has given us.

Heaven will not be like the Nirvana of Eastern mysticism, where all personality is dissolved into a God like a drop into the ocean. We will still be ourselves, but our character and nature will be perfected into the image of Jesus' perfection." David Guzik

How will we be like him?

A)We will have a body like his!

²⁰ For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself. Philippians 3:20-21

⁴² So also is the resurrection of the dead. *The body* is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. ⁴³ It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. ⁴⁴ It is sown a natural

body, it is raised a spiritual body. 1 Corinthians 15:42-44

B)We will have a perfected nature like his – no more sin – no more temptation –

C)We will have his wisdom – We will know all things – See Clearly

There was a time when an Enormous piece of Marble was presented to the Great artist Michelangelo

A)Michelangelo's reaction was My isn't it beautiful.

B)One of his helpers who was standing there said, "Well, all I see is a great big piece of marble—that's all."

C)Michelangelo responded, "Oh, I forgot. You don't see what I see. I see a statue of David there."

D)See Michelangelo saw what the Marble would become. He saw the finished product

In a similar way: Your heavenly father sees the finished product –

A)He sees what you will become – Just like Jesus!

Aa)That is our Hope – He is going to conform us into the image of his son

B)Process we are engaged in now – and it will come to full fruition when we see Him – that is our Hope!

C)Leads us to our final point

#3 Our Response to God's Love and hope

³ And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

A)In my 39 yrs of being a pastor I have done a lot of weddings –

B)I have spent 1,000's of hours doing premarital counseling with couples

1)who were getting ready to be married.

C)There is one common thing I have noticed in most of those couples –

1)during the time of premarital counseling

In the months leading up to the wedding

Their Physical appearance starts to change.

A)Get more fit – lose weight – working out

B) Hair cut – New Hairdo – Nails done etc.

C) Why they want to look good for their wedding day – wedding night

D) The Anticipation of what is coming – motivates them to make lifestyle choices that will reflect that anticipation

John says: All of us who have the Hope – Absolute expectation of Seeing Jesus –

A) That anticipation should affect our lifestyle

B) We purify ourselves – Lives marked by Purity. – We want to be ready.

C) What you believe should motivate and energize how you behave..

Couples getting ready for their wedding day have all sorts of motives for looking good.

A) Hopefully love for their soon to be spouse is at the top of the list

B) But wedding pictures is also a motivation

1) Wedding guest is another

C) Not embarrassed on their wedding night is up there too.

But for us who are Children of God – ONE MOTIVE

A) Response to the AMAZING LOVE OF GOD.

B) Our motivation for living and walking in Purity is not DUTY – but DEVOTION!

C) One day – We will see Jesus – are you Ready?