

Faith In the Home

All Saints Sunday

1 John 3:1-3, "Children of Assurance, Children of Righteousness, Children of God."

If a current or former professional athlete gets interviewed on a sports talk show, they will often be introduced by their accolades and accomplishments. "Joining us to talk about this year's World Series matchup is a former Rookie of the Year, Most Valuable Player, three-time World Series Champion, and seven time all-star, Buster Poesy!" Anyone who played baseball, or dreams of playing in the Major League would love to have those kinds of accomplishments under their belt. Really, who doesn't want a little recognition from the people who are close to them? But for many people in this world their identities rest in achievement, and they will do whatever it takes to get what they want. However, whether you made it the Hall of Fame, or never played sport one day your life, your life in this world is going to end. You could be homeless or a billionaire, one day, the great equalizer, death will come.

What is the meaning, what is the purpose of achievement in this world? 1 John, is the apostle John's letter to the Church and it is often called his love letter to the Church. In his letter he skillfully and gently reminds the Church to continue to seek righteous living in the unrighteous world. In the center of His letter, John said, "See what kind of the love the Father has given to us that we should be called children of God; and so, we are" (1 John 3:1a). That verse continues, "The reason why the world does not know us is it did not know Him." The world may think little of you. You may never have the same success and achievements that others have. But who cares? The creator of the universe thinks your special and loves you. He died for you. He rose again for you. Jesus gives you the power to become the children of God. "See what kind of the love the Father has given to us that we should be called children of God; and so, we are." The world may never know who you are, but God does. The world may hate you, but God's love for you is greater than the malice of the world. Not even death can keep you from eternal life with God. This love that we receive from God, is one of the ways the Holy Spirit motivates us and gives us the desire to live God's will.

What are some points of application for us?

1. The Church is filled with sinners, and the temptation is always to abandon God's will and fall into sin. But John reminds us as children of God, seeking to live His will is not vanity. Being righteous by following God's will may bring persecution, and hinder worldly gain. However, the eternal rewards of being children of God is greater than anything in

this world. They are especially better than the alternative of Hell. Remember too, this world is not our home. Our home is with Jesus.

2. It is not inherently wrong to seek success through hard work. It is also commendable to give credit where credit is due. For the child of God, that recognition should not come at the cost of abandoning God's righteous will for us. We also, have to recognize to that a Christian's accomplishments may be written off, or their reputation tarnished because the world hates Jesus and does not know Him. Therefore, they do not know who the people of God's Church really are.

3. How do we know that we are righteous before God and have salvation? First, none can say Jesus is Lord without the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit gives you the gift of faith. So, if you believe in your heart that Jesus Christ rose from the dead, and confess that He is the Son of God, then you have salvation. Secondly, your righteousness is not based on your works. It's given to you through Christ. Therefore, the Spirit changes our will and desire as He makes us healthy. Finally, the guilt we feel over our sins that we commit, and the struggle we have with temptation is a sign that God has changed our hearts. So, guilt and shame are beneficial feelings after we sin, because first, they point us back to Jesus. Second, that shame and guilt is a sign that the Holy Spirit is inside you changing you. If you do not feel guilt after sinning, then you are a slave to sin, and you are in trouble when it comes to your eternal destination. If you struggle with sin (because you don't want to do it), it is sign that you actually want to be righteous before God.