

I JOHN: TRUE SPIRITUAL FELLOWSHIP
VII. Fellowshiping With God In View Of Christ's Return
(1 John 2:28-3:3)

I. Introduction

- A. When John wrote 1 John, he implied in 1 John 1:3 that a number of his readers did not enjoy spiritual fellowship with the Apostles, with God the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ!
- B. Such a lack of true fellowship occurs with many believers today, a state that Christ predicted would exist in our era in Revelation 3:14-22. We thus continue our study of 1 John in viewing 1 John 2:28-3:3 on our need to fellowship with the Lord in preparation for Christ's return (as follows):

II. Fellowshiping With God In View Of Christ's Return, 1 John 2:28-3:3.

- A. Having addressed the spiritually immature "little children" (*paidia*) in 1 John 2:13c, 18-27 (U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 815-817; Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 609; John G. Mitchell, Fellowship, 1974, p. 70-75), John returned to using the noun *teknon* that he employed in 1 John 2:12 that the KJV renders "little children" but really means "born ones." John here thus addressed **all** believers regardless of their level of maturity. (Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T., p. 815, 817; Ibid., Arndt & Gingrich, p. 815-816)
- B. John then in 1 John 2:28 admonished believers of all the levels of spiritual maturity to fellowship with the Lord, that is, to "remain" in Him, that they might be confident and not ashamed over being out of fellowship with the Lord at Christ's appearing. Since John 15:10 defines "remaining" in Christ as observing God's commands with a high level of devotion to Him (the verb "keep" in John 15:10 KJV is *tereo* as in 1 John 2:3 KJV that we viewed and here in 1 John 2:28 KJV; Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T., p. 391, 814, 817), John taught that to have confidence before the Lord and not be ashamed at His appearing, we must fellowship with God, that is, observe His Biblical commands with a high level of devotion to the Lord.
- C. John added that if we "know" **absolutely** (*oida*) [from the Holy Spirit and Scripture] that Christ is righteous, we also **experientially** "know" (*ginosko*) [in our walk] that everyone who "practices, produces" (*poieo*) righteousness is born of God, 1 John 2:29. (Ibid., p. 817; Ibid., Arndt & Gingrich, p. 558-559, 159-161, 687-689) By this statement, John did not mean one is saved by works, but that a righteous walk evidences the reality of one's salvation, and that one can **experientially** know he can be confident at the rapture because he observes God's commands with a high level of devotion to the Lord! (Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 893)
- D. John exclaimed what manner of love the Father had permanently given (*dedoken*, perfect tense of *didomi*, "give," Ibid., 191-193; The Analyt. Grk. Lex., 1972, p. 85) to us that we might be called "born ones" (*teknon* again, Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T.) of God, and the better reading that does not appear in the KJV adds, "and we **are**!" (1 John 3:1a; Ibid., fn.; Bruce M. Metzger, A Textual Commentary of the Grk. N. T., 1971, p. 711-712)
- E. Because of our spiritual new birth in God, the lost world does not experientially know (*ginosko*) us because it does not experientially know (*ginosko* again) Him, 1 John 3:1b; Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T.
- F. Regardless, John added that now we are God's true "born ones" (*teknon* again), and what we will appear to be has not yet been manifested, but we "know" absolutely (*oida* again) [through the Holy Spirit and Scripture revelation] that when He, Christ, shall appear at the rapture, we will be like Him, for we will see Him just as He is in all His glory, 1 John 3:2.
- G. With this hope of reflecting the glory of our Savior at the rapture, John added that every believer who has this hope of attaining the glory of the Lord purifies himself just as Christ is pure, without sin, 1 John 3:3. This statement applies John's burden back in 1 John 2:28-29 that we believers should fellowship with the Lord, to find cleansing from sin by confessing our sins (1 John 1:9) followed by obeying God's commands with a high level of devotion to the Lord to be confident and not ashamed at His return!

Lesson: *Though the world is experientially ignorant of a purely righteous lifestyle since it does not fellowship with God, we can fellowship with the Lord, keeping His commandments with a high level of devotion to the Lord and thus experientially know Him and live in confidence about meeting the Lord. However, if we believers do not obey God's Word and remain disobedient, we will be ashamed at Christ's return. Since we then hope to obtain the glory of our Lord at the rapture, we should purify ourselves of sin by confessing it to the Lord and heed Scripture with a high level of devotion to the Lord that we might meet Him at the rapture with confident joy!*

Application: *Since we will obtain the glory of our Lord at the rapture, we should fellowship with God in righteousness now that when we meet Him, we will not be ashamed, but experience confident joy in His presence!*