I John 3:1-3

1Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

**Behold** what manner of love,.... See, take notice, consider, look by faith, with wonder and astonishment, and observe how great a favour, what an instance of matchless love, what a wonderful blessing of grace, (Gill, Studylight.org).

**Behold, what manner of love** - What love, in “kind” and in “degree.” In kind the most tender and the most ennobling, in adopting us into His family, and in permitting us to address Him as our Father; in “degree” the most exalted, since there is no higher love that can be shown than in adopting a poor and friendless orphan, and giving him a parent and a home. Even God could bestow upon us no more valuable token of affection than that we should be adopted into His family, and permitted to regard Him as our Father. (Barnes, Studylight.org).

**The Father hath bestowed upon us** - God, regarded as a Father, or as at the head of the universe considered as one family. (Barnes, Studylight.org).

**That we should be called the sons of God** - That is, that we should “be” the sons of God - the word “called” being often used in the sense of “to be.” (Barnes, Studylight.org).

**The sons of God:** RV 'children of God,' adding the words, 'and *such* we are.' The word translated 'children' here is characteristic of St. John, and implies community of nature, whereas the term 'sons' as used by St. Paul suggests the privileged condition of heirship. (Dummelow, Studylight.org).

**Therefore the world knoweth us not** - Does not understand our principles; the reasons of our conduct; the sources of our comforts and joys. The people of the world regard us as fanatics or enthusiasts; as foolish in abandoning the pleasures and pursuits which they engage in; (Barnes, Studylight.org).

2Beloved, 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.

**Beloved, now are we the sons of God** - We now in fact sustain this rank and dignity, and on that we may reflect with pleasure and gratitude. It is in itself an exalted honor, and may be contemplated as such, whatever may be true in regard to what is to come. In the dignity and the privileges which we now enjoy, we may find a grateful subject of reflection, and a cause of thankfulness, even if we should look to nothing beyond, or when we contemplate the fact by itself. (Barnes, Studylight.org).

**And it doth not yet appear what we shall be** - It is not fully revealed what we shall be hereafter; what will be the full result of being regarded as the children of God. There are, indeed, certain things which may be inferred as following from this. There is enough to animate us with hope, and to sustain us in the trials of life. There is one thing which is clear, that we shall be like the Son of God; but what is fully involved in this is not made known. (Barnes, Studylight.org).

(1)it could not be so revealed that we could understand it, for that state may be so unlike the present that no words would fully convey the conception to our minds. Perhaps,

(2)it may be necessary to our condition here, as on probation, that no more light should be furnished in regard to the future than to stimulate us to make efforts to reach a world where all is light. (Barnes, Studylight.org).

**But we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him** - It is revealed to us that we shall be made like Christ; that is, in the bodies with which we shall be raised up, in character, in happiness, in glory. Compare the [Philemon 3:21](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Philemon+3:21&t1=en_nas) note; [2 Corinthians 3:18](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=2%20Corinthians+3:18&t1=en_nas) note. This is enough to satisfy the Christian in his prospects for the future world. To be like Christ is the object of his supreme aim. For that he lives, and all his aspirations in regard to the coming world may be summed up in this - that he wishes to be like the glorified Son of God, and to share his honors and his joys. (Barnes, Studylight.org).

**For we shall see him as he is -** It is clearly implied here that there will be an influence in beholding the Saviour as he is, which will tend to make us like him, or to transform us into his likeness. (Barnes, Studylight.org).

3And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

**And every man that hath this hope in him** - This hope of seeing the Saviour, and of being made like him; that is, every true Christian. On the nature and influence of hope, see the notes at [Romans 8:24-25](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Romans+8:24-25&t1=en_nas). (Barnes, Studylight.org).

**Purifieth himself** - Makes himself holy. That is, under the influence of this hope of being like the Saviour, he puts forth those efforts in struggling against sin, and in overcoming his evil propensities, which are necessary to make him pure. The apostle would not deny that for the success of these efforts we are dependent on divine aid; but he brings into view, as is often done in the sacred writings, the agency of man himself as essentially connected with success. Compare [Philemon 2:12](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Philemon+2:12&t1=en_nas). The particular thought here is, that the hope of being like Christ, and of being permitted to dwell with him, will lead a man to earnest efforts to become holy, and will be actually followed by such a result. (Barnes, Studylight.org).

**Purifieth himself**] 'He who looks forward to becoming like God hereafter must strive after His likeness now' (Westcott). (Dummelow, Studylight.org).

**Even as he is pure** - The same kind of purity here, the same degree hereafter. That is, the tendency of such a hope is to make him holy now, though he may be imperfect; the effect will be to make him “perfectly” holy in the world to come. (Barnes, Studylight.org).