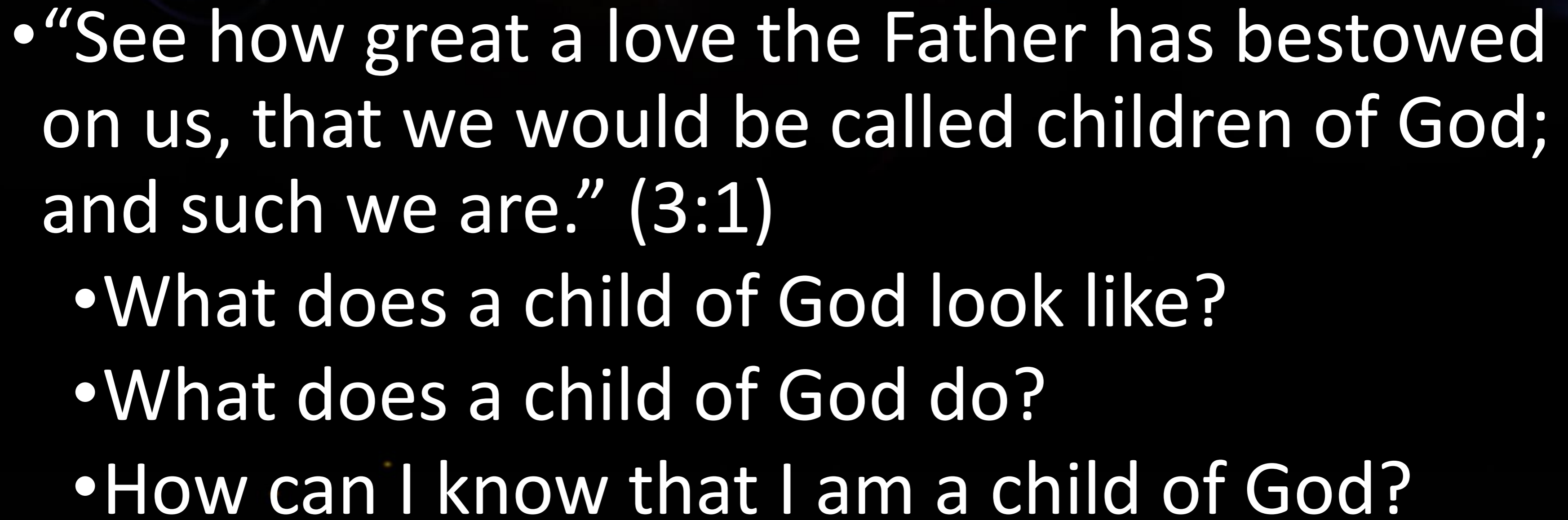


The background features a dark, starry night sky with numerous small, bright yellow and white stars. Overlaid on this are large, flowing, ethereal shapes in shades of blue and orange. The blue shapes are more prominent on the right side, while the orange shapes are more prominent on the left. The overall effect is one of dynamic, fluid motion.

Eternal Life

A Study of 1 John

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- “See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are.” (3:1)
 - What does a child of God look like?
 - What does a child of God do?
 - How can I know that I am a child of God?

The Point

- We are children of God (3:2)
- All children of God will look like the Son of God
 - Righteousness (2:29; 3:7b, 10)
 - Purity (3:3)
 - Obedience (2:3-6)
 - Love (2:7-11)

The Point

- Gnostic claim: “~~You are righteous; there is no need to actually live righteously.~~”
- Counter claim: Its not what you *say*, its what you actually *do* (see 1:6-7, 8, 10; 2:4-6; 9-10; 3:18; 4:20)

1 John 3:7-10

- *The 'Paternity' Test: Am I a child of God?*
 1. Look to the Truth (7a)
 2. Look at the Standard (7b-8)
 3. Look at Your Re-birth (9)
 4. Look for Family Resemblance (10)

1. Look to the Truth

- “Little children, make sure no one deceives you”
 - Literally: *let no one cause you to wander*
 - The deceivers’ goal was to lead them away from what the apostles taught (cf. 2:22-26)
 - See Acts 20:27-32 – “savage wolves ... not sparing the flock” and “men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.” (29-30)

1. Look to the Truth

- “Little children, make sure no one deceives you”
 - God’s goal is “the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God” as we *speak the truth in love* (Eph. 4:13-15)
 - “we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming” (14)

2. Look at the Standard

- “the one who practices righteousness”
 - *Practice - habitual pursuit, as a goal*
 - We still sin (1:9; 2:1), but we should be heading toward purity (3:3)
 - *Righteousness – conformity to a standard*
(God’s nature -> God’s will – see 1:5; 2:17)
 - Both *acts* and *motives* (see Matt. 6:1-18)

2. Look at the Standard

- “the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous”
 - Jesus is both the Source and the Model
 - The point is not simply *right acts* but character change (to become more like God’s Son)
 - God’s children desire to *be* righteous and *act* righteously

2. Look at the Standard

- “the one who practices sin is of the devil”
 - *Practice - habitual pursuit, as a goal*
 - *of the devil – more than imitating; belonging to, following, in agreement with*
 - *Practicing sin is lawlessness, which demonstrates allegiance to God’s enemy (3:4)*
 - Incompatible with being God’s child

2. Look at the Standard

- “for the devil has sinned from the beginning”
 - Literally: *because from the beginning the devil sins* [i.e. - *continuously*]
 - The devil works to encourage mankind to pursue *lawlessness*, i.e. - wrong beliefs and motives, which results in sinful acts

2. Look at the Standard

- “The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil”
 - *Destroy – dissolve, loosen -> undo*
 - Jesus exposes the devil’s *lawlessness* by manifesting the real *Life* of God (1:2; 3:4)
 - Jesus undoes the world system by modelling true righteousness (2:17, 29; 3:7b)

3. Look at Your Re-birth

- “No one who is born of God practices sin”
 - I.e. – *continuously*, as does the devil (3:8a)
- “because His seed abides in him”
 - *His seed* → *Life* and character traits (see 3:10)
 - We are given a new nature which is inclined toward holiness/righteousness (2:29; cf. 2 Cor. 5:17; 2 Pet. 1:4)

3. Look at Your Re-birth

- “and he cannot sin”
 - i.e. – *continuously*, as does the devil (3:8a)
- “because he is born of God”
 - The new birth brings a fundamental change in direction, attitude, practice, etc. (2 Cor. 5:17)

4. Look for Family Resemblance

- “By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious”
 - Only two options, with *no neutral*
 - *Obvious* – (cf. *manifest* - 1:2) -> *apparent, plain, conspicuous* -> “easy to recognize”

4. Look for Family Resemblance

- “anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God”
 - *Like father, like son*: God’s children act like God, just as the devil’s act like the devil
 - And the more we act like them, the more we become like them (3:3)
 - What does *practice righteousness* mean?

4. Look for Family Resemblance

- “anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother”
 - True righteousness \leftrightarrow love (Rom. 13:8-10)
 - Right actions + right motive = *like Christ*
 - How will the world know we are His disciples? (John 13:35)

4. Look for Family Resemblance

- Everything we do comes from love for someone
 - Is it love for God, others, or self?
 - How can we know? Our reactions can reveal our true motives
 - E.g. – why do people give gifts?
 - Love for the other or manipulation (affirmation, coercion, retaliation, etc.)

4. Look for Family Resemblance

- Why is *practicing righteousness* the criteria?
 - The devil can counterfeit many things...
 - For example?
 - ...but he cannot produce truly righteous acts out of love for God or others
 - The devil is focused on *self*: lusts of the flesh, lawlessness, hate for brothers, etc.

4. Look for Family Resemblance

- See Matt. 7:21-23
 - Who will enter heaven?
 - Those who do the will of the Father
 - Who will not enter heaven?
 - Those who practice lawlessness
 - What proves that we know Him, and He us?
 - Doing the will of the Father

Summary – 3:1-10

- Jesus came the first time to make us God's children and destroy the works of the devil
- Jesus will come again to make us fully like Him
- Therefore, we must purify ourselves, like Him
 - Sin is rebellion (not purity) and is of the devil
 - Rebirth points us to purity/righteousness/love

God's children must be like Him!

So What?

- Do not allow anyone to cause you to wander from this truth!
- God's children will act like He does: walking in the *Light*, practicing the truth, loving brothers, shunning the world system, abiding in the truth, practicing righteousness, turning away from sin
 - Are these evident in your life?

So What?

- Examine your goals – do you plan how to sin?
- Examine your motives – why do you do what you do?
 - Is your love focused on yourself or God and others? (Matt. 22:35-40)