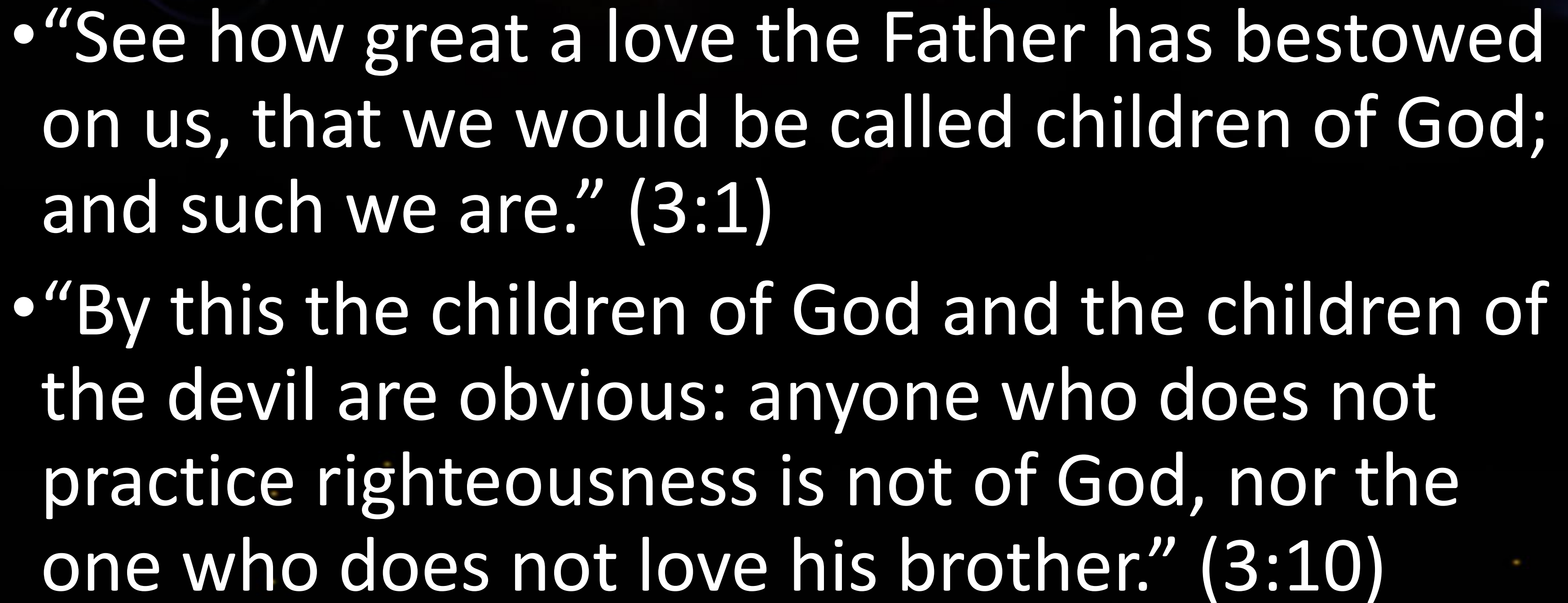


The background features a dark, starry night sky with numerous small, bright yellow and white stars. Overlaid on this are large, flowing, ethereal waves of light. On the left side, the waves are primarily orange and yellow, resembling fire or a sunset. On the right side, the waves are primarily blue and purple, resembling a nebula or a starry field. The waves flow from left to right, creating a sense of movement and depth.

# *Eternal Life*

**A Study of 1 John**

- 
- “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)
  - “By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother.” (3:10)



## 1 John 3:17-20

- *The Social Test: Do I love as God expects?*
  1. The Attitude of Love (17-18)
  2. The Assurance of Love (19-20)

# 1. The Attitude of Love

- “We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren” (16)
  - Jesus modelled God’s standard of love
    - NOT: “I’ll prove My love by killing Myself”
    - His self-sacrifice had purpose: it met a need, and bestowed real benefit to us

# 1. The Attitude of Love

- “whoever has the **world’s goods**”
  - *The things necessary to sustain physical life*
  - Not *rich*; you just have more than the brother
- “and sees his brother in **need**”
  - See James 2:14-17
    - “without clothing and in need of daily food”
  - E.g. - Acts 2:44-45; 4:32-35; 6:1



# 1. The Attitude of Love

- “and **sees** his brother in need”
  - *Seeing with understanding, comprehension; -> awareness and assessment of his circumstances*
- *The Scenario*: “Whoever” recognizes a need in a brother’s life and has the resources to meet that need

# 1. The Attitude of Love

- “and closes his heart against him”
  - *He chooses to turn off his compassion for him*
  - He recognizes the need, and has the means to meet that need, but *refuses* to help
- “how does the love of God abide in him?”
  - God’s children love God’s children (3:10, 14)
  - James: *useless, dead faith!* (James 2:14-17)

# 1. The Attitude of Love

- “let us not love with word or with tongue”
  - Actions speak louder than words (1:6; 2:4, 6, 9, 29; 3:4-10; Matt. 7:21)
  - God’s love is not a *sentiment* but a *choice*
    - It recognizes what is good for the one loved and works to provide it (selflessly)



# 1. The Attitude of Love

- “but [let us love] in deed and truth”
  - *In deed – action -> actually doing something*
  - *In truth – according to God’s view of reality*
    - *Love <-> Truth (see 2 John 1-6)*
    - *Cf. knowledge & discernment (Phil. 1:9-11)*
- Godly love must understand the way things really are and act accordingly

## 1. The Attitude of Love

EBCNT: “Love must be intelligent and morally discerning, however, if it would be truly *agape*. What is encouraged here is not a heedless sentiment, but love based on knowledge, the intellectual perception that has recognized principles from the Word of God as illuminated by the Holy Spirit.”



## 1. The Attitude of Love

EBCNT: “Spiritual knowledge, gained from an understanding of divine revelation, enables the believer to love what God commands and in the way he reveals.”

Spiritual knowledge of the truth “will serve to direct the believers’ love into avenues both biblically proper and pure.”

# 1. The Attitude of Love

- Godly love does not support or enable **laziness** (2 Thess. 3:6-13; cf. Eph. 4:28; 1 Tim. 5:13-14)
  - Be **personally responsible** (Acts 20:33-35)
- Godly love does not promote **materialism** (cf. Luke 12:13-21; 1 Tim. 6:17-19)
- Godly love does not negate **family responsibility** (1 Tim. 5:3-8, 16; cf. Mark 7:9-13)



## 2. The Assurance of Love

- “by this we will know that we are of the truth”
  - Seeing ourselves loving according to God’s truth reveals that we are *of the truth*
  - God’s truth should be in us, informing our choices and directing our actions (cf. 2:4)
  - We are to *practice the truth* (1:6), just as we are to practice righteousness (2:29; 3:7, 10)

## 2. The Assurance of Love

- “by this ... we will assure our heart before Him in whatever our heart condemns us”
  - *Heart => conscience* (cf. Acts 2:37)
  - Sometimes we have doubts about really being one of God’s children (cf. 3:1, 10; 5:13)
  - Loving according to God’s truth offers proof of Divine parentage (3:10, 14; cf. Luke 6:31-36)



## 2. The Assurance of Love

- “for God is greater than our heart and knows all things”
  - Sometimes our hearts are wrong (Jer. 17:9-10)
  - God’s omniscience assures us of His perfect knowledge of our status and motives (2 Tim. 2:19; Prov. 16:2; 21:2; 24:12; cf. 1 Cor. 4:3-5)

## The Point

- God promotes selfless love, sacrifice, humility, fellowship, righteousness, etc.
- The devil promotes *self*: self-love, self-focus, self-exaltation, division (3:4, 8; cf. 2 Tim. 3:1-5)
- Do you see yourself turning away from what the devil does to what God does? (3:3, 10)
  - Real love shows new birth (cf. 3:14)



## So What?

- “We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren.” (3:14)
  - What is your attitude toward those around you?
  - Do you have a desire to help others?
  - Do you choose to act on that desire?

## So What?

- In order to love properly, we must know God's view of reality
  - Putting *the truth* into practice informs our fellowship with God and others (1:6-7)
- Real love seeks to understand the whole situation and meet the real needs
  - Real love must be discerning



## So What?

- When you experience doubts:
  - Remind yourself of what is true about God
  - Remind yourself of what God says about you
  - Remind yourself of what God says is true
  - Look for practical ways to love others