

What Will We Become?

I John 3:1-7

APR 26 2009 (2006)

Easter 3B

Can anyone here name all of the books of the New Testament? Let's see if we can do it:

Matthew	Ephesians	Hebrews
Mark	Philippians	James
Luke	Colossians	I Peter
John	I Thessalonians	II Peter
Acts	II Thessalonians	I John
Romans	I Timothy	II John
I Corinthians	II Timothy	III John
II Corinthians	Titus	Jude
Galatians	Philemon	Revelation

I'll tell you the truth – I can name the first half of them without too much trouble, but with the last half I often get confused – so many short little letters – it's hard to remember them all and it's hard to put them in the correct order.

The scripture reading I want to share this morning is from one of these short little letters near the back of the Bible - the first letter of John. But before diving into that particular letter I want to say something about all of the letters; the letters to the Galatians, Thessalonians, the letters of Timothy and Titus. What they all have in common is that they were written by people whose lives had changed because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, they became something very different from what anyone ever expected.

As children they may have expected to become farmers, fishermen, merchants, soldiers, mothers, fathers, teachers, lawyers, tax collectors ... but after the resurrection they became so much more: disciples, witnesses, evangelists, preachers and teachers. There wasn't anything wrong with what they had planned to be, but in the resurrection they found so much more about God and themselves.

In the third chapter of John's First Letter we find these words: **"We are now God's children, but it is not clear what we shall become."** [I John 3:2]

I remember being a child. Here's a picture of me from long ago. I don't remember everything, but some things I do remember. I remember building tall towers of play blocks in my bedroom, trying to build them high enough to touch the ceiling - maybe I was

dreaming that I could build a building higher than the Empire State Building. I remember a favorite set of toy rocket ships – I know I dreamed about becoming an astronaut, and when John Glenn was the first to orbit the earth in a space ship, I knew that I would have my chance, too. I remember getting my first baseball glove – maybe I dreamed of becoming a famous baseball player like Mickey Mantle.

I also remember Sunday School and how we used crayons to color pictures of sheep and goats as we learned about Abraham and Sarah on their way to the promised land of Israel with all of their animals – maybe I learned that my family had its own promised land to find in the world.

And now here's a secret that I will dare tell the children who are here this morning. All of the adults you see around you this morning are still children – we never stop being God's children – and we are still growing and changing, learning and becoming. Not one of us has become all that we can be. And so the question I asked all of the children a little while about what you think you might become, is also directed at all of the adults. What will you become? In light of God's incredible love for the world, in light of God's incredible desire to meet our needs, in the light of the resurrection – victory over death - what will you become? If we really concentrate on the meaning of Easter, we realize that we cannot remain what we have been, that there is so much more to discover. Every day is like taking a fresh look into the empty tomb.

What will we become? The same paragraph in John's Gospel promises that what we will become is more and more like Christ. As we grow in our understanding we not only see Jesus more clearly, but we become more like him – in the ways we love, and show generosity, in ways that we contribute to his peace, in the way we dream, in the ways we help, in the vision we have for the world around us.

This is a real challenge – not just paying attention to Jesus, not just listening to him, not just remembering his stories, but becoming more like him.