

Session 3: John Teaches from a Mature Understanding of the Scriptures (Heart Knowledge) to Hearts that are Immature and Vulnerable!

1 John 2:1-2, “My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. ² He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.”

The tenderness and love for the younger generation is shown here...

His purpose in writing is to prevent them from sinning.

“You have given your life to Jesus ... and now it is very important that you don’t think lightly to sin.”

Two things to remember:

- 1. Sin is universal...and anyone who claims never to have sinned is a liar.***
- 2. There is forgiveness of sins through what Jesus Christ has done, and still does....***
But...don’t take sin lightly...Don’t think... “I have sinned, so what...why worry about it? My name is written in the Lamb’s book of life?”

John’s response:

- 1. Knowledge Involves Obedience***
Christians are people who have come to know God; and the inevitable accompaniment of knowledge must be obedience.
- 2. The Union with God and Man (Us) Involves Imitation of Christ.***
Those that claim that they abide in God (2:6) and in Jesus Christ must live the life that is conforming to the life in which Jesus lived.

Summary:

- Christianity is an ethical religion***
- Human beings are so often an ethical failure.***
- There is a barrier erected between us and God...because of this failure.***
- The way we sinners enter into the presence of God (all holy) is through Jesus...our Advocate.***

Advocate = “parakletos” –comforter; or the most common for this Greek word, “to call someone to one’s side” in order to use that person in some way as helper and a counselor.

Advocate is even more intimate...is like a lawyer who is your close friend who pleads one’s cause.

Jesus Christ is the prisoner’s friend...who has set the prisoner free...and remains a friend who stands in for him every time he comes before the judge.

Propitiation for our sin “Hilaskesthai” ...

Jesus is the person through whom guilt for past sin and defilement from present sin are removed.

Meaning...Through Jesus Christ our fellowship with God is first restored...and then maintained.

This love is for the whole world....

The hymn... ‘The love of God is greater far..than word or tongue can ever tell...it goes beyond the highest star..and reaches to the lowest hell.’

God's will and desire is that all men might come to know the saving knowledge of Jesus.

1 John 2:3-8, "We know that we have come to know him if we keep his commands.

⁴ Whoever says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person. ⁵ But if anyone obeys his word, love for God is truly made complete in them. This is how we know we are in him: ⁶ Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did. ⁷ Dear friends, I am not writing you a new command but an old one, which you have had since the beginning. This old command is the message you have heard. ⁸ Yet I am writing you a new command; its truth is seen in him and in you, because the darkness is passing and the true light is already shining."

The quest of the human spirit...is to know God, to abide in God and to have fellowship with Him.

- 1. The human race can arrive at God by the sheer process of intellectual reasoning and argument.**

A real challenge is to get to "know God" (a knowing).

The Greeks believed and taught..before Christ came along that we need to explore more knowledge to get to know the God of the universe. Our minds...our intellect to converse with God.

- 2. The human race can arrive at God by experiencing an emotional experience with Him. To know God...and also to "feel" God (a feeling).**

- 3. To know God...to feel God...is to have fellowship with him.**

John says... "Not unless you do what He asks you to do!" You can't do your own thing...educate yourself, have emotional highs...and then not keep His commandments...you are fooling yourself, but not God!

You must talk the talk...and walk the walk!

John speaks about a commandment which is at one and the same time old and new.

John 4th Gospel...John 13:34, Jesus speaking "I give to you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another."

In what sense was that commandment both old and new?

- 1. It was old in the sense that it was already there in the Old Testament...**

They had heard it before (Leviticus 19:18); "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

- 2. It was new in that it had been raised to a completely new standard in the life of Jesus.**

- It became new in the extent to which it reached.**

In Jesus, love reached out to the sinner....it reached out to the Gentiles...it reaches out to you.

- It became new in the lengths to which it would go.**

Nothing that anyone would do or could ever do that would turn Jesus ' love into hate. He even prayed for God's mercy on those who were nailing him to the cross.

John reiterated (stated again) that truth is not only something to be grasped by the mind; it was something to be done. James said it time and time again... “Be doers of the word and not hearers only.

Since Jesus had not come by the end of the 1st century, John believed and taught that Jesus’ 2nd coming might not be an event that was eminent...but that it is a process in which darkness is steadily being defeated by the light...and the end of the process will be called by God...it is His plan and Jesus the Christ will fulfill the purpose in which light defeats darkness.

Let’s Play Truth or Consequences!

What do you think about the following statement?

“In today’s world there are no black and white areas, only gray ones. Everything is relative. What might be good for you might be bad for someone else. What might be bad for you, might be good for someone else. We are finding out that truth is what you want it to be.”

What do you think about this statement? “If you feel like doing it, that is your business. Who has the right to tell you what to think, feel, say or do except you. It is your life—what right does anyone have in telling you what to do with it!”

What type of philosophy is this?

Now...What is the Truth?

1 John 2:9-14, “Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates a brother or sister is still in the darkness. ¹⁰ Anyone who loves their brother and sister lives in the light, and there is nothing in them to make them stumble. ¹¹ But anyone who hates a brother or sister is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness. They do not know where they are going, because the darkness has blinded them. ¹² I am writing to you, dear children, because your sins have been forgiven on account of his name. ¹³ I am writing to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. ¹⁴ I write to you, dear children, because you know the Father. I write to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God lives in you, and you have overcome the evil one.”

John states that there are no gray areas when it comes to love for the brethren and love for others...our neighbors. You are either in the dark...or you are in the light. Our neighbors cannot be disregarded...they are part of the landscape. The question is “How do we regard them?”

We may regard other people:

- *As negligible...a self-centered approach. These people make plans without taking other people into their calculations at all. (Their need, their sorrow, their welfare, and their salvation are not their concern).*

- *With contempt...treating others like they are fools in comparison to our intellect and attained recognition...like they are inferior (like slaves were treated).*
- *As a nuisance...a feeling that those “others” put themselves in dire straits (in poverty, sickness and afflictions)... “They don’t deserve our help because they made wrong choices and they have to live with it. Why should I pay tax to give to these people that don’t appreciate those that have.”*
- *As enemies...thinking that they are competition. They are the enemies because they are trying to take what I have....or working to get.*
- *As brothers and sisters...their hurts are ours, also. Their needs are our needs, their interests are our interests.....To be in fellowship with them is the true joy of life.*

“I write to you”... “I have written to you.”.....What is the difference?

- ✓ *When John says to us, “I am writing,” he is thinking of what he is at the moment writing and of what he still has to say.*
- ✓ *When John says, “I have written,” he is thinking of what has already been written and his readers have already read.*

What is John saying... “My whole letter—the part already written, the part being written and the part still to come—is all designed to remind Christians of who and whose they are and of what has been done for them.

Who they are...still children trying to get to the place where they know their purpose..and know what the outcome will be in the end.

Whose they are?...God’s children...bought with a price...and watched over by the family...a brother and a father who cares for them with a passion.

What has been done for them?...blood atonement, sins covered, an advocate (lawyer) that acts as defense against the accuser...in front of the Almighty Judge.

For John, it was of supreme importance that Christians should remember the status and the benefits they have in Jesus Christ.

LITTLE CHILDREN, FATHERS AND YOUNG MEN....

- ✓ *One thought....Three age groups in Church.*

Little children....sweet innocence of childhood and forgiveness.

Fathers....mature wisdom which comes from Christian experiences...and everyday life experiences.

Young men...strength which enable us to win the battles against the evil ones.

- ✓ *Little children...means all Christians...and they are divided into two groups:*
 1. *The fathers....the old..mature in the faith (but realizing that we must be seeking more.)*
 2. *The young men...the young, immature...still growing in what it is all about...but are willing to trust those that have been there to lead them.*

God’s gifts to all people in Jesus Christ...

- *The gift of forgiveness...*

Power in the name of Jesus. What is in a name...it represents strength and power if it is a good name.

- *The gift of increasing in the knowledge of God.*
Getting to “know” God...and having fellowship with Him. No strings attached; just realizing that it is not our intellect God wants from us...it is our respect, our feeling of security in Him.
- *The gift of victorious strength.*
Strength to overcome the evil one.

1 John 2:15-28, “Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them. ¹⁶ For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world. ¹⁷ The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever. ¹⁸ Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know it is the last hour. ¹⁹ They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us. ²⁰ But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth. ²¹ I do not write to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it and because no lie comes from the truth. ²² Who is the liar? It is whoever denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a person is the antichrist—denying the Father and the Son. ²³ No one who denies the Son has the Father; whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father also. ²⁴ As for you, see that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you. If it does, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father. ²⁵ And this is what he promised us—eternal life. ²⁶ I am writing these things to you about those who are trying to lead you astray. ²⁷ As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit—just as it has taught you, remain in him. ²⁸ And now, dear children, continue in him, so that when he appears we may be confident and unashamed before him at his coming.

God’s world...and man’s world.

We must understand what John meant by the world, the “kosmos.” Christians did not hate the world as such. It was God’s creation; and God made all things well. Jesus had loved the beauty of the world; not even Solomon in all his glory was clothed like one of the scarlet flowers which bloomed for a day and died. Jesus again and again took his illustrations from the world. In that sense, Christians did not hate the world.

The earth was not the devil’s; the earth and all its fullness was the Lord’s.

But....”Kosmos” acquired a moral sense. It began to mean the world apart from God

God’s world...has the love of the Father...and those that seek him and his ways. God’s world is the world that encompasses all that was made and that which was from the beginning. Man’s world does not have the love of the Father...because man’s world seeks something made with hands..made with intellect...something that reaches maximum pleasure in the world’s accomplishments.

God’s world and the Evil one’s world collide every day. How we handle stress...how we handle life...how we handle temptation...gives us a clue as to whose side we are on!

False teachers are going to be amongst us....they have pleasant things to say. Their hearts are full of lies..and empty promises.

God's promises are true. God never lies. If you remain in Him...He will remain in you.

Do we choose to lose...and be confused...or do we choose to let God be our hiding place...our decision maker?