

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

APRIL 28TH, 2019 // 1 JOHN

INTRODUCTION

While John doesn't formally introduce himself as the author of the letter, there is little debate that the author is actually John.

Some scholars believe the book was written between 60-65AD while others believe it was written 80-100AD

It was originally sent to Christians in Ephesus, then Asia (western Turkey) and possibly circulated throughout Asia.

One objective of John was to combat the heresy of Gnosticism.

- The writing of the Gnostics were the source material behind the movie "The DaVinci Code"
- Gnosticism was designed much like Scientology where people could pay large sums of money for secret knowledge.
- Gnostics believed that it was impossible for God to take on flesh (evil). They taught that Jesus therefore was a sort of phantom.

What we believe about Jesus matters.

Every attempt to alter the Gospel has been motivated by the desire of people to reduce the deity of Jesus.

We long to be the masters of our own fate: our desires, our plans, our timing, our way... all must be surrendered for the Gospel to be on display in our lives.

FROM THE BEGINNING (1 JOHN 1:1-4)

John is reestablishing the deity of Jesus.

- While the Gnostics believed Jesus was a phantom, John clarifies Jesus was a real, living person.
- John is defending the Gospel to those who may have believed a lie.

John had the unique perspective having seen Jesus and verifying the reality of Jesus with both his senses and his faith.

The disciples had the unique perspective as witnesses of Jesus in addition to their faith.

John 1:1 CSB In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

In John's consistency in his writings, he is quick to establish the authority of Christ over his life.

We will submit ourselves to something and our lives are marked by the authority we establish.

"His authority on earth allows us to dare to go to all the nations. His authority in heaven gives us our only hope of success. And His presence with us leaves us no other choice."
-John Stott

"Fellowship" (koinonia) means to share in common, to participate, to experience unity

Fellowship in John's context is believers sharing belief with other believers

- Strengthening of faith together, accountability in dealing with sin and struggles, restoring those who fall
- Sharing God experiences with each other, experiencing God together

You're like the five people you spend the most time with. Choose those five wisely.

The motivating reason of this entire letter can be summed up in one word: joy.

IN THE LIGHT (1 JOHN 1:5-2:2)

John is declaring the nature of God as light to clarify the expectation of our own lives.

- Believers are called to the same light (righteousness) that God possesses.
- Even if we stumble in sin, Jesus will reconcile those who confess to righteousness.

Notice the language here. For the believer, sin is now a family affair.

- The words used are "children" and "Father".
- A good Father does not cast out flawed children following in His footsteps.

The test of faith and character comes in light and darkness. Darkness is known for what it hides. Light is known for what it exposes.

What we learn when we step into the light of Christ is that the greatest part of ourselves is found in Him.

Confess (Gk, homos "the same" and lego "to speak") means "to speak the same thing".

- It's not saying you're sorry.
- It's "speaking the same thing as God" – agreeing with God that our conduct is sin and surrendering our own opinion of our actions.

Confessing sin is setting God's opinion of our conduct above our own opinions and preferences.

The light of God will always expose something in us if we look.

- Because sin is contrary to God's character, we cannot be close to sin and God at the same time.
- John is implying that those who don't confess sin have settled for a sinful life.

Imagining we are free of sin by our own merits is a false claim that we can stand in the presence of God based on our goodness.

Arrogance will never usher you into the presence of God.

REMAIN (1 JOHN 2:3-11)

John is correcting wrong beliefs of believers in Ephesus.

- The presence of God will ultimately impact the conduct of the believer.
- The predominant feature missing from the life of the person apart from Christ is love.
- This is probably another defense against Gnosticism. Gnostics cared more about knowledge of God rather than living for Him.

Imagine what would happen to the church if we didn't live divided?

There is this division within us. For some, it's the person they want to be vs. the person they are.

But for the Christian, the desire has to change.

WE WOULD REPLACE

- Struggles with victory
- Hidden sin with consistent character
- Compensating for flaws with contentment in redemption
- Insecurity about ourselves with security in Christ

JOHN IS TELLING US

- What we believe about Jesus matters
- How we respond to Jesus matters
- Knowledge alone will never replace active faith

Have we had enough of the double life?