

Review of John's Letters

Sermon

Hobart, November 4th, 2012

Devonport, November 10th, 2012

Launceston, November 11th, 2012

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Scripture Readings:

I John 2:12-14

¹² I am writing to you who are God's children
because your sins have been forgiven through Jesus.

¹³ I am writing to you who are mature in the faith
because you know Christ, who existed from the beginning.

I am writing to you who are young in the faith
because you have won your battle with the evil one.

¹⁴ I have written to you who are God's children
because you know the Father.

I have written to you who are mature in the faith
because you know Christ, who existed from the beginning.

I have written to you who are young in the faith
because you are strong.

God's word lives in your hearts,
and you have won your battle with the evil one.

INTRODUCTION:

I. REVIEW

A. OUR BRAINS ONLY HAVE THE CAPACITY TO FOCUS ON A FEW THINGS AT A TIME

1. So they naturally clear away things that aren't immediately relevant in order to properly focus on the things that are in front of us and around us both in physical proximity and in time.

B. SO WE TEND TO FORGET MOST OF WHAT HAPPENED BEFORE

1. except for a few highlights, or things we continually revisit

S.P.S:

C. SO TODAY LET'S REVISIT THE LETTERS OF JOHN

1. To help us remember some of the important things we learned from them
2. We are going to take time to share what we remember
3. Those verses and insights and core teachings that are important to remember
4. So it would be good to have as many of you as possible share something of your thoughts and reflections on what has impacted you in John's Letters.
 - a) We can then take some time after each to discuss what has been highlighted

D. PRAYER

BODY:

A. FIRST:

1. Share something of your thoughts and reflections on what has impacted you in John's Letters.
2. We can then discuss what has been highlighted

B.

1.

2.

3.

4.

II. KEY QUESTIONS:

A. WHAT WERE THE MAIN THEMES OF I JOHN?

I John 2:12-14

¹² I am writing to you who are God's children because your sins have been forgiven through Jesus.

¹³ I am writing to you who are mature in the faith because you know Christ, who existed from the beginning.

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¹⁴ I have written to you who are God's children because you know the Father.

I have written to you who are mature in the faith because you know Christ, who existed from the beginning.

I have written to you who are young in the faith because you are strong.

God's word lives in your hearts, and you have won your battle with the evil one.

B. JOHN WANTED TO AFFIRM AND REASSURE THE MEMBERS

1. That through Christ they knew God

a) That they were God's children, that they were strong and mature in the faith because they knew Christ, who was God in human form

b) God's word lived in them, they had victory over Satan and evil

2. It is easy to become unsure, to feel inadequate, weak and guilty; to doubt our standing with God, to be tempted to go looking elsewhere for security and a sense of belonging

a) John wanted them to be clear and confident that they were secure in God's hands, they were forgiven and loved by God.

3. Like with teenagers and many adults, if we know we are loved and accepted, we aren't so likely to go wandering off into other risky and dangerous places and experiences in a vain attempt to find ourselves, or find happiness and fulfilment

C. RIGHT AT THE BEGINNING JOHN EMPHASISED THE FELLOWSHIP WE HAVE WITH THE FATHER AND THE SON, AND WITH ONE ANOTHER

I John 1:3

³We proclaim to you what we ourselves have actually seen and heard so that you may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.

1. John Mitchell, referring to this verse, suggests that "The main theme of the Epistle is fellowship with God."

D. JOHN GIVES REPEATED EVIDENCE AND REASSURANCE OF THAT OF THAT FELLOWSHIP, OF OUR BEING TRULY GOD'S CHILDREN

1. First that the fact that we believe in Jesus Christ as the One who is both God and man, and who thus unites us with God

a) This belief comes from the Holy Spirit, and cannot come from anywhere else

2. Secondly the fact that we love our fellow believers is evidence that God's love and life is in us (3:23-24)

3. Thirdly that we have God's Spirit (4:13).

E. JOHN EMPHASISES THAT CHRISTIANITY IS ABOUT LIFE WITH GOD

1. Which is a life of love, fellowship and communion

a) Not a life of superior knowledge or keeping religious rules

2. And that the life of God is the true reality, light and truth that we can rely on today, and forever

a) And that light will gradually through Christ, the Spirit and the Church, push back the darkness until in the end it is all gone, and the life and light of God will be everywhere and forever

F. SO IN I JOHN; JOHN GIVES US;

1. *Clear assurance that we have the truth and a secure relationship with God*

2. *Clear encouragement to remain in that truth and relationship*

3. *Clear warning against straying from them*

III. II JOHN:

A. WHAT WAS THE MAIN MESSAGE OF II JOHN?

II John 5-7

⁵ I am writing to remind you, dear friends, that we should love one another. This is not a new commandment, but one we have had from the beginning. ⁶ Love means doing what God has commanded us, and he has commanded us to love one another, just as you heard from the beginning.

⁷ I say this because many deceivers have gone out into the world. They deny that Jesus Christ came in a real body. Such a person is a deceiver and an antichrist.

1. Similar message in I John;

I John 2:23-27

²³ Anyone who denies the Son doesn't have the Father, either. But anyone who acknowledges the Son has the Father also.

²⁴ So you must remain faithful to what you have been taught from the beginning. If you do, you will remain in fellowship with the Son and with the Father. ²⁵ And in this fellowship we enjoy the eternal life he promised us.

²⁶ I am writing these things to warn you about those who want to lead you astray.
²⁷ But you have received the Holy Spirit, and he lives within you, so you don't need anyone to teach you what is true. For the Spirit teaches you everything you need to know, and what he teaches is true—it is not a lie. So just as he has taught you, remain in fellowship with Christ.

2. The truth is God revealed in Christ, by the Holy Spirit
 - a) The Trinity is the true and ultimate reality
 - b) We should always remember that, and not get led away from the fellowship we have with Christ
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IV. III JOHN:

A. WHAT WAS THE MAIN MESSAGE OF III JOHN?

1. Being loyal to what we have been taught and given in Christ, even when it causes us to suffer
2. Not getting caught up in human greed, politics and selfish power struggles

B. GAIUS AND DEMETRIUS

1. are both solid examples of standing firm in the faith and living it in spite of opposition
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CONCLUSION:

A. JOHN STOTT:

John is above all else a pastor... and anxious to help...members to learn how to think and live Christianly.

At the foundation of their Christian thinking must be a right grasp of the unique divine-human person of Jesus, and at the foundation of their Christian living a transparent integrity of righteousness and love.

B. PRAYER