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1JOHN

Adopted and Changed

1 John 3:1-10

- I. Behold
 - a. My concern as a pastor:
 - i. I spend more time on how we should love God then on what is loveable about God
 - ii. More time on how we need to trust God then on why God is completely trustworthy
 - iii. More time on the importance of obedience to God then the majesty of God
 1. And this is a problem in pulpits all over the world – why? Because it is easier to tell people what to do then it is to explain the majesty and the sovereignty and the power and the glory of God
 2. So, we run to obedience, we run to sin avoidance, and when we do this we often run right past Jesus – we make Christianity about our good works, our righteousness, our accomplishments but this life isn't about us – it's about Jesus – the perfect expression of God our Father
 - b. Look at the first word of 1 John chapter 3
 - i. Behold – some translations read “see” – and they swing and miss, this means to gaze upon with eyes wide open
 1. See – did you see America's Got Talent last night? did you see the game? did you see your socks on the floor? – you must not of or you would have put them in the hamper – this word carries so much more weight than that
 - ii. I really enjoy weddings – my favorite moment, when the bride walks in – but I'm not looking at the bride, I'm looking at the groom as he beholds his beautiful bride with eyes wide open
 1. We are desperately lacking this in the church today – you could say that there is a famine in the land – let's be honest, believers simply do not take time to gaze upon the majesty of our God
 2. We are too preoccupied by lesser things
 - iii. What is the first thing we reach for in the morning? – what do we want to gaze upon? Our phones.
 1. What are we looking for? Something that feeds our ego, something that will distract us from the boredom or the responsibility or the suffering of the day ahead of us.
 2. After we spend those 5 or 15 or 55 minutes scrolling through posts and headlines and cat videos are we any better equipped to glorify God and love others well?
 - a. God make us a congregation that gazes upon you
 - b. John is going to help us do just that

1Jn 3:1-10 Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. (2) Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. (3) And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure. (4) Whoever

commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness. (5) And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin. (6) Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him. (7) Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. (8) He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. (9) Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God. (10) In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother.

II. Behold What Manner of Love

a. What did you hear in those 10 verses?

- i. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him, he who sins is of the devil, he who is born of God does not sin, cannot sin, I need to be righteous so that I can be called a child of God
- ii. Isn't it just like us to take a section of scripture that is entirely about Jesus and His wonderful work of justification and sanctification and purification and make it about our works?
- iii. John started this chapter with this statement – Behold, gaze upon, stare at, meditate on, this kind of love, a love that takes sinners like you and me, rebels, the guilty ones, dying in our iniquity, and ushers us into the family of God, a love that grants us citizenship into a Kingdom in which we don't belong, adopting us as His own
 1. **Joh 1:12-13 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: (13) who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.**
 2. **Gal 4:4-5 But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, (5) to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.**
 3. **Rom 8:15 For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father."**

b. If we apply our understanding of adoption to what God in His great love has done for us, then we fall short of the meaning of the word in scripture

- i. If I adopt a child, I can love them, I can hope to influence them for good, I can provide them with food, and an education, and a home to live in.
 1. When we adopt a child, the child moves into our home
- ii. When God adopts us, His Spirit moves into us – and where the Spirit of the living God lives there is radical transformation
- iii. This is the new birth, the new creation – adoption is easy to explain but trying to explain what happens the moment we let the Lord of the Universe make His home in us is much more difficult
 1. And even more difficult to understand – think about that late-night conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus – a man sitting across the table from God in the flesh
 2. No one has ever done what you have done, many of us know you are from God – so what's your deal?
 3. "Unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."
 4. Wait..what? Jesus could have said "unless you are adopted into my family.." Adoption he might have understood, caring for a child that was

not originally yours, giving all that you have to a child in need, that would have made sense

a. But to be born a second time? "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?"

b. **Joh 3:5-7 Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. (6) That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. (7) Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'**

III. One of the Family

a. God doesn't just fill out the paperwork and move us into His home, He moves His Spirit inside of us and transforms our hearts – changes the way we view Him and view others and view ourselves – He opens our eyes to deeper things, He frees us from the bondage of sin and death

i. And that is what John is writing about. He isn't telling us how to earn our place in heaven. He is explaining the marvelous work that Jesus accomplished in us to make us a part of the family, citizens of His Kingdom – and what that supernatural work accomplishes in us practically

b. Why is this important to John? Why is he addressing the practicality of the new birth because of a false teaching that was creeping into the church

i. **(7) Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous.**

ii. One of the primary purposes of John's letters was to combat the false teachings of the Gnostics – Gnosticism was built on the fundamental be that spirit and matter are completely separate from one another. Whatever is Spirit is inherently good, and whatever is matter is inherently evil.

1. Simply put, our fleshly body is evil and anything done by our fleshly body doesn't really matter because it is our spirit that is significant

2. They disconnected the works of the body from the works of our spirits

c. What made Gnostics so dangerous is that they claimed to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ

i. But they denied that Jesus came in the flesh, and they denied that Christ was crucified – they disconnected the body of Christ from the Spirit of Christ.

ii. You hear John responding to these lies in his gospel and in his letters

1. **Joh 1:14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.**

2. **1Jn 1:1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life—**

3. **1Jn_4:2 By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God,**

4. **2Jn_1:7 For many deceivers have gone out into the world who do not confess Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.**

d. Pastor what does that have to do with us?

i. Gnosticism is alive and well in the church today. We may not call it that, but there's a tragic belief that we can call ourselves Christians and not be changed

1. We can claim that we believe in Jesus, that our souls are saved, but continue to practice lawlessness, continue to engage in the very works that Jesus came to destroy

- ii. John says don't deceive yourselves – when the spirit of God makes His home within you, you are forever changed
 1. **(9) Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.**
 2. A transformation in our spirit results in a change in our body, our actions

IV. Perfect or Progressing

- a. Does that mean if I'm a child of God, I'm perfect? We know that is not that the case. John said if we say that we do not sin we are liars and when we do sin we have an advocate.
 - i. The key word here is practice – John says something in chapter 5 that on the surface seems kind of confusing - **1Jn 5:17 All unrighteousness is sin, and there is sin not leading to death.**
 1. The wages of sin is death so what sin doesn't lead to death? The sin that has been paid for at the cross.
 2. Whose sin has been paid for? – the children of God. Those who have given God the permission to move in. Those who no longer keep Jesus at arm's length but have opened their arms and invited Him in to destroy the works of the devil
 - b. **(3) And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.**
 - i. How do we purify ourselves? Peter could tell you because he was humbled by this lesson. Wash all of me! “You are already clean, I just need you to put your feet in my hands.”
 1. His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin – if you are truly born again, if the Spirit of God lives within you, you cannot be comfortable with sin
 2. And if there is sin in your life you will feel the conviction of the Holy Spirit drawing you to Jesus to purify you – to put your feet in His hands
 3. If that sweet conviction is not there, if you do not struggle against sin I am very worried for your sake
 4. Picture a battle field – there are those who are fighting, they are yelling, they are nervous, they are scared and on that same battlefield there are those who look peaceful, they look calm, they seem to be resting, oblivious to the gun fire – these men are dead
- c. It is not about perfection, it is about progression
 - i. Pastor shared a story about a house that he moved into – all the grass in the yard was dead, in it's place weeds, everywhere – it was a jungle. So, he got out there with a weed whacker and started chopping and His wife planted seeds. After a week of work, it still looked bad, but his neighbors knew someone moved in because it was better.
 1. But if you were to drive by that home a week later you may still think that no one lives there because you had no idea what it looked like before – you just saw a snapshot of a work in progress
 - ii. On the night the Jesus was crucified two men ran into the night weeping – fleeing from Jesus – one was Judas and one was Peter – one was filled with Satan and the other built the early church
 1. Let's be careful who we call children of the devil – we are all works in progress
 2. Next week will explore why Jesus came into the world, and the part we play in His Work – close with this parable

Luk 11:21-22 When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are in peace. (22) But when a stronger than he comes upon him and overcomes him, he takes from him all his armor in which he trusted, and divides his spoils.

V. Communion