



The
Journey
at Lake Wylie
Loving GOD by Loving People

The Believer's Bar of Soap

July 31, 2016

Who... When... Why...

- Who wrote the epistle of 1 John?
 - The Apostle John wrote this epistle as well as the Gospel of John.
 - He was not only one of the 12, but also one of the Big 3... Peter, James, and John.
 - The author is not John the Baptist who died before this epistle was written.
- When was it written?
 - John doesn't state his name or to whom the epistle is addressed.
 - But it is written for all believers to affirm their identity in Christ.
 - John left Jerusalem before its destruction in 70 AD.
 - John moved to Ephesus, which is today Turkey not far from Greece.
 - He wrote the book from there late in his life.
 - Speculation dates the book sometime between 80 AD and 95 AD.
 - During Jesus' 3 year ministry, John was an older teenager.
 - John lived longer than all the apostles.
 - John is writing from experience in his old age what it's like to follow Jesus in a time when persecution of believers was rampant.
- Why was it written?
 - He writes to encourage his readers to keep on keeping on in spite of false teachers.
 - To expose false teachers (Gnosticism).
 - To give believers assurance of salvation.

The Basic Tenets of Gnosticism

- The spirit is entirely good and matter is entirely evil.
 - Man's body, which is matter, is therefore evil.
 - It is contrasted with God who is wholly spirit and therefore good.
 - Salvation is the escape from the evil body and is achieved not by faith in Christ but by special knowledge (*gnosis* is the Greek word for knowledge).
 - It denied Christ's humanity in two ways:
 - Christ only "seemed" to have a body (Docetism = "to seem").
 - Christ joined the man Jesus at baptism and left him before he died (Cerinthianism).
 - Since the body was evil, it was to be treated harshly (asceticism=denying pleasure).
 - Paradoxically, some gnostics reasoned that since matter--- not the breaking of God's law--- was considered evil, breaking the law had no moral consequence (antinomian= against the law).
 - This view was also libertine, throwing of all moral restraints.
 - Gnostics denied the incarnation of Christ.

Text: 1 John 1:1-10

Vs. 1:1--- That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched — this we proclaim concerning the Word of life.

- “In the beginning was the WORD...”
- Not the Bible. Jesus is the Word.
- Touched with our hands. Why?
- Jesus is both true God and true man.
- Refuted the Gnostics.

Vs. 1:2--- The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us.

- What is ETERNAL LIFE?
- It is a Person, not something we achieve.
- Wasn't Jesus with the Father? Didn't He appear to us?
- In Him is LIFE, the Source of LIFE, Sovereign over LIFE.
- This epistle begins and ends with ETERNAL LIFE... Jesus, the Messiah.

Vs. 1:3-4--- We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. ⁴We write this to make our joy complete.

- Who is John addressing here? Non-believers.
- Fellowship is the spiritual union of the believer with Christ.
- Examples: Vine/Branches; Body/Head.
- John's joy could not be complete unless his readers shared the true knowledge of Christ.

Vs. 1:5--- This is the message we have heard from Him and declare to you: God is light; in Him there is no darkness at all.

- Light represents what is good.
- Darkness represents what is evil and false.
- John is building the case that God is light and light is good, not evil.

John 3:19-21 NIV --- This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. ²⁰Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. ²¹But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God."

Vs. 1:6-7--- If we claim to have fellowship with Him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. ⁷ But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, His Son, purifies us from all sin.

- 2 lifestyles: one of wickedness and error; the other of holiness and truth.
- Remember: Truth is not a creed or set of rules. It is a Person.
- If we walk (live) in the Light (Jesus), we have fellowship (spiritual union) with God.
- The blood of Christ is the only thing that can take away SIN.
- Sin is a key word in 1 John used 27 times.

- Remember: Sin is “acting independently” apart from God rather than “in dependence” upon Him.

Vs. 1:8--- If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

- **Romans 4:15---** Where there is no law there is no transgression.
- Remember: The gnostics believed since matter was already evil, the law had no consequence and thus they ignored it.
- You cannot break the speed limit if there is no speed limit. Understand?
- Gnostics believed they had no sin which needed the blood of Christ.
- They were deceived and the TRUTH (Jesus) was not in them.

Vs. 1:9--- If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make Him out to be a liar and His Word has no place in our lives.

- The Believer’s Bar of Soap! One of the great deceptions of Biblical interpretation.

Colossians 2:13-15--- When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. HE FORGAVE US ALL OUR SINS, having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross.

- Would Christ become your life IF you still had sin in you?
- NO! Christ forgave ALL our sin... past, present, future... and then He became our life.
- If we are now ONE with Jesus, and He is our life, does Jesus need forgiveness?
- In Him, are we pure, holy, righteous, without spot, or blemish? YES! YES! YES!
- When we ask Jesus to forgive us when we sin, are we not sinning by our lack of faith?
- Romans 14:13 says, “Whatsoever is not of faith, is sin.”
- Does this mean that as believers we never sin? NO!
- But Jesus has already forgiven it before we ever committed it!
- Then what do we do when we sin? STOP!!!!
- Thank Jesus for His forgiving you, and give Him back His stool!!!!
- John is addressing gnostic unbelievers here, not believers!!!
- If you say you have no sin, you are deceived and the Truth is not in you.
- BUT if you confessed your sin (agreed with God), then He is faithful and just and would forgive you your sins and cleanse you from all unrighteousness.
- He is not talking to BELIEVERS!!!!
- How I was taught:
 - You are saved now, but you are still going to sin.
 - When you do, here’s your BAR of SOAP.
 - Imagine getting your driver’s license and your Dad tells you what to do when you have a wreck.
 - That is how religion has lied to us.
- Some people don’t come to Journey because I don’t step on their toes and convict them.
- That’s not my job. That’s the Holy Spirit’s job.

- My job is to tell you the Good News over and over and over until you start believing it enough to start letting Jesus live it for you.
- I'm here to tell you how good Jesus has made you, not how bad the devil wants you to think you are.
- Jesus died to make you good, because He is good.
- When in Jesus Name are we going to start living the life, His Life, that He died to give us?
- We dishonor Him by living beneath our privilege.
- We are not being humble by thinking we are "sinners saved by grace."
- We are believing a LIE.
- We are SAINTS, children of the God of the universe, recreated in the image of His Son.
- How dare we live otherwise in light of how much our Lord loved us and gave His life for us.
- How long are you going to have to listen to the truth before you ever hear it?
- Jesus said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"