

**February 23, 2020 – Elmont Baptist Church**

**Text: 1 John 1:5-2:1**

**Message Series: 1 John: By This We Know**

**Week 1: Honest & Humble**

**Introduction:**

1. In a conversation this week it was brought up how the attack of the enemy on the church hasn't really changed in the past 2,000 yrs.
2. He's either working to deceive us to believe that Jesus isn't enough, and we have to earn God's favor with good works, or that you can live however you want because God will forgive you.
3. Remember, as we talked about last week, John is the last living Apostle when he writes this letter. His voice and influence are still very powerful as he lives out his last days.
4. This is most likely around AD 90-95, so somewhere around 60 after the resurrection of Jesus.
5. False teachers had crept into the church and brought with them dangerous teachings that John needed to address.
6. The most prominent teaching was that of Gnosticism. A teaching that said several alarming things such as: Jesus was not fully God and fully man – that He was a spirit but not human.
7. They also taught that salvation was obtained by "special revelation or knowledge".
8. Gnosticism teaching goes on to say that the spirit is good, and all matter or physical is bad, so sin all you want and treat others however you want because the flesh is evil no matter what.
9. John writes to combat this false teaching, or heresy, in the church. He does this in very stark contrasts to say, "Christ-followers, members of God's family, do this and not that".
10. He uses contrasts like "light vs darkness", "truth vs lies", "love vs hate", "life vs death". He isn't trying to address everything a believer might deal with or encounter, but just a high-level view of what it means to be a part of God's family.

11. So, John is going to write to clear up any confusion about how we become part of God's family and what it means to be a part of His family. And that hasn't changed.
12. We may not call it Gnosticism today, but there are many that identify as Christ-followers but are not walking in fellowship-fueled obedience to Christ.
13. Throughout this Book, John will give four reasons why he's writing...
  - a. That our joy may be complete – 1:4
  - b. That you may not sin – 2:1
  - c. About those that are trying to deceive you – 2:26
  - d. That you may know you have eternal life – 5:13
14. And the last three help in increase the first – fighting sin, deception, and discouragement, help increase our joy.
15. John describes God in two ways. He says, "God is light" and "God is love".
16. Under those two categories, John gives three tests, or themes, of Christ-follower faith that he mentions over and over in these five chapters.
  - a. Truth or doctrine – what you believe
  - b. Obedience – how you live
  - c. Love – how you care about and for others
17. All three, he says, are essential evidence of being part of God's family. We may still doubt at times, still sin at times, and still struggle in relationships, but grace rescues us and empowers us to pursue Christ.
18. The hope today is that we feel invited to walk in honest and humble obedience to Jesus.

**Read 1 John 1:5-2:1**

1. So, Last week we looked at this get-to-the-point introduction as John lays out the foundation of good theology or belief – Jesus. In doing that, we looked at one of the tests or themes last week and that was truth or doctrine, what we believe.
2. He then goes on to say that the goal of good theology is fellowship and joy. That our beliefs don't just stop in our minds but overflow into our relationships and outlook.
3. So often we try to separate belief and behavior, but biblically, that's not an option. The Holy Spirit instructs John to write and help us understand another essential test or theme is that of obedience.
4. Here John says, "this is what we heard taught and saw lived out directly from Jesus. That God is light and in Him there is no hint of shadow or darkness."
5. And because God is all Light and no darkness, we as His children should be walking, or living, in light and not walking in darkness. This is obedience vs disobedience.
6. And our obedience will not be guilt driven or some form of legalism. Those forms of obedience are still operating in darkness, they are still disobedience. They have motives and desires that are not of God but are selfish and arrogant.
7. Our obedience should be driven by this welcoming and inviting into the freedom that comes from our great God who is light.
8. His light brings freedom because we can see danger and avoid it and see ahead and walk with greater confidence.
9. Our walking in light or truth is evidenced by...

### **Honest & Humble Obedience that will result in...**

1. **Vulnerability in Relationships – v 6-7**
  - a. **With truth & sharpening**
  - b. **Not lies & hypocrisy**
    - i. We are wired for relationships and relationships are difficult, especially if you want ones that really add worth and value to your existence.

- ii. The passage just keeps pressing in on the reality that if we are trying to ignore, justify, excuse, or deny our sin, then we are growing deeper in our levels of deception.
- iii. If we are not striving to be honest and practice humility in relationships, then we are not going to have ones with any sense of depth and authenticity.
- iv. Trying to pretend to be something you're not and act like you have no sin or struggles or you gloss over them and make excuses for them are all symptoms of a heart problem.
- v. No one says, "my closest friend is an incredibly arrogant liar and hypocrite." No, no one wants that guy as a friend.
- vi. We want and need relationships we can trust. Ones that push us and encourage us to be better than we are. Ones that keep coming back, and don't give up on us.
- vii. Ones that trust us with their mess and we trust with ours. Ones that help us continue to root out dark places in our lives and walk in more and more of the light that we have through Christ.
- viii. And this doesn't mean that every conversation with these friends is soul-searching and confession-filled. That sounds miserable for a lot of us.
- ix. It's having people in your life that invite you in and you see who they really are and how they really are, and it makes you want to be more Christ-pursuing and people-loving.
- x. I have, and I hope you have, relationships that make you want to know, love, and follow Jesus more than you are right now.
- xi. John moves from talking about us trying to deceive those around us into thinking we are ok when we know we're not, and now says don't deceive yourself. If we're honest and humble in our obedience to Christ then it will be marked by...

## **2. Searching & Confessing – v 8-9**

- a. Our own sin & struggles**
- b. Not pointing out others**

- i. Don't justify your sin or change your beliefs to match or excuse your behavior. Don't ignore your sin because in your mind it doesn't really matter especially compared to someone else's.
- ii. When we do this, the Scriptures say that the truth is not in us. That can never mean something that works for our benefit.
- iii. But then there is one of the most comforting verses in all of the Sacred Text. 1 John 1:9, "If we confess our sin..."
- iv. If we will be honest about the dark areas that still lurk beneath the surface and be humble to confess to our gracious God, who already knows, then we have a guarantee of what will happen every single time – He will be "faithful and just to forgive us and cleanse us from ALL unrighteousness."
- v. He doesn't do this to put us deeper in debt or make us feel bad about ourselves. He does this so that we can walk in honest and humble obedience that is...

### **3. Recognizing & Delighting – v 10-2:1**

#### **a. That God is for your joy**

#### **b. Not keeping you from it**

- i. This passage isn't about being perfect and never sinning, but is about whether or not we are battling, confessing, and repenting of sin.
- ii. God isn't saying "don't sin because I want to keep you from pleasure and fun", but rather He is wanting us to see that when we are walking in the shadows, or darkness, we are sabotaging our opportunity for genuine fellowship with Him and others.
- iii. We are sabotaging our opportunity for true joy.
- iv. Remember, the goal of good theology is fellowship and joy.
- v. You cannot think that heaven is going to be good for you for forever, and at the same time think that God is not good for you and that He's holding out on you here and now.

- vi. I've often heard it said that God is after your holiness, not your happiness, and I agree with that in a sense, but please hear me – God cannot be after your holiness without being after your joy.
- vii. The two are inseparable because our ultimate goal is to glorify God and joyless Christ-followers do not glorify God.
- viii. Because as author John Piper says, "God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him."

## **Closing**

1. Great ways to respond
  - a. Who are the people in your life that know you and love you, but challenge to grow in Christ?
  - b. Do you spend more time confessing your own sin or noticing the sin you think others have?
  - c. Do you truly believe that if God got every fiber of your commitment you would experience more joy than you've ever known?