

The First Epistle of John

...so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ (1John 1:3)

1John 4:15-16

Review

Where is John writing from?

What heresy was he addressing?

What flavor of Gnosticism was John specifically dealing with?

What did the heretics teach?

How does John deal with this false teaching?

1John 1:6-10

Someone read 1Jn 4:7-12

Someone else read vv13-20

Now, someone else please read vv14-16.

Last time, we were talking about v14 and what the phrase “Savior of the World” means. Notice that John does not say that he came to *save the world*. He does not save the world. He came as the Savior *of the world*, i.e., all the world could be saved **if they would be**. The problem is: no one seeks after God. No one seeks to do the will of the Father. No one – on his own – freely chooses salvation; even though all would prefer heaven over hell.

But as the Scriptures make abundantly clear, it is only those who believe that are saved. Jesus said taught this truth clearly in numerous places in Scripture:

e.g., GJohn 5:40, 8:21

So, though he came to be the Savior of the world, in the sense of providing a redemption adequate for everyone, everywhere, it is only to those who lay hold of it by faith in his word, and make it personal in their lives, that it becomes experiential and evidential.

Now, John says, this that happened to the apostles will happen to you, if you believe.

Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. So we know and believe the love God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. {1 Jn 4:15-16 RSV}

When you believe and confess that Jesus is the Son of God (and that certainly means more than simply believing that he is divine, it means that he is God, he is the Lord, to you), it proves that God's life is in you.

The word rendered “confess” is literally “he who if he may confess” Remember when I told you about the 4 classes of IF ... THEN statements in Greek:

1. First Class – the IF clause is assumed to be true
 - a. Col 3:1
2. Second Class – the IF clause is assumed to be false
 - a. Luk 7:39
3. Third Class – the IF clause is probably true, but it is uncertain
 - a. 1Cor 13:2; Heb 6:3
4. Fourth Class – the IF clause is possibly true, but it is also uncertain
 - a. 1Pet 3:14

This is actually a 3rd class conditional.

It is important that this confession is one the Gnostics would never make. The Gnostic assumptions about spirit and matter eliminated the possibility of acknowledging that Jesus was both God and Man. They refused to accept the Incarnation, and thus would never have true fellowship with God. They could never “abide” with Him, or He with them.

So, by using a third-class conditional, John acknowledges that it is remotely possible that someone among his readers may not accept what he writes, here. But to the one who does, where his life is, his love will be, because love always follows the life of God. Therefore, you will begin to love. These are the marks, John says. Faith produces love. Your faith produces the love that accepts persons without distinction. The theology which robs Christ of his deity, whether ancient Gnostic or modern Unitarian (JWs), also robs man of the one belief that can generate love within him. That is why these belief systems cannot produce genuine love, but only love’s counterfeit.

Thus, to weaken faith is to deaden love.

What is the word just before “Son” in v14?

“The” the definite article. What is the grammatical function of the definite article?

To particularize, make a noun definite – Jesus is not just “a” Son of God, but THE Son of God, the one and only, unique Son who was in the Father’s bosom and who alone can show the Father to the world – to explain Him (GJn 1:18).

So, the Son came to the dark world (a term used frequently by the author Randy Alcorn) to demonstrate the love of the Father for the world. How greatly we need to understand that in these days when there is so much talk about love and yet so little evidence of it. Love comes from faith, and if there is not this relationship of faith, belief in the Son of God, there cannot be the life of God and there cannot be the love of God. (Ro 5:8).

What does that song by the Beatles say: “All you need is ...”

This is why we saw the phenomenon of hippies in the 60's and early 70's. They turned from what they regard as the phony love of the world (and in many ways they were right) and forming a society in which they produce exactly the same kind of phony love. That is why we see the world, with all its talk about love, rejecting this phony love, but going right on in its own way, producing phony love. Counterfeit love.

Love comes from faith and without the relationship of faith it is impossible to have love. The only really loving person, then, is one whom, as John puts it, "abides in love," i.e., habitually accepts others as persons without respect to their niceness or any other thing; the one who, without strain, without effort, regards people as people, sees them not as objects or obstacles, but as individuals, and reflects love to them and accepts them on that basis. That is what love is and that is how it is produced.

And this love is what make Christ appealing to some in the world, and is a stumbling-block to all others.

Notice that "whoever confesses" (or, "whosoever", as in the KJV). What does that word mean?

Unrestricted, unlimited, anyone, anywhere.

For the same sense, see 1Jn 2:5, 5:1

In other words all who are drawn by the Father to His Son, will never be turned away.

GJn 6:44

And don't miss the fact that the indwelling is mutual: "Abides in God, and God abides in him"