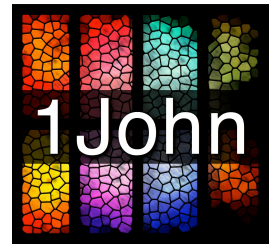


1 John

2: 28-3: 10

February 17, 2013

Luke Knight



Review from last week – the importance of a divine Jesus, and his historic / literal death and resurrection. Jesus is the bedrock of our faith. Though there is always room to discover and discuss, chipping away at the traditional, orthodox, Biblical understanding of Jesus will only hurt us.

We now move into John's explanation of and emphasis on the Christian family. What does it mean to be a part of the family of God?

2. 28

- John uses “remain” language, just like Jesus (John 8.31, 15.4).
- We struggle with sin and brokenness because we choose to try and “stop sinning” verses enjoying the Divine relationship.
- Jesus is the vine and we are the branches. Fruit and life change comes from being deeply connected to him.

2.29

- We are highly impressionable creatures.
- Peter and John in Acts 4.13.
- Our lifestyle will be defined by the lifestyles of those we are closest to.
- Are we, as God's children, looking more like him?

3.1-3

- John points out the eternal motivation for following Jesus. Not just life now, but life forever with God.
- Being like Jesus now is a taste of what being like Jesus will be like in eternity with him. Why not start now?
- When we get close to Jesus we will develop a taste for more life with God. We will develop and “eager expectation”.

3.4-10

- John says that the proof is in the pudding, who do you look like?
- What family do we belong to? It may not be about rule keeping. or doing right and keeping from wrong. This is an issue of identity
- Your identity as a child of God (or a child of the Devil) will manifest itself in how you live. Plain and simple.

If Jesus is so good, and if all we need to do is stay “connected to the vine”, why do we struggle so much to do so? May we suggest that our struggle (in part) stems from our view of God? Are we weary or uninterested in cultivating a relationship with God because of our view of him (anything but love)? Our paradigm of God may be foggy or twisted.

We will never function as a healthy family if we don't first understand God as a loving, compassionate Father. John knows this, which is why he writes with such passion in 1 John 3.1

Many derive their view of God not from Jesus, but from some other source (negative parental, or authority figure). Our view of God must come from Jesus.

- Colossians 2.9 – Jesus is God best expressed or “God’s fullness” is in Jesus.
- John 14.8 – Even Jesus closest friends struggled with this. It seems almost too good to be true.

How do we grasp God’s love for us as his children? How can we know how God feels towards us? Let us look at Jesus.

- How does Jesus treat children in the Gospels?
- Jesus considers children worth of his time and is willing to heal them. A high percentage of healings recorded in the Gospels involve kids!
- Jesus’ welcomes children when others would exclude or abuse them.
- Mark 10 – Jesus lays his loving hands on the little children. Jesus is a safe, compassionate, good picture of God.
- This is how God feels towards all humanity. This is his heart.

Discussion Questions:

- Identify three people you feel have shaped you significantly as a person. How have they done so?
- Have these relationships helped in your understanding of God? Why or why not?
- What do you *know* to be true of God (according the Scripture) but struggle with believing about him?
- How can we “remain in Jesus” as the Vine, as branches. What does this look like on a daily basis?
- Does your “remaining” or “abiding” in Jesus need to look like how others have expressed their faith in the past? Can we get more creative?