

Sermon Notes – January 3, 2016

Review

- ⇒ We saw in I John 2:18-19 that in the early church the study of Eschatology (“_____”) was very important. John’s readers already knew about a coming _____.
- ⇒ John speaks of some who had left the _____ church, believing error about Christ. John says of them that they “were not of us” — that is, _____.
- ⇒ In our study last week (I John 3:4-10) we saw that when we trust Christ as our Savior (truly _____) then the Holy Spirit takes up residence in us and begins to change us slowly but surely to become more like Christ. That process is called _____ and it is _____.

Today’s Text: I John 3:11-18

- ⇒ Today’s text begins with a similar phrase to 1:5.
- ⇒ 1:5 and 3:11 reflect two of the main themes in the *gospel* of John. Clearly John is passionate about certain things!

The Command to Love + a BAD Example (3:11-15)

- ⇒ Jesus teaches this lesson in John 13 when He washes the disciples’ feet, an act that reflects Philippians 2.
- ⇒ The story of Cain—a favorite negative example—reminds us that acting in love does not guarantee a hug.
- ⇒ John’s command to love is emphatic (14-15), especially so in light of the context of this letter. But note:
 - Speaking _____ IS loving!
 - Defending _____ IS loving!
 - Church _____ IS loving. I Cor. 5 & I Tim. 1:20
 - Even _____-loving, _____-loving, _____-loving churches struggle at times.

- ⇒ Biblical love is not generally about giving & receiving Hallmark-worthy greetings. Warm emotions are only one facet of full-orbed love. Listen to a word of caution from theologian D.A. Carson...

A Definition of Love + a Good Example (3:16-18)

- ⇒ Christ’s death on the cross in our place is appropriately held up as THE example of love. Cf. 4:10
- ⇒ At the time, Christ’s love-inspired sacrifice for us was _____ and _____ by most.
- ⇒ John offers a concrete example of love for his audience: love is about action, not simply words (17-18).

Responding to God’s Word

- ⇒ Has your understanding of biblical love been tainted by what D.A. Carson calls the “sentimentalized” love of the culture around us? Do this: make sure that your understanding of love is never separated from God’s holiness, God’s sovereignty, and God’s wrath.
- ⇒ Jesus paid the penalty for our sin by dying on the cross in our place. Loving other people often calls us to “die to self” — an often-painful act of setting aside our preferences & desires & perceived needs to attend to the needs of others. In your marriage, family, or other relationships, where might YOU need to “die to self”?
- ⇒ Dying to ourselves in a church family involves very practical stuff: allowing others to have their preferences without us protesting, serving in less-recognized places, esteeming others as more important than ourselves. This is the stuff that makes a church work!
- ⇒ Today we celebrate communion, remembering Jesus’ death on the cross in our place. Use the words of I John 3:16 & 4:10 to guide your thoughts as you pray & give thanks for Jesus.