

THE NEVER CHANGING GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST

Sunday, April 25, 2021-- 1st JOHN series -- msg 2 -- Pastor Andrew Coleman

1st JOHN 1:1-4

English Standard Version (ESV)

1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life— **2** the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us— **3** that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. **4** And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.

REVIEW from Last Week:

The Cascade of 1st JOHN: Right belief → right behavior → genuine love.

The Genre: an open letter to all churches.

The Author: John was a disciple and apostle

-- the youngest disciple who became the oldest

-- his message is very pastoral (gentle) but polemical (firm).

The Setting: critical transition at end of eyewitnesses

Doctrinal Problems:

-- as always, false teachers were rising up

-- so new heresies were circulating around.

Denying Jesus was the Messiah/Christ.

Denying Jesus was really the Son of God.

Denying Jesus had come in the flesh.

Denying Jesus's death was necessary for the forgiveness of sins.

Behavioral Problems:

Loving the world instead of loving God and others.

1) Notice the grand and glorious PERSON and WORK of Christ.

vs 1 that, which, the word of life, **vs 2** the life, it, it, the eternal life, **vs 3** that

Instead of using WHO for the relative pronoun, John uses THAT WHICH or WHAT also IT, THAT

A) John begins by centralizing everything on Jesus Christ. (no other intro!)

B) John begins by aggrandizing our view of Jesus Christ.

- He declares the physical body of Jesus. (Christ is a person.)

vs 1 which we have heard, seen with our eyes, looked upon and touched/held

- He declares the spiritual nature of Jesus. (Christ is much more than a person.)

vs 2 word of life, the eternal life

The Gospel (or 'Good News') encompasses everything Christ IS and everything He DOES.

1 *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—* 2 *the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us—* 3 *that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.* 4 *And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.*

2) Notice the UNCHANGING PERSON and WORK of Christ.

vs 1 *That which was from the beginning*

Genesis 1:1

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth

Gospel of John 1:1-5

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4 In him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Colossians 1:15-16 (Paul is speaking about Jesus...)

*15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. 16 **For by him all things were created**, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.*

Hebrews 13:7-9a

7 Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. 8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. 9 Do not be led away by diverse and strange teachings, for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace,

- God's plan and message of redemption is never changing.
- Those who preach the true gospel have always...
 - commanded faith and repentance (Matt. 4:17; John 3:16-18; Acts 2:38; 17:30)
 - declared God's kingdom is at hand (Matt. 3:2; Acts 19:8)
 - announced the merciful availability of divine forgiveness (Acts 10:43; Eph 1:7)
 - called sinners to be reconciled to God through Christ (2 Corinthians 5:18-21)
- John opens his letter with a simple statement that establishes the Gospel message concerning the Word of Life is permanent and unalterable. (Rev. 22:18-19)

3) Notice the PHYSICAL REALITY of Jesus Christ. vs 1

which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life

- Jesus wasn't a mere spirit, composite ideal, mystical phantom or basic mortal.
- Jesus was the infinite God-man. God in flesh who came to give His divine life to us.
- Satan's lie that Jesus really didn't physically die for sins is blasted by John as an eyewitness.
- Christ's physical life, death and resurrection is the means by which we are raised to life!
(see John 6:37-40)

1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life— 2 the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us— 3 that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. 4 And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.

4) Notice that the unchanging Gospel is proclaimed that we may believe it and live.

‘made manifest’, ‘testify to it’, ‘proclaim to you’... ‘so that you too may have fellowship with us’

- The gospel is not kept for the spiritual elite or privileged few as false teachers alleged.
- The gospel is personal but it is not private.
- The gospel is a privilege that becomes a platform!
- The true Christian is blessed to be a blessing. Matt. 5:14-16
- The true Christian is called to proclaim the unchanging Gospel so others can have fellowship.

5) Notice that the unchanging Gospel results in real relationships. vs 3

so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.

Fellowship (koinonia) = ‘a mutual participation in a common cause or shared life’

- The saving work of Jesus Christ restores our broken fellowship.
- True salvation brings reconciliation (and therefore, *fellowship*) with God.

Colossians 1:21

21 And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, 22 he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, 23 if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard,

- True salvation brings a common cause or shared life with others, namely, God’s people.
- One of the greatest indicators of whether or not someone knows Christ is whether or not they fellowship with His people (the church).

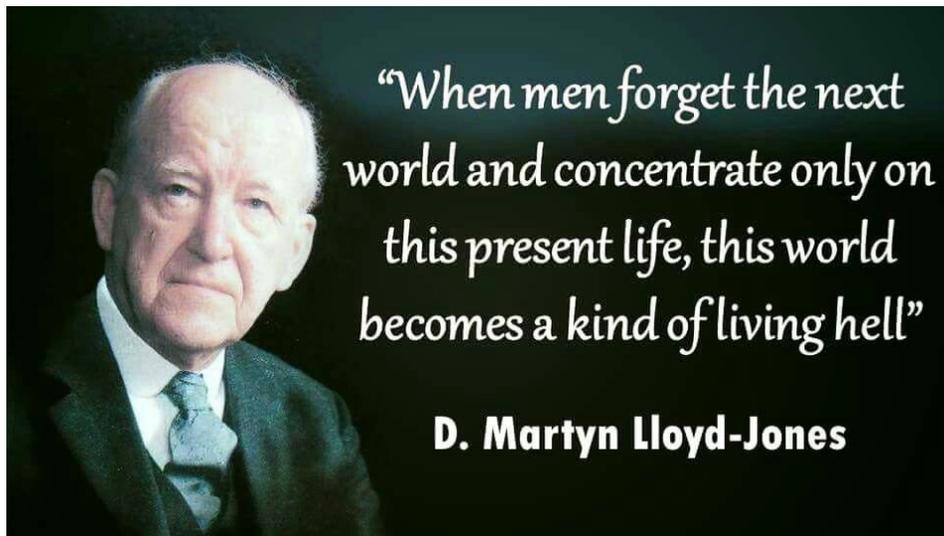
6) Notice the unchanging Gospel brings a joy that is complete. vs 4

And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.

- The world knows little or nothing at all of the joy spoken of here.
- At best, the world’s joys are temporary, not eternal.
- True joy comes from ‘*righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit*’ Roms 14:17
- In **the Gospel of John 15:11**, Jesus told the apostles in the upper room...

These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full.

SO HOW CAN SOMEONE HAVE THE COMPLETE JOY SPOKEN OF HERE??



‘THE DOCTOR’ WRITES ON THE SOURCE OF TRUE JOY

“Joy is something very deep and profound, something that affects the whole and entire personality. In other words it comes to this; there is only one thing that can give true joy and that is a contemplation of the Lord Jesus Christ. He satisfies my mind; He satisfies my emotions; He satisfies my every desire. He and His great salvation include the whole personality and nothing less, and in Him I am complete. Joy, in other words, is the response and the reaction of the soul to a knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones
Fellowship with God
(Crossway Books, 1992)