

1st JOHN: LOVING, FIRM ENCOURAGEMENT

Sunday, April 18, 2021-- 1st JOHN series -- msg 1 -- Pastor Andrew Coleman

3 KEY VERSES

English Standard Version (ESV)

1st JOHN 1:4

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

1st JOHN 2:1

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

1st JOHN 5:13

I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life.

THREE REPEATING THEMES --

A REPEATING THREE PART CASCADE:

- 1) Happiness 1:4
- 2) Holiness 2:1
- 3) Security 5:13

- Right Belief
- Right Behavior
- Real Love

THE GENRE: it is called a 'general epistle' or an 'open letter'.

No specific recipient, no introduction, no greeting, no conclusion.

But it most definitely has a warm and loving tone; it's a letter! (not a treatise)

THE AUTHOR: JOHN the disciple and apostle

Luke 6:13-14

*13 And when day came, Jesus called his **disciples** and chose from them twelve, whom he named **apostles**: 14 Simon, whom he named Peter, and Andrew his brother, and James and John, and Philip, and Bartholomew,*

- John is one of the Sons of Zebedee (James and John -- aka 'the Sons of Thunder')
- John was in Jesus's inner circle (Peter, James and John). An eyewitness to everything.
- John was closest to Christ at the Last Passover Supper.
- John was the youngest of the disciples/apostles who became the oldest of them.
- John writes 5 New Testament books!

The Gospel of John, 1st John, 2nd John, 3rd John, Revelation.
(evangelistic) (encouragement)

- John writes very artistically weaving words, themes and structures with beauty and precision.
- John lives, leads and pastors for 30 more years after Paul is beheaded (65AD).
- John's later years are lived in Ephesus (Turkey) and on Patmos (an island off Turkey).

THE SETTING of 1st JOHN:

The date of writing is approximately 91-93 AD.

The place of writing is either Ephesus or Patmos.

The Apostle John is quite old (in his mid-80's) and highly respected.

The true Gospel had flourished in Asia Minor but so had false teachers.

The false teachers brought false doctrines.

Like so often, 2nd and 3rd generation Christians were struggling to believe the right things and live the right way.

→ **DOCTRINAL PROBLEMS (believing the wrong things):**

False teachers, influenced by secular philosophies, were infiltrating many churches.

Wrong beliefs about the nature of God had crept in.

Wrong beliefs about the person and work of Christ.

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.

→ **OBEDIENCE PROBLEMS (living the wrong way):**

False teachers brought division and quarreling. Then they left leaving many disturbed.

Hatred and a lack of love was in the hearts of some.

Some made sin their practice... their way of life.

Many loved the things of the world instead of the things of God.

THE APPROACH OF JOHN: He is both Pastoral and Polemical.

John calls us back to the basics of Christianity.

John gently, lovingly and pastorally encourages us in the true and secure gospel.

John firmly and authoritatively refutes the false beliefs with crystal clarity.

John lays out the stark contrasts between 'darkness and light', 'truth and lies', 'hate and love', 'children of God and children of the devil'.

John exposes the reality that the way we live REVEALS whether we are truly born again.

John patiently repeats the same basic truths in four ever deepening (or widening) spirals.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION / MEDITATION / DISCUSSION:

1) How does the situation in 2021AD reflect the setting of 93AD?

What things does society suggest for us to believe about Jesus Christ?

How does society seek to influence our behavior in opposition to the way of Christ?

2) How does 1st John encourage you? How does it rebuke you?