

Series: The Confident, Loving Church – week 11

CDOBC – beginning on 2/14/10

Title: “Remain Faithful to the Truth”

1 John 2:24-27 ~ May 23, 2010

OBJECTIVE: To encourage believers to remain faithful to the Gospel.

Announcements

- Welcome / guests – communication cards
- Michelle Racioppo to annc. – Women of Faith Conf. – tickets available in courtyard
- “Serve” page on website
- Missions – Youth “Rent-A-Kid” - \$ needed by the end of May for Latvia
- Missions – Dale to annc. – 2011 *Vacation With a Purpose* trip to Europe
- VBS Registration – visit table in courtyard
- Church directories available – 1 per family please

Latvia support update – need – donations accepted after the service

Open your Bibles to 1 John 2:24-27

Opening Prayer

Illus. – (video?) Pepper and “remaining” or staying until released to eat her food.

Illus. – ‘Remaining’ is a difficult thing in our present day, always moving, ADD society. We have an urge...a need to update our computers and the software...to update our cars...to update our clothing.

“Remaining” is not something foreign to us though. The work it takes to “remain” on a diet, on an exercise regiment, on task at work, to remain a loving spouse, to remain a good parent, etc.

Remain faithful to the Gospel of Christ. vs. 24

For many Christians, this command (*menō* – abide/remain – present, active imperative) seems unimportant – like it’s directed toward the other person. What Christian purposefully rejects the

Gospel of Christ? Very few. However, many become deceived by teachers who appear to be faithful believers, but who teach a false Gospel – a Gospel that is “anti-christ”. John’s caution – His command though, is not targeted at a small minority of believers, but to every believer. Each one of us is capable of falling away and following a Gospel that is contrary to the truth of Christ articulated by Jesus Himself and the Apostles.

The message (“what you have heard”) is the Gospel – the Word of Christ – the truth of Christ. The truth – knowledge of the Word of God is not the goal, but the means of achieving the goal – which is fellowship with God – fellowship with the Son and the Father (vs. 24b). Notice how the message which they have heard from the beginning – leads not to knowledge (cognitive only), but to a relationship with God – (cognitive and experience – *ginosko*)

So why is it that so many of us will have no problem with putting forth the effort in these other areas of life – but we don’t (unwilling?) put forth similar effort in regards to our Christian life? Are we so tired pursuing the other things that we have no energy left for our faith? If this is true, isn’t that “loving the world” – something we are commanded not to do in vs. 15-17?

Notice the conditional statement here – “If it does, you also will remain...”. To remain in fellowship with Christ, this is dependent on you – on me. We need to understand the work involved in our faith – but that our faith is not by works. “If it does” implies that it might not remain in us – that we might walk away from the Gospel. Remember, when we talk about walking away from the Gospel, there are two ways this

can happen. One way is by a purposeful embrace of another Gospel. Another way – but just as harmful – is by passive withdrawal. A passive withdrawal is when your faith is not a high priority in your life and other things become more important to you and you don't attend church regularly or you don't read or study Scripture – and due to your passive attitude and non-actions regarding Christ, you find yourself far away from the truth of Christ.

What are the dangers that can cause this? What can cause a believer to choose another path other than the narrow road Christ calls us to?

Love for the world (2:15-17)

Walking in the darkness (1:6)

Denial of sin in our life (1:8)

Choosing not to love one another (2:3-11)

The amazing promise of remaining vs. 25

²⁵ And this is what he promised us--even eternal life.

“this” – what is John referring to? I think John is referring here to the promise of abiding / remaining that Jesus gave in John 14:23-26 & 15:3-5. When Jesus talked of our abiding with Him – with God Himself – this was a crazy – radical – never heard before idea! Under Mosaic Law – in O.T. times, “abiding” with God – “remaining” in Him was not possible – because the Holy Spirit did not indwell each believer. This promise of Jesus was unheard of for those who followed God. The fellowship with God – the presence of God in the life of each believer was brand new – and the presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of each believer is what enables us to have eternal life right now – not just in the future.

Future eternal life = John 3:16 “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

Present eternal life = John 10:10b “...I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.”

Two ways eternal life is enjoyed by us:

First, it is directly connected contextually to our remaining and abiding in Him. The future promise of eternal life is guaranteed in the nature of God – but our current enjoyment of eternal life is dependent upon our abiding or remaining in Christ. If we don’t remain in Him – i.e. walk in the light, we will not enjoy the blessings of eternal life today.

Second, it is directly connected to the Gospel of Christ (“...what you have heard from the beginning...”). The promised eternal life is only through Christ (John 14:6), and not through another gospel or some sort of religious ritual. It is by faith alone – faith alone in Christ and His work on the cross. The original – the true message is crucial. Without the true message of Christ (unchanged and unadjusted), you cannot have eternal life.

Religion is always going to be plagued by opportunists who want to take advantage of the system to make money, or acquire power. Knowing this – knowing that the church will always be plagued by ‘antichrists’ who want to use it for their own advancement, how do we defend against them? How do we protect the church from this danger?

By the Word of God (the true Gospel) and by the Holy Spirit – look at vs. 26 & 27.

The protection and security of the Holy Spirit vs. 26-27

26 I am writing these things to you about those who are trying to lead you astray.

27 As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit--just as it has taught you, remain in him.

“...that anointing is real, not counterfeit...”

“...and is true, and is no lie...” ESV

“...and is true and is not a lie...” NASB

“...and is truth, and is no lie...” KJV

The “Law of Non-Contradiction” – John is comparing the message they heard from the beginning (the Gospel of Christ – the truth) with the message they have heard from the false teachers – the antichrists (a lie). He is making sure they realize that there is no falsehood in the Gospel – there is no mixture of truth and lies – it is 100% truth – it contains no lies. It does not contradict itself. If something is absolutely true, then it cannot contain any lies – that’s the Law of Non-Contradiction”.

In verse 26, you have to love John’s directness in this letter. Just in case you were a bit slow on this... John was trying to expose the false teaching of the Gnostics, not to simply lash out at them, but primarily to protect the believers from great confusion and insecurity about their faith.

The instructions and warnings in John’s letter have specific application to his readers.

Since our thoughts are the basis of our actions---

Since our beliefs are the foundations of our opinions---

Since our understanding of the Gospel is foundational to our view of God and application of the Gospel---

It’s vital that we understand the truth – not simply our version or opinion of it.

Vs. 27 – “the anointing you received” – refers back to vs. 20 – the “anointing from the Holy One” (Jesus)

What does it mean when John says, “...you do not need anyone to teach you...”? After all, wasn’t John teaching them as he wrote this letter to them? Isn’t teaching and preaching listed among the spiritual gifts in the church? Isn’t teaching and preaching one of the things commanded to occur within the church? Your understanding of this verse will affect me in a major way...

“The statement that because of it (the indwelling Holy Spirit) they do not need any one to teach them is to be understood in its context. It is not to be taken as absolute affirmation that the experience of the Spirit in personal life carries with it independence of the ministry of teaching in the church. The ministry of teaching is the Spirit’s gift by which He provides instruction for believers...But the ministry of teaching must be exercised by men who themselves share the ‘anointing’ of which John speaks, men who remain in the fellowship of the Spirit. No one from outside that fellowship – and the false teachers had placed themselves outside it – can provide teaching which will either correct or supplement the truth of the Christian revelation. The believers to whom John writes have not become so impoverished within their fellowship that they need any one from outside it to teach them. It is within the fellowship that the Spirit operates; it is there that He teaches the people of God. So Paul prays that those who are inwardly strengthened by the Spirit of Christ “...may have power together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ...” Eph. 3:18” (The Gospel and Epistles of John,

by F. F. Bruce, p. 76)

Application

We are responsible to remain in Him.

It is by faith that we receive forgiveness of sin – by faith that we receive the Holy Spirit indwelling us – by faith that we are united “in Christ” – in faith that we are sealed by the Holy Spirit and are adopted into the family of God – by faith that we receive eternal life. God will be faithful to us and remain in us, but we must labor at remaining in Him. It is an issue of faith, and we must realize that our faith obligates us to hard, spiritual work – the work of obedience. This will demand that we put our faith into practice - it demands that we are diligent in our study of God’s Word and that we learn to hear the Spirit’s leading in our life.

Our victory is by the Gospel and the Spirit in our life.

The point is not information / knowledge of the Gospel, but to a relationship with Jesus – a relationship with the Father (vs. 24b).

Only through the Gospel of Christ and the Spirit’s work in your life can you discern spiritual truth from error – and only through these two things can you remain in the Son and the Father.