

A FATHER'S LOVING INSTRUCTION

1 John 2:12-28



SYNOPSIS

In our passage, we see John as a spiritual father giving loving instruction to his spiritual children. He both encourages them and admonishes them as he eagerly desires to see them grow in maturity. He encourages the church to show affection and preference towards one another in the midst of conflict. He also admonishes the church by warning them not to love the world. We are reminded that our primary love ought to be for the Father, because when our love is ordered correctly, we can enjoy all the pleasures that the Father has created for us. But when our love is disordered, we will see all of the things around us crash into one another. John reminds the church (and us) that though we may be in the world and sent into the world, we are ultimately not of this world.

John also talks about the many antichrists that have come - those that are anti - christ. He talks about those that will come and seek to lead people astray. How will they lead people astray? By bringing seductive lies that sound good but are wrong and destructive. In our day and age, we are very vulnerable to the seductive lies of the enemy. Three observations that were made as to why we are so vulnerable.

First of all, the idea of expressive individualism, where how we feel is ultimately true and what gives us meaning. Second, the idea of absolute relativism, where the notion of absolute truth is rejected and replaced with subjective truth (your truth = your truth, my truth = my truth). Lastly, the information age that has flooded us with information (and a lot of times disinformation). As we are aware of our vulnerability, let's not get overwhelmed, but remember a simple statement and a simple command: Jesus is the Christ, let us remain in Him.



OUTLINE

1

LOVE FOR GOD'S FAMILY

Although John is an apostle with authority over the churches, he doesn't lord it over them, but he comes as a spiritual father, both encouraging and admonishing them. Both are necessary as he shows his love and concern for the churches that he writes to. In our own lifetime, we ought to have spiritual fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters that will help encourage us and correct us so that we become more and more like Jesus.

2

DO NOT LOVE THE WORLD

One of the admonishments that John gives is a rebuke for the love of the world. He points out that those that have a love for the world do not have the love of the Father in them. John uses a hyperbolic statement to point out what ought to be a supremacy of love for God. When God sits at the center of our hearts, then all the other things that were created for our pleasure will be in their right orbits. When God is not in the center, then things will inevitably begin to collide into one another and collapse entirely.

3

REMAIN IN THE TRUTH

John warns them of those that once were in the faith but have left after false teachings. He warns them of the "soft power" and ideologies that can come to lead people astray. We also need to be wary of the false ideologies that surround our day and age as we seek to remain in the truth.



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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1

Do you have any spiritual mothers, fathers, daughters or sons?

2

How do we put God in the center of our lives (as the "sun") and put money, sex and power around Him?

3

What are your biggest distractions and temptations that keeps you from seeing Jesus as your ultimate joy and fulfillment?

4

How do we stand against deception in today's age of misinformation?

5

What has helped you in the past to remain in Christ and resist this world?



BIG IDEA

John is a spiritual father that writes to encourage and admonish the church - his spiritual sons and daughters. In our passage, he reminds them to love the Father far above any other things. He also reminds them of the false teachings that circulated in his day and age - the ideologies that sought to lead people astray. Through his letter, we see his desire for his spiritual sons and daughters to mature and blossom in their faith, becoming more and more confident in the truth of God and more mature in the way they display their faith.

