

THE THREE TESTS

1 John 1:1 - 2:11



SYNOPSIS

We started a new series on the book of 1 John. 1 John was a letter by the Apostle John to the churches in Ephesus, and he starts out by addressing some of the false teaching that has snuck into the church, shaking the confidence of the people of the church. One of the false teachings was that Jesus did not actually come in the flesh, and John quickly refutes it by pointing out that he was an eyewitness to the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. In it, he combats the wrong beliefs about Jesus that has begun to spread.

He continues by addressing two types of people: 1) those who say that they are in fellowship with Christ and yet continue practicing sin. 2) those that say they are without sin. And through his address, he points out that anyone can claim anything, but those that are practicing sin or saying they are without sin are simply not walking in fellowship with Christ.

Lastly, he points to the sign of a maturing believer, which is love for the household of God. Although we are to love our neighbors and those outside the family of God, John is referring specifically to the brothers and sisters within the family of God. We are to love one another with a deep love, pursuing unity as we build up the household of God.

Ultimately, we see the three tests that are mentioned in this passage: Right doctrine/belief (orthodoxy), Right practice (orthopraxy), and the love for one another that is to undergird it all. Those three criteria are what John points out for the follower of Jesus. As we grow and mature as followers of Jesus, may we also continue to hold fast to right belief, practice what we believe, and love one another deeply.



OUTLINE

1 JESUS CAME IN THE FLESH

There were those that left the church for a circulating heresy that would eventually be developed into gnosticism. This belief claimed that it was impossible that Jesus would come in the flesh, since they saw the flesh as wicked and broken. But John encourages the believers to hold fast to the fact that Jesus was fully God and fully human. Jesus had to be fully God and fully human in order to atone for the sins of humanity.

2 WALKING IN THE LIGHT

(1) Those who claim to be in fellowship with Christ, but continue practicing sin with no remorse have a faith without works. There needs to be substance to the claims and beliefs that we have. John is not saying we have to be perfect, but that a life that is following Jesus will not continue practicing sin without remorse.
 (2) Those who claim to be in fellowship with Christ, but deny any sin in their lives disrupt the process for repentance and restoration of a right relationship with God.

3 A COMMAND TO LOVE

One of the signs of a maturing believer is the love that they show to the family of God. God takes it personally how we treat the household of God, and one of the goals of the church is to grow in unity and love, knowing and being known by one another.



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? DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1

What ideologies and false teachings have infiltrated the modern church?

2

What does it look like to live like Jesus is actually our Lord? What does it look like to follow Jesus in our day to day lives?

3

Why do you feel uncomfortable rebuking the sins of other brothers and sisters?

4

How often do you self-reflect on your own sin and God's grace in dealing with it? How does that affect how you interact with others and their sins?

5

How can we love those we disagree with? How can we show those we disagree with that we love them?



BIG IDEA

From a **doctrinal angle**, John emphasizes Jesus coming in the flesh and how that was such an important belief that the believers needed to hold onto especially as strange teachings started to emerge in their midst.

From a **moral angle**, John emphasizes that anyone can claim to be in fellowship with Christ, but that their claims may not always be true in their lives.

From the **angle of love**, John emphasizes the love for the household of God that also testifies of our relationship with Christ. John points out that we cannot claim to be in fellowship with Christ and simultaneously hate our brother or sister in Christ

