

First John – Introduction (part two)

The truth of Christianity and the assurance of Christian faith are secured in two ways by John:

- 1) Objectively – the historical occurrence and the reality of Jesus' life where witnessed by the apostles and others (1 John 1:1-3)
- 2) Subjectively – the personal results of those who have believed the message of Truth. If a believer has these things they will know that Christianity is true and that they are true believers who can be assured of their salvation:
 - a. Truth – have the correct doctrine
 - b. Righteousness – have the correct behavior and lifestyle
 - c. Love

John is both condemning the false teachers and assuring the believers who are in the Truth.

The three areas of Christian error (or, new, improved or adjusted theology) that John's churches were facing (or, having to listen to, process and navigate through) included:

- 1) A new Christology – The Person and Work of Jesus was compromised
- 2) A new understanding of Sin (Hamartiology) – The seriousness of sin was minimized and fellowship with God was not interrupted by human sin.
- 3) A new level of super-spirituality – Spiritual superiority produced arrogance and loss of love
 - a. Secessionists – left apostolic church, started own evangelism/promotion, rejected believers who “stayed behind”, etc.

John tells us why he wrote the letter:

1. 1:4, “We write this to make our **joy** complete.”
2. 2:1 – “I write this to you so that you will **not sin**.”
3. 2:26 – “I am writing these things to you about those who are trying to **lead you astray**.”
4. 5:13 – “I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may **know you have eternal life**.”

John wrote evangelically to lead people to Christ in his Gospel:

“Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.” – John 20:30-31

John wrote as an elder/pastor/teacher to keep/confirm people in Christ in 1 John:

“I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may **know you have eternal life**.” – 1 John 5:13

John addresses these areas of theology that have been distorted by the false teaches and those who followed them out of the church, and must be reaffirmed for the True believers that remained behind:

1. **Theology** - Doctrine of God –

- a. God is Light (1:5) – To walk in the light (Truth) is to walk in the life of God
- b. God is Love (4:8) – To live in love is to manifest the nature of God
- c. John contrasts God's light and love with Satan's:
 - i. Lies
 - ii. Hatred
 - iii. Evil
- d. God the Father is revealed in Jesus so that to love Jesus (the Son) is to love the Father:
 - i. 1:2-3 -
 - ii. 2:22-24 -
 - iii. 4:14 -
 - iv. 5:1 -
 - v. 2 John 9 –

2. **Hamartiology** – Doctrine of Sin –

- a. 3:8 – The devil is the source of sin
- b. 3:8 – The devil has been sinning since the beginning (Genesis 3, beginning of creation)
- c. John 8:44 –
- d. 1 John 3:12 –
- e. 5:19 – Because of Satan the whole world (every person) sins
- f. 2:2 – Christ was a propitiation for the sins of the whole world
- g. 1:5-7 – sin is darkness
- h. 3:4 – sin is lawlessness, rebellion
- i. 5:17 – sin is unrighteousness
- j. 1:8, 10 – Sin is universal. Every person is a sinner. Every person sins.

3. **Christology** – Doctrine of Christ –

- a. The historical man Jesus is:
 - i. The Word of Life (1:1)
 - ii. The Christ (4:2)
 - iii. The Son of God (5:5)
- b. Jesus is called the Son 21 times in 1 John; 2x in 2 John
- c. The Son:
 - i. was with the Father (1:1-2)
 - ii. is the life of God (1:1-2)
 - iii. is the true God (5:20)
 - iv. is eternal life (5:20)
 - v. is sinless (3:5)
 - vi. made atonement for sins of the whole world (2:2; 4:10)
 - vii. destroyed the devil's work (3:8)
- d. The Son made atonement and destroyed the devil's work with his death on the cross
- e. The Son bled blood doing the Father's work of salvation because he was real flesh.

- f. Without being flesh and blood the Christ could not have done what he did and salvation would be something different. Thus, the teacher's/believer's understanding of this is crucial. If a person separates the eternal Son of God and the Christ (Messiah) from the man Jesus they no longer have Christianity or the Gospel. They are a false teacher, the anti-Christ and deceived. (4:1-3)
4. **Pneumatology** – Doctrine of Holy Spirit –
- a. The Holy Spirit enables the believer to understand the Truth (2:27; 5:7)
 - b. The Holy Spirit is a person and is not the Father or the Son (2:27; 4:2, 13; 5:7)
 - c. The Holy Spirit is God (2:27; 4:2, 13; 5:7)
 - d. The believer has been given the Holy Spirit (3:24)
 - e. The Holy Spirit empowers the believer to overcome the world (4:4)
 - f. The Holy Spirit enables the believer to recognize the false teacher/false prophet because the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth (4:6)
5. **Soteriology** – Doctrine of Salvation –
- a. Jesus work on the cross makes our salvation possible (1 John 2:2; 3:16; 4:10)
 - b. By believing and receiving the Son (5:10-13):
 - i. A person is born again (5:1)
 - ii. Becomes a child of God (3:1-2)
 - iii. Receives eternal life, which is now, but not yet. Eternal life has already began in the believer (2:25; 5:11)
 - c. Because of the new birth the believer can now do what is right (2:29). But, yet they can still commit sin (1:8, 10; 2:1), but they will not habitually live in sin (3:6, 7-9)
 - d. God lives in the believer and the believer lives in God (4:15-16)
 - e. Believers can know God and love others (4:7)
6. **Eschatology** – Doctrine of End Things –
- a. John referred to his time as “the last hour” (2:18)
 - b. Jesus Christ had began the Messianic Age which is approaching it fullness (Now, but not yet.)
 - c. There were already “many anti-christs, but yet John was anticipating the future appearance of the Antichrist. (2:18; 4:3)
 - d. The is already passing away (2:17)
 - e. The day of judgment is coming (4:17), but those who are living in God will have confidence on that day (4:18)
 - f. When Christ appears our transformation will be complete and we will be made like him (3:2)