

Life with Christ

1 John 2:1-11

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John the disciple was not only the author of the Gospel of John, but later he became John the “pastor” who would have a long and fruitful ministry in which he wrote extensively and encouraged many Christians in the early church. John’s letters in the New Testament are rich with practical insight for daily Christian life. They reveal John’s pastoral heart to see transformation in those who find eternal life in Jesus. The theme of life, both eternal and present is prevalent throughout all of John’s writing. This morning we will look at 1 John chapter 2 in which we find a powerful admonition to the early church to evaluate the quality of their life in view of the truth of the gospel.

Eternal Life Now!

One of the hallmarks of John’s theology is what scholars call “realized eschatology”. Simply put, John did not describe eternal life in God’s kingdom solely in future terms, rather, he understood it to be very much a present reality. He fixes his gaze on the quality of life that believers possess even now through faith in Jesus as the Christ (1 John 5:11-13). Eternal life is available through the Son, who is the “atoning sacrifice for our sins” and the “one who speaks to the Father in our defense”. Life...real life...eternal life is marked by the reality that we can know God right now. We can experience fellowship with Him through Christ. This is life...and it is full and wonderful, but it also must stand out in a world of sin and darkness.

Eternal Life Expressed Through Obedience

For John, the evidence of eternal life is seen in the conduct of those who claim to have it. For he proclaims, “We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands” (vs 3). Obedience is central to life with Christ...it is through obedience that we express our great joy in the life that we have been given. It is through obedience that God’s love is made complete in us (vs 5). In fact, John can conceive of no real fellowship with Christ which does not issue in obedience. “Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did” (vs 6). This makes sense when we remember that our future eternal life with God will most certainly entail a desire and an ability to fully obey and fully commune with God. John simply admonishes his church to begin that journey now.

Eternal Life Marked by Love

“Whoever loves his brother lives in the light” (vs 10). In John’s writing, the true mark of the person who has passed from death to life is love. Love of God and

love of neighbor. The people of God are the people of the light, the people who are to shine brightly in dark places. We do this best when we love. We do this best when we learn how Jesus loved and then imitate him. When we love, we exhibit with our lives the true life that can only be found in Jesus. It is a life-long journey of following, obeying, and enjoying Jesus Christ. It is eternal life! Let's get started.

For Further Reflection:

This week, read through 1 John 2:1-11 every day. Pray, listen, and reflect. Ask the Lord to speak to you about **your** life with Christ.