

LESSON SEVEN

MARCH 6 , 2022 – ONE ANOTHER ACCORDING TO THE APOSTLE JOHN

“God is love; he who dwells in love is dwelling in God and God in him.” I John 4:16

Last week began with a study of the account in the Gospel of John of the last night of Jesus’ earthly life as he spent it with his disciples, now to be called his friends. The evening began with Jesus washing the feet of his friends as an indication of humility and servitude that was to characterize their lives. He then gave them a new command which was to “love one another”. After urging them to stay carefully “connected” to the Father, he told them of the coming of the Holy Spirit who would enable them to do so followed by his prayer for unity among all of his followers.

A LOOK AT I JOHN

The discussion then began to focus on the writer of the Gospel of John. Now approximately 90 years of age, and exiled to the Greek island of Patmos, we find him writing 5 separate items, beginning with the Gospel, followed by his three letters, and then the Book of the Revelation. Focusing on the first letter, we saw its purpose as being:

- TO ENCOURAGE THE BELIEVERS IN THEIR WALK WITH GOD. -- 2:1
- TO REMIND THEM OF THE DEPTH OF THEIR FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD -- 3:1-3
- TO REASSURE THE BELIEVERS OF ETERNAL LIFE -- 5:13

Ron began by referring to last week’s lesson and a couple of factors that require emphasis. The first of these is found in John 14:23 and Jesus’ emphasis on the basis for loving one another as “love one another as I have loved you”. He went on to remind us of the purpose phrases in John 13 – 15. There are 22 such phrases intended, by John to explain the “here’s why” of what he is about to reveal to them. He finished his reflections by reminding us that I John was written to a special group of friends, as in contrast to the Gospel which was written for all, but both with a strong emphasis on love for one another.

TWO REFERENCES IN CHAPTER 3

3:11 – “For this is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another.”

3:23 – “And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us.”

Ron began with an analysis of the two reference to “love one another” in chapter 3:11 & 23. He focused first on John’s memory of the night of the last supper. Using another person in the room, Ron demonstrated the posture of John, with his head on the shoulder of Jesus, looking into his eyes as he gave this commandment. An incident that John could not forget. He reminded us that the Holy Spirit empowers us to love. He lives in our hearts and makes us more like Jesus. How well do you display the love of God by your choices and actions? What does it mean if we do not love one another? John tells us that the word commandment appears eight times at the last supper and demonstrates the effectiveness of that on his own life and memory.

THREE REFERENCES IN CHAPTER 4

4:7 – “MY DEAR FRIENDS, LET US LOVE ONE ANOTHER BECAUSE THE SOURCE OF LOVE IS GOD”

“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. ¹⁰If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love. ¹¹I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. ¹²My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.” John 1 5:9-12

4:11 - "If God thus loved us, my dear friends, we also must love one another"

"I give you a new commandment, love one another: as I have loved you, so you are to love one another." John 13:34

4:12 - "God has never been seen by anyone, but if we love one another, he himself dwells in us: his love is brought to perfection within us." "No one has ever seen God; God's only son, he who is nearest to the father's heart, has made him known." John 1:18 "Then the world will know that you sent me, and that you loved them as you loved me." John 17:23

In reflecting on these passages, Ron reminded us that Jesus set the extreme example when he sacrificed what was most dear to him for our benefit. The Holy Spirit empowers us to love. He lives in our hearts and makes us more like Jesus. The ultimate question is, how well do I display the love of God by my choices and actions. What does it mean if we do not love one another? "If God thus loved us, my dear friends, we also must love one another"

HOW THEN SHALL WE LIVE?

- 1. GUARD YOUR PLUG.**
- 2. FOCUS ON THE PERSON OF THE FATHER**
- 3. DETERMINE TO REACH OUT TO OTHERS IN LOVE**

NEXT WEEK -- LOVE "ONE ANOTHER" ACCORDING TO PAUL & PETER

I THESSALONIANS 3:12 --

I PETER 1:22