

Sermon “Starters” from 1, 2, 3 John

“The Word of Life—Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow” (1 John 1:1-4)

Intro—Gatherings with family (holidays, special family days), how we remember together, enjoy one another, and also anticipate when we might see each other again (“see you next time,” Passover “next year in Jerusalem”).

I. Recalling the Past

- a. When families gather they remember
- b. When the family of God gathers we remember (Advent, Lent, Holy Week and Easter, communion “in remembrance”)
- c. John, 1st century Asia Minor (Turkey) calls his readers to remember:
 - i. (“from the beginning” v 1; Gen 1; John 1; their faith beginning)
 - ii. “we have heard . . . seen . . . looked upon” vv 1, 3
 - iii. “the Word of life” v 1
 - iv. “we” “us” “our” (followers of Christ *together*)

II. Reclaiming the Power (Present)

- a. Power in the perfect tense verbs
 - i. Heard—and still hear
 - ii. Saw—and still see
- b. Power of remembering former times
- c. Power of renewing former vows

III. Responding to God’s Pull (into the future)

- a. We have work to do—together
- b. Nurture the “fellowship” v 3
- c. Experience the “joy” v 4
- d. Share the (spiritual) wealth “proclaim . . . testify” vv 1, 2, 3

Illustration—Olympic 4x100 relay team, best in the world but dropped the baton. We need not drop the baton if we will remember the past, tap God’s present power, and follow God’s leading into the tomorrows.

“When He Appears—A Call to Holiness” (1 John 2:28-3:8)

Intro—Maybe long ago, or perhaps just recently, you have messed up royally, and someone drew you close and said “I forgive you” and “I love you.” Remember a time when you felt fully and unconditionally loved, and rest in that memory for a moment.

I. Holiness Flows from the Great Heart of God—Divine love *toward* us

- a. “how great” 3:1
- b. Called “children” 2:28, 3:1, 2, 7
- c. Called “beloved” 3:2

II. Holiness Finds the Great Need of Our Heart—Divine Character *in* us

- a. Doing righteousness as God is righteous 2:29
- b. Like him 3:2
- c. Holiness in us as God is holy 3:3
- d. Christ the standard, not how I compare to others

III. Holiness Fixes Us for the Great Day of God—“when he appears” 2:28; 3:2

- a. Holiness in the present *prepares* us for the future day
 - i. Confidence in God’s presence
 - ii. Welcoming the King
- b. Holiness in the present *shapes* us

IV. Holiness Fixes Us to Live Christ-like lives in the Present

- a. Remain in him 2:28
- b. Do righteousness 2:29
- c. Children now 3:1
- d. Purify self! 3:3
- e. Christ appeared to carry away sin 3:5
- f. Christ appeared to “destroy the devil’s works” 3:8
- g. Living in Christ is to live free from the practice of sin

“O For a 1000 Tongues” (Charles Wesley)

*“He breaks the power of cancelled sin,
He sets the prisoner free.
His blood can make the foulest clean.
His blood availed for me.”*

In View of His Appearing—What Now? (1 John 2:28-3:10)

Intro—When families gather they remember (reunions, anniversaries, graduations, etc)—they also plan for the future (“so, when will we see you again?”)—and they enjoy the moment, the present.

- I. A Powerful Coming Yesterday “he appeared” (vv 5, 8)
 - a. Christ appeared—Advent!
 - b. Christ appeared with God’s lavish love (3:1) **“magnificent” love!**
 - c. Christ appeared to take away sins (3:5)
- II. A Promise Filled Coming Tomorrow “when he appears” (2:28; 3:2)
 - a. Advent again!
 - b. He will appear and we will see him (3:2)
 - c. He will appear and we will be like him (3:2)
 - d. He will appear and we will be confident and unashamed (2:28)
- III. A Personal Transformation Today
 - a. Called “children of God” (3:1)
 - b. In fact “we are” (3:1, 2)
 - c. We do “what is right” (2:29)
 - d. We purify self (3:3)
 - e. We don’t practice sin (3:6-10)