

The dynamic of life in Christ - 1 John 1:1 – 2:2

Read 1 John 1:1 – 2:2

Consider the Source

1. John is writing to a church that had begun its life rooted in the truth of the gospel. It is now hearing a different message that is threatening to choke out vibrant life in Christ. This different message is more than likely an early form of Gnosticism. Gnostic coming from the Greek word gnosis – or knowledge – but a particular kind of knowledge – a knowledge built on personal perception, experience, and feelings. As a culture we often say that spiritual truth is relative, we base it on experience, perception, and feelings. For John what should be the source of truth for the follower of Jesus? What implications does this truth have for how we navigate our lives as followers of Jesus?

Count the Cost

2. Three times in this opening section John tells us the reason why he is writing to them (1:3, 1:4, 2:1). What are those reasons? How are each the fruit of grabbing a hold of the historic reality of who Jesus is and what he has done for us?

Return to the dynamic

3. (vs. 5) For John the good news of Jesus begins with God as light, his holiness, his moral perfection. Who do we come to see ourselves to be in light of God's holiness? How is this a precondition for accepting what God has done for us in Jesus?

4. (vs. 5-10) John quotes the gnostic teachers in this section with the phrase "if we say..." From these statements what did the gnostics believe? What does John say you should believe in light of God's holiness?

5. Tim in the sermon spoke about the "dynamic of the gospel", and that the first truth you had to hold onto was the seriousness of your condition before God. What is the seriousness of your condition before God in light of what John says?

6. (1:5 – 2:2) The second part of the dynamic is to see the grandeur of his provision in Jesus. What are the things that God accomplishes for us in Jesus?

7. We need to hold onto these two truths together. The seriousness of our condition, with the grandeur of his provision. What are the results in our thinking and behaviour and self understanding if we hold one and not the other? If we diminish one in favor of the other? What are the results in our lives, our sense of self, our view of others, our behavior, and our thinking if we hold them as both true at the same time?