

"Gospel Transformation" 1 John 3:1-10

1. What are some of the ways followers of Jesus believe they are changed more into the likeness of Jesus? What are some of the motivations that lie behind these ways? What impact do those motivations have on us? Do some of those ways and motivations actually produce something in us antithetical to the character of Jesus?

Read 1 John 3:1-10

John writes to his church that is hearing a different message than the one they received from him. He is seeking to wake them up to the danger of this message for it isn't producing the character of Jesus in them and is eroding the love they have for one another. The gospel he says, will change you, transform you, make you more like Jesus. How? It comes from recognizing who you are, what you have, who you will be.

Who you are...

2. (vs.1-3) John is blown away by God's love for us in Jesus, a love that makes us children. In the sermon Tim acknowledged that we often aren't surprised by the love as God as John is because we believe that love is God's job and that everyone is a child of God. The teaching of the bible however is that outside of Christ we are enemies of God, objects of wrath, children of the devil (vs.8) – we are children of God however through God's work in Jesus, adopting us by grace through faith. How can this starting point bring us with John to be shocked and electrified by the uniqueness of this love?

3. How does encountering the forgiving love of God in Jesus change us? Discuss this question in light of 1 John and then read Luke 7:36-50 and ask the same question.

4. Discuss the quote. "It is an item of faith that we are children of God; there is plenty of experience in us against it. The faith that surmounts this evidence and is able to warm itself at the fire of God's love, instead of having to steal love and self-acceptance from other sources, is actually the root of holiness." – Richard Lovelace.

What we have....

5. (vs. 9) John says that we have been reborn through the work of the spirit which is the seed of the divine nature. What does this image of a seed tell us about the nature of spiritual growth? (Feel free to explore the three that Tim gave in the sermon – telling us that growth is gradual, seasonal, and inevitable – but feel free to go further afield) How can seeing this reality help us deal with discouragement, frustration, and apathy in our walk with Christ?

Who we will be...

6. (vs. 2) What is our future? How does living in light of that future change us? How does that future provide a means of discerning the value of what we are doing in our lives right now?