

## Week 3: 1 John 1:5-2:2

- 1) Review of last week's lesson. Any questions? Did anyone read the fish article about making observations?
- 2) Study of Today's Passage
  - a) Observational analysis
    - i) TYPE: epistolary. Why? What are the other types?
    - ii) FORM: other. Why? What are the other types?
    - iii) What are some questions you asked?
    - iv) What names or titles did you give to the paragraphs?
  - b) Structural Analysis
    - i) What sentence diagrams did anyone come up with?
    - ii) Listen to Hiebert on the "structure" of 1 John.
    - iii) What structure do you see?
      - (1) 1st Pass: 6 "if" statements
      - (2) 2<sup>nd</sup> Pass: 3 pairs of "if" statements
      - (3) 3<sup>rd</sup> Pass: 3 times the following:
        - (a) Claim
        - (b) Conflict
        - (c) Correction
    - iv) Continued in the section about "Sin" below.
  - c) Grammatical Analysis
    - i) Verb Tenses – grammatical analysis
      - (1) If we say that we have fellowship with Him (1:6) – present
      - (2) If we say that we have no sin (1:8) – present
      - (3) If we say that we have not sinned (1:10) – past perfect
    - ii) Noun v. Verb
      - (1) Sin, sins – noun, 5 times in this section (1:7,8,9; 2:2)
      - (2) Sinned, sin, sins – verb, 3 times in this section (1:10; 2:1)
  - d) Lexical Analysis
    - i) Fellowship (a partial word study local to this passage)
      - (1) A personal sharing with God or another believer.
      - (2) We cannot have fellowship with God if there is unconfessed sin in our lives. (1:6)
      - (3) A sign of fellowship with God is our fellowship with one another. (1:7)  
This means that if we do not have fellowship with other believers, we need to question whether we are in fellowship with God.
    - ii) Propitiation (a word study from various sources)
      - (1) Satisfaction for the moral demands of God's justice. God can now show mercy and grace without any thought of our sin.
      - (2) More than temporary sacrifice, appeasement, and atonement.
      - (3) Complete, final positional restoration of fellowship with God through Jesus, unlike the regular and continual sacrifices required of the OT priests.

- e) Historical Analysis
  - i) Christians in the church
    - (1) Primarily converts from heathenism. This is inferred from the fact that 1 John contains no quotations from the Old Testament and ends with a warning against idolatry.
    - (2) Some were believers for many years and advanced in their knowledge of truth. We see this from John's manner of addressing them (children, fathers, young men (2:12-14)) and from John's assertion that he doesn't write a new commandment, but an old one (2:7).
    - (3) No persecution mentioned (unlike in 1 Peter). However, the world hates the church for moral reasons (3:13).
    - (4) Lacking in brotherly love (2:9,11; 3:10-17), needing reminders about their walk with the Father and His Son (1:3,6-7), and vulnerable to worldly temptations (2:15-16).
  - ii) Many antichrists in the church (2:18)
  - iii) Gnosticism is prevalent
    - (1) Various pagan, Jewish, and semi-Christian systems (Stott).
    - (2) Summary of two main points of the various systems (Plummer and Hiebert)
      - (a) The 'impurity of matter'
        - (i) Docetism (from the Greek word meaning "to seem, to appear") – Christ did not have a physical body, but only appeared to have one.
        - (ii) Cerinthianism (named after Cerinthus, a contemporary of John who espoused this view) – Jesus is separate from Christ.
          - 1. No virgin birth of Jesus
          - 2. The Christ spirit came upon Jesus after His baptism
          - 3. The Christ spirit left Jesus before His crucifixion.
      - (b) The 'supremacy of knowledge'
        - (i) The few elite 'knowing ones' were so far above good and evil that conduct did not matter (Dodd).
        - (ii) Led to pride and 'unbrotherly contempt' (Moffatt) and 'lovelessness' (Stott).
- f) Light
  - i) Light and Darkness contrasted
    - (1) Intellectually, light is truth and darkness is error.
    - (2) Morally, light is purity and darkness is evil.
    - (3) Relationally, light is the presence of God and darkness is the absence of God.
  - ii) God is Light
    - (1) No article used. That is, neither "God is a light" nor "God is the light", but "God light is" (note word order). God, by nature, is Light. God is the definition of Light.
    - (2) Similarly, God is love ("God love is" I John 4:8,16); God is spirit ("spirit God" John 4:24); God is a consuming fire ("God [our] fire consuming" Hebrews 12:29).
    - (3) As light shines, God reveals Himself.

- (a) Splendor and majesty (Psalm 104:1-2)
- (b) Glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb (Revelation 21:23)
- (c) Lord God will illumine them (Revelation 22:5)
- (4) Absolute moral perfection.
  - (a) Unapproachable light (1 Timothy 6:16)
  - (b) Father of light, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow (James 1:17)
  - (c) His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9)
- (5) There is not one little, tiny bit of darkness in God (1:5)
- (6) There is no mixing of light and darkness (1:5).
- g) Sin
  - i) Refer again to Hiebert's comments about the structure of 1 John.
  - ii) Hiebert's 3 points
    - (1) The denial of the reality of sin
    - (2) The denial of the principle of sin
    - (3) The denial of the practice of sin
  - iii) Rosscup's 3 points
    - (1) A denial of the truth
    - (2) A deception about the truth
    - (3) A defamation of God Himself
  - iv) Stott's 3 points
    - (1) The denial that sin breaks our fellowship with God
    - (2) The denial that sin exists in our nature
    - (3) The denial that sin shows itself in our conduct
  - v) Hypothesis #1
    - (1) Claim: We can have fellowship with God while we have sin in our lives.
      - (a) Some Gnostics believed they could have fellowship with God through their spirit, because their spirits were pure and sinless. How they lived in their bodies did not matter.
      - (b) One need not be a Gnostic to think this way. In Romans 5, Paul teaches that where sin increases, God's grace abounds even more. Paul had to teach further in 6:1 that this was not a reason to keep sinning!
    - (2) Conflict: Those who think this way are lying, because it is already a known truth that sin and fellowship with God are incompatible. Moreover, this lifestyle of sin is not consistent with truth.
    - (3) Correction: Conduct ourselves in conformance to God's revealed truth for morality. The result will not just be fellowship with God. It will go beyond that to where we will have fellowship with other believers. As we continue to walk this way, we will want to avail ourselves of the cleansing from Jesus because of His shed blood.
  - vi) Hypothesis #2
    - (1) Claim: We don't have the capacity to sin. Some Gnostics believed they advanced beyond the point of being able to sin.

- (2) Conflict: Those who believe this are beyond lying, since they have progressed to the point where they are deceiving themselves about what is true. This deception is possible because they have pushed aside the truth. Sadly, “when ‘the truth’ is not in us, we are not by any means empty but are full of fictions, fables, myths, self-made fancies, notions that are not so.” (Lenski)
- (3) Correction: Stop thinking this way. Say the same things about our sins as God says (the meaning of “confess”). Then He will forgive us (in this case “remove” our sins) and cleanse us from the stain sin leaves behind.

vii) Hypothesis #3

- (1) Claim: We have never committed an act of sin before. (Note the past perfect tense of the verb.)
- (2) Conflict: This is so very blatantly wrong that it contradicts what God has said about man. God would have to be the liar, if this claim were true. God’s word can’t be in those who believe this claim, since His word declares the universality of sin.
- (3) Correction: This claim cannot be true, because God is not a liar. People do sin. John doesn’t want people to sin, the motivation being fellowship with God. However, John recognizes the reality that people will sin. For anyone who sins, which God who cannot lie would say is everyone, there is a solution. Jesus is the One who comes alongside of us (Advocate, or Paraclete) and pleads our case before God the Father. Better than being the “propitiator” (the one who prepares the blood sacrifice for us, as did the OT priests), Jesus is the “propitiation” (the one Himself who is that once and for all sacrifice) which satisfies God righteous judgment! With both his positive and negative statements about sin (2:1), John is neither too lenient nor too strict regarding his teaching concerning sin.

h) Exegetical Analysis (interpretation) of our “walk” from this passage

- i) What’s yours?
- ii) Here’s mine: John’s joy is that his Christian audience sees to it that “the whole round of the activities of the individual” (Vines) is conducted in the majestic, illuminating, invariant, and moral light of God, without a trace or hint of sin, which naturally overflows to fellowship with other believers. If any of them ever did sin, he could again enjoy this communion with God via confession of his sins.
- iii) By way of application, Apostle John wanted *our* “walk” to have this characteristic as well.

3) Handouts for Week 4

- a) “Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God” Matthew 4:4
- b) Daily Assignments for 1 John 2:3-17
  - i) Day 1:
    - (1) Worship God because He is Light!
    - (2) Read 1 John 2:3-17
    - (3) Perform an observational analysis on these paragraphs.

- (4) Fill in the following “intelligent guess” information onto the SURVEY CHART OF 1 JOHN.
  - (a) Paragraph Titles for 2:3, 2:7, 2:12, and 2:15
  - (b) KEY WORDS to date
- ii) Day 2:
  - (1) Thank God for Jesus, our Advocate and Propitiation.
  - (2) Do a structural analysis of these paragraphs.
  - (3) Meditate on what you learned about God today.
- iii) Day 3:
  - (1) Thank God for His commandments. What are some other verses in the Bible that teach us about God’s commandments?
  - (2) Do a grammatical analysis on this week’s passage.
  - (3) Mark significant words with a color and/or symbol of your choice.
- iv) Day 4:
  - (1) Sing a song of praise to God.
  - (2) Do a lexical analysis (word study) on a word of your choice from this week’s passage.
  - (3) Respond to God for the new understanding the Holy Spirit is giving you.
- v) Day 5:
  - (1) Ask God for understanding today as you move into the interpretation step.
  - (2) Compare 2:15-17 with Genesis 3 and Matthew 6:24.
  - (3) Prepare a synopsis of your interpretation of this week’s passage.
  - (4) Revisit the SURVEY CHART and make any modifications that are necessary.
  - (5) Worship God for the extent to which He goes to love you.