

READING JOHN'S FIRST LETTER TOGETHER – WEEK 4

Monday 1st August – 1 John 4. 19-21

Time to take stock as we conclude another section!

Having read of the importance of being a loving community there is a question to ask?

Is there anyone in my church, my family, my community who I cannot love?

Consider the implications of these verses.

Ask God to forgive your hardness; thank Him that He loved you, even whilst you were still in sin (Romans 5.8); and ask Him to give you of His love for your neighbour.

Tuesday 2nd August – 1 John 5. 1-5

God's commands – even that to love the unlovely – are not burdensome, even if they at first seem it.

In fact it is our new life in Christ, shown through obedience, that enables us to overcome the evil forces in this world.

What could give greater joy?

Wednesday 3rd August – 1 John 5.6-8

These are complex words upon which commentators disagree!

Their complexity is far beyond these simple notes.

But we can note how water might refer to baptism, the symbol of purification, which Jesus accepted, though did not require; and blood might refer to sacrifice and especially the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross.

Later came the Holy Spirit as Jesus promised.

But these three are not in juxtaposition – for they agree, as does the whole of Scripture.

Thursday 4th August – 1 John 5.9-12

To yesterday's witnesses we add the testimony of God Himself who spoke at Christ's baptism (Luke 3.22); Christ's crucifixion (Matthew 27.51) and at Pentecost (Acts 2.4)

As our reading of 1 John draws to its close, who would you believe?

These witnesses or human detractors?

Friday 5th August – 1 John 5.13-15

My prayer for all at Park is that we might believe; that we might know that we have eternal life; that we might have confidence in approaching God with requests that we know accord to His will; and that we might know that He hears us and grants our requests.

Saturday 6th August – 1 John 5.16-17

How do we respond when someone in church falls?

Do we gloat at their failure?

Or does our love for them drive us to earnest prayer that they might be restored?

We do not minimise sin – but we recognise that it can be cleansed!

The one exception is the unforgiveable sin – when a believer walks away from God and never returns.

So pray for their restoration!

Sunday 7th August – 1 John 5.18-21

And finally pray for yourself – that you may stay close to Christ and be kept from any idol that would seek to distract you from wholehearted worship, obedience and love.

Try writing a prayer to God, that thanks Him explicitly for what you have learned through reading this letter.