

Sent: Thursday, October 15, 2015 12:05 PM
Subject: Tuesday Nite's (October 13th) MOB Study

The title given to our lesson Tuesday nite, covering I John 2:18-29, was "Truth!" Warren Wiersbe, in his book on I John, "Be Real," calls this portion "Truth or Consequences!" And the whole point of the lesson, and of the Bible itself, is that there is such a thing as absolute and veritable truth! The Bible says that all Scripture is given by the "inspiration" of God and is therefore "profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, so that the man of God may be adequately equipped for every good work" (II Timothy 3:16-17). Peter said that "...no prophesy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God!" Now, as we know, that's quite a claim, which we hold "true"!

The Psalmist writes: "Your word is truth...forever settled in heaven... gives light to our path...is everlasting...establishes our footsteps...and gives us understanding" (Psa. 119)--among other things!

John wrote in the introduction to his gospel how that "in the beginning was the Word, and that the Word was with God and was God...and that the Word (speaking of Jesus Himself) was made flesh and dwelt among us..." and John continues: "...and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth!"

Jesus said: "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man comes to the Father but by Me!" He said, "You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." In anticipation of the cross and His "return to the Father," He promised the "Spirit of Truth" who would come to abide in believers, and "guide them into all truth." And, in His "intercessory prayer" to the Father, again just before the cross, He prayed that His followers would "kept from the evil one...and sanctified in the truth of His Word" (John 17:15-16).

And this gets to the central point of our lesson in I John 2:18-29. There were apparently "false teachers" who had come out of the church, of all places! who denied that Jesus was "the Christ," the Son of God--in essence, denying the truth that Jesus was God and that God was "manifested" in human flesh. They were thus attacking two foundational truths of the Christian faith: the doctrine of the Deity of Christ and the doctrine of the Incarnation! John said (in 2:19) that "they went out from us, but were not (really) of us..." He said, "This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son!" He repeats this indictment in chapter 4, where he urges believers to "test the spirits to see if they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out of the world." And he said that you can know whether or not it is the Spirit of God by what they teach! "Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of antichrist!" John urges believers to "abide" in Christ!

Truth concerning the person of Christ is just as critical to true Christian faith today! Some would say that it doesn't matter what you believe, as long as you're sincere--or that all religions are the same and that they all have the same God. But John, who wrote under inspiration of the Holy Spirit, would strongly take exception to such thinking, and put it in the category of "truth or consequences"! And so would we as, 21st century believers, where the culture thinks of truth as relative, where false teachers run rampant, and where the "spirit of antichrist" prevails!

In this context, Wiersbe encourages us, as believers, to look back, at the cross where Jesus paid for our sin; to look within, where the Holy Spirit abides to guide us into truth; to look around to see those we are called to love; and to look ahead, for the return of Christ!

This sets the scene for next week's lesson, on I John 3:1-10, given the title: "The Pretenders!"

Have a great week, men!

Lowell