

Scripture Reference: 1 John 1

Date: May 4, 2014

Title: "Eternal Life"

Focus: Joy is Found in Living the Life Jesus Offers (John Series 1 of 7)

First, Second, and Third John are short writings from John, the author of the Gospel and Revelation. They are not a letters, but really more of a tract, a piece written with a specific point.

John's purpose in First John is stated in verse 4, that his audience would find *complete joy*.

He reiterates this at the close of his writing (5:13) having presented that this joy is found in the life Jesus offers.

5:13; "These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life."

Therefore, he opens his missive with his personal experience of Jesus.

vv. 1-4; Fullest Joy is Found in the Life Jesus Makes Possible

Everyone seeks personal fulfillment, happiness, and contentment - Joy. This search leads people on many and varied paths. To one degree or another, these paths provide some degree of joy.

However, sharing from his interaction with the life he saw in Jesus, John found *complete* joy, and it is wrapped up in an *eternal* quality of life

What will be read in First, Second, and Third John is the result of John's personal experience with Jesus, what he saw as he followed and touched him. (v. 1). He is not passing on second hand or anecdotal information.

Jesus Lived and Offers Eternal Life

There is misunderstanding about what *Eternal Life* is. When this phrase is used people think it is referring to life after death.

Instead, this is but one aspect of eternal life. That part which takes place in Heaven after the end of one's earthly life.

John points out that eternal life is what he saw in the person of Jesus during His presence on the earth.

v. 2-3; "[What] we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us—what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ."

An eternal quality of life began with God, it is what He offers. It was manifested by Jesus, and it is what John wants to tell His readers about.

When people look at the life of Jesus in the Gospel and hear about it from the NT writers, they are seeing eternal life lived out on earth in the context of real events and people.

But keep in mind, the eternal life God gives and that was manifest in Jesus is not limited to Him. Jesus said He came that all might share in this same life.

John 10:10; "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."

vv. 5-10; Eternal Life is Lived in Truth

Because of an issue with the people to whom John was writing, he emphasized a particular aspect of the life God offers, truthfulness.

There were some in this local fellowship who made claim to possessing eternal life, but yet they walked in darkness, they made a practice of sin and rebellion.

John called this out for what it was, a lie.

vv. 5-6; "[What] we have heard from Him [Jesus] and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him [God] and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth."

There were obviously some who lived a life characterized by sin and yet claimed to be living a life God characterized by eternity.

John *was not* saying those living an eternal quality of life NEVER sin. Instead he was saying you cannot walk in fellowship with God and live a life characterized by sin.

Believers sin. If you think you don't you are deceiving yourselves (v. 8). Forgiveness is made available because those living eternal life will fall into sin (v. 9).

However, to claim to be following God as evidenced in the life Jesus lived (*eternal life*) and live a life of sin is inconsistent with Jesus and self-deception.

The Last 18 Inches

Jesus is the pattern for all matters of faith and practice. He is the example of one in relationship with God. He offers eternal life and shows what that looks like in everyday living.

Personal joy is only found in living the eternal life.

So, are you? Are you living an eternal quality of life as presented by God and demonstrated by Jesus? If you're willing to take a look and compare your life to the one lived by Jesus, what do you see?