

Just Checking In - The Remedy, 1st John

Nov 1, 2009

JCI The Remedy - truth, righteousness and love



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JCI – THE REMEDY 1 John November 1, 2009

Recently I've been reading, studying, meditating and preaching in 1st John. 1st John is an amazing portrayal of **three glorious realities about God, TRUTH, RIGHTEOUSNESS and LOVE**; and **three major problems** owned by every member of Adam's fallen race: **DOUBT, SHAME and FEAR**. What we know about the true God is the remedy for fallen man. This **threefold theme is** repeated through the entire letter. It cycles through these three themes paragraph by paragraph, with one of them being the major theme, but usually including one or both of the others. John borrows this threefold theme from Jesus' teaching found in his gospel in chapters 8-9 and 12-17.

Problem 1 – Deception/Doubt

The Evil One offered seeds of deception which our first parents planted and all of us have been reaping the bitter harvest of doubt and darkness ever since. This deception is both outward ("those who deceive..liars") and inward ("deceives himself... truth is not in him"). This deception then results in rebellion and death.

Solution 1 – Truth

This continual state of doubt and deception is ours because we have forsaken the only source of truth, certainty and light in the universe: God Himself! God's life-giving truth dispels the darkness of deception and doubt and brings certainty and life. Now, *WE KNOW*.... Because we have believed and received the truth. ("*We know*" is the most oft repeated phrase in the letter.)

Truth removes doubt.

Problem 2 – Shame

Deception resulted in disobedience (unrighteousness) which brings shame. Our first parents exchanged the truth for a lie and this resulted in sin which produces shame which then resulted in their attempt to cover their shame by self-made coverings of soon-to-wilt leaves.

Solution 2 – Righteousness

God provides a law-satisfying-sacrifice: the propitiatory death of Christ whose blood keeps on cleansing us from all sin, **replaces shame**

with justifying righteousness which fills us with hope and confidence. **Righteousness removes shame.**

Problem 3 – Fear

Because of our first parent’s doubt, deception, sin and shame, their fellowship with God was broken and replaced by fear which caused them to run from God and hide. Nothing has changed. Because we come into this world deceived, disobedient, and divided from God, we continue to live in doubt, shame, and fear.

Solution 3 – Love

Only God’s initiatory, undeserved, permanent and perfect love can cast out such fear. The certainty of His promise (truth) and the magnitude of His propitiation (righteousness) demonstrate the changelessness of His lavishly bestowed love on us, making us His present children and His future perfect image bearers. **Love removes fear.**

Perfect truth casts out doubt and deception and restores assurance.

God is truth “God is light... the One True God...faithful to forgive”

Perfect righteousness casts out shame and restores joy.

God is righteous “Jesus Christ The Righteous One... He Himself is the propitiation for our sins... just to forgive and cleanse us from all unrighteousness”

Perfect love casts out fear and restores fellowship.

God is love “God is love... He first loved us... perfect love casts out fear...”

And so John leads us from prospect through problem to solution to demonstration.... ***We believe God’s truth*** (confess... say the same thing as God... repeated several times) ***we receive God’s truth*** and ***we then demonstrate God’s truth*** as we live in truth and faithfulness ***We believe God’s righteousness, we receive God’s righteousness*** (as our propitiation) and ***then we demonstrate God’s righteousness*** as we can no longer practice sin and lawlessness since we have been born of God. ***We believe God’s love, we receive God’s love, and then we demonstrate God’s love*** as we love one another.

What we had (doubt, shame, fear) is removed by Christ ***for us.***

What we need (truth, righteousness, love) is provided by Christ ***to us.***

What we now experience as a result (confidence, joy and fellowship) is lived out ***in us*** as we practice truth, purity and love towards one another.

The Remedy: Truth, Righteousness and Love

Questions to Consider:

1. Truth sets us free.... from what? See how many things you can list that truth sets us free from.
2. Righteousness is the cure for shame. Explain how Jesus Christ removes all shame and fills us with confident joy in view of His coming.
3. Love casts out fear. What fears (list them) does love remove? How is the “fear of God” different from the “tormenting fear” that enslaves us?
4. What are all the different life-style-evidences that John lists of those who truly have become children of God?

For Further Study:

Do a word study of the three concepts in the entire letter. Make three columns and note the verses that relate to each as you read straight thru the entire letter.

Group 1 - Truth, true, know, known, knows, understand, understanding, understands, believe, believes, believed, confidence, liar, deceive, deceives, darkness, blinded, light, teaches, claim, confess, confesses, denies, acknowledge, acknowledges, promised, witness, testimony,

Group 2 - Righteous, righteousness, just, cleanse, cleanses, pure, purifies, sin, sins, transgression, law, lawless, lawlessness, transgression, shame, ashamed, unashamed, propitiation,

Group 3 - Love, loves, loving, fellowship, joy, life, forgives, forgive, forgiven. Now, read the letter through again and place a T (for a “truth” concept) or an R (for a righteousness concept) or an L (for a love concept) in the margin.

"O God of truth, thank You for removing my doubts and deceptions and giving me Your Word that lives and lasts forever. Thank You, O Righteous One, for removing my sin through the perfection of Your Son and His sacrifice in my place and cleansing me from all sin and shame. Thank You, O God of Love, for casting out my fears and lavishing Your love on me, filling me with joy and hope and fellowship with Thee now and forevermore. This I pray always and only in the Name of Him who is THE TRUTH, THE RIGHTEOUS ONE, HIM WHO LOVED US AND LOOSED US FROM OUR SINS BY HIS OWN BLOOD, our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."

Remember, you are very special to us and we are praying for you. May you find in Christ your joy complete, your strength sufficient and your vision clear... all the way to "that day"!

Living with leaving in view.... John 9:4 Ron & Val Berrus rsb@abwe.org

Seeing The Invisible, embracing The Unapproachable, declaring The Unexplainable, changed by The Immutable, running after The Irresistible with inexhaustible joy in our inexpressible sorrows, spending our time on eternity, owning nothing yet possessing everything that matters and lasts.

We are Pilgrims in Paradox. Welcome to THE JOURNEY

