week 21

Studying

THE CHURCHAAA

Together

[a weekly study of the Church as a church]

Day 1

Reading – 1 JOHN 2:18-27

Keep in Mind

Here John wrote about antichrists. The prefix “anti” means “against” or “instead of”. The people he was warning against were against the real Christ and His message and were offering their own messages in place of His.

Did You Notice?

1. John wrote that the coming of many antichrists was proof that it is the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_? (2:18)

2. What has God given His people so that they would know the truth? (2:20)

3. What must disciples do to ensure that they remain in the Son and in the Father? (2:24)

4. What were the antichrists trying to do to the disciples of Jesus? (2:26)

What Do You Think?

John instructed the disciples to see to it that what they have heard from the beginning remains in them. What does that mean? How can we do this as individuals and as a church?

Day 2

Reading – JOHN 2:28-3:10

Keep in Mind

In this passage, the apostle John explains in what ways the children of God are like Him and like His unique Son, Jesus. This idea of sharing in someone’s nature is a crucial part of what it means to be someone’s “children” – whether God’s or the devil’s.

Did You Notice?

1. How can we ensure we will be confident and unashamed at Jesus’ second coming? (2:28)

2. What has God done for us that inspired John to say God has lavished His love on us? (3:1)

3. What is true of those who have been born of God? (2:29; 3:6-7; 9-10 )

4. What two reasons did John give for Jesus’ first appearance? (3:5,8)

What Do You Think?

According to the apostle John, those who are children of God do not continue to sin. How do you understand this statement, and what does it mean about us as Christians if we do sin?

Day 3

Reading – 1 JOHN 3:11-24

Keep in Mind

John is very clear in this passage about the primacy of love in the lives of those who are in Jesus’ Church. Consider carefully the uncomfortably strong language he uses here in expressing the necessity and nature of true Christian love.

Did You Notice?

1. What is the message John’s audience had heard from the beginning? (3:11)

2. What should *not* surprise disciples? (3:12-13)

3. How do we know what love is? (3:16)

4. How should we go about loving one another? (3:16-18)

5. What is Jesus’ (two-part) command? (3:23)

What Do You Think?

Have you seen examples of the true love John describes in 3:16-18 demonstrated by people in our church?

Have you ever seen love that was only in “words or speech” but failed to translate into “actions and truth”?

Day 4

Reading – 1 JOHN 4:1-6

Keep in Mind

When John writes about “the spirits” here, he is primarily talking about the teachings that were being introduced by different teachers. By testing the spirits, the churches were determining whether they were from God or from deceptive spirits in league with Satan (see 1 Timothy 4:1).

Did You Notice?

1. Why do churches have to test the spirits? (4:1)

2. What specific test did John tell his audience to use in testing the spirits? (4:2)

3. The One who is in us is greater than \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ . (4:4)

4. Why do some listen to false teachers while others listen to Christ’s people? (4:5-6)

What Do You Think?

Have you ever encountered teachings in a church that you suspected or knew to be from “a spirit of falsehood”? If so, how did you know? Did others in the church recognize it, too? And what did you do about it?

Day 5

Reading – 1 JOHN 4:7-21

Keep in Mind

As you read this section, you’ll no doubt recognize a great deal of repetition in his themes. He has circled back to his main ideas of love and acknowledgement of the truth. Keep an eye out for the fresh insights John offers about these themes.

Did You Notice?

1. What is true of everyone who loves? (4:7,12)

2. How did God show His love among us? (4:9)

3. How can we know that we live in God and God lives in us? (4:13)

4. In this world we are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. (4:17)

5. What must be true of those who love God? (4:20-21)

What Do You Think?

Are there any brothers or sisters in Christ that you know you are not loving as He wants you to? As you consider what John wrote about the reason we love – “because He first loved us” – what can you do to move toward loving that person or those people in a way that pleases our Master and unifies His Body?