

February 25, 2018

I. My Notes - Walk Worthy Church

1. Series: Live, Learn, Love
2. Title: We Have Help
3. Text: 1 John 2:1-6 NCV
4. Quote: "God never said that the journey would be easy, but He did say that the arrival would be worthwhile" - Max Lucado

II. Intro

Story: Sports bring some great parallels to life experiences. One of these experiences took place during an NBA playoff game in 2003 between the Portland Trailblazers and the Dallas Mavericks. The lesson occurred before the game began.

13-year-old Natalie Gilbert, an 8th grader, had won the chance to sing the national anthem a-capella before the game. Even though she had been in bed all day with a flu, she was determined to do her best. She was obviously nervous, and a few lines into the song, Natalie forgot the words. She stood there embarrassed in the spotlight in front the crowd and a national television audience. It had to be the most agonizing moment in Natalie's young life - and everyone there was embarrassed for her as well.

After only a few seconds of uncomfortable silence, a demonstration of grace and compassion took place. Maurice Cheeks, the Trailblazers head coach walked to Natalie's side, put his arm around her and began to help her with the words. They started singing together, and soon the entire crowd was singing the national anthem. This act of kindness and understanding brought the entire crowd into the song. There was thunderous cheering when they all reached the words, "o'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!"

Natalie messed up, she fell short, but fortunately there was someone there to help her get up and keep going, and she finished strong. Wouldn't it be great if Christians would could come along side our brothers and sisters who have messed up and help them recover spiritually so they can finish strong?

Everybody messes up, even Christians. But we don't have a very good reputation

for how we treat them. Someone has said that “Christians are the only ones that kill their wounded.” There are times a Christian will fall short - mess up - sin, and when it becomes public knowledge, others will claim they are “fallen.” They haven’t fallen from salvation, they've tripped (fallen down) in their walk with God. But instead of extending a hand to help them up, many Christians react by kicking them when they're down.

I know there has been time in my life that I have needed help and understanding. And during those times when I have found judgement and criticism it becomes difficult to think that I was worth love or had any value at all. When there were demonstrations of grace, of compassion, I not only see value but have a hold on and can learn from the challenges and difficulties that arise.

Isaiah 26:3 (CSB): “You will keep the mind that is dependent on you in perfect peace, for it is trusting in you.” Peace follows righteousness; this is to be expected since “there is no peace for the wicked” says the Lord (Is. 48:22 NASB). Romans 5:1-2 (Phillips NT): “Since then it is by faith that we are justified, let us grasp the fact that we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have confidently entered into this new relationship of grace, and here we take our stand, in happy certainty of the glorious things he has for us in the future.”

There is a way to handle the challenges of life. There is a way to stand confident and live with peace and joy.

III. Text

1 John 2:1-6 NCV

My dear children, I write this letter to you, so you will not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have a helper in the presence of the Father—Jesus Christ, the One who does what is right. He is the way our sins are taken away, and not only our sins but the sins of all people. We can be sure that we know God if we obey his commands. Anyone who says, “I know God”, but does not obey God’s commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person. But if someone obeys God’s teaching, then in that person God’s love has truly reached its goal. This is how we can be sure we are living in God: Whoever says that he lives in God must live as Jesus lived.

It makes no sense to say you love God but don't keep His commandments. Of course, we're not saved by effort. Commandments, Godly principles and precepts, are not just guidelines (rules, standards) on how to live. They are also there to teach us that we are unable to meet these standards on their own - they show us we need a Savior. We need to be aware of the world and its influences. It's time to see that we have a way to live - a way to have a positive influence and testimony of God's love for us.

IV. We Are in This Together

Look at the first phrase of this chapter. Take it to heart. There is no separation here. The Apostle is speaking inclusive, he is talking about family. "My dear children" ... John is including himself as part of what he is about to explain. John is about to tell his "family" that there are things they are going to face that they must understand. That there is hope, that there is help. When he wrote this, the Apostle John, was at a place in his walk - in his life where he had seen and learned a lot. By this time, it had been about 50 years since the ascension of the Lord. (1 John was written between 85 and 95 AD)

He is writing this letter (as we have begun to explore) to talk about what it means to be a Christian - how to live a Christian lifestyle. In this opening statement, John is encouraging all believers to live different from the world. He is making a bold statement in telling us to avoid a lifestyle that separates us from the Lord... ("so that you may not sin" - CSB). Sin does occur, however, and God has provided a way for believers to respond to it. If anyone sins, Jesus is present to serve as his "advocate," a term often used for one who would testify in a person's favor in court. Christ is face-to-face with the Father, making intercession for the Christian on the basis of His own righteousness granted to the believer. What an advantage, to have the Judge's Son as our Advocate!

V. Just a question

Why is salvation important to you? Is it just about "fire" insurance? Or is it about the reality of peace and joy beginning today... Understand that being part of the family isn't only about heaven (though that is a great result) ... it's about finding peace and purpose today

VI. How Can We Know?

Unless you are willing to relinquish control, to submit and choose obedience, to the Lords will - to His purposes...life (things, circumstances) will never change. Seeing things start to change won't be because of anything that you have done, but everything God is doing..., for you and through you. Saying that you want to change and declaring that you have changed are just idle words, unless the choice is made to allow the Lord to be in charge. In other words, are you choosing to do your best to "walk worthy" of your calling? Does this mean life will be easy because I am a believer? Being on the right track isn't the easy path, at times. But it is always the proper path - the best track. It's the only way to live.

Living obedient makes it easier to hear and to understand what God is saying. It makes it easier to see His Hand on your life. And it makes it easier to live in the fullness of what the Lord has intended for us. We don't have to sin, but it is a fact that our flesh creates a struggle for us

Last week we talked about how to have victory over sin...1 John 1:7 (NASB) - "but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin."

Sincere (Genuine, Earnest, Honest) - To walk in the light means to be open and honest, to be sincere. Paul prayed that his friends might "be sincere and without offense" (ref. Phil. 1:10 NKJV).

Side Note: The word sincere comes from two Latin words, sine and cera, which mean "without wax." It seems that in Roman days, some sculptors covered up their mistakes by filling the defects in their marble statues with wax, which was not readily visible—until the statue had been exposed to the hot sun awhile. But more dependable sculptors made certain that their customers knew that the statues they sold were sine cera—without wax. Bible Exposition Commentary (BE Series)

It's a real dilemma, I would say there are many people in the church that don't want to be tested by "the light". Honesty can be a rough road for some. It is hard to admit the weaknesses we have. It is difficult to face flaws and weaknesses. It can be a scary thought to think that there may be something in our life that can cause us to be "separated" from the Lord...

VII. Security

Romans 8:31-34 (MSG) - "So, what do you think? With God on our side like this, how can we lose? If God didn't hesitate to put everything on the line for us, embracing our condition and exposing himself to the worst by sending his own Son, is there anything else he wouldn't gladly and freely do for us? And who would dare tangle with God by messing with one of God's chosen? Who would dare even to point a finger? The One who died for us—who was raised to life for us!—is in the presence of God at this very moment sticking up for us."

Life can break us down. Sometimes it is our choice, and there are times things happen where we have no control. In either circumstance, even the worst thing possible cannot separate us from the love the Lord God has for us. See, we can get caught up in the vicious cycle of drama - of works. And that can take our focus away from what is important

(Do you remember the solution for victory over sin?)

Being confident that, no matter what, we won't be separated from the love and grace of the Lord can help us maintain the focus we should have on the Lord. We have been completely and totally forgiven - it's available for everyone. Jesus can't forgive us anymore than He already has. God is not interested in your past, once a person has come to salvation He has forgotten it forever!

If you were on trial for your sins and found not guilty, you wouldn't want to be tried repeatedly, each day, would you? There is freedom, there are answers - there is relief. The real issue becomes that many don't realize it.

VIII. It's a Consistent Lifestyle

We must stop participating in the distractions and problems (sins) of life. When they become the focal point of our life then we get stuck in the past and things won't change. God has always been willing to protect and take care of His children
Micah 7:18-19 (NCV) - "There is no God like you. You forgive those who are guilty of sin; you don't look at the sins of your people who are left alive. You will not stay angry forever, because you enjoy being kind. You will have mercy on us again; you will conquer our sins. You will throw away all our sins into the deepest part of the sea."

The children of Israel knew that forgiveness was assured in God's pardon (exoneration, absolution), that He sought to abolish their sins and show them mercy. We have learned that the ability - the right - to seek forgiveness is available to all who believe. Obedience reveals our faith. Our faith has come from believing in the One who conquered sin and overcame the grace. He is the same one who made us more than conquerors (cf. Rom. 8:37) because of His great love. It is the same love the same faith, we should encourage others with.

IX. Final Words

Obedience comes from respect, awe, and fear of the Lord. Performance and effort are a result of the fear of failure.

Henri Nouwen (Author, Speaker) explained about obedience. "The word 'obedience,' he said, comes from the Latin *obaudire*, which means 'to hear.' By contrast the Latin word for 'deaf' is *absurdus*, from which we get our word 'absurd.' To truly hear Christ is to obey him; living in a manner to not hear and obey is the way of absurdity in living.

May you find comfort today in the family that surrounds you. May grace overflow the steps on your journey. And may the choices of obedience and understanding become clear in every moment of your walk.