

SERMON NOTES

SUNDAY 3.11.24

PREACHER: PS NATHAN BEAN

KNOWING JESUS

BECOMING CHRISTLIKE

*BEING, **THINKING** & DOING*

Conviction of a Disciple: As we spend more time with Jesus, we grow in a deep knowing of who He is and who we are in Him.

OVERVIEW

When we grow in relationship with Jesus, we can know that we know that we know that He is the Messiah and be able to stand firm in our faith and take hold of the eternal life available to us now.

ACTION

Step 1: Reflect: Do you believe that God's abundant life is available for you right now? How can you take hold of His gift of eternal life today?

Step 2: Commit: What aspect of your life are you refusing to release into the control of God? How could knowing His character and nature give you the confidence to entrust Him with that area?

Step 3: Act: This week, what steps can you take to actively grow in learning more about who God is for you and experiencing His presence for yourself?

THOUGHT

SCRIPTURE: 1 JOHN 5:6-21

We live in a world that is constantly trying to attack our faith. The way of the world promises freedom, and yet only ends up tying us in knots. More than ever, we need a deep understanding of our faith. But, this isn't a new challenge. In fact, you could argue that the entire book of 1 John is based around the idea of knowing. Knowing that Jesus was the Messiah, knowing what our faith is about, knowing that Jesus sustains us, and knowing that abundant and eternal life is available to us right now. When we live from a place of truly knowing, we live differently. We no longer see faith as insurance, but *assurance*. Insurance says we are covered for specific events: when life doesn't work out how we thought it would. Assurance says we are covered for life. When we know that we're covered no matter what, we live from a place of confidence.

John encourages us to believe in the Son and accept the testimony of God: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. But, it's one thing to believe *in* something, and another thing to believe *on* something. When we believe in something, it's like looking at a chair and believing it could hold our weight if we sat on it. But, we don't actually sit. When we believe *on* something, it's like not only looking at the chair, but then taking a seat on it. We put our life's full weight on Jesus and place our complete trust in Him. We know that we believe in Jesus and have allowed Him to change us from the inside out because we feel His abundant, eternal life daily, despite the circumstances we may face.

In verse 20, John reminds us that the Christian experience isn't about becoming more religious. It's about experiencing the presence of God. The intellectual element is important, but the experiential element is critical to having that deep knowing. Once we have experienced something for ourselves, no one can take that away from us. We know that we know Jesus and His life.

John pours out all of this wisdom to the early church, and then he ends his letter in the most unconventional way: "Dear children, keep yourselves from idols". Why? Because John knew that above everything else, there was a spiritual war going on. We face that same war today. In this war, neutral ground has never been, and can never be, an option. We were made to worship, but our hearts are vulnerable to worshipping the wrong things, which is how we create idols in our lives. Idols aren't always golden calves or little statues. We can turn even the best gifts from God into idols when we begin to worship them. Our careers, families, and status aren't inherently bad, but when we elevate them above God, we have an issue. So, we'll end here in the same way that John did: dear friends, keep your hearts in check and keep yourselves from idols.

DISCUSSION

1. How does the comparison between assurance and insurance resonate with you? Which of these would you describe your faith as, and how can you move towards an assurance over an insurance?
2. What are some areas where you don't put the full weight of your life in Jesus? How can you begin to change that?
3. How do you "keep yourselves from idols"? Is there anything in your life that has become an idol, and how can you put Jesus back in his rightful place in your life?

PRAYER

Heavenly Father,

Thank you for Your sacrifice and Your sufficiency. Thank you that we have access to abundant, eternal life with You right now. Help us to truly experience Your presence and grow in a deeper knowing of who you are, and who we are in You.

Wherever we have elevated anything other than You to the throne of our lives, convict us in love as we make You the Lord of our lives again and fall back in step with You.

Amen.