

Refuge City Church — May 14, 2023
“Beauty in the Difficulty” (1 John 2:1-6)—Mothers Day

Introduction

- The beauty and difficulty of being a Mom.
 - *The Beauty*: God’s gift of the ability to care for a growing child(ren).
 - **Psalm 139:13-14**, “For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.”
 - *The Difficulty*: the responsibility and weight of raising kids in a fallen world.
- Consider Eve, the first Mama
 - While carrying the mistakes of her past, giving birth and raising her sons, yet experiencing the heart-wrenching difficulty of one murdering the other!
 - Can you identify with Eve as a mom who experienced pain and loss?
- Last week, we concluded our discussion by looking at the necessity of pursuing the righteous conditions to be in perfect fellowship with God.
 - Jesus forgave us our sins, yet it is imperative to regularly confess our sins.
 - The family dynamic of living under the same roof in constant fellowship [[grace](#); [forgiveness](#); [discipline](#)]
- John continues that thought in his letter to “his children”.

“Our Advocate” [verse 1]

“My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.”

- “So that you may not sin”.
 - **1 Corinthians 10:13**, “No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.”
- One of the most difficult things as a parent is to watch our children make mistakes.
 - As little kids, when they fall down and get boo-boos.
 - As older kids, saying and doing things that are contrary to what they’ve been taught.
 - As adults, living a life contrary to God’s Word.
- Ever had the ‘mama-bear’ mentality kicks into high gear?
 - You tend to be their biggest *advocate* in life!
 - In those moments, Mom’s will come to the rescue, either through presence or prayer.
- That’s who Christ is to us. Our greater advocate!
 - In our darkest moments of despair, hurts, sin, mistakes, and blunders, Christ came to our rescue.

- His presence—**Romans 5:8**, “but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”
- His prayers—**Hebrews 7:25**, “Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.”

“Our Propitiation” [Verse 2]

“He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.”

- A dad might say “rub some dirt on it, and get back in to the game”.
- A mom is there to provide sacrificial help and cleanliness to our boo-boos.
 - The gentleness of cleaning our cuts and scrapes.
 - The reassurance when she pulls out the hydrogen-peroxide.
- **Romans 3:23-25**, “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith.”
- Jesus is our **satisfactory replacement** of all sin for the whole world.
 - It took a perfect lamb to satisfy the debt of an imperfect humanity.

“Our Obedience” [Verses 3-4]

“And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. Whoever says “I know him” but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him,”

- How many of us have heard, “I know. I know.”
 - Your child claiming what they know, when in fact, their words and actions prove otherwise.
 - Ever caught your child in a flat out lie, yet they try and carry on as if they are innocent and full of truth?
 - **LASTWEEK:** There is a strong difference between knowing God in your head, and knowing Him in your heart. [[information vs. intimacy](#)]
- The difficulty of being a mom is seeing your child wander off into troublesome ways, and reject the very things you’ve raised them to do.
- The beauty is that we can release those fears into the hands of the Lord.
 - Was it disastrous for Job’s wife to lose all her children in one fell swoop, see her financial security disappear, and her husband’s health rapidly decline? Absolutely!
 - Her story revealed that she chose not to remain in fellowship with God.
 - **Job 2:9-10**, “Then his wife said to him, “Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die.” But he said to her, “You speak as one of the foolish women would speak. Shall we receive good from God, and shall we not receive evil?”
 - Was it heart-wrenching for Eve to know one of her sons killed the other? Absolutely!
 - Despite her past and tremendous loss, it was revealed she carried on in her trust and fellowship with the Lord.

- **Genesis 4:25**, "...she bore a son and called his name Seth, for she said, "God has appointed for me another offspring instead of Abel, for Cain killed him." [praising God for His continued faithfulness and provision]
- Despite tragedy, death, economic hardships, and marital discord, we are to remain in faithful fellowship with the Lord.
- There is still a strong call to *individual fellowship* with God as a follower of Jesus.
- The obedience we should pursue is one of *desire*, because of our knowledge of God.
 - Our children learn to obey because initially, they *have to*, or there are consequences.
 - Eventually, they will obey because they see and experience the benefits of the rewards of obedience.
 - Prayerfully, they will come to obey because there is a *desire* to please the One who created us and love us... So it is with all of us, Amen?!
 - **Deuteronomy 28:1**, "And if you faithfully obey the voice of the Lord your God, being careful to do all his commandments that I command you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth."
 - **John 14:21**, "Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him."
- Your fellowship with God will determine your knowledge of God.
 - Increase in fellowship = Increase in knowledge.
 - You won't have one without the other.
- **Verse 4**: "Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him,"
 - John uses a harsh tone to get our attention and set us on a course towards greater fellowship, knowledge, and obedience to the Lord.

Claim	Condition
I have come to <i>know</i> Him [v. 4 ; John 17:3 , "And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent."]	He <i>keeps</i> His word [v. 5]
I <i>abide</i> in him [v. 6 ; John 15:4 , "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me."]	He <i>walks</i> as He walked [v. 6]
I am in the <i>light</i> [v. 9 ; John 12:46 , "I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness."]	He <i>loves</i> his brother [v. 10]

- **John 8:55**, "...but I do know him and I keep his word."
- Whatever you claim about God and your relationship with Him, the result of it should be obedience to what He calls us to do.
- God loved us first and foremost, and showed that love by sending His Son.
 - What He claimed, He proved by His action.

“Walk in His Love” [Verses 5-6]

“but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.”

- Let the love of God be perfected in us!
 - We do this by obedience to His word in all respects.
 - **John 15:8-10**, “By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love.”
- How do we know we are *in* Him? [intimate fellowship]
 - **1 John 3:24**, “Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us.”
 - **1 John 4:13**, “By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.”
 - **1 John 5:2**, “By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments.”
 - It is only by the indwelling Spirit of God!
 - **Revelation 3:20**, “...If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.”
 - The more you abide, connect, and remain in fellowship, the more God’s Spirit will reveal His presence, voice, and power.
 - **John 15:4**, “Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.”
 - The telltale sign is when our life represents how Jesus lived and loved those around Him.
 - Out of humble, desirous obedience to His Father and love for others.

Conclusion

- When we see our children acting, behaving, and treating others how they are supposed to, it’s not because they’re necessarily reflecting us as parents.
 - But rather who God created them to be, and that brings us joy and fulfillment.
 - **3 John 1:4**, “I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.”
 - This is God’s perspective of us, as we strive for deeper connectedness, devotion, and fellowship.
 - **1 Thessalonians 4:1**, “Finally, then, brothers, we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God, just as you are doing, that you do so more and more.”
 - The greater beauty in raising kids is not that they please us, but have fellowship with and please God in their individual walk with Him!
- So we ought to pursue, in our own lives as God’s children, to walk as He walked to the praise and glory of God alone.
 - **John 8:29**, “And he who sent me is with me. He has not left me alone, for I *always* do the things that are pleasing to him.”