Lownes Free Church Sunday Morning – April 15, 2018

***The Last Days!***  What happens next?

Life Lessons from Four Apostles

Do you walk with Jesus?

Joy and Danger in the Last Days

2 John

Second and Third John are the two shortest books in the New Testament, but both carry powerful messages. Most likely, John’s readers had both his gospel and the follow-up letter we call “First John.” This little post card emphasizes the original message of Jesus: believe in Me, and love one another. John reminds us that our faith is both content and conduct, belief and behavior, centered in Messiah Himself. We can deny the faith either by rejecting the creed or by rebelling against the commandment. Those who would lead us away from obedience and the truth are the opposite of Jesus, *i.e.,* “antichrists.”

***A Christ-Centered life. . .***

***is the living union of believers who lovingly practice the truth God has revealed through Him.***  vv. 1-3

Don’t read past these verses as “just a greeting.” There are no wasted words in Scripture. The “chosen lady” is a church, and her children are its members. The letter’s themes are introduced right away as “love” (2x), truth (4x) and God (and the life He freely gives through Jesus). All of this already is in us, and forever will be with us. This is the amazing hope we have in these Last Days. 1 John 1:1-4

***is a cause for joy in all who know Jesus.***  vv. 4-6

The New Commandment was to love “as I have loved you,” that is, sacrificially. The gospel invitation to faith in Jesus means embracing what He said (truth, commandments) so that our life is changed from self to sacrifice (walking in love). 1 John 2:7-11

***is a contrast to heresy and antichrist.***  vv. 7-10

Denying Jesus is denying God’s grace, and draws people away to false doctrine and unloving lifestyles. Other religions are not “saying the same thing” as Jesus. They are opposite Him, and to be rejected and avoided. He alone is salvation. 1 John 2:18-27

***draws us to face-to-face intimacy in Him.*** vv. 11-13

True knowledge of Jesus makes us long to be close to those who love Him. Texts, Tweets and Instagrams don’t displace the need for personal presence and face to face contact. 1 John 4:7-13

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***Last Days Life Lesson***

***Walking with Jesus means believing His message of truth,***

***keeping His commandment to love others as we have been loved, and rejecting religious lies and their teachers as God’s enemies.***

***Going Deeper--For Growth Groups:***

1. False teachers abound today as they did in Bible times. Why do such teachers appear, and why are their teachings so seductive?

2. Why is “Truth” a hard concept for moderns to nail down? List some ways believers can “walk in truth.” Why does John equate love and truth?