**Lessons from a Lockdown**

**Volume II**

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**Day 61**

**1 John 1:1-4**

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched —this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We write this to make our joy complete.

***Questions for Personal Reflection:***

1. Who is Jesus to me? How would I describe him to someone who does not know him or doesn’t believe that he exists?
2. Does what I know about Jesus come more from my one-on-one experience with him? Am I relying on first-hand knowledge of Jesus or only second-hand information? Why?
3. What have I seen or heard from Christ which I proclaim to others?
4. What does it mean to have fellowship with God? Is this something which I seek daily? Why?
5. If I shared with people about my relationship with Jesus, would they be inspired to become Christians? Why?

***Insight:***

John begins by describing who Jesus is to him. First, he describes Jesus as God for only God can only be “that which is from the beginning.” In the gospel he wrote, John said: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning” (Jn 1:1-2). In this letter, John equates Jesus with the Word. For John, there was no doubt that Jesus was God. As Christians we should also not doubt Jesus’ divinity even though certain religions and philosophies aggressively teach otherwise. But don’t take my word for it. You need to have your own conviction about this based on your own personal study of the Bible. If you study the Bible carefully, you will see that it clearly teaches that is Jesus is God. Therefore, we should worship him and treat him as God.

John also describes Jesus as a real person. Jesus was someone he saw personally and touched with his hands. John wrote the letter because there were so many false beliefs about Jesus. One of these beliefs was *Docetism* which taught that Jesus “only *appeared* to have a body” (D. Jacoby, Life to the Full). There are still many false beliefs about Jesus today. We need to be careful not to be deceived. This is why we need to be careful students of the Bible. John wrote the letter to protect the church from false teachings. We should also be as protective of the church. We should help our brothers and sisters who may be confused by false doctrine. Today, false information can spread much quicker and reach more people. Sometimes these false beliefs are embedded in popular culture or modes of entertainment. We need to become wise and discerning so we can identify false doctrine masquerading as progressive philosophy or harmless entertainment. To identify what is false we need to know very well what is true. Furthermore, we need to help those not in the church who may be deceived by false teaching. The world may have given them the wrong ideas about Jesus. So when we study the Bible with people, we are actually introducing them to the real Jesus.

There are an unlimited number of inspiring and useful things we can teach people from the Bible. But the most important thing we can teach people is who Jesus is. In fact, it can argued that everything in the Bible is intended to help us understand who Jesus is. Everything in the Bible leads to the truth that everyone needs a relationship with Jesus. Being a Christian is about having a relationship with Jesus. So studying the Bible with people is mainly about helping a person have a relationship with Jesus. If the person studying the Bible is not learning to have a relationship with Jesus, we are not helping him become a Christian. One way we can help someone have a relationship with Jesus is by sharing our own walk with him. We should always be eager to talk to people about our relationship with Jesus. At its purest form, this is what sharing our faith means.

John was able to proclaim who Jesus was because he knew him personally. We need to know Jesus in the same way. While it is great hear wonderful sermons or read insightful books about Jesus these are still second-hand ways of encountering Jesus. We must experience Jesus first-hand through our Bible reading and prayer. We can’t just rely on what other people say about him no matter who the speaker or the author may be. While initially we can believe the testimony of others, it is important that we “hear for ourselves” (Jn 4:42) and believe in Jesus because of our own personal study of the scriptures. While it is good that you are reading the insights in this quiet time series, your own personal reflection from reading the scriptures is even more important.

Jesus is the reason why we can fellowship with each other. It is our relationship with Jesus which defines and determines our relationships in the church. If we want to have a deeper relationship with people, we need to have a deeper relationship with Jesus.

Let us grow in our relationship with Jesus so we can we can share it with others.