

We Proclaim Christ

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 08 March 2020

Preacher: Don Macaskill

[0 : 0 0] so that you may have fellowship with us and our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.

One of the best ways to understand any piece of writing is really to understand why it was written. And it's interesting to know why, or what are the main reasons why the great Apostle John, the best friend that the Lord Jesus ever had, the closest friend he had, why he wrote this epistle? What prompted him to write it? What were the conditions that made him say, pick up his pen and write this epistle?

There's five. So let's look, first of all, at the five reasons why he seems to say in the letter anyway is why he wrote this letter. And then let's look at proclaiming Christ in the Lord's Supper.

First reason we would think why he wrote this is because of the threat to the doctrine of the person of Jesus Christ.

This book's about Jesus. Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Who exactly is he? That threat, that threat, that was a great threat. What was the real, true doctrine of Jesus Christ?

[1 : 3 4] It was being perverted. And it was being perverted, of course, in the Greek world. Gnosticism was having an influence on the church.

The church was beginning to believe the philosophy of Platoism and so on in the Gnostic heresy. Now that heresy was that it was a philosophy, matter, matter is evil.

Spirit is good. The unseen, the untouchable. Spirit is good. Matter is evil. Now the strange thing is that the Gnostics believed in Jesus.

And it's because they really believed in him that they said he couldn't have a body because a body is matter, skin, hair, teeth, and so on. Jesus didn't have a body. He just appeared to have a body.

He was a phantom. It just looked like he had a body. Their philosophy regulated their theology. They believed that matter was intrinsically, by nature, evil.

[2 : 5 1] And that spirit intrinsically, by nature, was good. And therefore Jesus was good. So he couldn't have had a real body just look like it.

And that's why John says in verse 1, that's why he emphasizes that which we've heard.

We've heard this person. We know more than you do. We lived with him. We were friends with him. We heard him. We saw him. And our hands have handled.

We've touched Jesus. We've shook his hand. We've hugged him. We've kissed him. We've kissed him. That's why he started off this way. I'm coming to tell you, Jesus had a body just like you.

Just like me. Jesus had a body, the true doctrine of Christ. He had a body as well as his divinity. The Greeks, the Gnostics believed in his divinity, but not in his humanity.

[3 : 5 9] Very important. Has great implications. Especially today. He gave his body. He gave the, we now have the symbols of his broken body.

Shed blood. Blood that you have. Body that you have. Important doctrine. Good reason for writing this. People were being infected by philosophy.

Same as we are today. Schools and universities are giving us philosophy. Instead of biblical truth.

Second reason. The church, the believers, were becoming immoral in their lifestyle. The believers were becoming immoral in their lifestyle.

Not good. Very bad. Again, Gnosticism. Gnosticism.

[5 : 02] What you do. How you live. It's not important. It's what you believe is important. As long as you believe the right things, you can live any way you like.

That's Gnostic heresy. People were being affected by the culture of the age in which they lived.

As long as you believe the right things, you can live as you please. And that's why he wrote chapter 3, verse 7. Dear children. See how he's passionate. See how he's love for them. Dear children.

He's saying. Do not let anyone lead you astray. He who does what is right is righteous. These are the righteous ones.

These are the ones that will be in glory in heaven. He who does what is sinful is of the devil. Chapter 3, verse 7. That's why he wrote it. It's what you do.

[6 : 05] It's important too. It doesn't get you to heaven. Yes, they're right. It's by faith in what Christ has done on the cross for us. By dying for our sins and rising again.

So that we're right with God. His imputed righteousness is transferred to us. But the way we live. God's concerned about that. Good reason to write the letter.

Isn't it? This is how we know. Chapter 3, verse 10. This is how we know. Who the children of God are.

Do you want to know you're a Christian? Well, John, at this point, we'll be saying this to you. How do we know the children of God? And who are the children of the devil?

Anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God. Sober, isn't it?

[7 : 06] The way we live is important. It confirms whose children we are.

God or the devils. If we claim to a fellowship. If we say we're Christians. We have communion with God. And with these people.

And yet, walk in darkness. What does John say? He says, you're lying. You lie. And do not live by the truth. Verse 6. So, second reason.

Christian living is important. The way you live. The third reason why John wrote this epistle. The great principle of love.

True love. Not infatuation. True love. Was receding from the daily lives of believers.

[8 : 08] The real truth love. The real love. Christ love. Agape love. Was receding.

Becoming less and less prominent in the lives of believers. You couldn't detect them by their love. Their Christ-like spirit was receding.

And that's why he wrote in chapter 4, verse 11. And dear friends. Since God so loved us. We also ought to love one another. And we're not. We're not loving.

We're not caring. We're not looking after. We're not praying enough for one another. We're not demonstrating our love. We aren't really practical in our Christianity.

You see, Christianity is not an ideology only. It's not just an ideology. It's practical. It has actions.

- [9 : 12] It has a way of life. If anyone, he says, and this is sore. If anyone has material possessions.
- And he sees his brother in need. And there's no pity on him. How can the love of God be in him?
- It's solemn, isn't it? It's very solemn. Love, Christ's love, is essentially practical.
- Jesus Christ. He gave his whole life. He gave his whole life for us. He didn't have to die. He didn't have to come from heaven and be abused by mankind and insulted and murdered. He didn't have to come. But he came because he loved us.
- [10 : 15] Biblical love. Biblical love. Christian love. Is essentially practical. It's not an emotion just. It's not lust. Not infatuation. Love is a kindly act. Love is a kindly act.
- Fourth reason why John wrote the letter. Christians were losing their joy.
- They were miserable. Christians were losing their joy. We should be joyful, friends. Of all the people that should be happy.
- We should be. We who believe. We who love. We who have been saved by Christ's life, death and resurrection. We should be happy. Happy are you, O Israel. Who's like you?
- [11 : 21] People should say, who's like so and so? Because he's full of joy and he's got reason to be joyful. Zacchaeus received Christ joyfully.
- The eunuch went on his way once he was baptized. Once he came to faith in Christ, he went on his way rejoicing. That was the main characteristic. That was the vision he got as he went away from Philip.
- John himself said here in verse 4. We're writing this. He tells us quite plainly in verse 4. We are writing this to make our joy complete.
- Now some versions have your joy. Some versions have our joy. But either way, as a Christian, be more joyful. Being joyful, not miserable.
- What an image we sometimes give to the world. It's so much so, they don't want to join us. That's our fault. That's our fault.
- [12 : 27] The scriptures, God's word commands us as believers. Rejoice. Rejoice. And again, I say rejoice.
- Did you get it? It's more as what Paul's saying. Rejoice. And again, I say rejoice. He says in the same letter, finally, my brothers. Rejoice in the Lord.
- Don't be miserable. You've a lot to look forward to. And the best has always in this life yet to be. And the glory that is to come.
- One of the big problems today is that Christians are giving a wrong image of what salvation means to your main characteristic in life.
- We're too miserable. We should be full of the joy of the Lord. So, doctrine of the person of Christ was under threat.
- [13 : 30] They were becoming immoral and living like the world. You couldn't distinguish them. And the Christians' love was receding. True love. They only talked about it.
- They didn't practice it. It was vanishing. And they were losing their joy. And then finally, and perhaps the main reason, as again and again in this wonderful chapter, John was so impressed with Jesus.
- He really was impressed with Jesus. He was so impressed that he wanted to share what he saw and heard of Jesus Christ. He wanted to share it.

This is too good to keep to myself. This is too good to keep to myself. I want my brother, my sister, my father, my mother, my son, my daughter. I want them to know the thrill of having Christ as your Redeemer and your Lord.

We proclaim to you. We proclaim to you what we've seen and heard of him. We're not going to be quiet. We're going to let people know how wonderful Jesus Christ is.

[14 : 47] Do you want to share him? Do you want to share him? Do you want to tell your neighbors about him? That's a great problem with a lot of Christians.

We keep the great blessing we have in Christ to ourselves. So he's wanting to share the good news. He's going to write this letter and that.

The early Christians, the early disciples, they were filled with enthusiasm about the discovery that Jesus rose from the dead. It proved so many things to be true and the lies to be lies.

And Jesus wants us to proclaim them. That's what we're doing today. That's why these sheets are white. People are going to come to show and to share Jesus, to proclaim him.

We have to go out into the world and preach the gospel. Jesus didn't come primarily to preach the gospel. My friends, he came so there would be a gospel to preach.

[16 : 03] For you and I to preach about what he did for us. He gave his life. He gave himself for us.

Unworthy, unrighteous, though we are in ourselves. Well, these are the five reasons.

There are sure there's many more. Why John wrote the letter. Real issues. Well worth writing the letter for. You agree? Well, let's move to proclaiming Jesus at the Lord's Supper.

Proclaiming Jesus at the Lord's Supper. Because he said, or Paul said, that's what we're doing when we're taking the Lord's Supper. I always think of this chapter when we have the communion.

John was, as we said, his closest friend on earth. And John knew perhaps more than any of the others about Jesus. No one knew more than him, I don't think.

[17 : 13] John was stunned when he first met Jesus. John was a Jew through and through. A Jew through and through in a world that was full of religion.

All kinds of religion. But the Jewish religion was unique. What is the most uniqueness about the Jewish religion among all the other religions of the world?

What was the one characteristic that stood out about Judaism? Monotheism. One God.

There's only one God. He's over everything. You see, all the other religions had a multiplicity of God. Man's natural and believing heart goes to...

Not atheism. That's a new modern thing. But a multiplicity of God. Gods of love. Gods of thunder. Gods of family.

[18 : 12] It's all kind of God. Gods of fire and thunder and so on. But Jews said, no, no. There's just one God. And he's holy. He's in heaven.

He's a spirit. He's in heaven. And yet, John, this man, who's writing this letter. When he met Jesus with a human body.

A real human body. Walked with him. Ate with him. And drank with him. And when Jesus said he was God, I and the Father are one.

I and the Father are God and for one. He believed it. Right away he believed it. He had no problem believing Jesus was God. And yet, he was a Jew.

Monotheism was the characteristic. Why? Because Jesus was real. Jesus was throbbing with life and truth and holiness and godliness and righteousness.

[19 : 19] He had to believe it. He had no problem believing. I think that's marvelous. That John had no problem accepting Jesus was God. And yet, he was brought up in the Jewish faith.

Amazing. I and the Father are one. He wrote it in chapter 10 of his gospel. Jesus was so perfect that being one with God was the only possible answer.

There would be a conflict immediately in John's mind. But he had it all up. Calculate it all up. Well, the only answer is that Jesus is God. Wonderful.

We proclaim to you what we've seen. What we've heard. What we've handled. Of the word of life. And he didn't want others to miss out on the thrill.

I'm going to tell you about him. I'm going to tell you about him. When we take the Lord's Supper, we're proclaiming Jesus for whatever. We're proclaiming Jesus.

[20 : 27] Whenever you eat this bread. Whenever you drink this cup. You proclaim the Lord's death. Until he comes. Is Jesus coming back? Well, we all believe it, don't we?

He's coming back. And we'll be there. All of us. Whether we believe him or not. We'll believe it then. But he's coming back.

Until he come. When you take the bread and the wine, you're making a statement. You're making a statement. Not verbally. But before the angels. There's angels here. But they're spirits.

You don't see them either. They can't assume a body. But not usually. But they can. They've got messages to give to us.

God will pick one. And send one. And here and there. To help us. With whatever problem we might have. At times. When you're making a statement.

[21 : 24] And the statement you're making is. You're preaching that Christ's death is a means of your salvation. Your future happiness. When you take the bread and wine. You're actually having fellowship with God and Jesus.

That you may know. We take the bread and wine. That you may have fellowship with us. We want you to join with us.

It's part of the passage. Part of the chapter. And our fellowships with the Father. And with his Son. The presence of Jesus is there. There's a blessing there.

The word fellowship is the same word as you probably know. As the word communion. It's the same word. John wants us to have true fellowship.

Horizontally. And vertically. He wants us to have fellowship with the Father. And he wants to have fellowship one with another. And that's one of the things about the communion. That's why we call it the communion.

[22 : 26] We're having fellowship. We're discussing the great things of God. When we gather together. And we have food. And we eat. And we drink. And we have fellowship. One with another.

Now. He said we've got a message from God. In verse 7. No, no. Verse 5. This is a message we've heard from him. I want to tell you. He gives a message. There's three things we'd like to notice.

About this message. Three parts of this message. Makes a surprising statement.

If you were to ask a colleague at work or a stranger. Are you a good person? Oh yeah. You're a wicked sinner. No.

Oh no. I'm okay. I'm right with God. A lot of people would say that. Well. Strangely enough. For the people of God.

[23 : 30] If we claim. Said John. Here. To be without sin. We deceive ourselves. Truth is not in us.

We're making God a liar. So rather than people saying. Hey. You're supposed to be good. You were at Lord's Supper last Sunday. What we're saying is.

No. We're sinners. If we. Claim. To be without sin. See that's one of the big marks of a Christian actually. I'm no good.

I haven't made it. I need forgiveness. I've done wrong. No excuses. No excuses.

I've done wrong. I know it in my conscience. In my heart. It's one of the things the Holy Spirit teaches us. We're sinners. If we claim to be without sin. You're deceived. That's why you do get.

[24 : 28] But unfortunately. It's hyped up too much. Oh I'm unworthy. I'm unworthy. Yes you're unworthy. But Christ is worthy. And we're coming here. To. A fellowship.

And reunion. With Jesus Christ. Who is worthy. Who is righteous. Righteous. This is exactly why Jesus is important to us.

Because he is righteous. And we're in union with him. We're joined too. When we have faith. In Jesus Christ. We're joined. We're united. To Christ.

Where he goes. We go. He's with the father. We go. To the father. We'll be with him. In glory. So when we take the bread and wine.

We're proclaiming. I have sinned. I need a savior. Jesus Christ is my savior. The one who came from heaven. The one who was sent from heaven.

[25 : 25] And who came willingly. And died. A fearful death. For my sins. So that's one of the things. That. One of the ways we proclaim.

We proclaim to the unseen angels. We proclaim to the public. To the world. That we are sinners. Needing salvation. What's the second thing that John tells us?

John tells us in this message. The message that we have. We have to confess our sins. We're confessing them. We're not hiding them.

We're not pretending we're good. We're not pretending we're good. Are we? There's no one pretending they're good. And here. Look at me. I'm holy.

It's not Christianity. We're people who confess. And admit. Our sin. Is that you? If we.

[26 : 26] Confess our sins. He's faithful and just to forgive us. Now confession to sin. Must be done. Voluntary. Not because your parents told you.

Not because your minister and elders told you. But because you know you're a sinner. The Holy Spirit convicted you. Convinced you. That you are a sinner.

Personal conviction. You see. Pharaoh confessed. I have sinned against the Lord this time. But it was the plagues. That convinced him. He didn't want to lose his kingdom.

The pressure was on him. But you can be all alone. In a room. And know you've sinned against God. And fall on your knees.

To the invisible God. And say Lord. I'm guilty again. I've done it again. Oh forgive me. Oh forgive me Lord.

[27 : 28] That's the wonderful thing about being a Christian. The wonderful thing is not that you stop sinning. Fully. You've got a changed life. Yeah. But you still fail.

But you go and confess it. And if we confess our sins. If we Christians. Who believe in him. Put our trust in him. Confess our sins. He will forgive us our sins.

We confess our sins. We admit our sins. True confession must not be because of the consequences of sin.

Some convicts coming out of prison. Will not sin again. I'm not going there again. Because jail is not worth it. But. It's because it's wrong.

It's against God. It's against the Holy One. It's against Jesus. Who did so much for me. It's confession as a result of the Spirit revealing to us.

[28 : 35] The real evil nature of our sin. So the third thing that John tells us. He got this message that he got loud and clear.

By meeting with Jesus. Was that he had to grasp hold of the promise. To really believe it. Grasp hold of it.

That God. If you confess your sin. Is faithful. And just. And will. Forgive you our sin. Verse 9. He will do it.

He will forgive you. Wipe you clean. White the snow. You've got to grasp it. And believe it. Despite what you. Feel.

Admit before God. That your sins of your heart and life. Never. Hold back. From confessing. Your sin.

[29 : 35] Because God. Specializes. In pardoning. Sinners. Who confess their sins. Specializes. As an eye. The nature of an eye.

Is to see. The nature of an ear. Is to hear. The nature of God. Is to forgive. It's part of his nature. To forgive. The confessing.

Believer. God loves. Forgiving us. God enjoys. Forgiving us. He loves. Seeing us on our knees.

He does. Asking. For grace. To help him. To help you. Walk. The right road. He is faithful.

To his character. That's God's character. Character. To forgive. The repentant sinner. Not the unbelieving sinner. Not the sinner who's persevering.

[30 : 33] In his evil way. But the confessing. Repenting. Sinner. Over all his other works. God's tender. Mercies.

Are. And he's just. That means he's justified. God is justified. God is justified. God is justified. In forgiving. The sinner. Who confesses. His sins.

What do you mean. It's justice. How can it be justice. Because. By the very nature. Of justice. Evil. Must be punished. The very.

Philosophically. The very nature. Of sin. Is that it has to be punished. And how can God be just then. Because Jesus. Because. God found a ransom. God found a saviour.

He found someone. Who bore your sins. In your place. The gospel of Jesus Christ. We've heard this message. That Jesus died. For sinners.

[31 : 31] And we're justified. We're rightly. Right with God. Through faith. In Jesus. Because he's found a ransom. He's found someone.

Who would take our sin. Who had no sin. Of his own. To die for. But he had yours to die for. And mine.

And he did. And so friends. Taking the bread and the wine. We're giving a statement. We're telling a story. It's this. That Jesus Christ.

Is the most wonderful. Person. That ever lived. He's the saviour. Not just the Jews. But of the world. Whatever.

Religion. We may have been brought up in. Whatever country. We may have been brought up in. We. Have. Salvation. He's the saviour.

[32 : 27] Of. Those. Who put. Their trust. In. Him. And so. Except. You eat. The flesh.

Of the son of man. And drink his blood. You have no life in you. Well. That's it.

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. May God bless his word. Let's pray. Oh Lord our God.

We thank you for. Writing so many. Truths. For us. We. Thank you oh God. For leaving on record.

[33 : 25] In writing. So that we may refer to it. Anytime we feel down. Or. Filled with unbelief. That Jesus died for sinners. And he rose again. And that. Through faith in him.

We. Won't be saved. And forgiven. And blessed. Help us confess our sins. Help us now Lord. To give you glory. And honor. As we sing.

Praises. To your. Great name. For we ask it. In Jesus name. Amen.