**BCM Bible Study – January 21-22**

**John 1:1 – 2:2**

**Who is John**: brother of James (the first martyr, not the brother to Jesus who wrote the book of James), son of Zebedee, one of three closest with Jesus, Jesus told John to take his mother into his house, wrote gospel of John, 1-3 John, Revelation

**Purposes of 1 John**: John testifies as a witness of his personal experiences that God became flesh and lived among men, he reaffirms the basics of faith in Christ to expose false teachers and to give believers assurance of their salvation – to answer the question – how do we know we are true believers?

**Main ideas of 1 John 1 – 2:2**: Jesus, both human and divine, is the one basis of true fellowship and eternal life, he is our atonement and advocate who reconciles us to God.

**Read 1 John 1:1-3**

Why was John so adamant about his firsthand experience with Christ?

**Physical reality, Jesus is flesh** (John 1:14): John is countering an early form of Gnosticism which says only a few have “secret, higher knowledge” for salvation, and that matter is inherently evil and spirit is good. This theology therefore says any action is permissible since the body has no meaning because real life exists in the spirit realm and that Jesus’ physical body was not real, but only “seemed” to be physical. **Importance**: Humanity of Jesus is necessary for atonement – must be physically real and physically die upon the cross in order to be the acceptable substitutionary sacrifice for sin since God established the necessity of the shedding of unblemished blood for the remission of sins (Leviticus 17:11).

John shares “that which was from the beginning.” How does the eternal nature of the gospel ground you in a world that is fleeting and temporary?

**Divine reality, Jesus is God**: Different forms of Gnosticism say Jesus was a normal human being who was simply empowered by God for only a small part of his life. **Importance**: A created finite being, which Jesus would be if He were not God, could not pay the infinite penalty required for sin against an infinite God. If Jesus were merely a good man, then his body had a sin nature and his blood was not perfect, not able to perfectly keep the law, thereby claiming that righteousness to impute to us.

What is most difficult for you to grasp – Jesus’ humanity or divinity?

This is the only time *Word of Life* title is used – why do you think John chose to call Jesus the Word of Life? What about this phrase gives you hope in trying circumstances? (John 1:1, 14 – the Word) (John 10:10 – abundant life)

John begins his letter with the premise that the God he knows is a speaking God. How does this encourage you in a culture that often portrays Him as mysterious, silent, or unapproachable?

**Read 1 John 1:5-7**

What does the Bible mean when it says God is light and how does the image of light help you understand who God is?

What did John mean by the phrase “walk in the light”?

Why is it impossible to have fellowship with God while walking in darkness?

Can you think of a time when choosing a path of darkness literally obscured your ability to see where you were going in life?

How, if so, do the words cleanse or purify – complete forgiveness and erasing of sin - relieve and encourage you?

**Read 1 John 1:8-10**

Why should Christians be marked by continual confession of sin? Read Proverbs 28:13.

Briefly describe a situation where you tried to make living in the darkness “work for you,” or justified sin in your life. Did you simultaneously try to convince yourself you were staying close to God? What were the results?

Do you see any of these “if we say” statements in v. 5- 10, basically saying that “sin doesn’t affect me” around you? Have you ever felt this way?

**Read 1 John 2:1-2**

Has our culture come to take sin lightly? How do we do this in our own lives?

How can we take 1 John 2:1 to heart and action?

Although John does not want us to sin, he knows that we sometimes do (vv. 1-2). How does the realization that Jesus speaks "in our defense" provide comfort and assurance when you sin?

What does it mean that Christ is our advocate? Do you feel like Christ has been your advocate?

Propitiation means removal of diving wrath, or turning God’s wrath away from us, the sinners. Is it hard to digest wrath in today’s culture or does this statement insight gratitude?