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The Message and the Mandate

Lee Magness

jlmagness@pepperdine.edu

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The Message and the Mandate: A Reading from 1 John

LEE MAGNESS

Although 1 John defies conventional organization, a number of theological threads run throughout the letter. This reading, adapted from the New Revised Standard Version, arranges the material in 1 John topically to highlight those theological threads. It is configured here for a Leader (litanist, lector) (L) and two readers.

MESSAGE ONE ~ GOD

L This is the message we have heard...

- 1 God is light,
2 *and in him is no darkness at all.*
1 God is greater than our hearts,
2 *and God knows everything.*
1 The one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.
2 *God is love.*
1 God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God.
2 *God is love.*
All God gave us eternal life.

MESSAGE TWO ~ JESUS CHRIST

L This is the message we have heard...

- 1 God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him.
2 *The Father sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.*
All Jesus Christ has come in the flesh.
1 He was revealed to take away sins, in him there is no sin.
2 *The Son of God was revealed to destroy the works of the devil.*
1 The blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.
2 *He will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*
1 We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.
2 *He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins.*
All He laid down his life for us.

MESSAGE THREE ~ WE

L This is the message we have heard...

All We are from God.

1 We are God's children.

2 *We have been anointed by the Holy One, and we all have knowledge.*

1 We know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding
so that we may know him who is true.

2 *We have boldness before God.*

1 We receive from him whatever we ask,
because we obey his commandments and do what pleases him.

2 *We love because he first loved us.*

1 We are God's children now;

2 *and what we will be has not yet been revealed.*

L What we do know is this,

1 that when he is revealed,

All we will be like him,

2 *for we will see him just as he is.*

MESSAGE FOUR ~ IF WE

L This is the message we have heard...

1 If we say that we have fellowship with him while walking in darkness,

2 *we lie and do not do what is true.*

1 If we walk in the light as he himself is in the light,

2 *we have fellowship with one another.*

1 If we say that we have no sin,

2 *we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.*

1 If we confess our sins,

2 *he will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

1 If we say that we have not sinned,

2 *we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.*

1 If we do sin,

2 *we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous,*

1 If we obey his commandments,

2 *we may be sure that we know God.*

1 If what you heard from the beginning abides in you,

2 *then you will abide in the Son and in the Father.*

1 If you know that he is righteous,

2 *you may be sure that everyone who does right is born of him.*

1 If anyone says, I love God, and hates their brothers or sister,

2 *they are liars.*

1 If we ask anything according to his will,

2 *he hears us.*

MESSAGE FIVE ~ WHOEVER

L *This is the message we have heard...*
 L *Whoever...*
 1 ...says, I know him, but does not obey his commandments,
 2 *is a liar.*
 L *Whoever...*
 1 ...obeys God's word,
 2 *the love of God has reached maturity in this person.*
 L *Whoever...*
 1 ...says, I abide him,
 2 *ought to walk just as Jesus walked.*
 L *Whoever...*
 1 ...says, I am in the light, while hating a brother or sister,
 2 *is still in the darkness.*
 L *Whoever...*
 1 ...loves a brother or sister
 2 *lives in the light....*
 L *Whoever...*
 1 ...hates a brother or sister
 2 *is in the darkness, and walks in the darkness, and does not know the way.*
 L *Whoever...*
 1 ...does not love
 2 *abides in death.*
 L *Whoever...*
 1 ...has the Son
 2 *has life.*

MESSAGE SIX ~ EVERYONE

L *This is the message we have heard...*
 1 Everyone who commits sin is guilty of lawlessness.
 2 *Everyone who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous.*
 1 Everyone who commits sin is a child of the devil.
 2 *Everyone who has been born of God does not sin,
 because God's seed abides in them.*
 1 Everyone who obeys God's commandments abides in God,
 and God abides in him.
 2 *Everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.*
 1 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God,
 2 *and everyone who loves the parent loves the child.*

MANDATE ONE ~ LOVING THE WORLD

- L* This is the message we have heard...
And this is the commandment...
- 1 Do not love the world or the things in the world.
 Do not love the world:
- 2 *The love of the Father is not in those who love the world.*
- 1 Do not love the things of the world:
- 2 *For all that is in the world—the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes,
 pride in riches—comes not from the Father but from the world.*
- 1 Do not love the world or the things in the world.
- 2 *For the world and its desire are passing away,*
- All but those who do the will of God live forever.**

MANDATE TWO ~ ABIDING IN HIM

- L* *And this is the commandment...*
- 1 Abide in him,
- 2 *so that when he is revealed we may have confidence
 and not be put to shame before him at his coming.*

MANDATE THREE ~ BEHOLDING THE LOVE

- L* *And this is the commandment...*
- 1 See what love the Father has given us,
- 2 *that we should be called the children of God, and we are!*

MANDATE FOUR ~ LOVING ONE ANOTHER

- L* *And this is the commandment...*
- 1 Love one another.
- 2 *Because we love one another, we have passed from death to life.*
- 1 And we ought to lay down our lives for one another.
- All Love one another.**
- 2 *For love is from God.*
- 1 Since God loved us so much,
- 2 *we also ought to love one another.*
- L* *And this is the commandment...*
- 1 We should believe in the name of God's son, Jesus Christ.
- 2 *Who conquers the world but the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?*
- 1 Those who love God
- 2 *must love their brothers and sisters as well.*
- 1 Let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action.

2 *How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods
 and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help?*

L Believe in Jesus Christ.

1,2 *Love one another.*

All **Obey his commandments.**

L *The darkness is passing away,
 the true light is already shining.*

1,2 The darkness is passing away,
 the true light is already shining.

All **The darkness is passing away,
 the true light is already shining.**

