

Through the Bible

I JOHN

Zac Poonen



Illustrations by Vinay Kuruvilla

John 1st



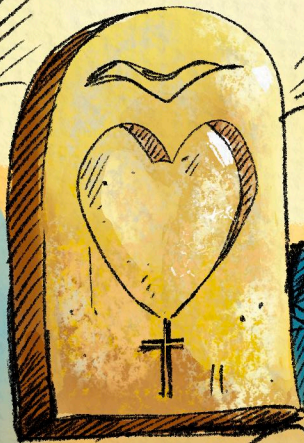
"GOD IS **LIGHT**" (1:5) AND "GOD IS **LOVE**" (4:8). THESE TWO OF THE **MAIN THEMES** OF HIS LETTER -- LIGHT AND LOVE. IN PRACTICAL TERMS FOR US, THAT MEANS **LIFE** AND **FELLOWSHIP**.

GOD IS **LOVE** AND JOHN REMINDS US OF THE ONE **COMMAND** THAT **JESUS** GAVE.

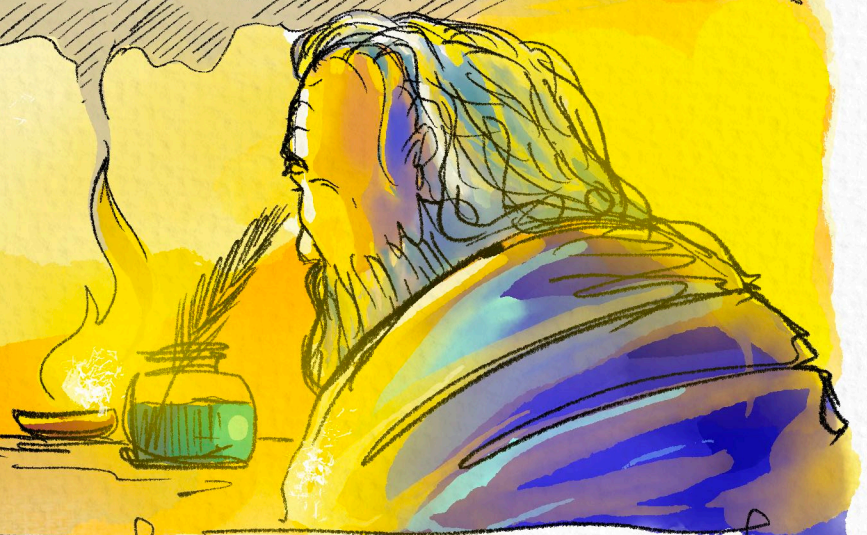


IN **JESUS** WAS LIFE -- AND THAT LIFE WAS THE LIGHT OF MEN (JOHN 1:4). IT WAS **THROUGH THE LIFE OF JESUS** THAT THE LIGHT WAS **SEEN** AND IT IS **THROUGH OUR LIFE** THAT THE LIGHT WILL BE SEEN.

JOHN WROTE ALL HIS LETTERS JUST A **FEW** YEARS BEFORE HE DIED, WHEN HE WAS ABOUT **95** YEARS OLD.



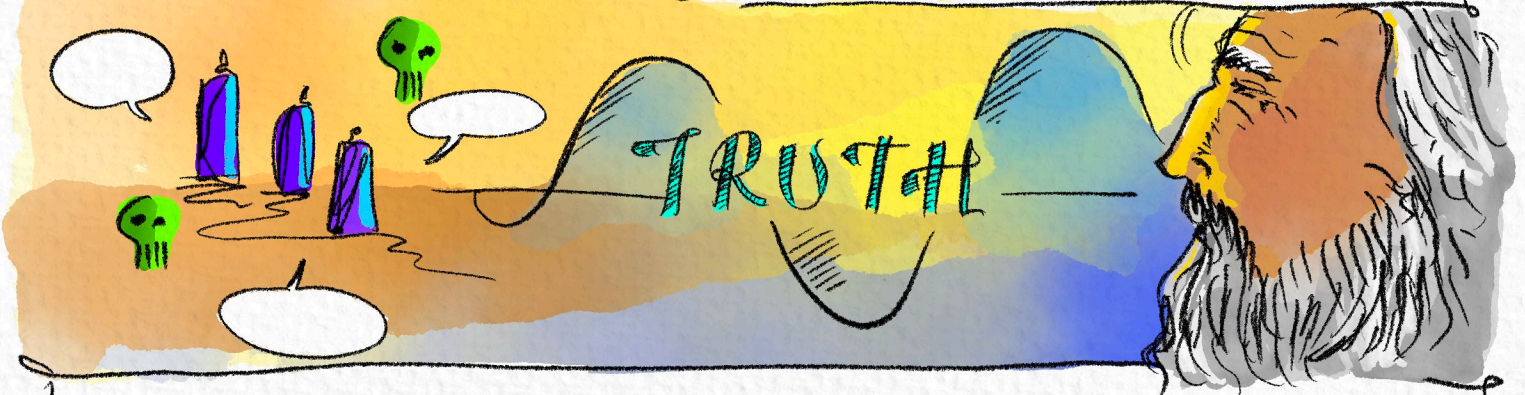
"A NEW **COMMANDMENT** I GIVE UNTO YOU THAT YOU **LOVE ONE ANOTHER** AS I HAVE **LOVED YOU**" (JOHN 13:34).



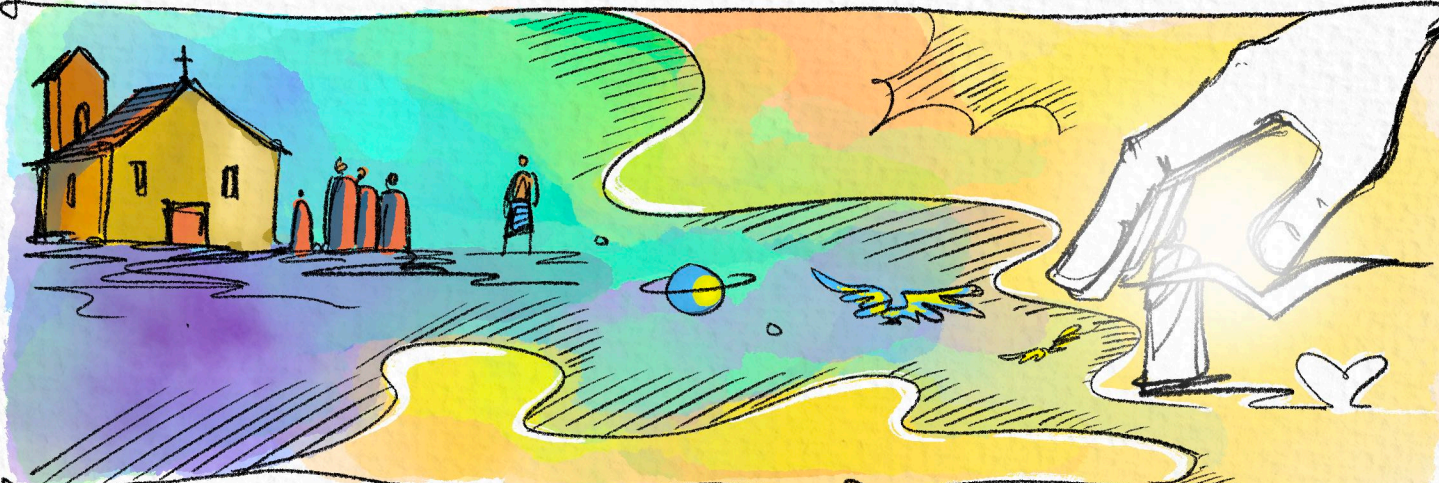
THE **OTHER 11 APOSTLES** OF JESUS HAD **DIED**, AND **JOHN** WAS NOW THE **ONLY ONE** **LIVING**.

HE HAD HEARD MANY FALSE **PROPHETS**
AND MANY FALSE **DOCTRINES**.

HE COULD SEE WHERE PEOPLE WENT **ASTRAY** BY **OVER-EMPHASISING** SOME TRUTH AND WHERE THEY WENT
ASTRAY BY **UNDER-EMPHASISING** SOME OTHER TRUTH.

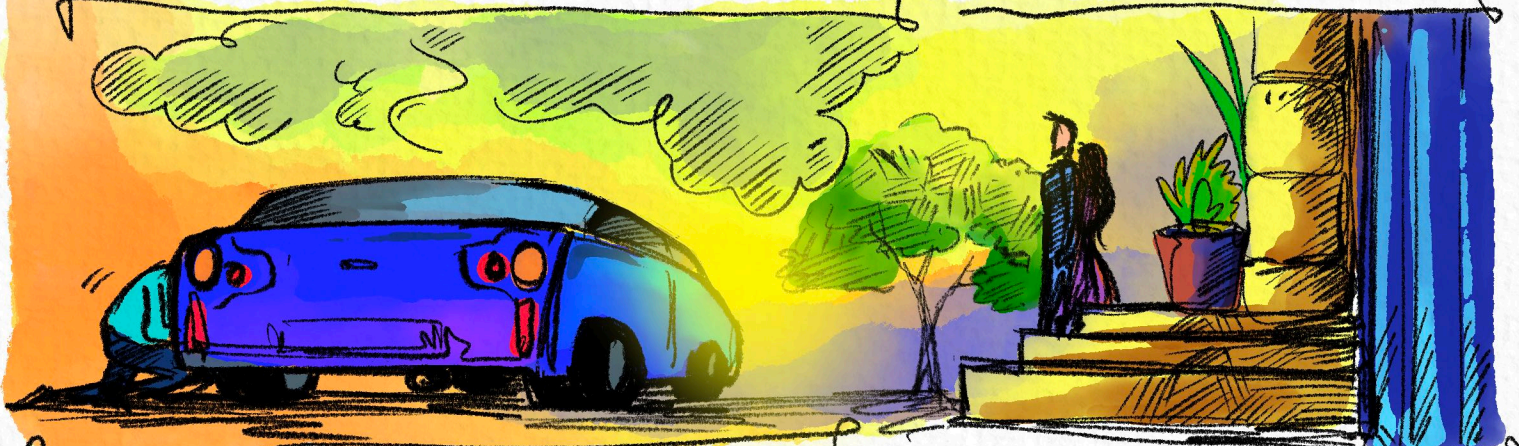


HE COULD LOOK BACK OVER **65 YEARS** AND **DISCERN** WHAT WAS IMPORTANT IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE AND WHAT WAS NOT.




JOHN WRITES IN HIS LETTER ABOUT WHAT WAS FROM THE
BEGINNING, AT A TIME IN **ETERNITY PAST**, WHEN THERE WAS NO
CHURCH GOVERNMENT, OR **CHURCH-MEETINGS**, OR
BELIEVERS, OR **HUMAN BEINGS**, OR **ANGELS**, OR **HEAVEN**, OR
EARTH -- AT A TIME WHEN ONLY **GOD** EXISTED.

WHAT WAS THERE IN **ETERNITY PAST**?
ONLY **GOD** -- FATHER, SON AND HOLY SPIRIT.
THEY HAD **ETERNAL LIFE** AND THEY HAD
PERFECT FELLOWSHIP BETWEEN THEM.



SO IF WE GET **TAKEN UP** PRIMARILY WITH MATTERS THAT ARE
ONLY **TEMPORAL** AND **MISS** THESE **TWO GREAT ETERNAL**
REALITIES, THEN WE WOULD HAVE MISSED EVERYTHING. THAT
WOULD BE AKIN TO **POLISHING** THE **NUTS** AND **BOLTS** OF A
CAR'S WHEEL, WHEN THE **CAR'S ENGINE** HAS **BROKEN DOWN**!

CONSIDER THE CHRISTIAN HOME. WHAT IS THE
MOST **IMPORTANT** THING IN A HOME? IS IT THAT
EVERYTHING SHOULD BE **NEAT** AND **TIDY**? NO. IT
IS THE LIFE OF **GOD** THAT SHOULD BE **MANIFEST**
IN THE **HUSBAND**, **WIFE** AND **CHILDREN**, AND IN
THE **RELATIONSHIPS** BETWEEN THEM.



LIFE AND FELLOWSHIP COMES THROUGH HUMILITY. WHEN WE HUMBLE OURSELVES, WE PROVIDE GOD WITH THE GROUND ON WHICH THE HOLY SPIRIT CAN BRING FORTH HIS FRUITS IN OUR LIVES.

JOHN SAYS IN HIS VERY FIRST WORDS IN THIS LETTER THAT HE HAS HEARD, SEEN AND TOUCHED THIS LIFE OF GOD THAT WAS MANIFESTED IN JESUS (1:1--3).

WE MUST EMPHASISE LIFE FIRST AND THEN FELLOWSHIP. ANY SO-CALLED "FELLOWSHIP" WITHOUT THE LIFE OF GOD IS A DECEPTION.

THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT IN CHRISTENDOM TODAY SEEKS TO UNITE CHURCHES. BUT IT IS NOT ON THE BASIS OF THE LIFE OF GOD. FINALLY THEY WILL JOIN WITH PEOPLE OF OTHER RELIGIONS AS WELL.

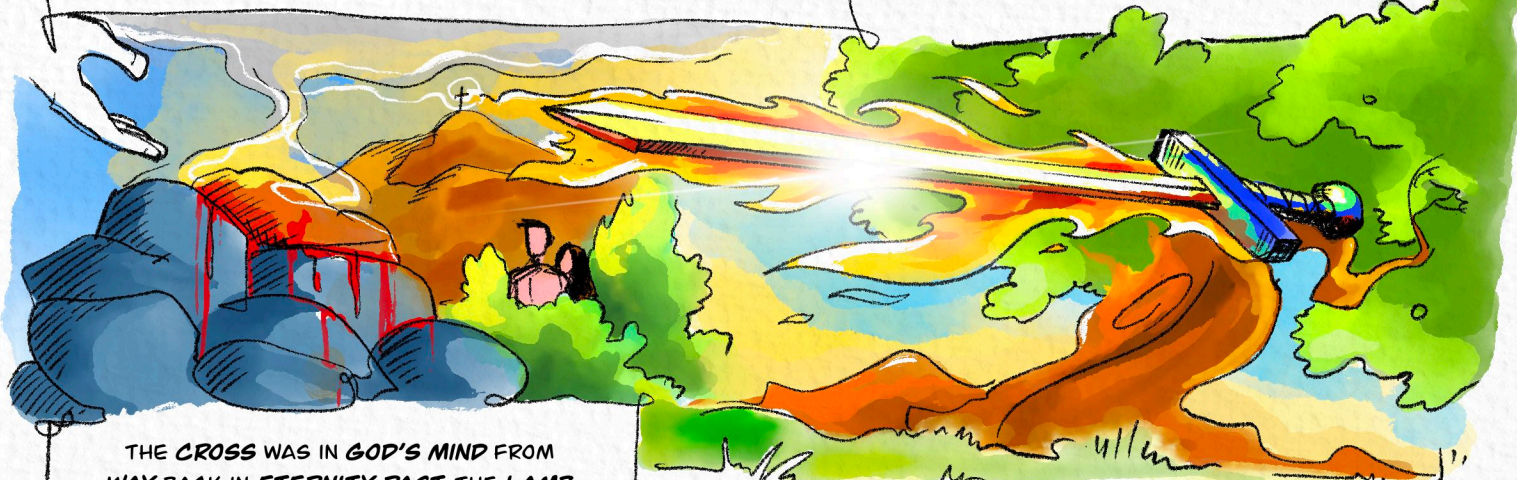
"OUR FELLOWSHIP IS WITH THE FATHER" (1:3). TRUE FELLOWSHIP IS IN TWO DIRECTIONS, LIKE THE TWO ARMS OF THE CROSS. IT IS THROUGH THE CROSS THAT WE COME INTO FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD AND ALSO WITH ONE ANOTHER.

THAT IS NOT THE FELLOWSHIP JOHN IS TALKING ABOUT IN HIS LETTER. PEOPLE CAN HAVE THAT TYPE OF "FELLOWSHIP" EVEN IN HELL.



BETWEEN CHRIST AND US THERE IS A **CROSS** ON WHICH HE DIED. BECAUSE OF THAT WE CAN HAVE FELLOWSHIP WITH OUR LORD. WE CAN NEVER HAVE FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD APART FROM THAT, BECAUSE IN OURSELVES, WE WILL NEVER BE GOOD ENOUGH.

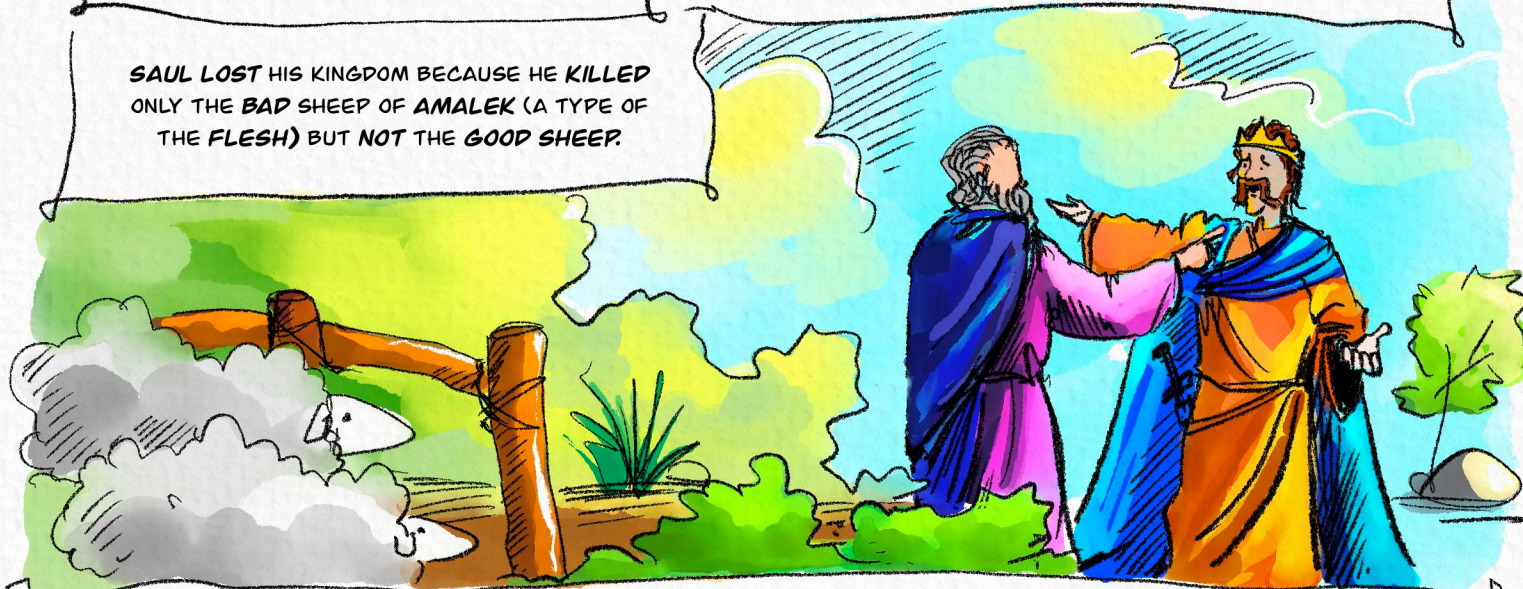
AND BETWEEN US AS BELIEVERS ALSO, THERE MUST BE A **CROSS** ON WHICH EACH OF US DIE TO OURSELVES, IF WE WANT TO HAVE FELLOWSHIP WITH EACH OTHER.



THE **CROSS** WAS IN GOD'S MIND FROM WAY BACK IN ETERNITY PAST. THE LAMB WAS SLAIN "FROM BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD" (REVELATION 13:8 - KJV) THAT WAS NOT SOMETHING GOD DECIDED ON, AFTER ADAM SINNED.

GOD PLACED A **SWORD** IN FRONT OF THE TREE OF LIFE WHEN ADAM SINNED. THAT SWORD FELL ON JESUS AND SLEW HIM.. AND THAT **SWORD** MUST FALL ON OUR ADAMIC LIFE TOO

SAUL LOST HIS KINGDOM BECAUSE HE KILLED ONLY THE **BAD SHEEP** OF AMALEK (A TYPE OF THE **FLESH**) BUT NOT THE **GOOD SHEEP**.



WHAT DO THOSE **BAD SHEEP** TYPIFY? JEALOUSY, BITTERNESS, SEXUAL SIN, LOVE OF MONEY, ETC. AND WHAT DO THE **GOOD SHEEP** TYPIFY? HUMAN INTELLIGENCE, CLEVERNESS, TALENTS, ABILITIES, ETC. PUT THEM ALL TO DEATH.



ISAAC WAS **GOD'S GIFT** TO ABRAHAM. BUT GOD TOLD ABRAHAM TO OFFER UP EVEN ISAAC ON THE **ALTAR**. THAT IS WHAT **WE** HAVE TO DO TOO, WITH OUR **GOD-GIVEN TALENTS**. THEN LET **GOD** RAISE THEM UP FROM THE **DEAD** AND THEN HE WILL **USE** THEM FOR HIS **GLORY**. THAT'S THE **ONLY** WAY TO **SERVE** GOD.

COME TO **JESUS** WITH EMPTY HANDS AND ASK HIM TO GIVE YOU HIS **SUPERNATURAL** GIFTS TO **SERVE** HIM. THEN GOD WILL **SANCTIFY** YOU AND GIVE YOU HIS LIFE. THEN YOUR **NATURAL** ABILITIES WILL BECOME **SERVANTS** OF THE **SPIRIT** -- AND YOU WILL DO **GOD'S WORK** WITH HIS POWER AND **NOT** YOUR OWN.



JOHN SAYS THAT **FELLOWSHIP** WILL RESULT IN **FULLNESS OF JOY** (1:4). **JOY** IS A **MAJOR** PART OF THE **CHRISTIAN** LIFE. THE **HOLY SPIRIT** HAS COME TO BRING THE **ATMOSPHERE** OF **HEAVEN** INTO OUR **HEARTS**



I HEARD A STORY OF A **LONG-FACED** CHRISTIAN WITNESSING TO SOMEONE AND ASKING HIM, "WOULD YOU LIKE TO **RECEIVE CHRIST** INTO YOUR HEART?" THAT PERSON LOOKED AT THE CHRISTIAN'S FACE AND REPLIED, "**NO**, THANK YOU. I HAVE **ENOUGH PROBLEMS** ALREADY!" THAT IS A **POOR** WITNESS FOR OUR **WONDERFUL LORD**.



YOUR JOY CAN BE FULL HERE ON EARTH, WHETHER YOU ARE BEING PERSECUTED LIKE JOHN ON PATMOS, OR WHETHER YOU ARE SITTING COMFORTABLY AT HOME. YOUR JOY WILL NEVER BE DEPENDENT ON YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES, IF YOU CHOOSE TO WALK IN THE LIGHT OF GOD AT ALL TIMES.

GOD IS LIGHT AND THAT THERE IS NO DARKNESS IN HIM AT ALL (1:5)



Joy



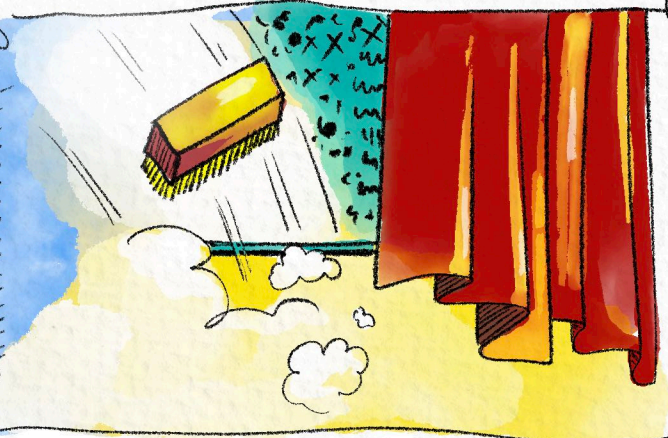
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BUT IF WE SAY WE HAVE FELLOWSHIP WITH HIM AND WE WALK IN DARKNESS, THEN WE ARE NOT PRACTISING THE TRUTH. THERE ARE MANY CHRISTIANS WHO SAY THAT THEY HAVE FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD BUT WALK IN SIN.

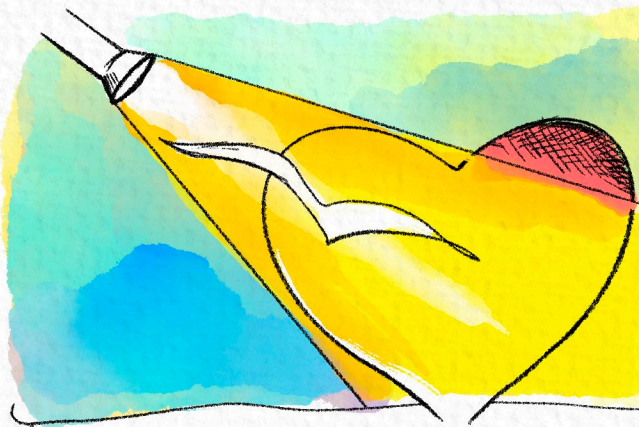
THE OLDER WE BECOME AS BELIEVERS, THE MORE JOY WE WILL HAVE, IF WE ARE WALKING WITH GOD.



1:7 SAYS "IF WE WALK IN THE LIGHT AS HE IS IN THE LIGHT, THEN (AND THEN ONLY) THE BLOOD OF JESUS CLEANSSES US FROM ALL SIN." THIS VERSE IS NOT TALKING ABOUT PERFECTION. IT IS TELLING US TO BE TOTALLY HONEST ABOUT OUR SINS AND NOT BE HYPOCRITES.



THIS VERSE ALSO SAYS THAT THE BLOOD OF JESUS WILL CLEANSSE US, AND NOT JUST COVER OUR SINS, AS IT WAS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.



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THEN WE READ IN 1:8, "IF WE SAY WE HAVE **NO SIN**, WE **DECEIVE OURSELVES**." HERE, THE SIN BEING REFERRED TO, IS **NOT CONSCIOUS SIN** (WHICH EVERY **GODLY MAN** CONFESSES AND FORSAKES), BUT TO **UNCONSCIOUS SIN**, WHICH **ALL OF US** HAVE. CONSIDER WHO IS WRITING THIS VERSE. JOHN, A MAN OF GOD, **95 YEARS OF AGE**, WHO HAD WALKED WITH GOD FOR **65 YEARS**. HE **INCLUDES HIMSELF** HERE

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE IS A **STRUGGLE** AT EVERY STAGE. THE **SECOND-STANDARD** STUDENT STRUGGLES WITH **MATHEMATICS**. IT IS **MULTIPLICATION** THAT IS DIFFICULT FOR HIM. THE **PH.D.** STUDENT ALSO STRUGGLES WITH **MATHEMATICS**. BUT HE IS STRUGGLING AT A **FAR HIGHER LEVEL**.

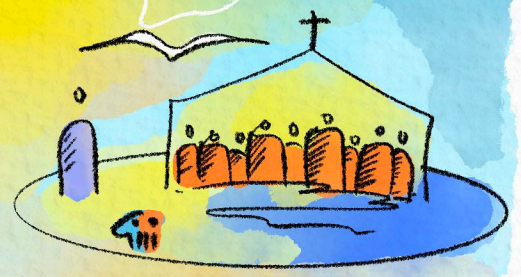
IN 1:9, WE READ A CLEAR PROMISE: "IF WE **CONFESS** OUR SINS, HE IS FAITHFUL AND RIGHTEOUS TO **FORGIVE** US OUR SIN, AND TO **CLEANSE** US FROM ALL UNRIGHTEOUSNESS."

SIN MUST BE **CONFESSED** ONLY IN THE **CIRCLE** IN WHICH IT WAS **COMMITTED**. FOR EXAMPLE, IF YOU HAVE A DIRTY **THOUGHT**, ONLY **GOD** IS IN THAT CIRCLE. SO YOU **CONFESS** SUCH SINS **ONLY TO GOD**.

IF HOWEVER YOU HAVE **HURT** **ANOTHER PERSON**, THEN THERE ARE **TWO PERSONS** IN THAT CIRCLE -- **GOD** AND THAT **OTHER PERSON**. THEN YOU MUST **CONFESS** TO **GOD** AS WELL AS TO THE **OTHER PERSON**.

IT IS A **STRUGGLE** WHEN WE HAVE CLIMBED JUST **500 FEET** OF THE MOUNTAIN, AND IT IS A **STRUGGLE** AFTER WE REACH **20,000 FEET** AS WELL, BECAUSE THERE WILL BE **UNCONSCIOUS SIN (UN-CHRISTLIKE AREAS)** IN OUR LIVES UNTIL THE VERY END

IF YOU HAVE HURT A **CHURCH**, THEN YOU MUST **CONFESS** TO **GOD** AND TO THE **WHOLE CHURCH PUBLICLY**.



PASTORS IN SOME GROUPS ARE TRYING TO CONTROL THEIR CONGREGATIONS BY MAKING PEOPLE CONFESS THEIR PRIVATE SINS IN PUBLIC. THEN WHEN THEY KNOW ALL ABOUT A PERSON'S PAST LIFE, THAT MAN CAN NEVER LEAVE THE GROUP BECAUSE THEY COULD BLACKMAIL HIM

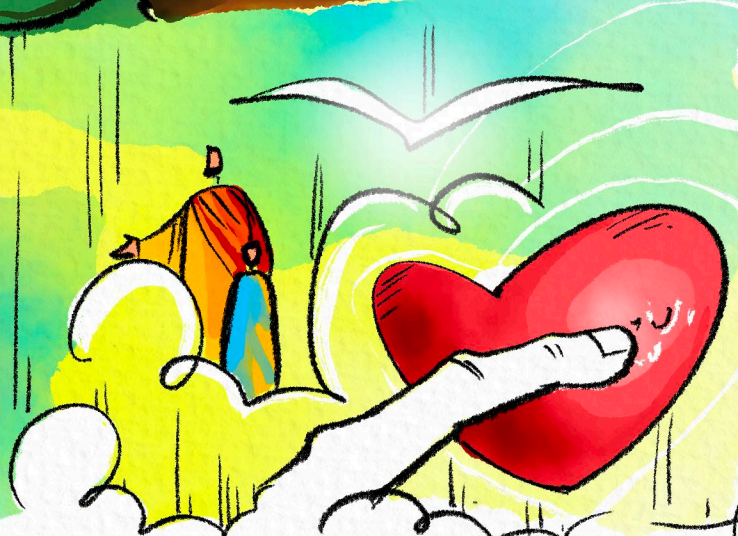


THEN IN 2:1, JOHN GOES ON TO SAY. "THESE THINGS I AM WRITING TO YOU SO THAT YOU SHOULD NOT SIN." THAT IS THE BALANCE FOUND IN SCRIPTURE: WE SHOULD NOT SIN, BUT WE MAY SIN. "AND IF ANYONE SINS, WE HAVE AN ADVOCATE WITH THE FATHER, JESUS CHRIST THE RIGHTEOUS."

IF WE ARE LEARNING MOUNTAIN-CLIMBING, THE INSTRUCTOR WON'T FIRST TELL US, "WELL, OF COURSE YOU ARE GOING TO FALL AND BREAK SOME BONES." NO. HE WILL TEACH US HOW TO CLIMB TO THE TOP WITHOUT FALLING. THEN HE WILL TELL US WHAT TO DO IF WE DO FALL.



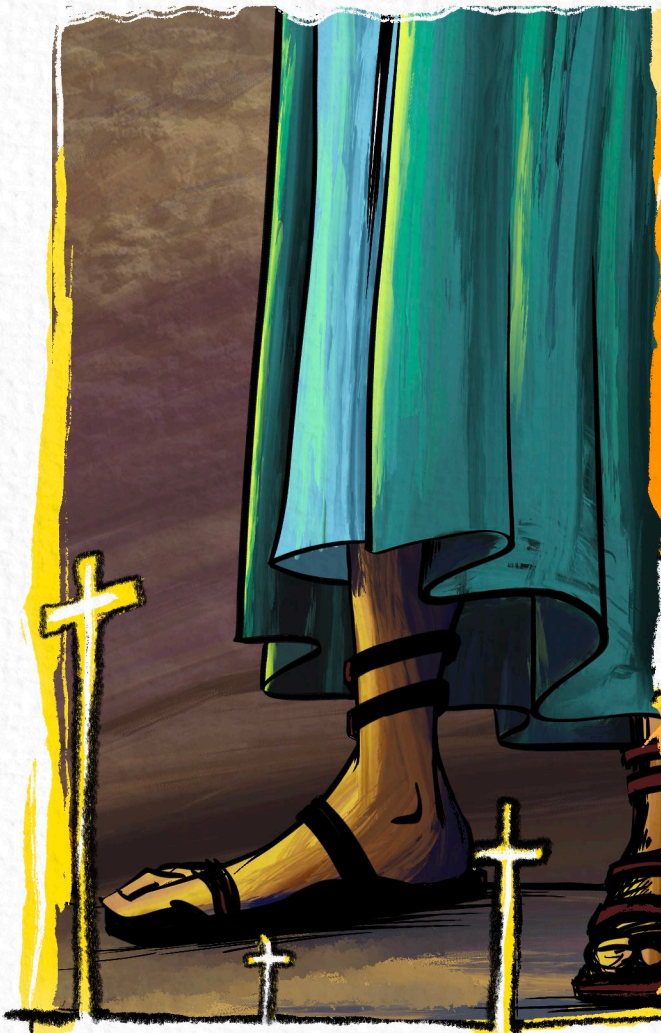
2:2 TELLS US CLEARLY THAT CHRIST DIED FOR THE SINS "OF THE WHOLE WORLD", NOT JUST THE ELECT, AS SOME TEACH.



IN 2:3, WE ARE TOLD HOW WE KNOW THAT WE HAVE COME TO KNOW JESUS.. BY KEEPING HIS COMMANDMENTS.



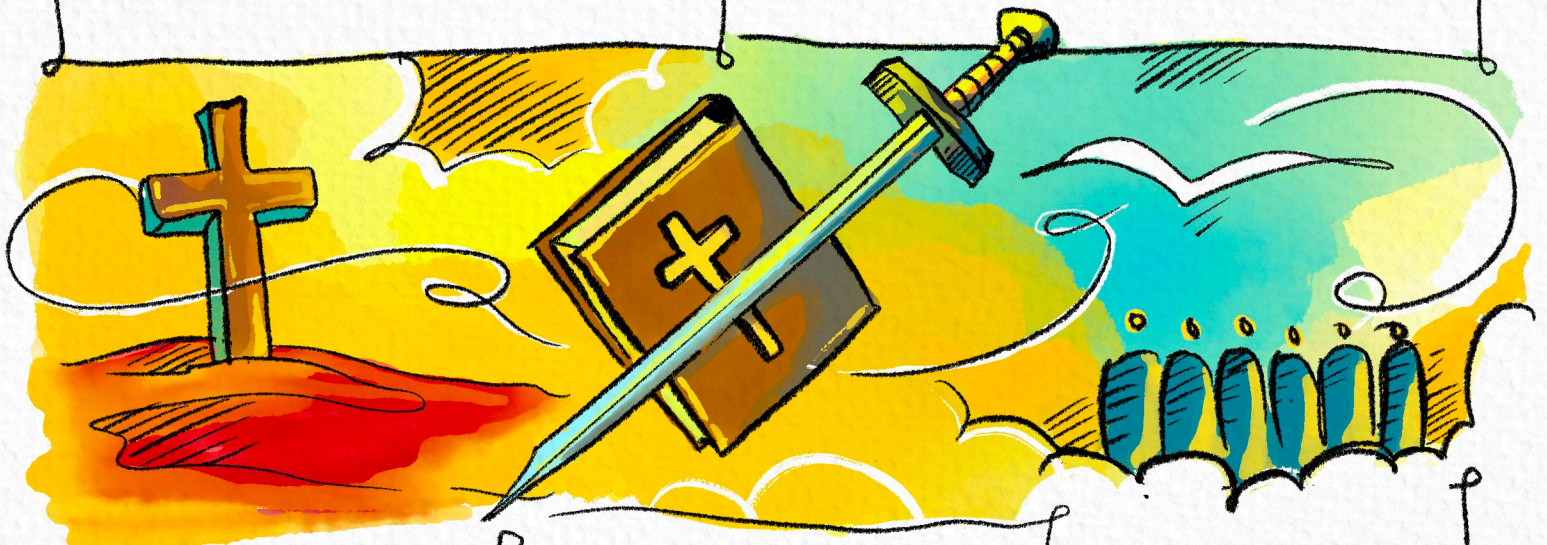
ONE WHO **HATES** HIS BROTHER IS STILL IN **DARKNESS**; BUT ONE WHO **LOVES** HIS BROTHER **ABIDES** IN THE **LIGHT** (2:9).



ANYONE WHO SAYS HE IS A CHRISTIAN SHOULD **LIVE AS CHRIST LIVED**" 2:6 (LIVING). WE MUST **NOT** EXCUSE OUR SINS BY SAYING "AFTER ALL, WE ARE **ONLY HUMAN**". BUT **WALKING** IS A **CONSCIOUS** ACT. SO **WALKING** AS JESUS DID RELATES ONLY TO THE **CONSCIOUS** AREA OF OUR LIVES.



THEN, IN 2:12--14, JOHN WRITES ABOUT THREE STAGES IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE, SPIRITUAL **BABYHOOD**, SPIRITUAL **YOUTH** AND SPIRITUAL **MATURITY**.



BABES ARE THOSE WHO KNOW ONLY THE **FORGIVENESS** OF THEIR **SINS** AND THAT **GOD** HAS BECOME THEIR **FATHER**.

THE **NEXT** LEVEL OF **MATURITY** IS WHEN WE LEARN HOW TO HAVE **GOD'S WORD** **ABIDING** **PERMANENTLY** IN OUR HEARTS SO THAT WE ARE **STRONG** AND CAN **OVERCOME SATAN** (2:13, 14).

WHEN YOU BECOME **MATURE**, YOU KNOW **GOD PERSONALLY**, THE **VALUES** HE HAS AND THE **PRINCIPLES** BY WHICH HE WORKS, ETC. SUCH **FATHERS** CAN **GUIDE** OTHER BELIEVERS

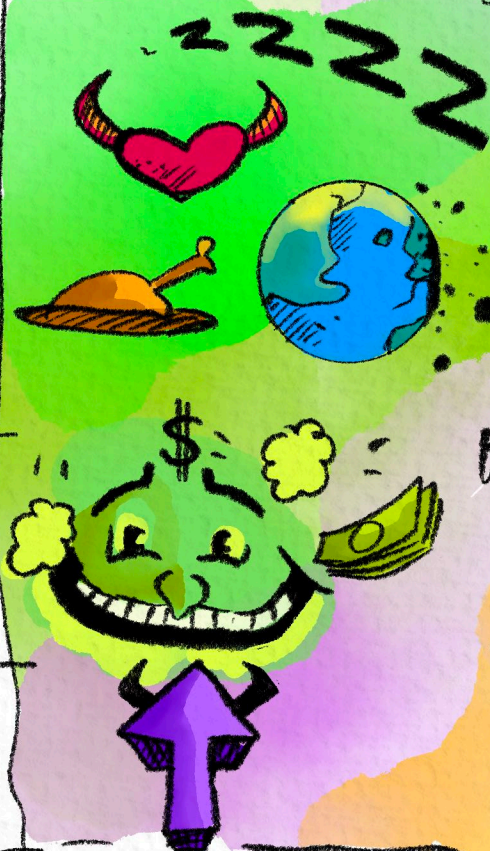
TO ALL THESE BELIEVERS WHO ARE AT DIFFERENT LEVELS OF MATURITY, JOHN GIVES AN EXHORTATION: "DON'T LOVE THE WORLD OR THE THINGS IN THE WORLD" (2:15).

THERE ARE THREE THINGS MENTIONED HERE THAT CONSTITUTE WHAT JOHN CALLS "THE WORLD":

THE LUST OF THE FLESH -- SEXUAL PASSIONS, OVEREATING, LAZINESS;

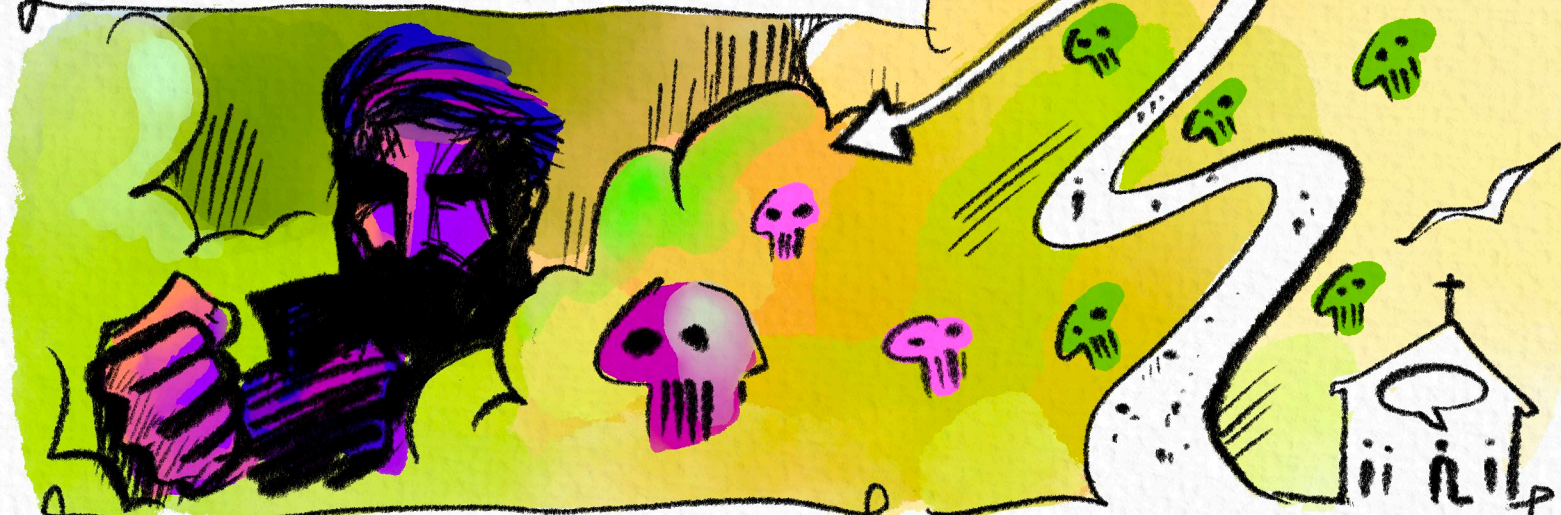
THE LUST OF THE EYES -- THE DESIRE TO BUY EVERYTHING THAT WE SEE, WHICH IS RELATED TO THE LOVE OF MONEY; AND

PRIDE -- THE GREATEST SIN OF ALL.



ALL THESE AND THE WORLD WILL PASS AWAY VERY SOON. ONLY THE ONE WHO DOES THE WILL OF THE FATHER WILL REMAIN FOREVER (2:17)

THEN JOHN GOES ON TO SPEAK ABOUT THE SPIRIT OF THE ANTICHRIST. THE ANTICHRIST IS ONE WHO WILL RISE UP IN THE LAST DAYS. BUT THERE WERE ALREADY PEOPLE WITH THE SPIRIT OF THAT ANTICHRIST IN THE CHURCH IN THE FIRST CENTURY.



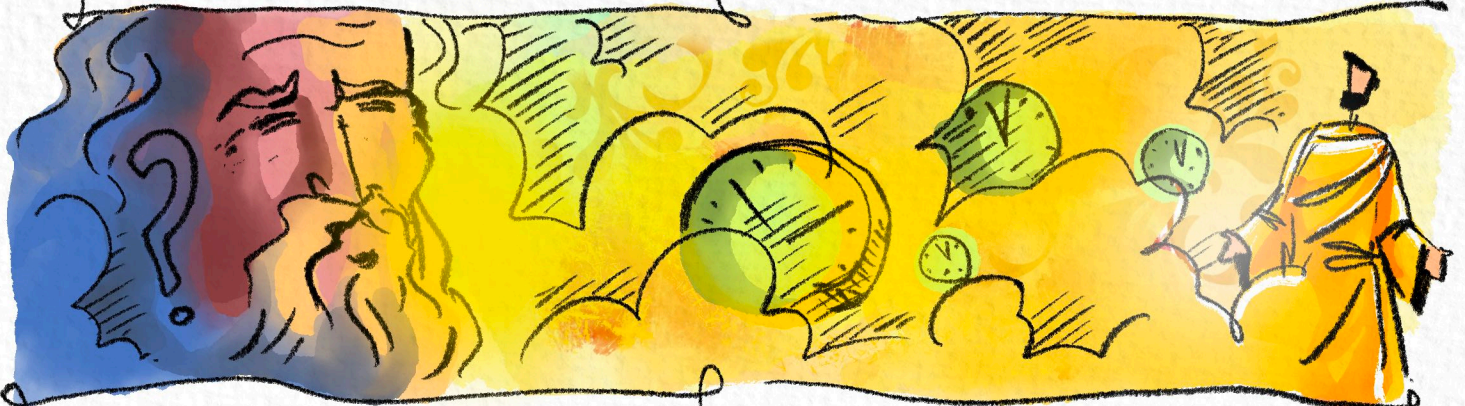
ONE MARK OF SUCH PEOPLE IS THAT THEY LOVE TO RULE OVER OTHER BELIEVERS. 2 THESSALONIANS 2 TELLS US THAT THAT THE ANTICHRIST WILL SIT IN THE TEMPLE AS GOD. ANOTHER MARK OF SUCH PEOPLE IS THAT THEY NEVER ASK FORGIVENESS FROM ANYONE -- JUST AS GOD NEVER HAS TO ASK FORGIVENESS FROM ANYONE.

THE PREACHING IN THE CHURCH MUST BE SO POWERFUL THAT THE ANTICHRISTS MUST GET OFFENDED AND GO SOMEWHERE ELSE. JOHN SAYS "THEY WENT OUT FROM US BECAUSE THEY DIDN'T BELONG WITH US" (2:19). THEIR SPIRIT DIDN'T AGREE WITH OUR SPIRIT.



JOHN GOES ON TO SAY, "...THE **ANointing** WILL TEACH YOU ALL THINGS" (2:27).

IN 3:1, JOHN SPEAKS ABOUT THE **FATHER'S GREAT LOVE** THAT ENABLES US TO BE HIS **CHILDREN!**



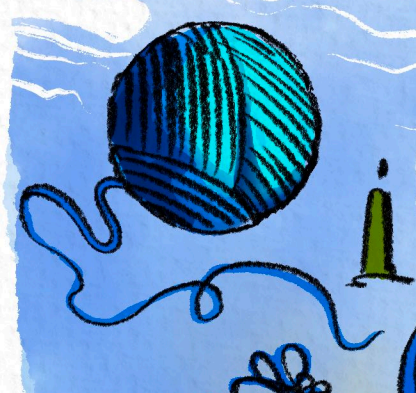
MANY ARE **CURIOUS** ABOUT THE **FUTURE** LIFE. BUT EVEN JOHN AT 95 SAYS HE IS **NOT** VERY **CLEAR** ABOUT IT. (3:2)

BUT WE KNOW THIS ABOUT THE FUTURE THAT WHEN **CHRIST APPEARS** WE WHO ARE **CHILDREN OF GOD** WILL BE LIKE HIM (3:2).



KNOWING THAT WE WILL BE LIKE HIM WHEN HE COMES, WE WILL KEEP ON **PURIFYING** OURSELVES, KEEPING **JESUS' TOTAL PURITY** AS OUR **GOAL**.


JESUS APPEARED ON **EARTH** TO ACCOMPLISH TWO THINGS: 1. TO **TAKE AWAY** OUR **SIN** (3:5), AND 2. TO **DESTROY** THE **WORKS OF THE DEVIL** (3:8).




WHEN WE WERE BORN
ON EARTH, IMAGINE
THAT WE WERE
GIVEN A LARGE
BEAUTIFUL BALL OF
THREAD, NEATLY
ROLLED UP.

WE BEGAN UNTYING
THIS BALL AS WE
GREW UP AND TIED
IT INTO NUMEROUS
KNOTS THROUGH OUR
SINS.

NOW THAT WE HAVE
LIVED MANY YEARS,
THIS BALL OF
THREAD HAS GOT A
MILLION KNOTS IN IT
--

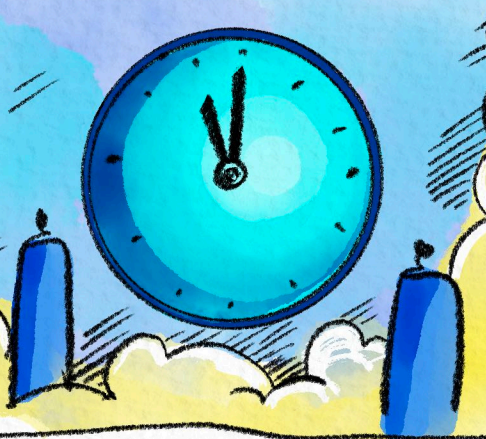


AND AS WE LOOK AT
IT, WE ARE
THOROUGHLY
DISCOURAGED AND
WISH WE COULD
START LIFE ALL OVER
AGAIN. BUT WE KNOW
THAT IS
IMPOSSIBLE.



JESUS HAS COME TO
"UNTIE" THE WORKS
OF THE DEVIL

..AND TO GIVE US
BACK A NEAT BALL
OF THREAD **ONCE**
AGAIN.

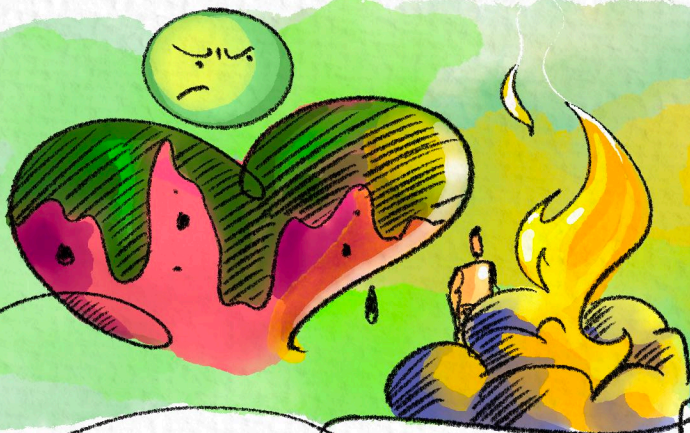


EVEN THOSE WHO CAME TO WORK IN THE
ELEVENTH HOUR GOT A REWARD. SO EVEN IF
YOU HAVE WASTED **90%** OF YOUR LIFE (11
HOURS OUT OF 12), YOU CAN COME TO THE LORD
NOW -- AND HE WILL **STILL** MAKE SOMETHING
GOOD OUT OF THE **REST** OF YOUR LIFE.

IN 3:9, JOHN SAYS, "NO ONE WHO IS BORN OF
GOD **PRACTISES SIN.**" WHAT THAT MEANS IS
THAT WHEN WE ARE **TRULY** BORN AGAIN (BORN
OF GOD) WE WON'T **KEEP ON** COMMITTING SIN.



A PERSON WHO IS BORN AGAIN MAY **SLIP** UP
OCCASIONALLY, BUT HE WON'T **CHOOSE** TO
KEEP ON COMMITTING SIN. THAT IS HOW WE
DISTINGUISH BETWEEN THE CHILDREN OF GOD
AND THE CHILDREN OF THE **DEVIL** (3:10).



THEN JOHN SPEAKS ABOUT LOVE IN 3:12. HE WARNS US NOT TO BE "LIKE **CAIN** WHO **HATED** HIS BROTHER." CAIN KILLED HIS BROTHER, BECAUSE CAIN'S DEEDS WERE **EVIL** WHILE HIS BROTHER'S WERE **RIGHTEOUS**.

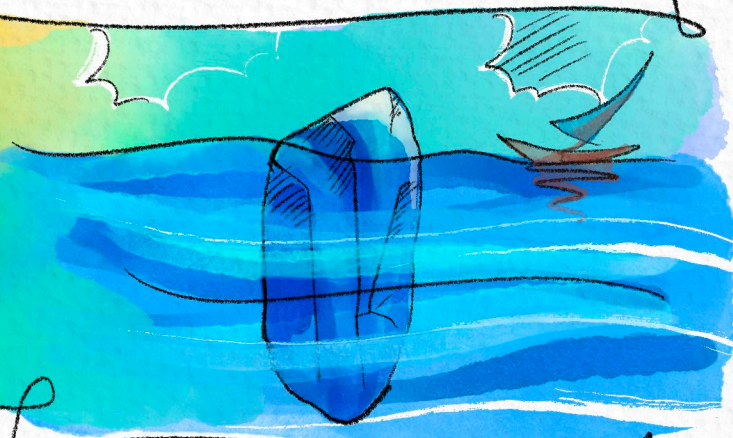


AND THEN JOHN SAYS, "DON'T BE SURPRISED IF THE **WORLD** HATES YOU" -- AS CAIN **HATED** ABEL. THE WORLD HATES THOSE WHOM **GOD** APPROVES OF.

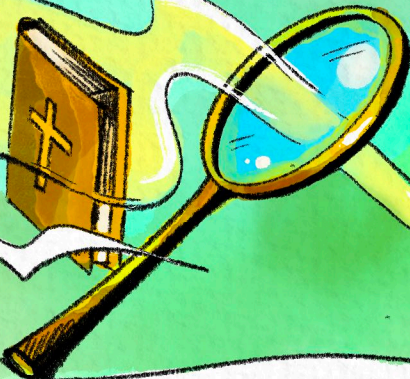


IN 3:16, JOHN GIVES US ONE PROOF THAT GOD'S LOVE IS DWELLING IN OUR HEARTS: "WE KNOW **LOVE** BY THIS THAT HE LAID DOWN HIS LIFE FOR US -- AND **WE OUGHT** TO **LAY** DOWN OUR LIFE FOR THE **BRETHREN**." OUR **LOVE** SHOULD BE SHOWN NOT IN **WORDS** BUT IN **DEEDS**.

3:20 MEANS THAT IF YOUR **CONSCIENCE** ITSELF IS CONVICTING YOU ABOUT SIN, YOU CAN IMAGINE HOW MUCH **MORE** SIN THERE IS IN YOUR LIFE THAT **GOD** SEES? YOU SEE ONLY **10%**, GOD SEES **100%**.



IT IS ENOUGH IF YOU KEEP YOUR **CONSCIENCE** CLEAR -- THAT **10%** THAT YOU CAN **SEE** AND GOD WILL **CLEANSE** THE **REST** AS WE SAW IN 1:7.



NEXT JOHN WARNS US NOT TO **BELIEVE** EVERY **SPIRIT** THAT OPERATES AMONG CHRISTIANS BUT TO **TEST** ALL OF THEM (4:1). IF IT IS OF GOD, IT WILL **EDIFY** YOU, IT WILL **LIFT** YOUR SPIRIT UP AND **BLESS** YOU.



IN 4:2, WE READ ANOTHER OF THE GREAT THEMES OF 1 JOHN: "**EVERY SPIRIT** THAT **CONFESSES** THAT **JESUS** HAS COME IN THE **FLESH** IS OF **GOD**."



IN 4:4, JOHN ENCOURAGES BELIEVERS BY SAYING, "YOU ARE FROM GOD, LITTLE CHILDREN. HE THAT IS IN YOU IS **GREATER** THAN HE THAT IS IN THE **WORLD**." THAT'S WHY WE CAN BE **OVERCOMERS** AT ALL TIMES AND WHY WE NEED NEVER BE **AFRAID** OF THE DEVIL OR OF ANYONE ELSE IN THE WORLD.

IN 4:12, JOHN REPEATS WHAT HE HAD EARLIER SAID IN HIS GOSPEL AS WELL: "NO ONE HAS **SEEN** GOD AT ANY TIME."

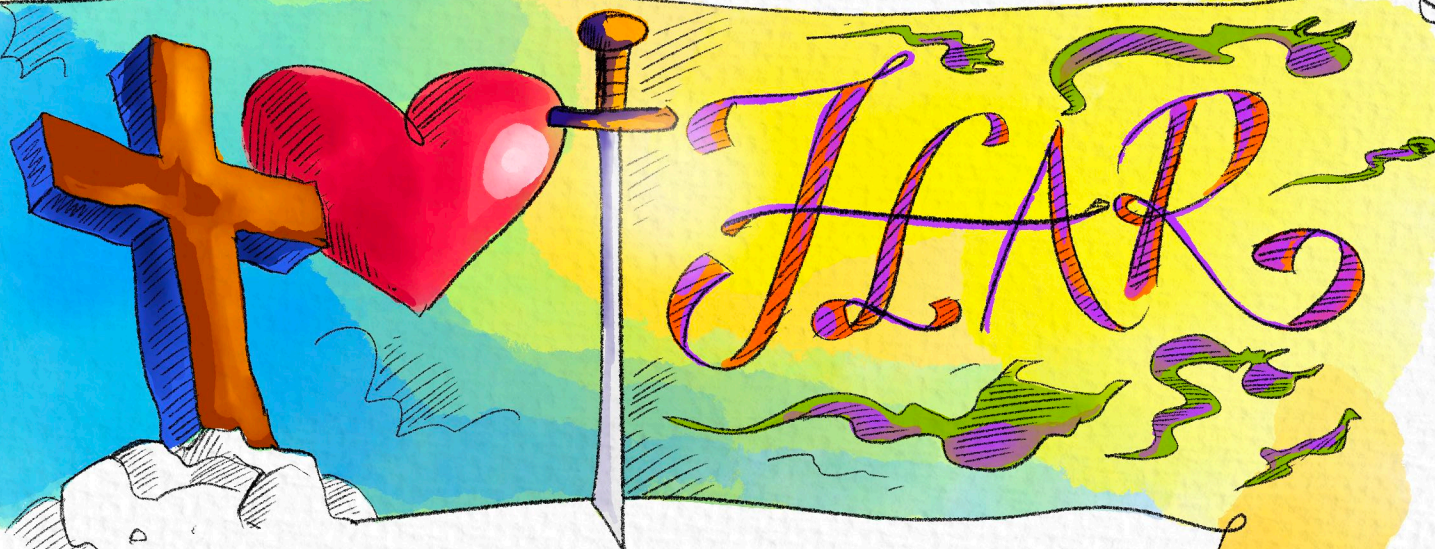


WHEN JESUS WAS HERE ON EARTH, PEOPLE SAW **GOD** IN **JESUS**. NOW **WE** (THE CHURCH) ARE THE **BODY** OF **CHRIST**. PEOPLE MUST SEE **GOD** IN **US**. THAT IS WHY WE MUST **LOVE** ONE ANOTHER.

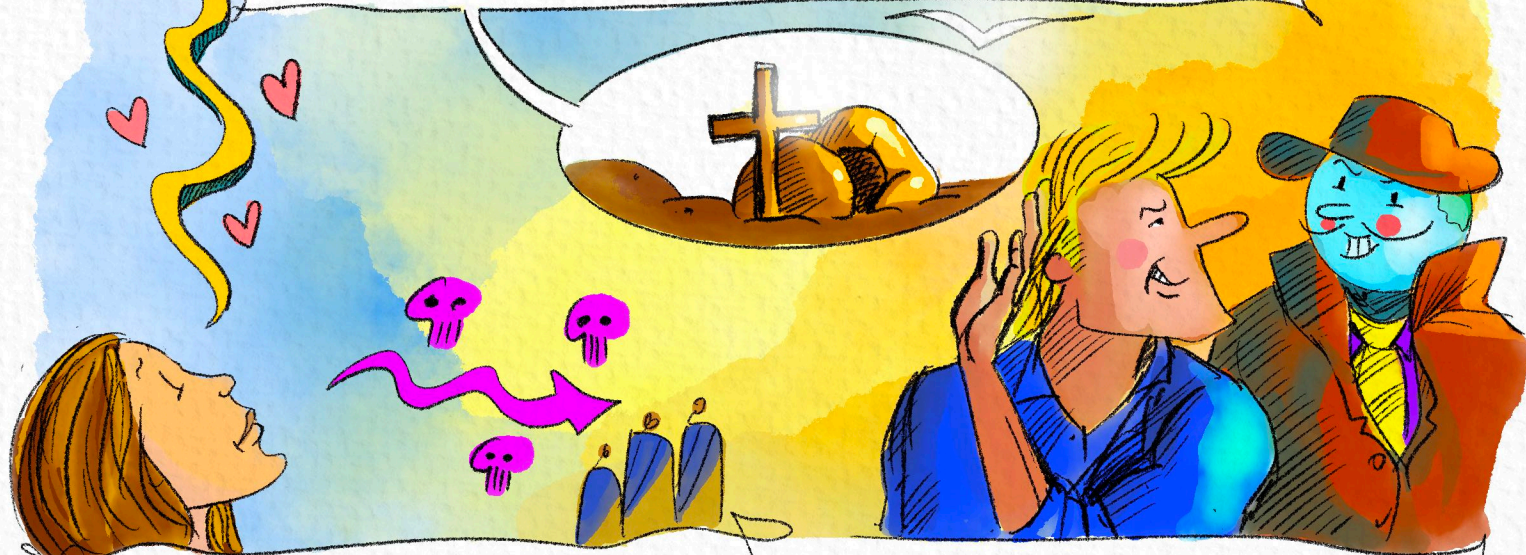


4:17 SAYS "AS JESUS IS, SO ARE WE IN THIS WORLD." LIVE WITH THAT **AUTHORITY** AND DON'T EVER LIVE IN ANY **FEAR**. WE WILL HAVE **NO FEAR** WHEN WE **REALISE** HOW **MUCH** GOD **LOVES** US (4:18).

FEAR CAN COME IN ONLY WHEN WE THINK THAT GOD WANTS TO **PUNISH** US FOR SOMETHING. BUT THERE IS **NO** FEAR WHEN WE RECOGNISE THAT GOD LOVES US **IMMENSELY**. AND WE LOVE THE LORD IN RETURN BECAUSE HE **FIRST LOVED** US (4:19).

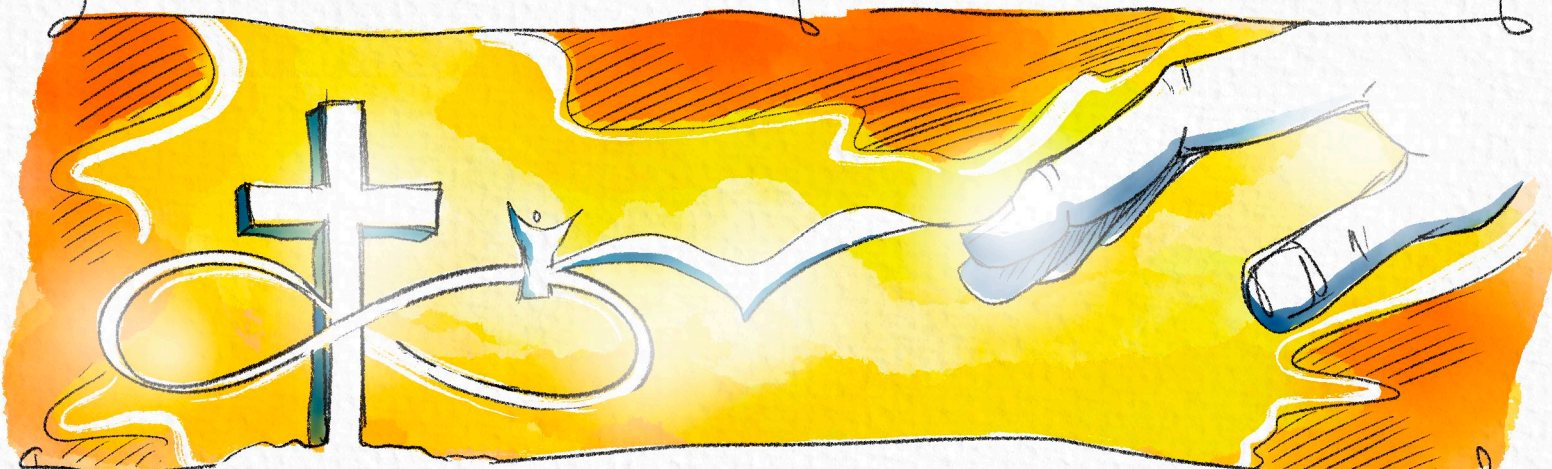


THE MORE WE RECOGNISE HOW MUCH JESUS LOVED US, THE MORE OUR **LOVE** WILL GROW FOR HIM -- SPONTANEOUSLY. **PERFECT LOVE** CASTS OUT **FEAR**.



BUT NO-ONE CAN SAY THAT HE **LOVES GOD** IF HE **HATES** ANY BROTHER IN CHRIST. SUCH A PERSON IS NOT A **BELIEVER** BUT A **LIAR** (4:20). HERE IT IS REFERRING TO A BROTHER "WHOM YOU CAN **SEE**" (4:20).

IT IS BY **FAITH** THAT WE OVERCOME THE WORLD -- IT IS WHEN BELIEVERS DON'T BELIEVE EVERYTHING THAT JESUS SAID THAT THEY FIND THE WORLD VERY **ATTRACTIVE** -- AND ARE **OVERCOME** BY ITS **TEMPTATIONS**.



BEFORE JOHN CLOSES HIS LETTER, HE ONCE AGAIN ASSURES EVERY **TRUE** BELIEVER THAT HE "HAS **ETERNAL LIFE**" (5:13).



AND HE ALSO ASSURES THEM THAT WHEN THEY PRAY FOR ANYTHING ACCORDING TO THE **WILL OF GOD**, THEIR PRAYERS WILL BE **HEARD AND ANSWERED BY GOD (5:14)**.

IN 5:16, JOHN URGES US TO **PRAY FOR BELIEVERS WHO WE SEE COMMITTING SOME SIN**, SO THAT **GOD CAN DELIVER THEM FROM DEATH AND LEAD THEM TO LIFE**.

IN 5:19, JOHN STATES THAT THE **WHOLE WORLD IS LYING UNDER THE POWER OF SATAN**. **MOST BELIEVERS DON'T BELIEVE THIS**. IF WE BELIEVE IT, WE WILL BE **CAREFUL IN DEALING WITH EVERYTHING IN THIS WORLD -- ITS FINANCIAL SYSTEM, ITS EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM, ITS FASHIONS, ITS ENTERTAINMENTS, ITS MUSIC AND ITS ENTIRE VALUE SYSTEM -- FOR IT HAS ALL BEEN POISONED BY SATAN**.



JOHN'S CONCLUDING WORD IS: "LITTLE CHILDREN, **GUARD YOURSELVES FROM IDOLS**" (5:21). THAT MEANS, "**GIVE UP EVERYTHING IN YOUR LIFE THAT HINDERS GOD FROM HAVING FIRST PLACE IN YOUR LIFE**". AMEN.