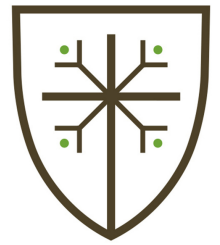


SERMON NOTES



September 18, 2022

SERMONS ON FIRST JOHN

Reasons to Stay

All Saints Presbyterian Church

SERMON INFO

TITLE

Reasons to Stay: Being and Doing

PREACHER

Rev. Tim Frickenschmidt

TEXTS

Ezekiel 37:1-10
1 John 2:28-3:10
John 3:1-8

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Are there times when your soul feels like Ezekiel's valley of dry bones? Where do you see the Spirit breathing new life into it?
2. Tim said, "new birth is not a static reality. It grows in us." What are ways in which you've seen evidence of this in your own or someone else's life?

SERMON IN SUMMARY

So far in first John, we've seen John expose two lies being spread by those who are leaving the church. The first, which we looked at last week, was a lie of belief, denying that Jesus was the Christ. This week, the lie is a lie of doing. The lie the world tells us is that it's ok to live however we want. That it doesn't matter what we do or how we live our lives. Why is this not true for the Christian?

The Christian has been born again with the life of God. Christ appeared to give us that new life. As Tim said, "born-again" is not just a type of Christianity, it IS Christianity. We need this new birth because without it, our souls are like the valley of dry bones in Ezekiel - skeletons with no life and no chance of life.

But John tells us God's seed abides in us. The use of this form of the word "seed" would have been scandalous in John's day (and ours!) - translated as the seed of a man. The seed that produces life. The seed of God grows new life in the Christian. And the kind of "doing" characteristic of the Christian life is a result of that new birth. The Christian does (i.e. practices) righteousness because it is simply the nature of the life that lives in them. The fruit of our outward life is the result of our spiritual nature.

Our doing is an expression of our spiritual *belonging*. The devil, John says, has been sinning, deceiving, from the very beginning. Those who went out from the church were throwing lies around - lies about who we are, who God is, how we should live. They became like the one to whom they belonged, the devil. Those who belong to Jesus become like Jesus. Everyone has a master and our life, our "doing," reveals who or what it is.

Finally, new birth is a current reality, but it is not a static reality. It grows in us. We stay near to Jesus because we long to be like him, to see face to face him who is the very embodiment of the new life that lives within us.