



“The First thing to teach your children”

1 John 1:1-2:2

by Pastor Dave Goehmann

April 8, 2018

There are fewer and fewer people alive today that were eyewitnesses of Major events in history. The Great depression, World War 2, Vietnam, and the list continues. It's weird to consider that High School Seniors today were maybe a year old if that during 911.

These events greatly influence our way of life today. Some think the absence of having eyewitnesses in the younger people today that it creates a less grateful and more entitlement type of culture.

History books don't give these events the same freshness compared to eyewitness accounts which are retold by Veterans and just the average citizen who is was an eyewitness to cultural shifts such as the Great Depression.

These eyewitness accounts and stories passed down by generations are extremely important. That's why in the book of First John, John starts off by explaining that yes, he and the other disciples were eyewitnesses of Jesus as he did miracles, taught parables, and lived a flawless life. Not only that, but John himself was thee best and possibly the only disciple who was literally at the foot of the cross as he consoled Mary the mother of Jesus.



John also, as he ran ahead of Peter, could be considered the first disciple to be the eyewitness of the empty tomb. John having witnessed the crucifixion, ran to the tomb, not necessarily because he was more athletic, but possibly more eager to see for himself that Jesus had actually risen from the dead.

Also it is said of John that he looked and believed. Quite possibly the first disciple to witness the crucifixion, resurrection, and first to faith that Jesus rose from the dead. The women of course were the very first witnesses as they even looked standing at a distance of the crucifixion, and being the first at the tomb, but John is a very close second.

Point being John says in his first letter right off the bat,

1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—1 John 1:1

Peter makes the same point in his second letter, 2 Peter 1:16

¹⁶ For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

And so we have these personal letters, written in the Bible, in our hands that tell us what happened and what we need to know.



As we would have the opportunity to share the story of 911, so these disciples share with us their eyewitness account. So what is the main message that John wants us to know as he looks back at Jesus and how that impacts our lives today? What is the first thing we should learn?

Well, it's much like the first thing we need to teach our little children. We teach them a very important concept in relationships, and that is, to say I'm sorry. We understand as parents that first of all that means accepting responsibility for our actions.

How fitting and also sad that Adam and Eve needed to learn real quick this concept as sin had been introduced in their lives for the first time. Adam quote "It was the woman" and technically he kind of blames God for making a woman. And Eve does the classic, "The devil made me do it" kind of attitude. No you two, it's actually your own stinking fault. Who done it? You done it.

But not only teaching I'm sorry, we also teach the give a hug concept to little children. "Ok you two, give each other a hug." Wouldn't that have been funny if God would have said right then and there, "Ok you two, Adam and Eve, give each other a hug and that would have settled it.

We know that it would not have settled it. And if we think about it, as parents, that doesn't necessarily settle it with our kids either. You have probably seen the fake



hug when the kids stand really far apart or they can't look the other person in the eye.

Or worst of all, they just refuse to hug. Then what do you do?

What if I told you, especially young parents, that there was a new way of parenting that is revolutionary. All experienced parents know that there is no guidebook on parenting. But what if I told you there is a magic key to parenting. What if I told you it has just been discovered and it has been proven to raise amazing children. This new parenting method is revolutionary. Do you want to know the secret to parenting? It's called "Resurrection Parenting!"

I know it's great, I made it up myself! Jesus rose from the dead and that is key. Often times we point out that Jesus died on the cross, which combines the full package deal of forgiveness and eternal life. Yet, it is most often forgotten is the resurrection.

Wouldn't that be cool if every time one of our kids acknowledged it was their fault we would shout out Alleluia, Christ is risen! And then instead of a hug we would expect them to say back to us, "He is risen indeed. Alleluia!" I know, just saying the words doesn't do the trick. But in some way can't we communicate that Jesus conquered sin?

Now don't get too excited, children don't get off that easy. And neither did Jesus when he died for you. Sin is still serious. But again, to prove my point Paul says just a



bit later in 1 Corinthians 15: ¹⁷ And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins.”

John writes it this way right off the bat, “If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, but if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just, will forgive our sin and cleans us from all unrighteousness.”

Note the most forgotten words and some of the most important words in that sentence. “God who is faithful and just” God is indeed faithful to his promises and just in his decision to anoint Jesus as the one who has the right to forgive.

We do things right and put first things first in the worship service. We confess our sins and receive God’s perfect cleansing forgiveness. From God’s perspective it is not only said, it is done. Jesus died and rose, and that settles it.

Like little children we blame others. Like little children, we hide our sin from others. Like little children we avoid taking responsibility, we would even lie rather than confess the truth.

But what have we been taught by our parents? Is it that we should be grateful? Is it that we should be good kids and behave ourselves. Is it that they don’t know what it’s like to go through real hard times?



Or is it that we are grateful because of Jesus. Or is it that we press on to live a Godly life because of what God has done for us? Or is it that we have been through some hard times but God got us through that and so he can get you through too.

It's the same story but told from a different point of view. We survived the Depression! We won the War! We learned a few good things about life through the events we witnesses. And we hope to pass on to you that which we have received, the forgiveness of our sins and our very own resurrection stories including the resurrection we expect to have on the Last day!

And we don't just share these stories with our little kids. We share these stories with our grown kids. Other kids, and people who are just big kids in an old persons body. That means everyone.

Each one of us has his or her own resurrection story. It's your unique story how you made it through the hard stuff. And maybe there is some hard stuff right now, maybe we can go through it together, even with our own little children.

"Daddy, it will be ok, cause grandma is in heaven." Well said, little child. How we wish things were so simple. And they are, but that doesn't make them easy.



God has given us the key, it's called the office of the keys in the catechism. That peculiar church power to declare the forgiveness of sins as if Christ himself shared that forgiveness with you.

In confirmation class we talked about this with the students, and if I recall correctly the parents were there. We came to the conclusion that many of us don't realize. The office of the keys is not just for pastor's. And the office of the keys isn't the pastor's office keys. And the office of the keys is not the keys to the church building. It's your keys, the priesthood of all believers.

You have the power to declare today a resurrection day. You have the power to proclaim Jesus resurrection for anyone and everyone. As a believer in Christ, whether you are a parent or not, you have the power of the resurrection yourself. Think about what that means when you come into situations that are hard. Think about that resurrection power that you have when someone needs forgiveness

Jesus rose from the dead. That settles it, not hugs. And if there is some way, somewhere that we can communicate that to little children, that's the first thing we need to teach them above all else. And as God's little children ourselves, that's the first thing we need to learn. Alleluia, Christ is risen! Amen.

