Grace Guide

 Intro 1 John

 April 30, 2017

Southport, NC was home to one of North Carolina’s most famous authors, Robert Rourk. One of his most beloved books was entitled, The Old Man and the Boy, and is autobiographical in nature. It is the story of a grandfather passing on the knowledge of fishing poles, shotguns, hunting dogs, and life in general. Sometimes serious, oftentimes comical, the old man imparts wisdom that helps the young boy navigate through life. When the young boy comes home with a report card containing too many D’s, the old man was not going to give any consolation or comfort toward the boy’s predicament at home. Instead, he explained that all those subjects that seemed insignificant next to catching fish or shooting quail were actually extremely important. The old man explained that even though he might never use those subjects, they were designed to enlarge his brain. The boy was puzzled. The old man explained that eventually he would need a gallon sized brain for when he grew up. At present, his was barely a quart. Such wisdom and perspective gave the boy insights into the process of growing to maturity.

The apostle John is like the old grandfather. Being the last remaining disciple who walked with Jesus, he was loved and honored by the whole church. In this epistle, he is passing on to us lessons learned from walking with Jesus for many years.

**Discussion- Read through chapter one, and be prepared to share what the wise old man is speaking to you. What truths do you find most helpful? Share with your group.**

Some of the themes that John teaches us about are those of joy, knowledge and assurance of salvation.

**Discussion- Consider one thing that you’ve learned from walking with the Lord. Be ready to share with your group what you, as a mature believer, would share with someone younger.**

1 John also emphasizes the reality of knowing Jesus (walk in the light as He is in the light).

In 1858, David Livingstone, already world famous, returned to Africa to find the source of the Nile. He reached the southern end of Lake Tanganyika in 1867 and moved on toward the interior of central Africa, then dropped out of sight. In 1869 the New York Herald sent Henry Morton Stanley on an expedition to find him. After many hardships, Stanley found Livingstone on October 28, 1871, and remained with the famous missionary-explorer until March 1872. These months made a profound impact on Stanley. He said,

In 1871 I went to him as prejudiced as the biggest atheist in London. To a reporter and correspondent such as I, who had only to deal with wars, mass meetings, and political gatherings, sentimental matters were entirely out of my province. But there came for me a long time of reflection. I was out there away from a worldly world. I saw this solitary old man there, and asked myself, "How on earth does he stop here—is he cracked, or what? What is it that inspires him?" For months after we met I simply found myself listening to him, wondering at the old man carrying out all that was said in the Bible—"Leave all things and follow Me!" But little by little his sympathy for others became contagious; my sympathy was aroused, seeing his piety, his gentleness, his zeal, his earnestness, and how he went quietly about his business. I was converted by him, although he had not tried to do it.

What H. M. Stanley had seen was the life of God in one of God's own.

**Picture yourself in this position. What are you saying to others through your life?**

**Francis of Assisi is famous for saying, “Preach always. If necessary, use words.”**

**Trivia Question-**

**As you read chapter one, guess which verse provides the basis of the founding principle of Grace Community Church. We began focusing on this verse while we were just a fledgling Bible Study meeting twice a month. Can anyone guess what it is? Your study leader has the correct answer.**