

True Fellowship with God Part I  
*Requires a Biblical View of Christ*  
(I John 1:1-4)

**Introduction:**

1. If there is one thing we must get right it is this; “Jesus is the Christ, Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:16), and “there is no way to the Father but through Him”.
  - Jesus declared this to His disciples; “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me”. (John 14:6)
  - Jesus also declared these words to Martha; “I am the resurrection and the life, he who believes in Me will live, even if he dies, and everyone who live and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this”? (John 11:25-26)
- 1) Martha got it right when she responded; “Yes, Lord, I have believed that You are the Christ, the Son of God, even He who comes into the world”. (John 11:27)
- 2) Eternal life can only be given by God. When Jesus declared these words it completely offended those who heard Him because they rejected Him as the Messiah and wanted to kill Jesus on the spot; “My sheep hear my voice and I know then and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of My hand. My Father who has given them to Me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father hands. I and the Father are one”. (John 10:27-30).
- Those who reject Jesus are rejecting God (Matthew 10:32-33,38,40, John 3:18, John 5:18-24, 33-47, John 13:20, John 15:1-11)

2. Take note of a few various testimonies from Scripture regarding Jesus Christ:
  - John the Baptist when he saw Jesus and prepared to baptize Him declared these words; “Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29)
  - Nathaniel (one of the 12 disciples) when called by Jesus to follow Him declared these words; “Rabbi, You are the Son of God, You are the King of Israel” (John 1:47)
  - When Jesus performed the miracle at Cana where He turned the water into wine, John records these words; “This beginning of His signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him” (John 2:11)
  - Here is testimony from the Samaritan woman and other Samaritans who heard her testimony; “From that city many of the Samaritans believed in him because of the words of the woman who testified, He told me all the things that I have done....many more believed because of His word, and they were saying to the woman; it is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this One is indeed the Savior of the world” (John 4:39-42)
  - Simon Peter declared this about Jesus; “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:16). In the Gospel of John it is recorded this way; “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have believed and have come to know that You are the Holy One of God” (John 6:68-69)
  - The very testimony of the life of the Apostle Paul is evidence that he too recognized and understood Jesus to be the Son of God and Savior of the world.
3. There is countless evidence and testimony throughout the over 2000 years of church history that those who follow Jesus know without a doubt that He is the Christ, the Son of the living God.
4. Therefore, John begins his letter with the clear understanding to all of his readers that fellowship with God and fellowship with Christ are the same.

## The Joy of Knowing Jesus – The Incarnate Word (I John 1:1)

### 1. A Biblical understanding of Jesus' deity

- John reference to “that which was from the beginning” could be taken one of two ways:
  - 1) He could be referring to the eternality of Christ as he did in his gospel account; “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being” (John 1:1-2)
  - 2) The other possibility is that he is referring to the beginning of the proclamation of the gospel as witnessed by the apostles who lived with him, were taught by him, and followed him.
- John could have either of these possibilities in mind because; Jesus is real, He is God, He is eternal, and those who confess Jesus as Lord and Savior (Romans 10:9-10), follow Him because He is Truth. (John 8:12, **John 8:31-32**)
- John is writing to believers and as such doesn't need to prove Jesus is God – **this is a given fact to a follower of Christ** and should require no further explanation. What he is saying is that this same Jesus that declared Himself to be God is the same Jesus that they (the apostles – who had direct contact with Jesus) are proclaiming. The evidence of Jesus' deity is overwhelming and affirmed by the presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer. (John 15:26-27, 16:13-15)
- To follow Christ is to believe that He is God
- To deny that Jesus is God is to unite oneself with the evil one; “If God were your father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and have come from God, for I have not even come on My own initiative, but He sent Me. Why do you not understand what I am saying? It is because you cannot hear My word. You are of your father the devil and you want to do the desires of your father.....He who is of God hears the words of God, for this reason you do not hear them, because you are not of God” (John 8:42-47)

## 2. A Biblical understanding of Jesus' humanity

- Jesus is God in human flesh. (**I John 1:1**, see also Matthew 1:23, John 1:1,14)
  - 1) It is no accident that John uses the phrase **“Word of Life”** because that is an accurate description of who Jesus is; *“In the beginning was the **Word**, and the **Word** was with God and the **Word** was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him and apart from Him nothing came into being. In him was **life** and the **life** was the **light of men**”* (**John 1:1-4**)
  - 2) *“And the **Word** became flesh and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth”* (John 1:14)
  - 3) John uses the natural human senses of \_\_\_\_\_ (*they heard him with their own ears*), of \_\_\_\_\_ (*They saw Him with their own eyes*), and of \_\_\_\_\_ (*they touched him with their own hands*) to describe the physical nature of Jesus.
  - 4) **Jesus was born** of a virgin (just as the Scripture said He would – **Isaiah 7:14**) and just as the angel Gabriel declared He would; *“The angel said to her, do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end”* (Luke 1:30-33)
  - 5) The angel also declared to the shepherds; *“For today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior who is Christ the Lord”* (Luke 2:11)
- The evidence of Jesus' humanity is without question an undisputable fact and this is precisely what John is declaring to his readers.

## 3. A person who chooses to follow Christ may not fully grasp the deity and humanity of Christ but to deny that He is God incarnate is to not truly know Him and to not know Christ is to not know God.

## The Joy of Sharing About Jesus – The Incarnate Word (I John 1:2)

1. Take note of what John says here in verse 2; “and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us”.
  - In following the context - Who is the “life that was manifested”? \_\_\_\_\_
  - It is important to see that John’s focus is on \_\_\_\_\_ and not on himself or anything that the Apostles did or accomplished.
  - One very clear identifying mark of a false teacher or a false belief system is their focus on someone or something other than \_\_\_\_\_.
2. One thing if not “the thing” that makes us (*those who follow Christ*) different from others (*those who don’t follow Christ*) is our fundamental belief that Jesus is who He claims to be!
  - It is that belief in Jesus; “For if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses resulting in salvation. For the Scripture says, whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed” (Romans 10:9-11), that unites our hearts with God and restores our lives back into fellowship with Him.
  - It is the transforming power of the Holy Spirit that makes us new; “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, the old things passed away, behold new things come” (II Corinthians 5:17), and that transformation (which occurs at the moment of salvation), is evidenced in our love for Jesus and our testimony for what He has done for us and for all who believe in Him.
3. A true and genuine follower of \_\_\_\_\_ is not confused who He is and will have no problem testifying to others that He is Lord and the only way to the Father. (Acts 4:12, John 14:6)
4. Our willing testimony about Jesus as Lord and Messiah mark us as genuine followers of Him because that is consistent with one who follows \_\_\_\_\_.

## **The Joy of Fellowship with Jesus – The Incarnate Word (I John 1:3-4)**

1. John is making a clear connection here:

- The same \_\_\_\_\_, whom they (*himself and the other apostles*) saw with their own eyes, and heard with their own ears; is the same \_\_\_\_\_ that they (*himself and the other apostles*) are proclaiming to those who hear the message of the gospel (in this case it was the recipients of John's letters).
  - 1) The message of salvation is about \_\_\_\_\_, it has always been about \_\_\_\_\_, and the only true message of our day continues to be about \_\_\_\_\_!
  - 2) The fact that John uses two of our natural sense (hearing and seeing) adds emphasis to the fact that he wants the reader to know that Jesus was a real person, not a spirit, and not some figment of their imagination as some of the false teachers of his day were promoting.
  - 3) Any belief system that denies that Jesus was a real person, or denies that He was God does not have fellowship with God for if they did have fellowship with God then they would believe that Jesus was God.
- John in essence was “reaffirming” the basic truths of their faith by reminding the recipients of his letter (who would naturally have been believers or they would have had great trouble in understanding this concept or the rest of the Epistle for that matter), that because of their faith they stand secure in Jesus Christ. (See also John 1:12, Ephesians 1:7, 13-14)
  - 1) This is evidenced by fellowship with God, with His Son Jesus Christ, with the apostles themselves and ultimately with all believers. (Romans 8:16)
  - 2) It is because of that fellowship that a believer chooses to walk in the light (something John will discuss in vs. 7), rather than desire/choose to walk in darkness.
  - 3) Simply put; it is a natural thing for a believer to want to be in fellowship with God, whereas an unbeliever does not. (See I Corinthians 1:18, and 2:14)

2. John concludes this opening of his letter with a wonderful statement; “These things we write that our joy may be full” (I John 1:4)
  - John invested himself in others (as did all of the apostles) and nothing would please him more than to see the recipients of his letter walking in the Light and being in fellowship with God.
    - 1) He would later write these words in his third Epistle; “I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in truth” (III John 4)
    - 2) Walking in the Light or being in fellowship with God is natural for the believer and a good benchmark that we belong to God.
  - The aim for the Apostle John was that the recipients of his letter would live in obedience to Christ (by not denying Him and by living in fellowship with Him) and in so doing it would bring joy to John and the other apostles.

### **Concluding Thoughts:**

1. It was necessary for John to clearly spell out to his readers that on this one thing we must not err and that is; Eternal life comes from God and eternal life is made possible through only One source which is \_\_\_\_\_, The Word of Life.
2. John further states that fellowship with God is only possible through \_\_\_\_\_, The Word of Life.
3. His appeal to make his joy complete comes through knowing and seeing other followers of Jesus Christ doing the same thing that the apostles were doing; which was having fellowship with the Father, and with His son Jesus Christ.
4. Questions/Comments: