

## 1Jhn 01 - Disciples have Fellowship - 1Jn 1:1-4

*Dave Shepardson, wordbymail.com*

There is **trouble** in Christianity  
Trouble like we've never seen before

The **World** is creeping into the church  
The Philosophies of the World are infiltrating the church

Christians think they can live like the World,  
even **LOVE** the World - & still be Disciples of Christ

There's even a move to **DENY**  
the basic truths of **WHO** Jesus Christ **IS**

People are **picking & choosing** the teachings of Jesus  
that go with their own desire & plans

With all this going on it's getting harder & harder  
to even tell **WHO** is a true disciple  
or **WHAT** a true disciple even looks like

**Someone** has got to lay out the fundamentals of what it means  
to actually follow Jesus Christ as Lord - **AMEN** ???

---

Now - **wait a minute** - guys - I just listed the concerns  
the Apostle John had for Christians in the **FIRST CENTURY**

Everything I just said relates to what was happening  
in the Christian church - Less than **70 years** after the Resurrection

**Did YOU** think - I was describing the state of Christianity **TODAY??**  
or at the end of the **FIRST CENTURY** ???

**MAN** - Some things **NEVER** change !! - **DO THEY??**

Today we begin a Verse-by-Verse series in **1John**

& the battles we have to be True disciples of Christ **TODAY**  
are the SAME battles the believers had in the **FIRST CENTURY**

**Let's Pray** - & we'll start this great book

---

As we approach **1 John**  
we approach one the last books of the bible to be written

There is only **ONE** of the original 12 Apostles still alive -  
& he is **OLD** - maybe nearing even 100 years old

& as the aging Apostle gets ready to finish his work  
What's his **Battle Cry to** the church in 1John ?

in the midst of a Faith that was **ALREADY** being watered down  
by the "**Mixing In**" of the philosophies of the world

**1John** calls us back to - - the **Basics of Discipleship**

& it just so happens that God is calling us here at **CCN**  
back to the Basics of Discipleship

so it seemed like a **pretty good fit** to me

When **1John** was written  
Christians were being deceived by teachings - - -

that **MIXED** Christian truth - with the **Philosophies** of the world

& John **writes** this epistle (reads more like a sermon)  
to encourage true discipleship,

in order to **strengthen & build up** the church,  
& to limit the damage done by those misleading the believers

That approach makes 1John perfect for the **1<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY**  
& for the **21<sup>ST</sup> Century**

---

**Doesn't it** blow your mind - that by the turn of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century  
there was already a strong influence

to **combine** the **Gospel** message  
with the **Worldly** Philosophies of the day

this **Combo-Mix**, of the Gospel with Worldly Philosophies  
eventually became known as **Gnosticism**

which **ended up** taking on different shapes & sizes,  
because it combined different philosophies

But The **BIGGEST TRUTH**  
that Gnosticism worked so hard to **DENY**

was that **Jesus** Christ was God **MANIFESTED** in the flesh,  
in fact - **they denied** He was actually physical at all

& the **LURE** - of One Branch of Gnosticism - was that,

**because** physical bodies didn't mean anything  
a believer could do **WHATEVER** they wanted  
with their **physical** body

with **NO adverse affect** on the **Spiritual** Life

& I'm pretty sure - **THAT** was  
the first **MAN-MADE Church Growth** Campaign

---

---

In **Ephesus** - where this letter was circulated  
there was an **easy familiarity** with Christianity  
. . . say like . . . the United States today

the church in **Ephesus** was now  
**2<sup>nd</sup>** & even **3<sup>rd</sup> Generation** believers

& it seems maybe the **newness** had worn off,  
the thrill of those early days was kinda fading away

What an incredible city **Ephesus** was  
when **Paul** had been there teaching daily about Jesus

& Challenging the idol worship of **ARTIMUS**  
to the point of a full scale **RIOT (Acts 19)**

But Ephesus was "**cooling off**" in their **PASSION** for Christ

& they were **heading to** that devastating letter  
addressed to them in **Rev Ch 2** - where Jesus says to them in

**Rev 2:4 - NKJ**

***4 Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love.***

See - In **Essence** - the Christians in Ephesus - - -

They wanted to believe they **could live in BOTH**  
**Light & Darkness** - - at the same time

& **that is STILL** one of the **enemies** cleverest traps  
to **keep people** from truly following Jesus

& so - the **last Apostle** - in one of his last letters

addresses the exact same concerns  
that we should have **about ourselves** today

That is - **WHAT MAKES a true Disciple of Jesus Christ ??**

What separates a **True disciple** - from a **False disciple??**  
& **how can** we tell the difference?

But **please listen** carefully

John **isn't writing** to encourage us to Judge **someone ELSE**

he's **writing** to encourage us to judge **OURSLEVES**

Near the end of the book we read in **1 John 5:13 - ESV**

***13 I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life.***

**1John** gives us some very clear ways to **KNOW**  
that we **HAVE** Eternal Life

**James MacDonald** calls them MARKS of a **True Christian**  
Like a **BRAND** on a cow

& our desire - is to **HELP** you make sure  
that you are **BRANDED** by Jesus Christ

That you may know - **Absolutely** without a Doubt  
That you **HAVE** the Assurance of Eternal Life

But **I need** to tell you something  
that is of **Great Concern** in today's Christian Church

This Verse **DOES NOT say** - IF you've **repeated** the **Sinners Prayer** -  
You may **KNOW** that you have Eternal Life

I've actually **seen this verse** used 10 sec after a person  
has said the Sinners Prayer  
to **GUARANTEE** them of their salvation

**But guys - if that person walks out**  
& NEVER shows One **SIGN** - & Never has One **MARK**  
of being a **True** Christian

Then **that person** who **Guaranteed** them their salvation  
**LIED TO THEM** - & possibly to their **eternal destruction**

**1John 5:13** says - at the **END** of the book;  
***I write these things to you . . .***  
***that you may know that you have eternal life.***

The question must be - **WHAT** things did he write

**What things** did John WRITE that give us **TRUE ASSURANCE**  
that we have **Eternal Life** ??

& over the coming weeks - we will **find out exactly** what was written  
that will give us **Absolute Assurance** of our **Eternal Life**

---

---

Now - There's just one "Technical Thing"  
we've got to know going into this book

1John is Very Hard to outline  
it doesn't really go in ANY logical order

But instead - it kinda bounces back & forth  
among the MARKS of a True Disciple of Christ

& the over-riding goal  
is to Spell-Out the MARKS that give us TRUE ASSURANCE

So that - *that we may KNOW that we have Eternal Life*

So in General - We'll be looking at Subjects that Fall  
into THREE AREAS of True Discipleship

- 1) True FAITH
- 2) True OBEDIENCE
- 3) True LOVE

& as we dive into these Three Broad areas of True Discipleship

Not only will you be able to tell  
if you have the MARKS of The Assurance of Eternal Life

But you'll know exactly how to get the MARKS of Eternal Life  
in case you don't have them yet

---

OK - Ready to DIVE IN ?

1John starts & ends with the same FOCUS  
*The Eternality of Jesus Christ*

(Warning - big words)

John starts with TWO incredible Truths -

The **ETERNALITY** of Jesus Christ  
& The **INCARNATION** of Jesus Christ

& then he says he's **PROCLAIMING** these two truths  
because they are a **REQUIREMENT** for **True FELLOWSHIP**

These first **THREE** vs's are actually **ONE long**,  
complicated sentence in the **GREEK**

So **let's read** all 3 Vs's

### **1Jn 1:1-3 - ESV**

***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—  
2 the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it  
and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father  
and was made manifest to us—  
3 that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you,  
so that (powerful conjunction) *you too may have fellowship with us;  
and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son  
Jesus Christ.****

Notice - From the **END** of the sentence,  
the **PURPOSE** of these incredible truths is

**SO THAT** - ***you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our  
fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.***

**John starts** with the same magnificent theme as his Gospel

(turn over) **Jn 1:1-4 - ESV** → →



(turn over) **Jn 1:1-4 - ESV**

***1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.***

***2 He was in the beginning with God.***

***3 All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.***

***4 In him was life, and the life was the light of men.***

THEN - One more Verse

**Jn 1:14 - ESV**

***14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.***

**NOTICE** - The **ETERNALITY** of Jesus Christ  
& The **INCARNATION** of Jesus Christ

Now - **KEEP that in mind** - & flip back to **1John**

**1Jn 1:1-3 - ESV**

***1 That which was from the beginning* (the Eternality of Christ), ***which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands* (the Incarnation of Christ), ***concerning the word* (logos) ***of life—*********

***2 the life was made manifest* (Incarnation), ***and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father*** (Eternality) ***and was made manifest to us*** (Incarnation) —**

***3 that which we have seen and heard* (Incarnation) ***we proclaim also to you,*****

***so that* (Requirement) ***you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.*** (True Fellowship)**

**That's** a lot of information! - **WHY** is it Sooo Important ??

**Guys** - listen to me please

You can go around **ALL DAY**  
saying Jesus Christ was a **GOOD TEACHER**

You can go around **ALL DAY**  
saying He's just one of many Equal **RELIGIOUS LEADERS**

Your **UNBELIEVING** Friends may appreciate that

But we can't **FOOL ourselves** into thinking we are Christians  
or that we have Eternal Life (Fellowship with God)

As long as we believe that **WORLDLY PHILOSOPHY**

---

**BUT** - when we start **Proclaiming** what John is Proclaiming here  
**NOW** we've got a whole different game on our hands

It seems nice & Politically Correct to say  
Jesus was a **Good Teacher**  
& just one of many good **Religious Leaders**

**But when start Proclaiming that Jesus Christ**  
is **ETERNAL**

Was **BEFORE time** with the Father, making Him equally God  
That **NOTHING** exists without HIM creating it  
That **in HIM only** is **LIFE** - & He is the **ONLY** "Giver of Life"

**NOW** - you're going to get **HEAT** from the Unbelieving World  
& **NOW** - you're going to **HAVE** - Eternal Life

Because **that True Faith** - is going to put you in **FELLOWSHIP**  
with the Father & the Son

---

But WAIT - There's MORE

**WHAT IF that**

Eternally Existent  
Equally God  
Creator of all that's been Created  
Source of ALL Life . . .

**ACTUALLY** - Became a **MAN** - & **DWELT** Among us - **NOW WHAT?**

If that **Eternal** - All **Creator** - **Source** of Life - **GOD** . . .

Became a **MAN** - then **WE**, would **HAVE TO**,  
*Actually Follow Him* - **Wouldn't WE ??**

& **THAT** - is the exact problem

because if we **Truly Believed** all those truths about Jesus  
then **certainly** we would have to actually **follow** Him as **LORD**

**THAT** was the problem **JOHN** was dealing with in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century  
& **THAT** is the problem **WE** are dealing with today

Everybody's happy with an **Ambiguous God**

**But when you PROCLAIM**

That there is Only **ONE GOD**  
That He alone is the **CREATOR** of all - & the **SOURCE** of Life

**& that this ONE GOD became a MAN**

& He **Dwelt** among us  
& He told us **exactly** what was required **for Eternal Life**

Now **THAT** - is what the **Philosophies of the World**  
just can't stand for - & continually fight against

---

---

But I need you to know

Faith in these Truths - are a **REQUIREMENT**

for you to have **fellowship** with the **FATHER**,  
& with the **SON** . . . **AND** *other believers*

There is only one SOURCE of Life

The WORD (LOGOS - Expression) of God

& this True & Full God - Actually, Physically,  
became a MAN - & Dwelt among us

to Live - & to Die - in our Place

& 1John says - We Proclaim these EXACT truths

because Faith in them is a **REQUIREMENT**

for **Fellowship** with the **FATHER**, the **SON**, & all **BELIEVERS**

The word "Fellowship" here in Vs.3 = **KOINONA**

= ***Sharing in Common with others***

& please hear me when I say

If we don't Believe these truths . . .

Then we have **NOTHING** in common

with the **Father**, **Son**, or **True Believers**

---

---

In the **FIRST** Century -  
the Gnostics **DENOUNCED** one Primary Truth about Jesus

That He was **Literally GOD** - in the **Literal FLESH**

& we have **MANY** False Religions today  
that just have **ONE** Problem with Jesus Christ . . .

They just don't want us to Say  
That He was **Literally GOD** - in the **Literal FLESH**

& some of them will say - at your door (Jehovah's Witness)  
that they are Christians just like you

But listen - today we're dealing with  
the **TRUE FAITH** that makes a **TRUE CHRISTIAN**

& John says **without Faith** in these **Specific Truths**  
You **CANNOT** have fellowship with God - or other Christians

**Let's read** these incredible 3 vs's - one more time - from **NLT**

### **1Jn 1:1-3 - NLT**

***1 We proclaim to you the one who existed from the beginning, (eternally God) whom we have heard and seen. We saw him with our own eyes and touched him with our own hands (real Lit incarnation). He is the Word of life (life in expression).***

***2 This one who is life itself (the source) was revealed to us, and we have seen him (literally). And now we testify and proclaim to you that he is the one who is (exists as) eternal life. He was with the Father, and then he was revealed to us.***

***3 We proclaim to you what we ourselves have actually seen and heard so that (requirement) you may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.***

1John starts - not with a Bang - with an **EXPLOSION !!**

---

---

& now **the final verse** in this introduction

& since we're reading **from the NLT**  
let's **look closely** at V.4 there

### **1Jn 1:4 - NLT**

***4 We are writing these things so that you may fully share our joy.***

John says - ***Look, I'm telling you these things  
so that you may fully share our JOY***

How many **friends** & **family** members  
have you had say to you -

***Man, don't push your religion on me!***  
*(as their life is in Raging Self-Destruction)*

***Push my religion on you??*** - Are you kidding

***I'm sharing these things with you - so that you can share my JOY  
including the Joy of Eternal Life***

Because the only **TRUE God**  
Who became **TRULY Man**  
Said that **TRULY Believing** these things  
Is the only **TRUE way**  
To have **TRUE Fellowship** with God, including Eternal Life

---

---

## **Guys - we AREN'T Christians because**

We live in a Christian Culture  
Adhere to basic Christian Principals  
Or believe that there's a Higher Power

We are **Christians** because we've put our Full & **Complete faith**  
in the God of the Bible

**NOT** picking & choosing  
the parts that fit our own Philosophies

But **fully believing**  
in the Eternal & Incarnate Jesus Christ

& **believing enough**  
to actually follow Him - As our **Lord**

---

If you **have never** that commitment to Christ  
I'd like to give you a **chance** to right now

If you've never **Fully Embraced**  
these **Foundational Truths** about Jesus

**Please Receive** these Truths into your life

We say - with the Apostle John in

### **1Jn 1:3 - ESV**

***3 We proclaim to you what we ourselves have actually seen and heard so that you may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.***

**Let's Pray**