

A WONDERFUL WITNESS FOR A WRECKED WORLD

(1 JOHN 1:1–4)

Central to the Christian Faith:

- Jesus Christ is the God-man who is the foundation of true Christian fellowship and eternal life.

Overview of 1 John:

- Whereas the Gospel of John is written so that we might have eternal life in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of God (Jn. 20:31), the book of 1 John is written so that we may know we have eternal life in Him (1 Jn. 5:13).
- 1 John will expose those who profess Christ but do not know him, and it will assure those who know Christ but may have uncertainties about their salvation.

Four objectives aimed at believers in the book of 1 John:

- 1:4, “to promote full joy” in the family of God
- 2:1, “to prevent sin” in the family of God
- 2:26, “to protect from false teachers” in the family of God
- 5:13, “to provide assurance of salvation” in the family of God

Three corrective themes found in 1 John:

- A correct belief in Jesus
- A correct obedience to God’s commands
- A correct love for each other

What about the Prologue of the First Epistle of John (1:1-4)?

- Doubt arose as to whether God had fully become human flesh in the person of Jesus Christ, with false teachers and wrong ideas about Christ apparently disrupting Christian fellowship. The Epistle of 1 John is a corrective to questions about what is essential to Christianity. Its prologue bears witness to the full humanity and full deity of Jesus and it proclaims eternal life and individual fellowship between God and mankind through Jesus Christ—which ultimately leads to Christian joy. John later clarifies that true believers never lose this joy (1 Jn. 2:19).

1.) God’s Son, the Word of Life, literally came in the flesh so that believers may have eternal life (v. 1–2).

- Eyewitness testimony: Jesus Christ is fully man and fully God.

APPLICATION (v. 1–2):

- ✓ Have a passionately personal witness for the Word of Life.

2.) Christian fellowship becomes possible only to those who respond in faith to the proclamation of the Word of Life. (v. 3)

- Fellowship is with the Father and Son and other believers
- Invite all people into the family of God by accepting Christ

APPLICATION (v. 3):

- ✓ Have a purposefully proclaimed witness in hopes others may join the fellowship with us.
- ✓ Correct doctrine is important. Without it, fellowship with God is not possible, so proclaim it and provide assurance to others.

3.) Full joy comes when the believers to whom John writes, and all those who come afterwards, have Christian fellowship (perfected ultimately in heaven).

APPLICATION (v. 4):

- ✓ Have a persistent witness to guard against false teachings and grow in Christian maturity.
- ✓ Recognize and work toward a vital fellowship here on earth today and pray for and anticipate that which will come in the future, made possibly only through the historical Christ.
- ✓ How can you be happy with that which disrupts fellowship? How can you be content to share Jesus without discipling that leads people into a visible relationship with Jesus Christ and other believers?