

1 John Chapter 1: Fellowship with God; Agreeing with the Light

Remember to Lift Up the Lord Jesus Christ

Introduction:

Author: John the Apostle: **Love, Light** and **Life** [Eternal]

1. Son of Thunder [Let's call down fire on Samaritans] w/ James
2. Jesus best friend [Leaning on Jesus breast]
3. Apostle of **Love**, Testifier of **Deity** of Jesus, Denouncer of **false** doctrine
4. Pastor of the church of Ephesus; founded by Paul the Apostle
5. Author of **Gospel of John, 1.2.3 John** and **Revelation**

Characteristics:

1. **Sermon** in style; no salutation or conclusion as other letters
2. This is a "**Family**" epistle rather than a "Church" epistle; i.e. How to restore a dysfunction *in the family*. [C.f. 1 John 1:9]; shuts out the world (for a little while) focus on believers
3. Written after Revelation about 100 AD

Recipients

1. Church of Ephesus in danger of persecution from **within**:

Acts 20:28 *"Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. ²⁹"I know that after my departure **savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock;** ³⁰ and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. [c.f. 1 John 2:26, 2 John]*

- **Danger:** Not destruction but **change**; i.e. to introduce heresy under the guise of so-called "intellectual credibility" Salvation not by faith but "special knowledge"
- **Cults:** Distort the **Person** and **work** of Jesus Christ; i.e. Who He is and what He accomplished on the cross; prey on new believers
- **Gnosticism:** Many forms and not solid until 1st 2nd century; lit. "to know" especially spiritual truths; levels
 1. **Commonality: Matter and materialism are evil**; i.e. "The spirit inside the body is a seed within dirty soil". Read "liberalism" [good in everyone]
 2. **Legalism/Licentiousness**; Stoics [no emotion denying the flesh] / Epicureans [feeding the flesh so it won't "bother" me anymore]
- **Gnosticism vs. Christianity**
 1. **Cerinthian Gnostics** believed the "divine Christ" joined Jesus at baptism and left before death; thus the "divine Christ" did not suffer and die for our sins
 2. **Docetic Gnostics** [Dokeo; to seem]denied the Incarnation of God; i.e. Jesus becoming man: "God could/would not unite with 'evil' flesh" and "Jesus only '**seemed**' to have a body, but left no footprints" but....

- God **did become a man**:

John 1:14 *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.*

- Jesus **did have a body**, even after the resurrection:

Luke 24 ...they were startled and frightened and thought that they were seeing a spirit. ³⁸ And He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? ³⁹ "See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; touch Me and see, for **a spirit does not have flesh and bones** as you see that I have." ⁴⁰ And when He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. ⁴¹ While they still could not believe it because of their joy and amazement, He said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" ⁴² They gave Him a piece of a broiled fish; ⁴³ and **He took it and ate it before them**.

John 20:27 Then He said to Thomas, "Reach here with your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand **and put it into My side**; and do not be unbelieving, but believing."

Purpose: Five fold: along with dealing with error

1. That we might have **fellowship** with fellow believers, the Father, and the Son [1:3]
2. That we might have fullness of [complete] **joy** [1:4]
3. That we might not **sin** [2:1]
4. That we would be certain we have **Eternal Life** [5:13]
5. That we would believe in the **Name** of the Son of God [5:13]

1 John 1

I. The Incarnate Word Jesus is Eternal Life

¹ What was **from the beginning**, what we have **heard**, what we have **seen** with our eyes, what we have **looked at** and **touched** with our hands, concerning the **Word of Life**--

- **Faith:** Not a leap in the dark; heard, seen, touched; fact of the resurrection
- "What was from the **beginning**..."

3 Beginnings:

1. Genesis 1:1: Creation

Genesis 1:1 In the **beginning God created** the heavens and the earth

2. John 1:1 Jesus was *with* God *and* God at the first beginning; creation

John 1:1 *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 came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

[Important: Jesus did not begin; Notice He was "with God" and "was God" during creation]

3. 1 John 1:1: The **incarnation** in Bethlehem

- Heard, seen, **looked at**, touched
- **Looked at:** lit. *gazed intently* from gr. "**Theaomai**" [Theater]; behold or intellectually to grasp the meaning

2 Peter 1:16 ...For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but **we were eyewitnesses of His majesty**.

- **The One we look** at/to for salvation/hope/ Life...[c.f. John 3:14; serpent]
- **Touched:** Gr. *Pselapphan*: Grope or feel as a person with blindness
- **Word** of Life:

John 11:25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and **the life**; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies...

John 14:6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and **the life**; no one comes to the Father but through Me.

1 John 5:11 And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this **life** is in His Son.

John 5:26 "For just as the Father has **life** in **Himself**, even so He gave to the Son also to have **life** in **Himself**...

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--

- **Manifested:** Brought out in the open for us to see, hear and touch:

John 1:14 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.

- **We...proclaim Eternal Life:** We proclaim Jesus who is Eternal Life; Heaven is wherever Jesus is. Again "...from the Father" in fellowship now seeking **ours**...

John 17:3 "This is **eternal life**, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

³ what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, **so that you too may have fellowship with us**; and **indeed** our **fellowship** is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.

- **"So that you may have fellowship":** Koinania; i.e. having in common/sharing
- Indeed [Truly]; True fellowship or fellowshiping in the Truth is **sharing the things of Christ**

Acts 2:42 [New believers] were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴³Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles. ⁴⁴And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common; ⁴⁵ and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need.

- **Preaching and Teaching** *should* result in listeners fellowship with God/each other

⁴ These things we write, so that our [your KJV] joy may be **made complete**.

- 3 Way Fellowship: **complete** = God + Fellow believers; c.f. 1 John 4 e.g. **Love**
- Fellowship with God brings "complete" joy. But there is **one PROBLEM**:

II. God Is Light How can we have fellowship with God Who is **Light**

Ephesians 5:8 ...you were formerly **darkness**, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light

Amos 3:3 Can two walk together, except they be agreed? [KJV]

Job 9:33 "There is no umpire between us, Who may lay his hand upon us both.

Isaiah 55:8 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," declares the LORD. ⁹ "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts.

⁵This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that **God is Light**, and in Him there is no darkness at all.

- **Message:** God is Light...no darkness at all
- **Apostle John:** God is Love, Life, and **Light**; modern science not quite sure
- What "**God is light**" says about God:

1. **His Glory/Radiance;** Everything changes in the presence of God

Exodus 34:34 But whenever Moses went in before the LORD to speak with Him, he would take off the veil until he came out; and whenever he came out and spoke to the sons of Israel what he had been commanded, the sons of Israel would see the face of Moses, that the skin of **Moses' face shone**. So Moses would replace the veil over his face until he went in to speak with Him.

Ezekiel 43:1 Then he led me to the gate, **the gate facing toward the east**; ²**and behold, the glory of the God of Israel was coming from the way** of the east And His voice was like the sound of many waters; and the earth shone with His glory. ³And it was like the appearance of the vision which I saw, like the vision which I saw when He came to destroy the city And the visions were like the vision which I saw by the river Chebar; and I fell on

my face. ⁴And the glory of the LORD came into the house by the way of the gate facing toward the east. ⁵And the Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house

1 Timothy 6:15b He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, ¹⁶ who alone possesses immortality and **dwells in unapproachable light**

Matthew 17:2 And He was **transfigured** before them; and His **face shone like the sun**, and His garments became as **white as light**. [**Note:** Not from without but within; i.e. unzipped]

2. **His Revelation:** Word of God/His Spirit revealing sin/our need for a Savior

3. **His Purity:** No darkness at all; the Holiness of God; His Perfection

- If we are darkness how can we have fellowship with light? Darkness is not just the absence of Light... but **hostile** to the light.

Romans 3:10 "THERE IS **NONE RIGHTEOUS**, NOT EVEN ONE..."

Romans 5:10 ...while we were **enemies** we were reconciled to **God**

Romans 7:18 ...I know that **nothing good dwells in me**, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not.

Romans 8:7 ...the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is **not even able to do so**...

We are not sinners because we sin; **we sin because we are sinners**...yet:

- God **desires** fellowship with us:

1 Corinthians 1:9 ...you were called into **fellowship with His Son**, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Isaiah 2:5 Come, house of Jacob, and **let us walk in the light** of the LORD.

III. 3 Methods of reconciling man [darkness] with God [Light] w/ regard to **Fellowship**

- 2 False, Man-Made and worthless; only One True, God ordained and priceless:

Man-Made Method #1 Bring God **down** to our level; deny His Holiness and Purity:

⁶If we **say that we have fellowship** with Him and yet walk in the darkness, **we lie** and do not practice the truth;

- Answer to the **Epicureans**

- Darkness; Walking in:

Ephesians 5:1 [Read] Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; 2and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma. 3 *But immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints;* 4*and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.* 5*For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.* 6 *Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.* 7*Therefore do not be partakers with them;* 8 *for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light* 9(for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), 10 trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. 11Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them...

- **If we walk [read "lifestyle"] in darkness;** i.e. deeds of darkness, and claim to be near we are liars; Hypocrites
- **God is Holy and He is Light;** If we walk in darkness we are not fellowshiping with Him...period

7but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.

- **"But if we walk in the light...we have fellowship"** Being *continually* cleansed by Jesus Blood is dependant on walking in the light. Cleansed is present tense C.f. v 9
- It is where we walk that matters; i.e. **"in the light"**

Man-Made Method #2 Raise ourselves up to God's level; claim perfection

- Answer to the **Stoics**; denying the flesh; i.e. godless religion [c.f. Colossians 2]

Romans 3:10 as it is written, "THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE..."

⁸ If we say that **we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us.**

- The claim is **perfection**; only God is perfect
- **Self-deception:** "I only make 'mistakes'; I do not sin"

Proverbs 20:9 *Who can say, "I have cleansed my heart, I am pure from my sin"?*

John 2:4 The one who says, "I have come to know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him...

God's Only Method of Fellowship with Him Walk in the Light

Isaiah 1:18 "Come now, and **let us reason together**, "Says the LORD," Though your sins are as scarlet, They will be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They will be like wool.

⁹If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

- **1 John Chapter 1 "ifs"**
 1. If we say we have fellowship...
 2. If we walk in the light...
 3. If we say we have no sin...
 4. If we confess...forgiveness, cleansing, fellowship
- **Confess:** Gr. *Homologeō*. Lit. "to say the same thing"; i.e. If God hates it...I hate it
- **To agree with the Light;** i.e. the revelation of our sin and need

¹⁰If we say that **we have not sinned**, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.

John 9:41 Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but since you say, 'We see,' your sin remains.

Luke 5:31 And Jesus answered and said to them, "It is not those who are well who need a physician, but those who are sick.

Proverbs 28:13 He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, But he who confesses and forsakes them will find compassion.

Psalms 32:5 I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I did not hide; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD"; And You forgave the guilt of my sin. Selah.

- God has made a way for fellowship with Him; we must walk in the light

2 Timothy 2:25 ...perhaps God may grant them [us] repentance

SUMMARY: Fellowship with God; Agreeing with the Light

- **The Incarnate Word: John testifies of Jesus;** the Eternal Life
- **God is Light;** a dilemma for darkness
- **Man seeks to bring God low** denying his holiness and living any way we choose; living in darkness and dark deeds and claiming fellowship with light...?
- **Man seeks to raise himself up** claiming perfection and equality with God; again denying His holiness and our sinfulness...pride
- **True fellowship with God** is when we allow the light to reveal our need and walk in that light being constantly and continually cleansed **as we confess our sins**