

Was Jesus Both God and Human

1 John 1 - 2:6

John is credited with writing five books of the Bible. John, 1, 2, 3 John, and Revelation.

He is the the son of Zebedee and brother of James (the first apostle to be martyred, cf. Acts 12:2)

What Does The Bible Say?

John wrote 1 John for four reasons:

1. To promote joy

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

(1 John 1:4 NLT)

2. To prevent sin

My dear children, I am writing this to you so that you will not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate who pleads our

case before the Father. He is Jesus Christ, the one who is truly righteous. (1 John 2:1 NLT)

3. To protect from false teachers

I am writing these things to warn you about those who want to lead you astray. (1 John 2:26 NLT)

4. To provide assurance of salvation

I have written this to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know you have eternal life. (1 John 5:13 NLT)

What Does The Bible Say?

1 In the beginning the Word already existed.

The Word was with God,

and the Word was God.

2 He existed in the beginning with God.

3 God created everything through him,
and nothing was created except through him.

4 The Word gave life to everything that was created,
and his life brought light to everyone. (John 1:1-4 NLT)

We proclaim to you the one who existed from the beginning,
whom we have heard and seen. We saw him with our own eyes
and touched him with our own hands. He is the Word of life.

2 This one who is life itself was revealed to us, and we have seen
him. And now we testify and proclaim to you that he is the one
who is 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 you may have fellowship with us.
And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus

Christ. 4 We are writing these things so that you may fully share our joy. (1 John 1:1–4 NLT)

John connects the opening verses of John with the beginning verses of 1 John.

Jesus is the one who stands with the Father in the beginning before Creation itself.

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And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. (1 John 1:1–3 NLT)

Jesus Christ has always been and therefore is God in the flesh. He is divine.

58 Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, before Abraham was even born, I Am!” (John 8:58 NLT)

30 The Father and I are one.” (John 10:30 NLT)

9 Jesus replied, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and yet you still don’t know who I am? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father! So why are you asking me to show him to you? (John 14:9 NLT)

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Jesus was not only divine but also fully human!

14 So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen

his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son. (John 1:14 NLT)

How Can You Obey?

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.

4 We are writing these things so that you may fully share our joy. (1 John 1:3–4 NLT)

John uses the word "proclaim" in verse 3; he cannot remain silent on what he has seen and heard about Christ.

To what end? "So that you may have fellowship along with us."

Additional Notes:

If you would like to use your home to disciple others, check out our training at www.crosswaveschurch.com/host. Cross Waves has produced short videos to train you how to use your home to reach others for Christ. So please check it out.

Explore:

KEY TRUTHS:

- 1. Jesus Is the Way, the Truth, and the Life (1 John 1:1-4)**
- 2. Walking Jesus' Way Requires Holiness and Humility (1 John 1:5-10)**
- 3. Walking Jesus' Way Requires Ongoing Dependence on Him (1 John**

2:1-6)

HOW IT FITS: Where This Lesson Fits in the Story of the

Bible: John wrote 1 John around the late 80s AD or early 90s

AD.

Explore:

Have you heard the phrase “the proof is in the pudding?” That is actually a morphing of the original phrase: “the proof of the pudding is in the eating.” It originated centuries ago in England where pudding sometimes referred to a form of sausage filled with minced meat and any number of other ingredients. Such things could have interesting flavors. The phrase meant you had to taste the food (perhaps cautiously) before knowing if it was any good.

The use of the phrase today often conveys a similar idea, although rarely in reference to food. The proof of something can be found in examining it at work. You can look at the evidence to determine if something is true. In the first of his epistles, John laid out the case that the proof of people's knowledge of Christ as Savior could be found in their attitude toward Him and the way they lived as a result. John sought to repudiate false understandings about being in right relationship with God and provide clarity about how to have such a relationship. As in John's day, the proof is still in the pudding.

Jesus Is the Way, the Truth, and the Life (1 John 1:1-4)

Although this phrase does not explicitly occur here in 1 John, it does appear in John's gospel (John 14:6). Note that this letter does not open in the manner typical to other New Testament epistles, lacking a declaration of the author's name, identification of the audience, and a salutation. This letter reads

more like a sermon or exposition on concepts from John's gospel.

Jesus had declared His union with the Father (John 14:7, 10-11) and that He alone was the way to the Father (John 14:6). Here in 1 John those truths are reiterated along with the empirical evidence John personally had for declaring this testimony to be true. First, John affirmed the divinity of Jesus in much the same manner as the opening of his gospel account. He referred to Jesus' eternal nature by identifying Him as being from the beginning (1 John 1:1), echoing the phrasing of John 1:1—In the beginning was the Word. He then affirmed the humanity of Jesus, stating that “we” had heard, seen, and touched Jesus in the flesh (1 John 1:1). “We” in 1 John 1:1-4 referred to the apostles (those who had literally seen Jesus) and the unified truths they had declared about Him as the Christ (verse 2).

The apostles declared what they observed about Jesus, His life, teachings, and resurrection, preaching a consistent gospel founded upon the truth that Jesus is the Son of God and the only way to fellowship with the Father (1:3). This mission of gospel proclamation motivated each of them, with John noting that it brought them joy to fulfill this God-given purpose and to see others find their joy in Christ (1:4).

From the outset John made it clear that Jesus is what life is all about. He is the only way to know our purpose (eternal life made manifest to us, verse 2), fulfill our purpose (fellowship with God through the Son, verse 3), and live with purpose (gospel-driven service to others for the glory of God, verse 4). In order to walk in light and truth, one must walk with Jesus. A life of purpose and joy can only be found in Him and through Him.

Jesus is everything! Any part of our lives that isn't saturated by His purposes will lack substantive meaning. Light brings

warmth and clarity. Truth brings surety and endurance. These things are necessary for a life of joy. Jesus alone can give them to us. We must submit ourselves wholly to the message Jesus proclaimed, which has been passed on by those who heard, saw, and touched Him. Life in Him, the life He calls us to, is the only life worth living.

We must examine our lives and determine if our priorities reflect this commitment. Are we walking the walk? Can we point to the ways Jesus is influencing our lives, shaping the purpose of each day? We should strive to live in a manner that declares the centrality of Jesus to our existence.

Explore:

This epistle never specifically names its author, but the early church held the apostle John as the writer. The overwhelming resemblance in style, word choice, and thematic elements to the gospel of John support this. Ancient writers such as Clement of

Alexandria, Irenaeus, and Tertullian all wrote of this letter as belonging to John. It was likely written in the late 80s or early 90s AD, around the same time he wrote his gospel account and the book of Revelation.

Explore:

Walking Jesus' Way Requires Holiness and Humility

(1 John 1:5-10)

After establishing Jesus as central to the purpose of the apostles and the message they shared, John shifted his focus to correcting falsehoods about how a person is to fulfill that purpose and have real fellowship with God through the Son. He accomplished this by presenting the falsehood, then presenting the correct doctrine.

The first falsehood addressed is the belief that fellowship with God can be had without a holy life. If a person claims to believe

in Jesus as the Son of God, but lives a lifestyle contrary to His teaching, that person does not have saving faith (verse 6). God is light and He makes no exceptions for sin (verse 5). Sin is entirely incompatible with the nature of God. The power of the presence of His light in a person's life will lead to change (verse 7). If a person continues to walk in darkness without any evidence of change and ongoing effort to repent of sin, they are lying to themselves and everyone else about being a follower of Jesus (verse 6). Sinless perfection is not possible for us (this is addressed by John in the next few verses), but the pursuit of holiness is a marker of true fellowship with Jesus (verse 7). Just as walking is an ongoing activity, so too is repentance. The Christian life is one of consistently striving to turn away from sin and toward Christlikeness. That is what it means to walk in the light (verse 7).

The second falsehood addressed is the belief that righteousness can be achieved on our own merits. John addressed those who

thought they could have fellowship with God through such a manner in verse 8. Those who say they have no sin are those who do not admit or understand their need for the righteousness of Christ to be applied to their lives. Knowledge of the holy standards of God and trying to live up to them in one's own effort is not possible. Repentance is essential to saving faith, since true belief results in a transformed life from the inside out. We deceive ourselves (verse 8) if we think our good deeds could ever be enough to satisfy the perfect holiness of God, in whom there is no darkness at all (verse 5). It is only through full acknowledgement and confession of our unrighteousness that we can receive forgiveness of sins (verse 9). Repentance is not a one-time action. We need to repent of sin continually, not to be "saved again" but for continual cleansing.

God promised to make a way for the redemption of humanity when He promised the coming of the Messiah in the Old Testament. Just as He fulfilled that promise by sending Jesus

Christ, He is also faithful to fulfill the promise to cleanse anyone from unrighteousness through the blood of Jesus (verses 7, 9). God is just in doing so, since Jesus paid the penalty for all sin by shedding His holy, sinless blood (verse 7). There is no unrighteousness that is too great to be covered by the blood of Christ. We don't have to lie to ourselves in fear and shame of our un-worthiness. Instead, we can agree with God in His assessment of our sinfulness (verse 10) while also rejoicing in the gifts of His grace and mercy (verse 8). We must acknowledge that fellowship with God is entirely dependent upon the sacrifice of Jesus Christ as the propitiation for our sins (1 John 2:2). This understanding serves to increase our appreciation of His love and kindness toward us and to motivate our pursuit of holiness out of gratitude for what He has given to us.

Explore:

God offers salvation and forgiveness through faith in Jesus Christ.

Explore:

Walking Jesus' Way Requires Ongoing Dependence on Him

(1 John 2:1-6)

In the latter half of chapter 1 John communicated how pride and lack of honesty about our sin would keep us from fellowship with God. Total reliance on Jesus for salvation is required. In the next chapter, John elaborated that this can be done because Jesus is our perfect advocate. Note the description of Jesus as the righteous (2:1). He alone can stand as righteous before the Father and advocate on our behalf. This is true at the moment of conversion when a person is born again, and it remains true for as long as that person lives.

John acknowledged that we remain sinners saved by grace and ever in need of a Savior. He called us to repent of darkness and

walk in holiness, but he also knew that we would still struggle with sin (2:1). Thus, he stated that Jesus stands ever as our propitiation and advocate, making a way for us to have fellowship with the Father. There will never be a time when we cease to need Him in order to stand before the holy God. Our fellowship with God is not based upon our ability to develop righteousness over time but on Jesus Christ the righteous. This gives us confidence to boldly approach the throne of grace and serve Him with zeal, even when we have failed over and over again. No matter how many times we fail, Jesus will always be enough.

Jesus is not only our advocate before the holy God, though. He is also our strength to walk in holiness in this life. In verses 3-4 John equated knowing Jesus with keeping His commandments. In verse 5 he equated keeping God's commandments with the perfecting of God's love in a person's life. Coupled together, we can learn from these verses the need for holiness to strengthen

our fellowship with God, and the need for fellowship with God to strengthen our holiness. The more we trust in God and obey Him, the closer we will draw to Him and the better we will know Him as He truly is: worthy of all honor and praise and glory. The better we know Him, the more we will value and trust His ways and walk in the light of His holiness. Growth in holiness is a demonstration that we abide in Him (verse 5b). Following His example leads to His presence and growth in holiness (verse 6).

Explore:

Christianity is about more than going to church and living a good moral life. Being a Christian is about having a vibrant personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Every Sunday School teacher or Bible study leader should want to see each of his or her learners enter into this relationship—their eternal destiny

depends on it. As you work toward this goal, keep the following in mind:

Following Christ is about more than a mere decision; it is about a lifelong relationship. Jesus called us to make disciples, not mere decision-makers. Aim for long-term faith, not momentary emotion.

Salvation is a matter of grace, not works. Our works do not save us (Ephesians 2:8-9), nor do they keep us (Galatians 3:2-6).

Good works are a product of salvation, not a prerequisite to it.

Don't confuse sanctification with salvation. Holiness follows salvation; it doesn't precede it. Don't try to impose "Christian" expectations on men and women who don't know Christ.

- Keep it simple. Being born again is not complicated. Here's a simple way to explain it:

- Acknowledge your sinfulness and your need for a Savior (Romans 3:10, 23).

- Trust in Christ's sacrifice for your sins and in His resurrection (Romans 10:9-10).

Surrender your life to God's transforming power (Romans 12:1-2).

Most of all, remember that your job is to tell the truth in a way others can understand, answer their questions, and give them an opportunity to respond. If you do that faithfully, some will respond and join the band of Christ-followers. When they do, Heaven will rejoice!

Question 1 of 4

Would you have more confidence in a secondhand or eyewitness account of an event? Please explain your answer.

Question 2 of 4

What distracts us from living with the gospel-purpose?

Question 3 of 4

How is the doctrine of the incarnation (Jesus is God in the flesh) offensive or threatening to those who have not understood and embraced the gospel?

Question 4 of 4

How is Christian fellowship similar to and different from simple friendship?

