



An Invitation to Joy

A Series from 1 John

The Three Gateways to Joy **1 John 1:1-4**

Gateway One: Faith that is experiential and not simply intellectual.

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—

Text Message:

- The first verse alone chock full in describing an experiential faith. Look at all the experiences: we have heard, we have seen, we looked upon, touched with our hands.
- John uses two different Greek tenses to describe this:
 - 1) Perfect tense (have heard, have seen [twice])- refers to an experience of that past that has permanent and lasting results to the present.
 - 2) Aorist tense (looked upon, touched), which flashbacks to precise moments when this took place.
- These all describe the apostles' experience with Jesus post-resurrection.
- One of the reasons for this was the false teaching of proto-Gnosticism. But that's not the main reason- the main reason is seen in Verse 4: Joy!

Gateway Two: Faith that is communal and not simply individual.

Text Message:

- To separate faith in Christ from community with one other strips what Jesus had in mind from his Eastern context and places it in our Western context, where individualism reigns supreme.
- There are twenty plural references in just four verses! The only singular topic is Christ, who holds us all together as His Body!
- Which means that while an experiential faith is a gateway to joy, it isn't a "solo flight" but us experiencing Jesus together in community as we gather in various environments (Sunday worship, Bible Studies, Prayer Meetings, etc.).
- This is why we share "Missions Moments" each Sunday!
- Our culture may tell us it's about our individual private faith, but Jesus says, "it's about **MY BODY!**"
- We grow stronger in Christ together!
- *Where do you need in your life to move from the individual relationship with Christ into greater community with others?*

Gateway Three: Faith that is scriptural and not simply inspirational.

⁴ And we are writing these things so that our^[a] joy may be complete.

Text Message:

- Notice the very important phrase, "we are writing these things."
- Joy was made complete in "writing these things."
- The things John is referring to as he is writing this letter has become for us the New Testament!
- In other words:
 - 1) What was originally written in the first century to bring joy to the Christians is a gateway to joy for us!
 - 2) What was written in time to some of us has become timeless to the rest of us!
- It's not a matter of having one of these gateways to joy in place but walking in and through them all!

Meditation for Wednesday, September 15, 2021

1 John 1:1-4

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 you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. ⁴ And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.

Practical guidelines:

- 1) Read the verse above and notice any word, words, or phrase that Scripture and take notice of a word or phrase that “stands out” to you.
- 2) Spend time before the Lord with the word, words, or phrase, repeating it and taking notice of what thoughts, pictures, prayers, etc. come to mind.
- 3) Interact with the meditation by prayer.
- 4) When distracted, intentionally return to the word or phrase and resume meditation.

Notes: