

5-Day Devotional: The Authentic Gospel

Based on 1 John 1:1-4 and the Sermon “The Authentic Gospel”

This devotional explores the themes from the sermon on 1 John 1:1-4, emphasizing the real Jesus, real fellowship, and real joy in an age of counterfeits. Each day builds on the authentic gospel as proclaimed by the Apostle John.

Day 1: Discerning the Real from the Artificial

Short Devotional:

In a world flooded with artificial intelligence creating hyper-realistic fakes, it’s hard to know what’s genuine. The sermon draws a parallel to the spiritual realm, where false teachings and “AI Jesus” versions distort the truth. John wrote 1 John to help believers discern the authentic gospel amid skepticism, reminding us that the real gospel is rooted in eyewitness testimony and the unchanging Christ. Today, reflect on how we can ground our faith in what’s truly real, not fabricated.

Scripture to Read:

1 John 1:1-2 (ESV) – “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— 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.”

Quote from the Sermon:

“This all gets us to a simple question: How do you know what’s real? In a world where artificial seems to be ubiquitous, how you know what’s authentic?”

Discussion Questions/Takeaways:

1. What “artificial” versions of faith or Jesus have you encountered in media or culture?
2. How does John’s eyewitness account strengthen your trust in the gospel?

3. Takeaway: Commit to testing spiritual teachings against Scripture to avoid counterfeits.

Closing Prayer:

Heavenly Father, in a world full of deceptions, help me discern the authentic gospel. Open my eyes to see the real Jesus as John did. Guide me away from fabricated faiths and ground me in Your truth. Amen.

Day 2: Proclaiming the Real Jesus**Short Devotional:**

John begins by proclaiming Jesus as the eternal Word who became historical—seen, heard, and touched. The sermon stresses that Jesus isn't just a prophet or teacher but God Himself stepping into humanity. In an era of false doctrines like docetism, John refutes illusions by sharing his personal encounters. Today, embrace the real Jesus: eternal, Creator, and manifest in flesh, who demands we die to self and live in Him.

Scripture to Read:

John 1:1-4 (ESV) – “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men.”

Quote from the Sermon:

“The Real Christ... is both ETERNAL, and HISTORICAL. And according to John, and the multitudes of other eye witnesses.... It actually happened. This isn't allegory, but it is revelatory!!! This isn't abstract theology, or philosophy.... but a lived experience, grounded in reality that demands consideration.”

Discussion Questions/Takeaways:

1. How does viewing Jesus as both eternal God and historical man change your daily life?
2. What counterfeit views of Jesus (e.g., just a good teacher) have you needed to reject?
3. Takeaway: Share one truth about the real Jesus with someone this week to proclaim Him boldly.

Closing Prayer:

Lord Jesus, You are the eternal Word made manifest. Thank You for stepping into history so I could know You. Help me proclaim Your reality to others and reject any diluted versions. Transform my heart to live fully in You. Amen.

Day 3: Vertical Fellowship with God**Short Devotional:**

The gospel invites us into real fellowship—not just facts about God, but a shared life with Him. The sermon explains that through the real Jesus, we enter “koinonia,” a communion broken by sin but restored on the cross. This vertical fellowship means walking with the Creator now, through His Spirit. It’s astounding: the eternal God desires connection with us, as in Eden. Today, die to self and embrace this intimate relationship.

Scripture to Read:

1 John 1:3 (ESV) – “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.”

Quote from the Sermon:

“This means that connection with the creator... is possible!! This was surprising to many of John’s readers, and should be astounding to us. When you step through the threshold of belief in the REAL JESUS... then you are invited into a shared-life with the eternal God!! You were made for this.”

Discussion Questions/Takeaways:

1. What barriers (like sin or doubt) hinder your vertical fellowship with God?
2. How does Galatians 2:20 illustrate dying to self for Christ to live in you?
3. Takeaway: Spend extra time in prayer today, focusing on sharing life with God through His Spirit.

Closing Prayer:

Father, thank You for inviting me into fellowship through Your Son. Forgive my sins that broke our connection, and fill me with Your Spirit. Help me walk closely with You, experiencing the shared life You designed for me. Amen.

Day 4: Horizontal Fellowship with Believers

Short Devotional:

Real fellowship extends horizontally to other believers, united by Christ—not superficial affinities. The sermon notes that we have more in common with Christians worldwide than non-believing neighbors because of our shared Savior. This community helps us discern the real Jesus, proclaim Him boldly, and grow in maturity. Church isn't optional; it's where we foster accountability and light. Today, invest in authentic relationships with fellow believers.

Scripture to Read:

Galatians 2:20 (ESV) – “I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”

Quote from the Sermon:

“You have more in common with a Christian in Kenya than you do with a friend who went to the same school, or lives on the same street but doesn't have Christ. Because what you have in common IS Christ. And what's great about that is... horizontal fellowship helps us regularly discern the real Jesus continually and helps us proclaim the real Jesus boldly.”

Discussion Questions/Takeaways:

1. How has horizontal fellowship strengthened your faith in the past?
2. What superficial bases for connection (hobbies, etc.) might you need to prioritize less?
3. Takeaway: Reach out to a fellow believer today to encourage them in Christ.

Closing Prayer:

Lord, thank You for the gift of fellowship with Your people. Unite me with brothers and sisters in Christ, helping us grow together in truth and love. Use our community to proclaim the real gospel and walk in Your light. Amen.

Day 5: Completing Real Joy**Short Devotional:**

The authentic gospel culminates in real joy—lasting fulfillment in God, not temporary happiness. John wrote so our joy may be complete through knowing the real Jesus and fellowship with Him. The sermon shares C.S. Lewis's story of being “surprised by joy”

upon encountering the true Christ. Joy comes from grace, not earning salvation. Today, step over the threshold of belief and find settled joy in God's family.

Scripture to Read:

1 John 1:4 (ESV) – “And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.”

Quote from the Sermon:

“The moment that you step through the threshold of belief in Christ, you enter into the real and lasting joy of all who are in God's family. And by joy we don't mean happiness. Happiness is temporary. Joy is lasting. You can have right now a settled lasting joy from relationship to God and his people.”

Discussion Questions/Takeaways:

1. How does real joy differ from temporary happiness in your life?
2. Reflect on a time when belief in Christ brought you unexpected joy, like Lewis.
3. Takeaway: Journal one way God's grace has filled you with joy, and share it if possible.

Closing Prayer:

Gracious God, complete my joy through the real Jesus and fellowship with You. Replace temporary pleasures with Your lasting fulfillment. Surprise me anew with Your grace, and help me live in the happy life found only in You. Amen.