

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. Scripture text: **1John 1:1-4.**

What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we beheld and our hands handled, concerning the Word of Life-- [2] and the life was manifested, and we have seen and bear witness and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us-- [3] what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, that you also may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. [4] And these things we write, so that our joy may be made complete.

B. This is the second is a series of lessons covering the books of 1,2,3John. Tonight:

1. John's right to write.
2. Our benefit to read (hear and understand).
3. The joy that comes from testimony and fellowship.

II. JOHN'S RIGHT TO WRITE.

A. See 1John 1:1,2.

B. The manifestation.

"That which was from the beginning" suggests:

1. The same beginning as in Gen. 1:1; Jn. 1:1; Col. 1:16; and Heb. 1:10.

(Gen 1:1) In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

(Jn 1:1) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

(Col 1:16) For by Him all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities-- all things have been created by Him and for Him.

(Heb 1:10) And, "THOU, LORD, IN THE BEGINNING DIDST LAY THE FOUNDATION OF THE EARTH, AND THE HEAVENS ARE THE WORKS OF THY HANDS;

2. An expression of the deity of X before His incarnation.
3. A similar thought as Jn. 1:1 presenting Jesus as the divine Word.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

C. The testimony.

1. Multiple eyewitness testimony from the apostles.
2. They heard, saw, beheld (contemplated), and handled Jesus.
3. To behold means to meditate upon, to view attentively.
4. John states this three times in the first three verses.
5. This testimony is about Jesus and His pre-existing deity as well as His humanity (2Pet. 1:16-19).
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. [17] For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such an utterance as this was made to Him by the Majestic Glory, "This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased"-- [18] and we ourselves heard this utterance made from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain. [19] And so we have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts.

D. The proclamation.

1. Concerning the Word of life (Jn. 1:4).
In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.
2. See 1Jn. 5:11.
And the witness is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.
3. The importance of accepting the apostles' testimony (1Jn. 4:5,6).
They are from the world; therefore they speak as from the world, and the world listens to them. [6] We are from God; he who knows God listens to us; he who is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.
4. The life, the eternal life, was with the Father, but has been made manifest to the apostles (and us).

III. OUR BENEFIT IN READING (UNDERSTANDING).

-  A. See 1John 1:3.
- B. Our benefit in reading and understand this proclaimed message hinges upon accepting the apostles' testimony (1Th. 2:13; Eph. 3:4).
(Eph 3:4) And by referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ,
(1Th 2:13) And for this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received from us the word of God's message, you accepted *it* not *as* the word of men, but *for* what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe.
- C. To remain in the apostles' doctrine is therefore very important. We should not add to it or go ahead of it (1Cor. 4:6; 2Jn. 9).
(1Cor 4:6) Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively applied to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that in us you might learn not to exceed what is written, in order that no one of you might become arrogant in behalf of one against the other.
(2Jn 9) Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son.
- D. To believe the message is to have fellowship with the apostles, and to have fellowship with the apostles is to have fellowship with the Father and His Son, JC.

IV. THE JOY THAT COMES FROM FELLOWSHIP.

-  A. See 1John 1:4.
- B. Some translations say "your joy" and others says "our joy." It is difficult to determine.
1. If it should be "your joy" then John is expressing the joy we should have in believing the apostles' testimony concerning Jesus. This is a definite possibility (Jn. 15:10,11).
"If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love. [11] "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and *that* your joy may be made full.
 2. I tend to think it should be translated as "our joy" because of John's statements in 2Jn. 4 and 3 Jn. 3,4.
(2Jn 4) I was very glad to find *some* of your children walking in truth, just as we have received commandment *to do* from the Father.
(3Jn 3,4) For I was very glad when brethren came and bore witness to your truth, *that is*, how you are walking in truth. [4] I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth.
 3. But I am not dogmatic.
- C. This joy is not to be determined by physical circumstances (Jn. 16:21-24).
"Whenever a woman is in travail she has sorrow, because her hour has come; but when she gives birth to the child, she remembers the anguish no more, for joy that a child has been born into the world. [22] "Therefore you too now have sorrow; but I will see you again, and your heart will rejoice, and no one takes your joy away from you. [23] "And in that day you will ask Me no question. Truly, truly, I say to you, if you shall ask the Father for anything, He will give it to you in My name. [24] "Until now you have asked for nothing in My name; ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be made full.
- D. Rather, this joy comes from having fellowship (a relationship) with God through JC.

V. CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. John attacks the Gnostic belief that Jesus was a phantom. The apostle repeatedly says that Jesus was the divine Son of God in full human form.
- B. John plainly teaches that salvation in this Jesus is found by accepting the apostles' testimony.
- C. We can have joy and fellowship with God by believing in the incarnate Word, JC.
- D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians, erring Xians.