

Jesus was truly God. Only the eternal God could die and rise again to life to pay the eternal debt of the entire human race.

3. We Must Believe the Incarnation to be Saved ^(v.3-4)

a. John declared to us what he saw and heard

- 1) John just told us that Jesus was truly human and truly the eternal God.
- 2) In his Gospel, John points his readers to Christ for eternal life.
- ✚ (John 20:30-31) "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."
- 3) That which John saw, heard, and knew about Jesus is more than historical facts. It is the message of salvation from eternal judgment in hell. John declares this to us so that we might believe it and receive it.

b. By acting on John's message we can be saved and have joyful fellowship with God.

- 1) John was enjoying fellowship with God the Father and with God the Son, Jesus Christ.
- 2) By believing and receiving the message John preached about Christ, we too can have fellowship with God. All fellowship with God begins with true salvation.
- 3) Fellowship with God gives joy (v.4)

✚ *To have fellowship with God, we must believe the incarnation and the atoning work of Jesus Christ.*

Conclusion: John knew the Lord as a human and divine friend. He heard him, saw him, watched him, and touched him. He declared that Jesus was both God and man at the same time. Jesus incarnation enabled Him to die and pay for our eternal judgment in hell (Joh 3:16). Are you positive that you have received his gift of eternal life?

Sound doctrine about Christ and faith in Christ are the basis for fellowship with God. When we get this right, we can have fellowship with God just as John had fellowship with Him.

Song: Isn't the Love of Jesus Something Wonderful, 450

The Basis for Fellowship

15 February 2015 pm – 1John 1:1-4 – 1Jn 2015 – Scott Childs

Introduction: John opens this book by telling us that one can only have fellowship with God and with God's children when he believes right. The basis for fellowship is not love but sound Bible doctrine.

Transition: In the opening verses of this book, John presents three doctrines we must believe to have fellowship with God.

1. We Must Believe That Jesus was Truly Human ^(v.1)

a. Who was the Word of life?

- 1) The Word of life was obviously a person. This becomes more obvious in the following verses.
- 2) John opened his Gospel by introducing us to Jesus as the Word that had life.
 - a) Jesus was the Word and the Word was God.
- ✚ (John 1:1) "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."
- b) Jesus was the life. He is the source and giver of eternal life.
- ✚ (John 1:4) "In him was life; and the life was the light of men."
- 3) The Word of life is obviously the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the person of whom John was writing.

b. What did John know about Christ?

Though it may have been 60 years since John walked with Jesus in Galilee, he remembered those three and a half years with clarity.

- 1) **That which was from the beginning.** Many have thought that he referred to the **beginning of time at creation** in Genesis 1:1 and John 1:1. This is possible, but it does not fit the context very well. John knew the facts concerning Christ from the **beginning of his public ministry**. Peter, Andrew, James and John were the first men to follow Jesus in his ministry (Mat 4:18-22). Either interpretation correctly describes John's knowledge about Christ.
- 2) **Which we have heard.** John heard Christ speak in a human

voice. He sat at Jesus feet and heard him speak for more than three years. He heard him pray in the garden. He heard him preach in the synagogues. He heard him rebuke the hypocritical Pharisees. He heard the words of salvation from his lips. Even Christ's enemies said (John 7:46) ". . . Never man spake like this man." John was not imagining things. He really heard Jesus speak.

- 3) **Which we have seen with our eyes.** John saw with his own eyes the miracles of Christ. He saw Jesus walk on the water. He saw Jesus heal the lepers, blind, crippled, deaf, and paralysed. He saw Jesus raise a dead son and a dead daughter and his dead friend Lazarus. He saw Jesus feed thousands with a small lunch. He saw the raging sea calmed and the demons depart at the command of Jesus. He saw Jesus crucified. He also saw Jesus after his resurrection. The Jesus he saw as not a phantom. He was a real person.
- 4) **Which we have looked upon.** John looked attentively on the life of Christ. He watched him as they walked the dusty roads and climbed the mountain to Jerusalem. He watched him as he prayed, ate, sang, and slept. He looked at his character. He knew Jesus well.
- 5) **And our hands have handled.** John touched Jesus with his hands. It is likely that many times John reached out a hand to pull Jesus into a boat or embraced in greeting. John often leaned on Jesus as they reclined to eat. Even after his resurrection, Jesus encouraged his disciples to touch him. He said, "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." (Luke 24:39)

📖 *For us to have fellowship with God, we must believe that Jesus came to earth as a human. This is essential for our salvation.*

2. We Must Believe that Jesus was Truly God ^(v.2)

a. John tells us that the life was manifested.

- 1) The word "**manifest**" means to make visible or to make known what already exists. At his incarnation, Jesus, God the Son, became visible in a human body.

- 2) In eternity past, because Jesus was God, Jesus was a spirit until His incarnation (John 4:24). When He was born of Mary, Jesus became the God-man.

✚ (Matthew 1:23) "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."

✚ (1 Timothy 3:16) "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."

- 3) John saw Jesus and witnessed to the fact that Jesus was a human. John's testimony is very credible since he was an eyewitness.

✚ (John 1:14) "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."

b. John testified that Jesus was the eternal life.

- 1) John called Jesus "*the life the eternal*". He was human but John knew that Jesus was also the Eternal Life. He was divine. No mere human could have lived the life of Jesus Christ.

- 2) John clarifies it yet further by saying that eternal life was **with** (near) the Father before he was manifested. Being the eternal life, Jesus had always been near the Father.

- 3) During His ministry, Jesus claimed to be the life.

✚ (John 14:6) "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

✧ *The Gnostics were not the last to deny that Jesus was the eternal God who became a real man. The Jehovah's Witness cult claims that Jesus is just a god, the first of God's creation – not God Almighty incarnate. The Mormons claim that God was once a man and he climbed the ladder to become a god. They claim that Jesus was the first born "spirit child" of their god and his second son was Lucifer or Satan. Islam teaches that Jesus was a good prophet.*

📖 *For us to have fellowship with God, we must also believe that*