

Study #1
The Introduction & Preface
1 John 1:1-4

Introduction to 1 John

- 1. Author & Audience
- 2. Historical Context: _____

3. Purpose

- a. _____ genuine believers

1 John 5:13—¹³ *I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life.*

1 John 1:4 —⁴ *...we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.*

1 John 2:1—*My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin.*

1 John 2:26 —²⁶ *I write these things to you about those who are trying to deceive you.*

_____, _____,

_____, _____

- b. _____ false teachers

4. The Tests of Life

- a. Theological - Do I believe that Jesus is the Son of God (3:23, 5:5, 10, 13), the Christ who “came in the flesh” (4:2)?
- b. Moral - Do I practice righteousness and keep the commands of God?
- c. Social - Do I love others? (4:7-8)

→ Read 1 John 1:1-4 (ESV)

“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.”

OBSERVATION QUESTIONS

1. Having read the passage...
 - a. What initial observations do you have?
 - b. What words might you want to look up in the Greek to better understand their meaning?
 - c. What words are repeated?

2. Considering these are the first verses of a letter, what seems to be missing?

3. John begins his letter with: “That which was from the beginning.” What do you think “that” is referring to? What does “the beginning” refer to? Read John 1:1-2 to enhance your understanding.

John 1:1-2—¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God.”

4. After stating, “that which was from the beginning,” John makes a list. What does he list?

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What do you observe about that list?

Who/what is this list “concerning”? (end of v. 1)

5. Who/what might be the “Word of Life”?

What from the passage supports your conclusion?

Read the following verses & discuss how they help explain the passage.

John 1:1-5, 14 –¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. ⁴ In him was life, and the life was the light of men...¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

6. Having considered the list “concerning the Word of Life,” what do you think John was saying about his personal experience with the Word of Life?
7. V. 2 starts and ends with “—“. What does that signal?
8. What is v. 2 explaining or giving more information about?
9. Finish this sentence: “the life was made _____”.
What does that mean?
How many times is that stated in verse 2?
What does it mean when something is repeated?

Read the following verses to gain a better understanding.

1 Peter 1:20 –²⁰ [Christ] was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you ²¹ who through him are believers in God...”

John 1:4-5, 9-10, 14 –⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. ⁵ The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it...⁹ There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and

the world did not know Him...¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

10. Who was “the eternal life” with (v. 2)?

11. John makes another list in v. 2. Now what does he say about “the life that was made manifest”?

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What do you observe about that list?

What does it mean to “testify”?

What does it mean to “proclaim”?

12. Read v. 3. What is the purpose of John proclaiming the things “concerning the Word of Life”?

13. What does “fellowship” mean?

14. Who does John say he has fellowship with? Read the follow verses and compare.

1 Corinthians 1:9 – “⁹ God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.”

John 17:20-23—“²⁰ I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word,²¹ that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, ²³ I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.”

15. Why is John writing “these things”? (v. 4)

16. What do you think is the main point of these verses?

TEACHING NOTES

The Preface — John 1:1-4

- 1. The eternal pre-existence** (“That which was from the beginning”)
- 2. The historical manifestation** (“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.”)
- 3. The authoritative proclamation** (“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...”)
- 4. The fellowship** (“so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.”)
- 5. The completed joy** (“⁴ And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.”)

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. 1 John tests our faith (theologically, morally, and socially) and written for the purpose of joy, holiness, warning, and assurance. How do you think you might grow as we study this letter together? Do you anticipate any challenges?
2. What from today's study increases your certainty in Jesus being fully God and fully man?
3. What does your fellowship with God look like? What does your fellowship with other believers look like?
4. Joy is the response and reaction of the soul to knowing the Lord Jesus Christ. Are you finding joy in Jesus Christ? Does Jesus satisfy your mind? Your emotions? Your desires? How can your joy grow?

Next Week: 1 John 1:5-2:2