

That our joy may be complete – 1 John

1 John 1:1-4

“The eyewitness account” – February 9, 2020



Introduction

Where are you looking for life? In the beginning, Adam and Eve didn't need to look because they had it in the Garden of Eden. But when they rebelled against God, rejected His rule and went looking for life *outside* of God, death came just as God had warned (Gen. 2:17). Outside of God's satisfying love and refuge, we became self-centered and selfish, missing out on the glory of God and instead trying to make a name for ourselves. In the prologue of John's letter, we see a sneak peek at where he's headed in the rest of the letter.

Pray

Before you begin, take some time to ask God to help you understand His word, to reveal what needs to change in you, and for the grace to follow Him in response. To help, use [Psalm 119:33-40](#) as a prayer for God to open His word up to you.

Sermon Outline

- I. Where can we find life? (1:1-2)
- II. Where can we find community? (1:3-4)

Who's the author? *The Apostle John, one of the twelve disciples and author of the Gospel of John.*

Who's the audience? *Christian tradition suggests it's the church in Ephesus, where John likely lived out his final days. He would've written it likely in the early 90s, A.D.*

What's the purpose of the letter? *Due to the false teaching of an early version of Gnosticism, there was confusion about Jesus and what real Christianity was. In 5:13, John says he wrote, 'that you may know that you have eternal life.'*

Read & Discuss

- 1) Read [1 John 1:1-2](#)

In v1, we meet Jesus who is fully God *and* fully man, without division. This doctrine of the incarnation was being challenged by the false teachers, but John shows it is essential for the Christian faith. Without Jesus being fully man, we have no mediator, no atoning sacrifice, and we are still in our sin. Without Jesus being God incarnate, his atoning death loses its infinite value to take the wrath of God that has infinite consequences. But as an Apostle who is giving eyewitness 'testimony,' John reminds us, "I was there! I saw him, heard him, and touched him. This is true!"

That Jesus is the Word of life shows us that He is God's word that reveals the Father ([John 1:14, 18](#)), and in Him is life ([John 1:4](#)). He doesn't just give life, He is life ([John 14:6](#)). In other words, He is the best, the ultimate that life has to offer. Why would we go looking in empty cisterns when He is life? Why are we tempted to look for life outside of God? In other words, what does the prospect of finding life outside of God offer (albeit impossible), that makes it tempting?

Additional Reading: John 17:3, 1 Timothy 2:5

2) Read [1 John 1:3-4](#)

By 'fellowship,' John means something more than potluck dinners and sweet tea. Fellowship (*koinonia*) means to share or participate in something. What a group shares in common is the thing that centers them and binds them together as a group. For the church, that's Jesus. The satisfying, loving, and infinite joy that exists in the relationship between God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit was lost because of sin...but thru Jesus' death and resurrection, God graciously makes a way and invites us back in. In John 17:22-23 Jesus prays, "The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, 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."

Why is knowing the seriousness of our sin important for knowing the joy that is found in the gospel? What are ways we can better see both our sin and God's love?

Additional Reading: Luke 7:41-47

Prayer of Response

1) After hearing God's Word, what sin do I need to confess? From what do I need to repent?

2) How should my life be lived this week based on what I have heard? What should I understand, believe, desire, or do?

Spend time praying together in response to God's word asking for His help and greater faith to follow Him in the week to come.

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***Next week's sermon text:** we turn to **Matthew 11:12-30, "Rest for weary souls"**