

# That our joy may be complete – 1 John

1 John 4:1-6

“Victory in Jesus” – April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020



## Introduction

Who we listen to, matters. In some instances, if we listen to the wrong person it can mean grace consequences. When John wrote this letter to the church, there were competing voices of people claiming to have the Spirit, claiming ‘*God told me this,*’ or claiming to speak on behalf of God. John doesn’t want us to be confused, but confident about the truth ([1 Jn. 5:13](#)). Therefore, in 4:1-6, he clarifies how we can know who speaks on behalf of God. In other words, when it comes to the important question of how we can be ready to meet our Maker, John shows us how we can know who to trust – who to listen to.

## 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. Test who they say Jesus is (4:1-3)
- II. Trust the eye-witness (4:4-6)

## Read & Discuss

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

In order to understand Christianity, we need to know who Jesus is. There are lots of *secondary* issues churches can and will disagree upon (Paul calls them ‘opinions’ or ‘disputable matters’ in [Rom. 14:1](#)) but the identity of Jesus is not a secondary issue we can agree to disagree on – it is a matter of *first* importance ([1 Cor. 15:3](#)). John reminds us those who are ‘from God’ confess that Jesus is *the Christ who came in the flesh*. He’s the Christ (the anointed King, the ‘Messiah’) who fulfills all the Old Testament prophecies of a King who would rescue His people, defeat their enemies, and rule over them with justice and righteousness. Not only is the Christ *fully God*, He would also be *fully man*. When we consider the mission of Jesus to redeem, why was it necessary He come in the flesh? (see [Heb. 2:14-15](#) and [1 Corinthians 15:12-19](#)).

When you consider how the New Testament presents the identity of Jesus as *Christ* and God *in the flesh*, is that ever intimidating or threatening to what you desire? If so, *why*? What does John mean by ‘confesses’ in v2 & v3? How is confession a matter of the heart and not just what we say by mindless rote?

Additional Reading: Isaiah 9:6-7, John 5:44, 7:17

2) Read [1 John 4:4-6](#)

By 'world,' John means a world system that operates as if God doesn't exist or is irrelevant – it is a world order opposed to God in the hopes of maintaining self-rule or the semblance of control. If Satan cannot get us to deny God with a direct attack, he often tempts us to deny Him by keeping our spirituality, but redefining God. We like the idea of defining God on our own terms because it allows us to keep the parts about Him that we like and ignore the parts we don't. The problem with such a counterfeit Christianity is that defining God as we like is not worship – it is idolatry. Are their ways you've redefined God to your liking rather than submitted to God as He reveals Himself in Scripture?

In [v4](#) John tells the Christian we 'have overcome'. When we feel weary, weak, and at times defeated that might sound strange! But we overcome 'by faith' (see [1 Jn. 5:4](#)). This faith is not a leap into the dark, but trusting God – banking our lives on the light of His word and His promises to us such that we *act* on them ([Ja. 1:22](#)). Remember the New Testament talks about our life being *bound* to Christ's – we are united to Him by faith ([Rom. 6:3-4](#) or [Eph. 1:7-14](#) - note the '*in Him...*' that's repeated). How does Christ's death and resurrection offer us hope when we face a difficult and uncertain future?

As God's word to us (John 1:14, 18), Jesus speaks for God. Jesus then commissioned a handful of Apostles who were eye-witnesses of His life, death and resurrection. They were called and guided by the Holy Spirit ([John 14:26](#), [2 Pet. 1:21](#)) to write down the New Testament for us! Today, God speaks to us in the Bible. His word is truth (John 17:17) and it is the standard by which we test everything we hear, read, or see. How is the resurrection of Jesus a reason to believe that the Bible is God's word?

Additional Reading: Romans 8:23-39

### **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.

If you missed the sermon on Sunday or would like to listen again, visit our website at <https://fbcum.org/sermons-new/>

**\*Next week's sermon text:** we turn to **Romans 8:12-17 "Fellow Heirs with Christ"**