

**This Is A Test**

# 1 John

- No address
- No signature
- No greeting
- Resembles sermon more than letter
- But... 2:1, 26; 5:21

# 1 John

- Purpose: readers had encountered false doctrines that deny . . .
  1. Reality of Jesus' body
  2. Jesus is Christ, Son of God
  3. Necessity of godly living

John contains 'signs' to  
produce faith – Jn.20:30-31

1 John contains 'tests' by which  
to judge faith – 1 Jn.4:2-3

# 1 John

- Three features of true knowledge of God and fellowship with Him –
  1. Righteous life
  2. Brotherly love
  3. Faith in Jesus

Some were deceived; left churches over these errors – 2:19; 4:1.

John (apostle of love) hates false doctrine. 5:13.

# I. The Word of Life, 1:1-4

## 'That which' (neuter)

- Includes message, works, attributes of Jesus

Jn.4:22, You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews.

Jn.6:37, All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.

1 Jn.5:4, For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

# 'Was from the beginning' (He is eternal)

- Gospel is not an afterthought (Ep.3:10-11)
- 'Beginning' depends on context
  1. 1 Jn.2:7. Cf. Ac.11:15
  2. 1 Jn.1:1. Cf. Gn.1; Jn.1:1
- He existed before He was manifested
- Gnostic claim: He was created
- He 'was' (not 'He became')

‘Which we have heard’  
(direct, not hearsay)

<sup>21</sup> “Therefore, of these men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, <sup>22</sup> beginning from the baptism of John to that day when He was taken up from us, one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection” – Ac.1:21-22



# ‘Which we have seen with our eyes’

- 4:14

For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard – Acts 4:20

- ‘With our eyes’ – not figure of speech; literal
- ‘I saw it with my own eyes...’

‘...have looked upon’ (cf. ‘theater’)

And the Word became 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 – Jn.1:14

- Not a casual / momentary glimpse, or assumption.

## ‘...hands have handled’

“Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have” – Lk.24:39

- Cf. Jn.20:17, “Do not cling to Me...”
- Cf. Jn.20:27, “Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side...”

# ‘concerning the Word of life’

- The Word who gives life.

“In Him was life, and the life was the light of men” – Jn.1:4

- Jesus is the Bread of life, the Light of life, the way...truth...and the life...

‘the life was manifested’ (v.2)

- Manifestation preceded seeing

‘and we have seen’ (apostles)

‘and bear witness’

- Language of personal experience

## ‘and declare to you’ (v.2)

- Words of commission.

“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” – Acts 1:8

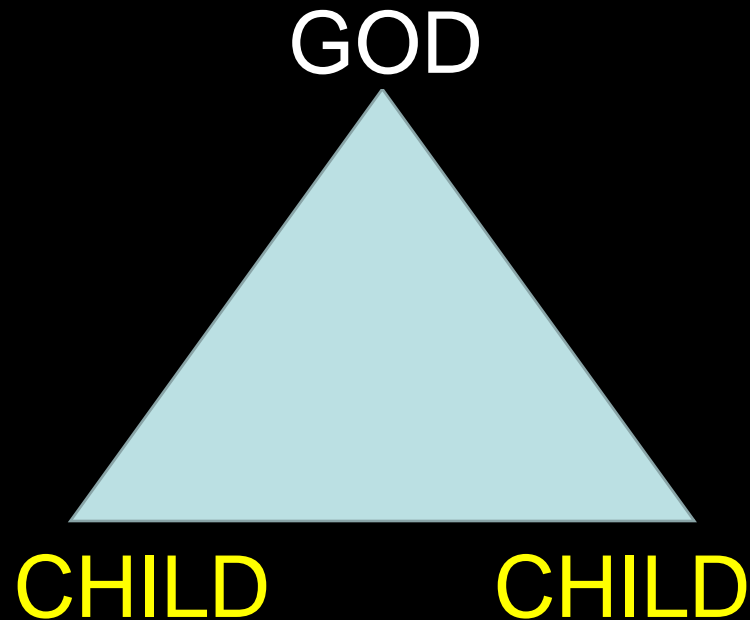
- We believe what we have NOT seen because eyewitnesses did see (Jn.20:29).
- The few share with the many.

‘that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us’ (v.2)

- 5:11-12, 20
- How serious is the message??

‘...we declare to you...’ (v.3)

- Main verb.
- Why declare? Fellowship
- Jn.17:21,  
all ... one.



How much  
division  
between  
Father and  
Son?

How much  
fellowship  
between  
John and  
Gnostics?



## ‘...we write...’ (v.4)

- “Your” or “our”?

“And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together” – John 4:36

I. The Word of Life, 1:1-4

II. The God of Light, 1:5-2:2

# 'Message we heard from Him' (Jesus?)

## God is Light

- Message to declare: not a discovery or invention

Apostles merely pass on what they received

- Light: Gn.1:3; Rv.22:5
- "God is...: **love** (4:8); **Spirit** (Jn.4:24); **Light**
  - Light guides, Jn.8:12
  - Light reveals, Jn.3:19-20; Ps.119:105

‘In Him is no darkness at all...’

We associate darkness with sin / error

If we claim fellowship with Him and walk  
in darkness...we lie (6)

1. The Claim: fellowship with Him
  2. The Condition: walk in darkness; lying
  3. The Conclusion: liar
- We cannot live in sin and fellowship God.

‘In Him is no darkness at all...’

We associate darkness with sin / error

If we claim fellowship with Him and walk  
in darkness...we lie (6)

14 Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? 15 And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? 16 And what agreement has the temple of God with idols?

‘...we walk in the light...’ (7)

- Results –

1. Fellowship. Ep.5:11.

2. Blood cleanses. Hb.9:22.

<sup>1</sup>Jesus had a body

<sup>2</sup>He suffered

<sup>3</sup>He sacrificed

By His sacrificial  
death, we share  
in His life

- “Sin”: 17 times in 1 John; 17 times in John

## 'have not sinned...' (8)

- 'Have' sin (Jn.9:41)
- Consequence: truth not in us [= Jn.8:44]
- Does this matter? [Jn.8:32]

‘confess our sins...’ (9)

- If we walk in light, we see sins that were hidden in darkness

To deny sin is to say ‘God is a liar’ (10)

[5:10]

- Two causes –
  - Stifled conscience. Jn.8:7
  - Ignorance of Word. Jn.5:38
  - U.S.



‘I am writing so that  
you may not sin...’ (2:1)

- 1:3, so that we may have fellowship...
- 1:4, so that your joy may be complete...
- 2:1a – sin disrupts fellowship, destroys joy.
- 2:1b – paradox: realizing our sin drives us to God for forgiveness
  1. Satan brings condemning accusation.
  2. Holy Spirit convicts of sin, Jn.16:8...
  3. Jesus pleads our forgiveness.

I. The Word of Life, 1:1-4

II. The God of Light, 1:5-2:2

III. The Walk of Life, 2:3-6

## 2:3, the test

- How to know we know Him? Cf. Jn.14:15

2:3, the test

## 2:4, the testimony

- 'I know Him' – Gnostic platitude
- To claim it without keeping His commands is:
  1. Liar. Rv.21:8. 1 Co.5.
    - a. Paul more upset with church than sinner
    - b. Tolerance makes them as guilty as fornicator
    - c. Withdraw, or share sinner's fate
  2. Does not have truth (God's commands).  
Jn.8:32

2:3, the test

2:4, the testimony

**Parallels [1:6; 2:4]:**

A If we say we have fellowship with Him

B And walk in darkness

C **We lie and do not the truth**

A He who says I know Him

B And does not keep His commandments

C **Is a liar and the truth is not in him**

2:3, the test  
2:4, the testimony  
2:5, the terms

- Whoever (open invitation)
- Keeps (present tense)
- Word (1:10 explains *truth*, 2:4)
- Love of God perfected in him – reaches goal (knows God; fellowship). 1 Jn.4:19
- By this we know we are in Him
  - Relationship
  - Ac.17:28

2:3, the test  
2:4, the testimony  
2:5, the terms  
2:6, the truth

- Claim: ('he says') must be proven
- If abide in Him, live like Him. Gal.2:20
- Walk as he walked (proves we know Him)

Obedience, not feeling,  
is the test of perfect love (5).