

Week One: Intro to 1 John

OPENING PRAYER

READ | 1 John 1:1-4; 5:13

¹That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. ²The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. ³We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. ⁴We write this to make our joy complete.

¹³I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.

DISCUSS

1. What is the purpose of this letter according to verses 1:1-4 and 5:13?
[Whatever else we understand about the entire book of 1 John, it's in light what is described here as true of Jesus, how he has been experienced in the flesh by man, and the character of our relationship with him. Is joy made complete by sharing the reason for it with others?]
2. How might these verses, particularly 'that which has been heard, seen with our eyes, and touched with our hands' (vv.1, 3), show us that the possibility of fellowship with God is no mere fiction, but as real and sure as any fellowship we have with human beings?
[For the one with whom they have fellowship with is one of whom they have seen, heard, and touched. The Christian faith refuses to be put in the category of a belief system of nice, abstract ideas to which someone might respond, "I'm glad that is true for you and works for you." Christianity claims to be grounded in history and to be objectively true. Our fellowship with God, then, is a reality to be enjoyed!]
3. By what names is Jesus referred to in verses 1 and 2? Why is He referred to this way?
['Word of Life'; 'the life']

APPLY

1. Do you ever doubt that Jesus, the Son of God, was just as real and just as human as you are... as the person sitting next to you right now? Why/why not? What's the significance of God actually becoming a man, walking dusty roads, and eating fish and bread, for the fellowship with Him that is possible for us today?
2. According to v.13, 1 John was written so that you might believe Jesus is God and rose from death, so that you *may know* that eternal life is yours. How have you experienced (or how do you desire to experience) fellowship with God that reinforces His love for you and the realities of the gospel—that Jesus is who He claims to be,¹ and that in Him we are who He claims we are?²

CLOSING PRAYER

Prayer suggestions: > *that through this study our group would experience greater assurance and freedom in the gospel of Jesus Christ*

> *that members of our group would be committed to one another's spiritual growth, such that our real and tangible fellowship with God would become richer and more evident*

> *that the life-giving Holy Spirit would help us with our unbelief, and meet us where we are*



¹ God in the flesh

² His beloved; His redeemed; His brothers and sisters; His co-heirs of the Kingdom; His church; His friends; His sheep; His children