



FAITH, FREEDOM, & FITNESS

DAILY BREAD

Wednesday, April 1

1 John 1:1

***That 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.***

The old phrase “seeing is believing,” carries great weight. It’s one thing to hear about an event, read about it, or even watch it unfold on video, but witnessing the event first-hand is different. Whether it’s watching a Led Zeppelin concert on YouTube or seeing them perform live at Madison Square Garden, or being an eyewitness in a criminal proceeding, there’s something “special” about being there.

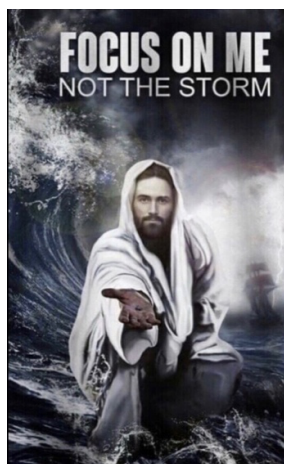


Today we are beginning a one-month study of John's three letters. The apostle starts from the very "beginning," referring to Jesus. Jesus is God and was in the beginning with God. Like the opening passages of Genesis and the Gospel of John, 1 John starts with a clear connection between Jesus and God the Father as the beginning of all things. John also refers to the idea of Jesus coming to earth as a flesh-and-blood man, which is a critical part of the gospel.



John was a personal witness to His earthly ministry, and one of the closest followers of Jesus. He heard Him teach, saw Him before and after the resurrection, and touched Him with his own hands. John was the last surviving apostle, so he spoke with an authority few could match. John further calls Jesus the "Word of Life," a phrase used elsewhere only in Philipians 2:16.

In Christ, Spero



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Thursday, April 2

1 John 1:2

***The 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.***

Verse 2, while short in length, consists of six distinct parts related to Jesus.

First, Jesus – “The Life” – was revealed to John and to others.

Second, John was not alone in seeing Jesus. The statement here says, “we.” There were many eyewitnesses to Christ’s miracles and His resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:3-8).

Third, John could attest to these things. Like a witness in a courtroom, John could give testimony of being with Jesus, watching Him perform miracles, watching His death, seeing the empty tomb, and experiencing Christ resurrected.

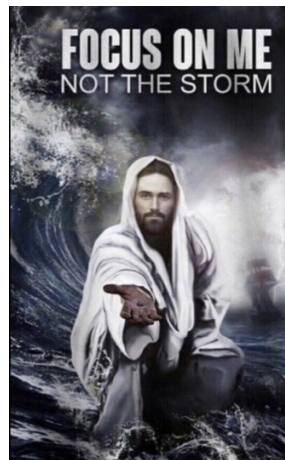
Fourth, John could announce eternal life, which is Jesus Himself, to everyone. The phrase “eternal life” is often used in John’s Gospel, and six times in this letter alone (1 John 2:25, 3:15, 5:11, 13, 20).



Fifth, Jesus was with the Father in heaven prior to coming to earth. Again, John emphasizes Christ's deity prior to coming to earth.

Sixth, that Jesus came to earth in flesh-and-blood form. John ends the verse as it began, describing how Jesus was "made manifest," or shown, and was revealed to us.

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Friday, April 3

1 John 1:3

***We 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.***

In today's verse from 1 John 1:3, John repeats his claim to eyewitness experience from verse one. These things John and others saw Jesus do, and which they heard Jesus teach, served as the basis for what they "proclaimed." The Greek work translated "proclaim" is *apangellomen* which includes the idea of announcing or reporting. John could accurately teach about Jesus because he personally served with Him and had learned directly from the Lord.

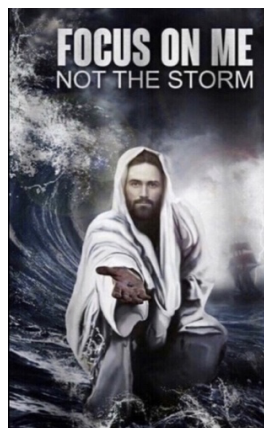


The goal of John's teaching was shared fellowship. The idea of fellowship, from the Greek *koinonia* was an important concept in the New Testament (Acts 2:42). John noted the importance of fellowship with each other. John also reminds the reader that we also have fellowship with both Christ and God the Father. This reflects the Great Commandment, found in the Gospels (Matthew 22:37-40), to love God and love your neighbor as yourself.



A right relationship with God is seen as essential to right relationships with other people. Also important is John's emphasis of the connection of the Father and Son, a theme both in John's Gospel and the letter of 1 John.

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Saturday, April 4

1 John 1:4

We write this to make our joy complete.

Today's verse from 1 John 1:4 concludes the introduction and partially explains the purpose of John's letter (the main point is found later in 1 John 5:13).

John wrote to fulfill mutual joy between himself and his readers. Many false teachers opposed the truth of Christ in the early church. Persecutions from the government and the surrounding culture were thrown at those preaching the truth as well.

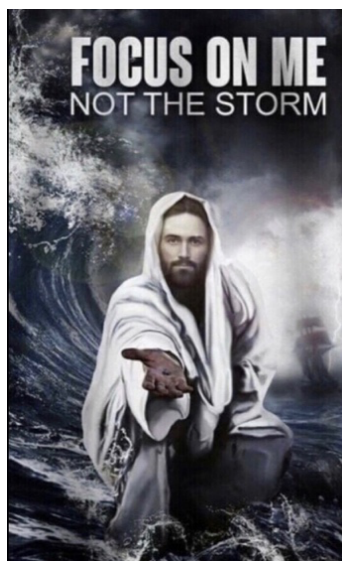


Unfortunately, not much has changed since John's time. Christians are still being persecuted world-wide, and John's letter continues to serve to counter these concerns and build up his fellow believers in Jesus.



Joy is part of the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23), and an expected aspect of the Christian life. Part of John's purpose is showing followers of Christ like you and me how to experience joy and fulfillment in our walk with the Lord.

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