

1 John 1:1-4 (Teaching)

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 28 December 2022

Preacher: Spencer Baumgardner

- [0 : 00] Morning. Morning. Well, you're wrapped up duty glass please. I know a lot. It kind of made me sad. I enjoy going through duty. Before we get started this morning, does anybody have any questions or comments about the book of duty?
- One more opportunity for that. If not, flip back just a little ways from Jude to the book of 1 John.
- We seem to be hanging out towards the back of the Bible for some reason. And that's fine.
- The back's just as important as the front end. The book of 1 John, written, of course, it's rightfully assumed, written by the Apostle John, given its wording.
- [1 : 04] Nowhere in the letter do we have John introducing himself, but given its wording and the things that we find throughout the first, third John, it's rightfully assumed that John the Apostle is the one that wrote this letter saying, why don't I write the Gospel of John.
- It's thought that this was written sometime between 85 and 90 AD by John the Apostle and he being the oldest living Apostle at that time.
- And likely the only one that was still left remaining as far as church history goes. But 1 John, it's got some doctrinal stuff in it.
- It doesn't get real deep and real heavy into things as far as theology goes. The 1 John was written as an exhortation to believers, as an exhortation to the church, much like James when we went through the book of James and much like Jude was.
- It was written to believers in Jesus Christ. And that's something that we need to keep at the forefront of our thoughts as we go through this book.
- [2 : 27] A lot of Gnosticism was creeping into the church during this time and Gnosticism, I may or may not have explained it before, Gnosticism was, well, there are several thoughts with the Gnostics, but one of the main thoughts was that, yes, you can have your relationship with God, you can have your relationship with Jesus Christ, but I have a special relationship with Jesus.
- So even though we don't find it in the Bible, which the only Bible they had at that time was the Old Testament, even though we don't find it in the Word of God, you just listen to me because God told me different.
- That was the thought of the Gnostics, or that was one of the thoughts of the Gnostics. And that was one of the concerns during this time, and that struck not only the 1st generation church, but the Gnostics hung around quite a bit during the 2nd and the 3rd generation church.
- If you look back and you study your church history, and unfortunately, there's still Gnosticism around today, much of it's found in the charismatic movement that you may hear about, you may see videos on YouTube or whatever the case may be.
- People saying, well, God told me this or God told me that, and it goes completely contrary to what the Scripture says. Folks, if it goes outside of what this Bible says, it cannot be from God.

[3 : 58] It won't be from God. If it doesn't fall in line with the pages of Scripture, if it goes against something that God has declared or decreed, I can promise you it did not come from God.

It may have come from a spirit, but it didn't come from the Holy Spirit. This was one of the things that John was fighting against, and James fought against, and Jude fought against.

It was very prevalent in the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd generation church, Gnosticism. It was a dangerous thing. It was just as dangerous 2,000 years ago as it is right now, because it leads a lot of people astray.

It leads a lot of people into thinking that God is someone whom He is not. So these are things I just want you to keep in the forefront of your thoughts as we go through the book of 1st John here.

So we'll begin in verse 1 of 1st John. It says, that which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of life, for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, which was manifested unto us.

[5 : 21] That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that you also may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ.

We'll get back up to verse 1. That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of life.

That which was from the beginning, so John here immediately speaks of the deity of Jesus Christ, saying that which was from the beginning, and we're all pretty well familiar with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Gospel of John and how it begins. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Speaking of Jesus Christ, and this is a very, very similar introduction that John gives in this letter that he's writing, but that which was from the beginning, it speaks of the deity of God, the deity of Christ.

It speaks of the eternality of Jesus Christ. It speaks of Him being immortal. He's always been there, and He always will be there. That which was from the beginning.

[6 : 41] This is Jesus Christ that he's speaking of here. This was prophesied in the Old Testament in the book of Micah. We're about to enter into the Christmas season now, and we're going to start seeing Christmas cards that have Micah chapter 5 and verse 2 on, which speaks about Jesus Christ. It prophesies Jesus Christ in that where he says, he says, Bethlehem et Frata.

He says, you know, out of, he said, though you be little among thousands in Judah, but out of you, I'm going to bring a ruler to rule over Israel who is from everlasting. He is eternal, meaning this ruler that's going to come out of Israel, he's going to come future tense, but he's always been.

He is from everlasting. The Bible refers to God, and Jesus was God, manifesting the flesh while he was here, but the Bible speaks of God as the ancient of days, meaning he's always been here.

And I can't explain that, and you can explain that, and no one can. I've seen some pretty disturbing, scientific explanations of how God could have always been in existence.

Folks, it's inexplicable, and that's one of the beautiful things about it, folks. Really and truly, salvation is inexplicable. It's amazing to me that God would leave heaven above, leave a perfect place such as heaven, and leave his throne up there, come down here and put on a robe of flesh, become something as lowly and as wretched as a human being, although he was not wretched while he was here, no guy was ever found in his mouth. He was without sin while he was here, he was without sin before he was here, and he's without sin now. But why he would come here to save a bunch of wretched sinners, that is amazing to me.

[8 : 39] And it's really inexplicable to me, it's unexplainable to me. I understand God wanted to tabernacle with his creation. I understand he wanted to live amongst his creation, and he wanted to fellowship with them, and these other things.

And that's part of the explanation, but why he would save me, me personally, it's amazing to me. But the existence of God, he's always been there.

We can go back and we can go back and back and back and say, well, this came from that, and that came from this, and the question is always there amongst unbelievers.

Well, where did God come from? Where did God come from? God has always been there. The Bible says he is from everlasting. He is from everlasting, and he is to everlasting.

He's from eternity to eternity. He is eternal, he's always been there. He spoke this entire world and universe into existence, and he's always been there. Jesus Christ was not a created being, he has always been there.

[9 : 46] And the same three persons that he is there, that he's there as now, and God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled all the word of life, which we have heard.

John here is saying, and like I said, Gnosticism was pretty prevalent in the church at this point, not to mention Judaizers and other things, other people that had creaked into the church, and they were presenting false doctrines and things that were not of God, were not of Scripture, were not Spirit-inspired, were not God-inspired.

They were presenting all these things, and John here is saying to these believers that he is writing to, you need to listen to me. He's saying, I'm speaking to you of this one that's been there from the beginning.

I'm speaking to you of Jesus Christ, and I have heard him with my own ears. I have seen him with my own eyes. John could have lengthened this verse quite a bit, and I'm not adding to Scripture and saying this, but he could have said, I spent three plus years with the man, wandering around to the different towns, going to the different regions.

I heard the sermon on the mount. I saw the miracles performed. I saw the blind eyes open. I saw the deaf ears unstopped. I saw the paralytics giving life in their legs and their feet.

[11 : 21] I saw these miracles with my own eyes, and that's the case that John is making here. You don't listen to these false teachers that are coming in here to the church.

You listen to someone that spent three plus years with the man. I saw him. I heard him, and I studied him. That's what John is saying in these verses, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon.

It sounds like he's repeating himself when he says, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon.

He's talking when he says, we have seen with our eyes. He's saying, I visually saw Jesus Christ. I visually saw the Creator, the ancient of days. He was standing before me.

I slept with him out underneath the stars. I ate meals with the man. He's saying, I saw these things, but then he says, and we have looked upon. And it's not a repetition. John is not repeating himself here.

[12 : 20] He's saying, I studied the man. And had I been on the apostle then, I don't know what I would have done, but when Jesus Christ performed the miracles that he did, and when he preached the sermons that he did, and this man, this rabbi from Nazareth, as many people saw him as, referred to him as, when this man was preaching, I would have studied his every move.

I would have contemplated every word that exited his mouth. And that's what John is saying when he says, when he looked upon him, he's saying, we studied him in death. I looked upon him.

He said, I heard him, I saw him, and I studied the man. So you need to listen to me and not these false teachers that are infiltrating into the church.

This is what John is saying here. He says, our hands have handled the word of life. He's saying, not only have I seen him, not only have I heard him, and not only have I studied him, I have touched the ancient of days.

I have touched the eternal one. I have touched the very maker of the universe. I mean, we read in the gospels, we read where John, John was the apostle the latest head on the bosom of Jesus Christ.

[13 : 37] He's the apostle, he's the apostle whom the Bible says that Jesus loved, nothing he didn't love the rest of them. That was John's title in the gospels.

He is the apostle whom Jesus loved. He laid his head on his breast. He handled, he touched him. And I say, he done all these other things as well, seen him and heard him.

And this is John's case that he is making for these five chapters that will be going through in 1 John. This is the case he's making. These are the reasons you need to listen to me.

I have spent time with the man. You consider your own life. You consider looking for advice on and for anything. Something's going wrong with your car.

Who are you going to call? You're going to call a plumber? No. You're going to call someone to know something about cars. You're going to call a mechanic or an automotive technician as they're called nowadays. You know, if you're looking to fly somewhere, you're not going to call a ship captain to take you there.

[14 : 41] You're going to call a pilot to fly you somewhere. And John is making his case here saying, I have spent time with this man. I know what I'm talking about. Listen to me.

Not these false prophets, not these false teachers, not these nostics, not these Judaizers. You listen to me. That's the case that he's making. He says, our hands have handled of the Word of Life.

Again, this is a title for Jesus Christ that John has given here, the Word of Life. For the life was manifested and we have seen it and bear witness and shoe unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested unto us.

He says, the life, what life, the Word of Life, Jesus Christ is life. My goodness, how many times do we read that in the Scriptures? And John is re-emphasizing that to his audience, to the people whom he's writing about.

But once again, remember, having to re-emphasize this to people who already believe in Jesus Christ. And I know I said a while back as I was teaching, I want to be reminded over and over of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

[15 : 54] I will never tire of the gospel of Jesus and how Jesus Christ came here and gave his life for me. How a man literally died for me for my sake.

I will never, ever, ever tire of hearing that. And he says, the life was manifested, the Word of Life was manifested. Jesus Christ Himself, God Himself was manifest in the flesh.

Why was that? Well, the Bible tells us that God is spirit. Those that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. And if God is indeed a spirit, as the Bible says, and he is because the Bible says that he is, he had to take on a fleshly form.

All things are purged by blood according to the Scriptures. Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission according to the Scripture. A spirit cannot shed blood. He had to take on a human bodily form in order to be the sacrifice that he came here to be.

The life was manifested and we have seen it. The Word of Life, it was manifested. The Word of Life, Jesus Christ, the very one in John 14 that said, I am the way, the truth in the life.

[17:10] Jesus Christ said, I am the life. He said, I am the resurrection in the life. He said, I am that bread of life. Jesus Christ is life, period.

He is life in you and somebody made me hear this morning that's lost without Jesus and they think, well, I'm perfectly fine. You know, I'm sitting here, I'm alive, I got blood flowing through me, I got air in my lungs.

I'm perfectly fine. Jesus Christ is life. That is what the Bible says. And if you're sitting here lost this morning, you are dead according to Scripture and your trespasses and sins.

You're not sick, you're not in need of a doctor. You are dead and your trespasses and sins. And that's another amazing thought to me in the Scriptures that I wasn't laying, coughing and gagging and bleeding out in search of God.

I was dead and God came to where I was and he breathed life into me. He breathed spiritual life into me. It's an amazing thought in the Scriptures that the Bible says there's none good, no not one.

[18:16] There's none that seeketh after righteousness, no not one. None of us were seeking after God when God came to us. God had to come to where we were because we were incapable and we had no desire to seek after him.

And this is not my interpretation of what the Bible says, it is what the Bible tells us is the case. None of us wanted God, but God wanted us. And he came to where we were.

Here in this Scripture he says, for the life was manifested. This was God coming to where we were. I've already said this morning, since I've been up here, God's desire was to tabernacle with his people.

We read about that in the Book of Exodus. The people then were the Jews, they were the Israelites, they were the apple of God's eye according to the Scripture.

And God's desire was to tabernacle with the Jews whom he had chosen. But God now commanded men everywhere to repent.

[19:17] That's Jew and Gentile life. Paul wrote to the Roman Church in Romans chapter 1, he said, For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God and the salvation to the Jew first and then to the Greek.

It's the power of God and the salvation for you and for me, for every Jew and for every Gentile that has ruined the earth, is ruined the earth and will ruin the earth. Salvation is for all, but the Word of life, it was manifest.

And John saw that manifestation, he heard the manifestation. He communed and traveled with the manifestation of the Word of life.

And the life was manifested and we have seen it and bear witness. Folks, this is our job now. John here is saying, my testimony as to everything that I've written up to this point, this is the testimony that I bear.

But folks, we have the same testimony. We may not have ever seen Jesus Christ. I've never seen the man face to face, but I have had an experience with Jesus Christ.

[20 : 21] And I know Jesus Christ personally. I know Jesus Christ intimately. And the cause I know him, I can bear almost the same witness that John here has, except for the seeing him.

I've never seen him. I will one of these days praise God for it, but I've never seen the man. But we can do the same thing. And when we go to witness to someone, we go to testify of the goodness of Jesus Christ.

That's all a testimony is. That's all it is in a nutshell. Jesus Christ is good. He's been good to me. I was lost and Jesus Christ saved me by his shed blood that he poured out on my behalf.

He poured out on behalf of the entire world of lost sinners and those who accept that sacrifice, those who accept that blood to wash away their sins.

Those are the redeemed. Those are the saved. Those are the ones that are on their way to heaven. The life was manifested. We have seen it and bear witness and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested unto us.

[21 : 37] He says that eternal life, which was with the Father, it was with the Father. Presently, John and John and his present tense writing here.

He's speaking of his experience that he had with Jesus Christ. And he's saying that Jesus Christ was with the Father before he came here.

And that points all the way back to the very first line that we read in this passage of scripture, that which was from the beginning. Jesus Christ has always, always existed.

He is not a creative being. There's a lot of people out there, there's a couple of sub denominations out there that will teach you that Jesus Christ was created by God.

No folks, Jesus Christ has always been the Holy Spirit has always been God the Father has always been. There's always been a triune God existing in what we commonly refer to as the trendy.

[22 : 40] Don't let anybody convince you otherwise. Show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested unto us. That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you.

Again, this goes back to witnessing. That's what John is saying. Everything I'm about to write to you now is based on all these five chapters in 1 John is based on what he's saying.

This is what I'm declaring to you and I'm declaring it to you with the authority of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ being, being eternal being that He is and being immortal as He is, being there from everlasting as He has always been.

That you may also have fellowship with us and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. So He gives us all these warts.

We've read a whole bunch of warts up to this time. Then He gives us the why that you may, that you also may have fellowship with us. That's the why.

[23 : 48] You say, I'm declaring these things unto you that you may also have fellowship with us. Folks, Jesus Christ is the common ground that all Christians have.

I don't care if you're here in Northeast Tennessee. I don't care if you're in California. I don't care if you're in Saudi Arabia or Italy or anywhere else in the world. If you're a born again believer, Jesus Christ is our common ground.

And Jesus Christ is the reason that we can have fellowship. I doubt seriously that everybody in here can have everything in common with one another.

Some people like sports, some people like music, some people like to read, some people prefer movies. Those are things that might cause a negative type of fellowship among people.

But through Jesus Christ and by Jesus Christ, we can have fellowship one with another. It doesn't matter what color our skin is. It doesn't matter if we're male or if we're female.

[24 : 56] With Jesus Christ, we can have fellowship with one another. This is the why that John gives here.

He says that you may also have fellowship with us. And truly, our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ. And John makes a very distinct difference between the Father and Jesus Christ here.

One of many verses in Scripture that certain people don't particularly like, because there is that distinction between the Father and the Son here.

As I've already said, God Almighty is three separate persons, all bound up into one Godhead.

The Bible speaks of Jesus Christ. Paul wrote to the church at Colossians and he said that in Him, in Jesus Christ, throughout the fullness of the Godhead.

[25 : 59] But there is a distinction there. There is God the Father, there is God the Son, and there is God the Holy Ghost, or God the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ said at the end of the Gospel of Matthew when he was telling the apostles, the disciples, when he said, going forth to all nations, teaching them and baptizing them, in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost.

Jesus Christ makes that distinction himself. John makes the distinction here and there are many other places in Scripture that that distinction is made. He says, our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ.

He's talking about declaring these things that they can have fellowship one with another, that John can have fellowship with the people which he is writing to. Likewise, they can have fellowship with him.

Then he says for truly, our fellowship is with God and with Jesus Christ, with the Son, Jesus Christ. That is the common ground that all of us can stand on is Jesus Christ.

We may not have much else in common with one another, but if you're a born-again Christian such as I am, we can fellowship because of that. Fellowship among Christians is very important.

[27 : 21] I mean, if Christians aren't fellowshiping or aren't having communion or having communication or a relationship with other Christians, who are they going to have it with?

They're going to have it with the world. And what good is that going to do a Christian? It's not going to do them much good. I ain't saying to cut ties with all your worldly family or worldly spouses or boyfriends, girlfriends, or anything like that.

I'm saying you need communion and you need fellowship with other believers or people of a locked faith. This is something that is essential in the life of a Christian.

If we don't have that, we're going to become stale as Christians. We help each other grow. We nourish each other. We support each other. We exhort one another.

These are things that the Scripture prompts us to do with one another. We need fellowship with other Christians. If we don't get it with them, we're going to get it elsewhere and elsewhere is no good.

[28 : 27] These things right we unto you that your joy may be full. This is another why that John gives us here. This is probably as far as we're going to get today.

These things right we unto you that your joy may be full. What in what John wrote in those three verses will cause our joy to be full?

The first thing that pops in my mind is that the eternal God, as I've already said, left heaven and came here and gave himself as a sacrifice for me.

The very one that spoke to me or spoke to the universe into existence and the very one that created me and created you. The very one that done these things, he left his place on high to come here and be a sacrifice for me.

And why did he do that? Because I was incapable of saving myself. I was incapable of my own salvation. But yet God left these things.

[29 : 33] The eternal God, once again going back to the first line we read, that which was from the beginning. He came here that I could have life and that I could have relations, that I could have fellowship with him.

And in turn, having fellowship with him back in one verse, the verse three, and having fellowship with him, I can have fellowship with an entire family of other believers that has spread the world over.

Once again, I mean, we're not the only Christians in the world, folks. A lot of people have got that type of tunnel vision, especially around here in this general area. They think this is, you know, the Bible belts the only place that's going to heaven.

That is not the case. That is not the case. I got brothers and sisters and cross that wear turbans on their heads on the other side of the world. I got brothers and sisters and cross that live in jungles.

I got brothers and sisters and cross that will world over. If they believe in Christ and they believe in the same cross that I do, the same one that was from the beginning that John is speaking about here.

[30 : 37] They are a brother or sister in Christ. And therefore, I can have fellowship with him on the common ground that we have in Jesus Christ. But he says, I speak to you, we write these things, we write unto you that your joy may be full, that your joy may be full, that you can be happy, that you can be content, that your joy may be full, folks.

And if you're a born-again Christian, we should be joyful. We shouldn't walk around sad grimace on our face like I see so many Christians do, like I see myself do, like I know I've been told that I do sometimes.

We walk around with a straight face like a world's coming to an end. And shame on me for doing that. But he writes these things, all three of those verses that we just read, that their joy and that our joy, 2,000 years later, may be full.

And that's where we're going to end right now, those first four verses. Anybody have any questions or any comments on that?