

~1 John~

Lesson 3- Fellowship in Him

Let's begin by reading our text today- **1 John 1:1-4**

Last week John described the Word of Life having been manifested in the flesh, in which he heard, saw, beheld, and handled. And by this he is declaring the message of eternal life. That Jesus came in the flesh, paid the price for sin and redeemed us unto everlasting life. We also spent some time on what it means that Jesus came in the flesh. It is such a common saying now in Christianity, that Jesus died for my sins. And this should be common, this is the fundamental principle of our Christianity, but many Christians don't actually know what this means. So we went through the three main reasons why Jesus had to come in the flesh.

- 1) To be our Kinsman Redeemer who is legally able to pay the debt of sin
- 2) To be the Lamb of God, the propitiation for our sins, the perfect payment to pay the debt of Adam's sin which enslaved all mankind under the bondage of sin.
- 3) To be our High Priest that would offer the perfect payment, His blood in the Holy of Holies in heaven to the Righteous Judge and be our Advocate to the Father.

John's writings reflect this. He walked and talked with Jesus in the flesh, and you can see his heart pouring out to his flock in Ephesus. He is telling them and reminding them saying, "God sent His Son and He has given you eternal life because He loves you so much. If you truly believe this, how can you be committed to anything else? Abide in Him, keep His commandments, do not love the world or anything in it, but stay committed to Jesus and His Word. Don't be deceived by these liars, believe the Word of Life, believe the Truth, believe my report when I tell you I have seen the Christ with my own eyes!"

I want to remind you of the story of Polycarp. He lived from 65 – 155AD. He is considered one of the church fathers and was a student of the Apostle John and the Bishop of Smyrna. When he was an old man, after serving the Lord his entire life, he was arrested and taken into the arena to be burned at the stake for being a Christian. The proconsul offered him release if only he would recant and deny the Lord Jesus. And his response was this, "For eighty and six years have I been his servant, and he has done me no wrong, how can I blaspheme my King who saved me?"

Eusebius- Ecclesiastical History, Book XV

I believe this is the mindset of the Apostle John while writing this epistle. God has been so good to you. He sent His Son for you, how can you not give Him your life in return?

Now today we will be looking at the next set of verses, picking up where we left off last week. We have to remember, John is writing this like a conversation, so his thoughts flow right from one to another, and he continues to circle back around with some of the same ideas, but each time going a little deeper.

There are three main points in this letter that his conversation revolves around:

- 1) Jesus is the pre-existent One who was sent by the Father and manifested in the flesh to give us Life
- 2) True believers abide in God. They are born of God and have fellowship with Him, being one in Him
- 3) To expose the darkness and discern between the Spirit of Truth and the spirit of error

In verse 2 John ends with the Word of Life being manifested to us. And then verse 3 begins with him reiterating "that which we have seen and heard and declare unto you" about that which was manifested.

1 John 1:2-3 ² the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us—³ †that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, †that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.

† *That which we have seen and heard we declare to you,...* δὲ ἑώρακαμεν καὶ ἀκηκόαμεν, ἀπαγγέλλομεν ὑμῖν

- John is so emphatic that this is the third time he said he has seen, ἑώρακαμεν, and the second time he said he has heard, ἀκηκόαμεν, and for this reason he is declaring, ἀπαγγέλλομεν, this message so that we might have fellowship.

†... (so) that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. ἵνα καὶ ὑμεῖς κοινωνίαν ἔχητε μεθ' ἡμῶν· καὶ ἡ κοινωνία δὲ ἡ ἡμετέρα μετὰ τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ μετὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.

- “so that” - ἵνα- this is why John is declaring the message. This is the purpose of the message... so that anyone who receives the message will receive the eternal life in the message and be in fellowship with God, the Son, and the brethren.
 - Fellowship among the brethren is a fruit of having fellowship with God and His Son Jesus Christ.
 - Notice that our fellowship is a result of our fellowship with Jesus. It is because we have fellowship with Him so that we can then have fellowship with each other.
- So that you... “may have” fellowship - ἔχητε – to have or possess, but I want to point out that this word is in the subjunctive mood, meaning it is conditional. Conditional on what?
 - I believe this is more than justification. Remember, John is writing to believers **so that** they may have fellowship, 1 Jn 5:13. These are already Christians, but he wants these Christians to be partakers of this intimate fellowship with God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ.
 - Why is this conditional?
 - Our justification is a result of our receiving the Light
 - Our sanctification is a result of our commitment to the Light
 - And our commitment has a direct influence on our Fellowship with the Light.
 - Justification = **receiving** the Light
 - Sanctification = **commitment** to the Light
 - Commitment = **Fellowship** with the Light
 - This is what this entire epistle is addressing. What are you committed to? Are you committed to Righteousness or are you committed to sin?
- So that you may have... “fellowship”- koinonia, **κοινωνία**, partnership, to share in common, to be a partaker.
 - John only uses this word 4 times here in the opening of his epistle, but the idea behind this word is one of the core principles of John’s writing, to abide in Him. This is true fellowship, true partnership. To abide and be one with Jesus Christ.
 - This is the difference between being a part of the body of Christ and being His Bride.
 - Those that are faithful to Him will have the honor of being His Bride, Rev 19:7-8.
 - The faithful Christians who are committed to His will are those who have a close, intimate, fellowship with Jesus Christ.
 - Even though John doesn’t continue using this word, we can see the results of being in this “fellowship”- koinonia, **κοινωνία**. This is being eagerly committed to do His will, Rom 8:12-18, **23-25; Heb 9:28; 1 John 2:5-6, 24-3:1, 23-24; 4:7-16; 5:1-5, 20;**
 - Keeping His Word, keeping His commandments, walking in Love... these are all the fruit of being committed to Him
 - This is the idea of koinonia, that God has invited us to be one with Him in His family for all eternity. **Gospel of John 17; John 14:1-3, 6, 21-24; 15:4-11**... this leads us into verse 4...

1 John 1:4 And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.

- John writes this so that our joy might continually be full,
 - “may be” - εἶμι, to be or exist- present tense in the subjunctive mood, - ῖ,
 - “might continually be full”
- Our joy is made full when we accept His gift of eternal life and abide in Him. That is the key, abiding in Him. When we abide in Him and have fellowship in Him, our joy is continually filled.
 - Psalm 16:11- *You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.*
 - We have the fullness of joy and pleasures forevermore when we surrender ourselves to Him and

abide in Him, have our fellowship in Him, have our absolute trust in Him and invite the Holy Spirit to guide and direct our lives. It is then when supernatural joy takes over and our joy is continually filled up.

I want to show you Paul's perspective on having fellowship with God and abiding in His Son

- Just like John, Paul portrayed this Oneness we have with God by our being in Christ. All through Paul's writings he is constantly referring to our being in Him, being in Christ, in the Beloved, in love....
 - In his letter to the Philippians, notice the earnestness Paul has in striving to be one in Him, **Phil 3:7-14, 20-21**
- It is those that press toward the prize of the high calling; those who are eagerly waiting the Savior; those who keep His Word; those who keep His commandments; it is those who are **committed to His will** that will partake in this koinonia, **κοινωνία**, fellowship, having a partnership with the Creator of the universe, a fellowship in the eternal family of God. It is these who the Father and the Son will make their abode with.

Let's read the first 4 verses in 1 John again this this thought in mind, **1 John 1:1-4**

Jesus has manifested Himself in this world giving us the Word of Life. Those who receive this Life have eternal life and those who are committed to Him and His Word and abide in His love; these have perfect fellowship with God the Father and with His Son, and as a result, we have fellowship with one another. It is in this hope of eternal life in Him, and the fellowship of being One in Him that our joy is continually made full.