

001 - Introduction - 1 John 1:1 - 2018-04-08

Call to Worship: Psalm 130:5

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 42:1-7

Sermon: "The Word of Life Declared to You" 1 John 1:1-4

Benediction: Psalm 130:7

## INTRODUCTION

Today we, the disciples of Jesus Christ, the church of the living God, begin to study together through the first letter of John. What a privilege!

Who was John?

He was a fisherman, called by the Lord Jesus to leave his nets.

Matthew 4:18-22 And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. (19) Then He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." (20) They immediately left their nets and followed Him. (21) Going on from there, He saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets. He called them, (22) and immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him.

He was one of the disciples whom Jesus named His apostles

Matthew 10:1-4 And when He had called His twelve disciples to Him, He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease. (2) Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; (3) Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus; (4) Simon the Cananite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him.

He was, in his own words, the disciple whom Jesus loved, who leaned on Jesus' bosom at the last supper.

John 13:23-25 Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved. (24) Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask who it was of whom He spoke. (25) Then, leaning back on Jesus' breast, he said to Him, "Lord, who is it?"

He was the disciple who wrote the gospel we call "John," testifying to the truth of Jesus Christ. John 21:24 This is the disciple who testifies of these things, and wrote these things; and we know that his testimony is true.

My main teachers:

The usual cast of characters:

- the notes of the Marian exiles, from the Geneva study bible, John Calvin, John Trapp, Matthew Poole, John Gill, Adam Clarke, Albert Barnes, Charles Spurgeon, B.H. Carroll, A.T. Robertson
- but more especially

John Cotton (1585-1652)

- educated at Cambridge

- 1612-1632 ministered in Church of England; forced out by Laud

- 1633 departed for New England

- pastor of church in Boston until his death

- he is the person who coined the term "Congregationalist," and was a strong advocate of that form of church government

- upheld the doctrine of salvation by God's free grace, over against others indicating some role of good works in salvation

Spurgeon: "In doctrine and experience he is a noble teacher."

Robert Candlish (1806-1873)

- free Presbyterian

- educated in Glasgow; took D.D. at Princeton in 1841

- pastor of St. George's Free Church in Edinburgh

Spurgeon: "We set great store by these lectures... A man hardly needs anything beyond Candlish. He is devout candid, prudent and forcible."

As you hear me expounding 1 John to you in the coming days, I hope not to say to you anything I dreamed up on my own, but to say to you what the faithful pastors have always said to people from 1 John, spoken to this generation much as they have been spoken to every generation since the Reformation.

I begin almost as a cook who has tried to prepare a favorite dish from an old recipe. May God grant that it comes out well, that you have an appetite for it, and that it nourishes us well.

TEXT

1 John 1:1-4 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, concerning the Word of life-- (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. (4) And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.

## BODY

- I. There Is One Who Not Only Was from the Beginning, but also Has Been Seen By Men  
*1 John 1:1a 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*
  - A. He was from the beginning
    1. meaning that when God was just about to create the heavens and the earth in the beginning, He already was
    2. and so
      - a) eternal, having no beginning
      - b) divine - God
  - B. Perceived by men to be a man
    1. heard, seen, looked upon, touched
      - a) hear the emphasis on the physical senses
      - b) “looked upon,” the third item in the list, has the connotation of not merely seeing, but examining and considering
    2. and so, necessarily human, truly human
  - C. Not divine and human in the same sense
    1. not as if one nature could be both 1) already being before creation, yet also 2) made to bleed by a crown of thorns
      - a) it might be said poetically, “’tis mystery all: th’immortal dies,” but to talk about it plainly, in the sense that the One is immortal, in that sense He does not die
    2. no, if both, then necessarily being two natures in one person
      - a) divine nature, so that He is very God
      - b) human nature, so that He is very man
    3. we had this for our subject last summer; the main text for looking into that is the first several verses of John’s gospel; so, no surprise that we find the same glorious subject here in the opening verses of John’s first letter

There Is One Who Not Only Was from the Beginning, but also Has Been Seen By Men

II. That Eternal One Seen By Men Is the Word of Life

*1 John 1:1b the Word of life*

- A. How the Word? Why is He called, “the Word”?
  - 1. as words convey meaning from one to others, so He conveys things from God the Father to others
  - 2. God the Father wills to communicate of Himself to us, His creatures; He does so by this One who is the Word
- B. How the Word of Life? Why is He called, “the Word of *Life*”? The Father has granted that He, the Word, conveys life from God the Father to others
  - 1. originally in creation
    - a) John 1:3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.
    - b) Colossians 1:16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.
  - 2. also new life in salvation: John 5:24-27 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life. (25) Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live. (26) For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself, (27) and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.

That Eternal One Seen By Men Is the Word of Life

### III. The Word of Life Was Manifested To the Apostles

*1 John 1:2 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--*

- A. Him whose divine nature cannot be seen by physical eyes, was manifested to them by taking on human nature, so that the apostles could see with their eyes the Word of life a man like them, and could hear what He said with their ears
- B. The apostles have seen Him
  1. walking on water
  2. healing the sick, raising the dead to life
  3. bleeding
  4. dying
  5. eating fish in front of them, when He had risen from the dead
- C. The apostles have heard
  1. I say to you, love your enemies
  2. Luke 9:22 saying, "The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day."
  3. Luke 9:23 Then He said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.
  4. "My God, My God, why has Thou forsaken me . . ."
  5. "It is finished!"
  6. Luke 24:36-39 Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, "Peace to you." (37) But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit. (38) And He said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts? (39) 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."

The Word of Life Was Manifested To the Apostles

- IV. The Word of Life that Was Manifested to the Apostles, the Apostles Declare to You
  - A. The apostles, having seen and heard, bear witness
    - 1. you understand the concept of bearing witness from the legal system
    - 2. you know it from mention in the Ten Commandments
      - a) Thou shalt not bear false witness
      - b) Implied: Thou shalt bear true witness
    - 3. Acts 4:20 "For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."
  - B. The apostles, bearing witness, declare unto you that eternal life, which
    - 1. was with the Father, and
    - 2. was manifested unto them
  - C. They declare it
    - 1. in the sermons preached, as recorded in Acts
    - 2. in the gospels written---Matthew, Mark, Luke, John
    - 3. in the letters written, such as 1, 2, and 3 John
    - 4. in the apocalypse, the Revelation

The Word of Life that Was Manifested to the Apostles, the Apostles Declare to You

V. The Apostles Declare the Word of Life to You For Two Purposes

A. That you may have fellowship with God

1. in the first place, that you may have fellowship with them, the apostles
  - a) they know the Word of Life first hand, and believe in Him according to what they have seen
  - b) you do not know the Word of Life first hand; but by the apostles' declaring Him to you, and your believing, you enter a fellowship with them, as those who are blessed by God in that though you have not seen Him, yet you believe in Him
2. so you see that coming into fellowship with the apostles is primarily so that you may by entering that fellowship, find that you also are entering the fellowship they have with God the Father and Jesus Christ the Son
3. think hard on that, you who at present have no fellowship with God, but are strangers to Him, enemies, even, to Him
  - a) by what the apostles testify of the Word of Life, you may have fellowship with God the Father and Jesus Christ the Son, who is that Word of Life

B. That your joy may be full

1. the affection experienced by the soul sure of peace with God
2. 1 Peter 1:8-9 [from verse 7: Jesus Christ,] whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, (9) receiving the end of your faith--the salvation of your souls.
3. the testimony of the world, by which you have fellowship with the people of this world and the things of this world, does not bring you fullness of joy
  - a) it brings you some passing pleasures
  - b) it brings you some false hope of joy, that never really comes
  - c) it brings you grief, sorrow, pain, and suffering
  - d) but what this world declares or proclaims to you does not bring you fullness of joy
4. but the apostles declare the Word of Life to you that your joy may be full

CONCLUSION

There Is One Who Not Only Was from the Beginning, but also Has Been Seen By Men

That Eternal One Seen By Men Is the Word of Life

The Word of Life Was Manifested To the Apostles

The Word of Life that Was Manifested to the Apostles, the Apostles Declare to You

The Apostles Declare the Word of Life to You For Two Purposes

That you may have fellowship with God

That your joy may be full

JRY:

Your joy will not be made full by the things of this world.  
-not even your own love relationships

Those who have seen and heard the very Son of God tell what they have seen and heard to you.

You don't need to be told about death---you know about it yourself.  
You have heard it

You have seen it with your eyes  
Your hands have handled it  
Death has been manifested to you  
You don't need anyone to declare death unto you---you can declare it yourself

What you need is to be told about life!

Those who know about the life declare it unto you!

The life is Jesus Christ Himself

Prelude: Grace 112 "My Hope Rests Firm"

Amillecay: flute

Oahnay: trumpet - see attached in E

Nananay: piano

Trinity 109 "This Is My Father's World"

Amillecay: piano - transpose

Oahnay: trumpet

Nananay: clarinet

Grace 123 "The Risen Christ"

Amillecay: flute

Oahnay: trumpet - see attached in F

Nananay: piano

Trinity 441 "Thy Works, Not Mine, O Christ"

Amillecay: piano

Oahnay: sing

Nananay: sing

Hymn 581 Psalm 16

Amillecay: sing

Oahnay: trumpet - see attached in E "My Heart Doth Overflow"

Nananay: piano

Grace 71 “How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds”  
Newton; familiar tune