



Pray

If you are a Christian, take time in prayer to remember your conversion and praise God.

Who in your life needs to know the “word of life” so they can have fellowship with the Father? Whose salvation would complete your joy? Pray for them by name.

How does this passage move you to thank and praise God?



In The Beginning Again | 1 John 1:1-4
Study Guide 1 for sermon on 1/03/2021



Introduction

This week we begin a study through the letters of John. 1 John is powerful and at times a little frustrating. John doesn't write in a style we are accustomed to. Sometimes it is hard to follow John's train of thought. He often circles back to topics he has already addressed, but this is for our benefit. He repeatedly addresses themes that we need hammered into our heads and hearts.

1 John is remarkably contemporary. Some of the big themes are love for our faith family, especially those in need, and the relationship between sin and being God's children. The theme John opens with focuses on the trustworthiness of the apostle's message regarding eternal life. John states his case in clear terms: if you believe and follow the apostle's message you have fellowship with God. We live in a pluralistic culture where truth is a do-it-yourself project. John opens his letter by holding Jesus in front of us, as if to say, “He is the way, the truth, and the life, and no one comes to the Father except through him.”



Overview

Context: If you want to get the most out of 1 John, you need to keep the historical context of the letter at the front of your mind. We believe that John is a very old man by the time he writes this letter. It is possible that John is the last living apostle. Now several decades

after the resurrection, competing messages about Jesus are running through the Christian community. When John is dead and gone and the apostles are no more, who will the church listen to? How will they remain anchored in truth? John wants his readers to hold fast to the apostolic gospel in every age of the church. So he opens his letter by focusing our attention on the things that he himself has seen, heard, and touched regarding the message of eternal life through Jesus.

Structure:

- I. The word of life experienced (1)
- II. The word of life revealed (2)
- III. The word of life declared (3)
- IV. The word of life enjoyed (4)



Engage

1. What similarities do you find between 1 John 1:1, John 1:1, and Genesis 1:1?
2. Who is the “we” John refers to in verse 1? Is it the church, the apostles, or simply John himself?
3. What or who is the “word of life” in verse 1? Does your Bible translation capitalize that phrase? Does that help clarify the meaning of the phrase?
4. Identify all the “tactile” language in verses 1-4. Why do you think these descriptions are important to John?
5. Identify the “tactile” language used in 5:14-18. How is it different from the language used at the start of the letter? How does this help us understand the overall message of the letter?
6. In verse 2, John says he is declaring to his readers that which was revealed to him. When is the last time you shared your own faith story with someone? Do the friends in your Growth Group know your testimony? Now is a good time to think about your testimony and pray about sharing it with someone.
7. In verse 3, John states that the apostles’ message is the exclusive path to fellowship with God. Why might it be difficult for a Christian to hold to the belief that Jesus is the exclusive way to eternal life?
8. How does belief that Jesus is exclusively the way to eternal life fuel missions?
9. How is Christian fellowship similar to and different from common friendship?
10. Look at verse 4, what does it mean for joy to be “complete?”