

## Christianity

1 John 1:1-4

Series: A Sure Salvation

### 1. Introduction

- a. It is in view of the propensity for a Christian to doubt his/her salvation that John writes this first Epistle.
- b. John is therefore concerned for the Christians Assurance of his/her salvation.
- c. This assurance is not predicated upon a false sense of security based upon an empty confession but on truly a regenerated life that is trusting in the Lordship of Christ.
- d. John gives us his very purpose when he writes:
  - i. **1 John 5:13** I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life.
  - ii. The emphasis here is on the word know.
- e. According to John, a Christian can know and should know that he has eternal life and, second, there are three practical test that can settle the matter in our minds definitively. These are:
  - i. The Moral Test: The test of righteousness and obedience
  - ii. The Social Test: The test of love
  - iii. The Doctrinal Test: The test of belief in Jesus Christ
- f. A second purpose was to battle the early form of Gnosticism that was making in-roads into Christianity.
  - i. Gnosticism:
    1. Superiority of the Intellect – Secret mystical knowledge
    2. Radical and unbridgeable distinction between spirit and matter coupled with conviction that matter is inherently evil and that spirit alone is good – denial of the moral life

### 2. Verse 1A – The Unchanging Word –That which was from the beginning,

- a. The message of redemption is unchanging
- b. The proclamation of the gospel is the same and cannot change in any age.
  - i. To preach the true Gospel is to command men to come to faith through repentance.
- c. Any alteration of the Gospel, whether by addition or subtraction, constitutes an attack on the truth and its sovereign Author.

3. Verse 1B-2A – the Experience of Christ – which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—the life was made manifest
  - a. The Word of life is directly linked to the person and work of Jesus Christ as proclaimed in the Gospel.
    - i. Experiencing Christ was not a mystical thing as proclaimed by the Gnostics of his day
  - b. John listed a variety of ways in which he had actually perceived the Word of Life with his senses.
    - i. First: What he had heard.
      1. John heard all the teachings of Christ
      2. **John 4:42** They said to the woman, “It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world.”
      3. **Romans 10:17** So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.
    - ii. Second: What we have seen with our eyes
      1. This makes it clear that he was referring to the physical experience of seeing
      2. His ministry and resurrection
    - iii. Third: looked at
      1. More than a mere glance or quick look; instead, it denotes a long, searching gaze.
    - iv. Fourth: touched with our hands,
      1. To feel or grope. Physical touch, tactile touch
  - c. The life was made manifest –
    - i. This means to reveal or make visible what was hidden. God did not reveal Himself in human flesh until Christ’s earthly ministry when the divine or eternal life became visible to mankind.
  - d. Conclusion: In Jesus Christ what is eternal and transcendent have become palpably immanent. John affirms the incarnation. The eternal has somehow materialized in the carnal.
  - e. People, John among them, can bear and are bearing eyewitness testimony to the incarnation.

4. Verses 2B-3A – The testimony – and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us—that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you
  - a. We have seen it, and testify – this is a swearing, a legal deposition.
  - b. Via the incarnation, “life” was manifest.
    - i. Life – in Christ
    - ii. Life – after death for we are all to die.
  
5. Verse 3B – Koinonia – so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.
  - a. What John is reporting is intended to nurture fellowship:
    - i. He writes so that his reader “may have fellowship with us” – the apostolic “we” who testify of Jesus’ earthly and heavenly life.
      1. We have fellowship with the apostolic tradition through the reading of the witness of John and others.
      2. We share the experience of a common yet transcendent bond and especially the bond of trust in the crucified and resurrected Christ—
      3. John writes to promote unity and harmony with God and with the fellow saints. He writes in order to stabilize and enhance the existence of the Church
      4. **Hebrews 10:24-25** And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, (25) not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.
  
6. Verse 4 – Joy – And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.
  - a. John wants the reader’s joy to be increased
  - b. He seeks his readers’ elevation as followers of Jesus. He has the heart of a pastor which cannot be completely happy so long as some of those for whom he feels responsible are not experiencing the full blessings of the gospel.
    - i. The joy of fellowship with one another
    - ii. The joy of our salvation because of the finished work of Christ
    - iii. The joy of knowing that we have the presence of Christ himself through his Spirit with us
    - iv. The joy of prayer, and study

7. Benediction:

- a. **John 15:9-11** As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. (10) If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. (11) These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.