



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

1 JOHN 1:2- THE CORNERSTONE OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH!

COLORADO

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The Apostle John, the last one still living, writes of the essence of our Christian belief. He addresses the fundamental questions still asked today... what is Christianity? John wastes no time in addressing the essential core of Christianity and the evidence for it, writing this Spirit inspired truth about the Person and work of Jesus Christ! The last surviving Apostle gives this Epistle a note of authority that's full, final.

1 John is a message written to believers no matter where you live. It is an appeal to every believer, in every land, in every age. There is a theme of life...eternal life not referring to merely endless existence, but the very life of God revealed in Jesus and shared by all who put their trust in Him. This eternal life is secured in God through Jesus Christ His Son.²

I. 1 JOHN 1:2 THE CORNERSTONE OF CHRISTIANITY!

"What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we beheld and our hands handled, concerning the Word of Life (2) and the life was manifested, and we have seen and bear witness and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us..." 1 John 1:1-2

John reminds us that from the beginning, the proclamation of the gospel has always been the same. Though many were denying that Jesus Christ came in the flesh, John gives his eyewitness testimony to the fact that Jesus is God Incarnate, born in the flesh.

John begins his letter in verse one with *"we have heard, we have seen with our eyes, what we beheld and our hands handled"* regarding Jesus Christ. Now in verse two he adds that Christ appeared in the flesh and again *"we have seen and bear witness and proclaim"*! There is a united witness of the disciples' testimony to the Incarnation. And every verb John uses here in these first two verses is used to make one great point: the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is NOT a speculation, an ideal or an opinion...*it is a fact!*

John plunges into the weighty truth that verifies the heart of Christianity, the heart of the Gospel; that eternal life has been manifest in the Incarnate Son of God. This is crucial to the faith and life of a believer because this is the cornerstone of the Christian faith.³ So John begins his Epistle by affirming the historical fact and reliability of the gospel.

He then confirms the most essential core and content of the gospel asserting that the Incarnation of Jesus Christ lies at the very heart of our Christian faith. Why? In no other way could God justly deal with the sin that set us under God's just judgment and provides us with the righteousness that would

fit us for fellowship with Him and ultimately in His presence forever. 2 Corinthians 5:19 tells us that it was Christ, the God-man, reconciling the world to Himself. This is the uniqueness of Jesus Christ...that the world stumbles over. You must know that in His love for us God Himself took on flesh, lived a perfect life, died the death sinners deserve, and then arose in victory over sin and death. In Jesus Christ we are brought face to face with the true and living God. (John 1:1-3) The gospel of Jesus Christ is NOT one of a number of options for men and women to consider...Christ is the one and only way for sinners to be reconciled to God and rescued from the coming wrath...and John says this is an indisputable fact!⁴

A. "AND THE LIFE WAS MANIFEST" - 1 JOHN 1:2A

John begins *"and the life"*, meant to represent Jesus Christ, the One they heard, saw and touched. He was a real and living person, not an abstract reality. This life was *"manifested"*, a Greek word (*phaneroo*) meaning to make visible from what was hidden, tangible, appeared, to reveal and used twice in this one verse. God revealed Himself in human flesh in Christ on His earthly ministry. John wants all to know about the personal, visible encounter the Apostles had with the Incarnate Life, the Word of Life! (1 John 1:1) The Incarnate Life here on earth was a historical reality given to a few to dispense the truth.

The emphasis by John on the material flesh manifestation of Christ to men's ears, eyes and hands is primarily directed against heretics troubling the church and teaching that Christ could not have come in the flesh. Christ, the eternal One, is Who the Apostles heard, saw and touched. The two are the same. Jesus the eternal and historical are the same. Even today much of the gospel is regarded as myths. But this is a record of God's objective self-revelation in Christ!⁵

B. "AND WE HAVE SEEN AND BEAR WITNESS"—1 JOHN 1:2B

For the third time in just two verses John repeats that all of the disciples, *"we have seen"*, scrutinized with their own eyes, referring to an insight that led to belief. And what John saw still lingers before his mind's eye even as he writes some 60 years later. Keep in mind the fact that John says there was a unity of witnesses, *"we"*, a solidarity with the Apostles' testimony. It was more than just John, but rather a plurality of witnesses testifying to the undeniable reality of the Incarnate Christ, God's Son born in the flesh.

BIBLE STUDIES

LEGISLATORS, GOVERNOR & SPOUSES: TUESDAY AT 7:15AM, CAPITOL BASEMENT, ROOM 0109

STAFF, LOBBYISTS, JOURNALISTS & SERGEANTS: TUESDAYS AT NOON, [SSB 1525 SHERMAN, RM #603-ACROSS COLFAX FROM CAPITOL](#)

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“What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we beheld and our hands handled, concerning the Word of Life (2) and the life was manifested, and we have seen and bear witness and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us...” 1 John 1:1-2

And then John writes that they “bear witness”, a Greek word (*marturomen*), that indicates the authority of the experience. It is an authentic witness. You must be an eye witness to be an authentic witness. The true witness doesn’t talk about what is learned second hand, but of what he himself has personally heard or seen. This is a word of authoritative experience. John and the other disciples were true and credible witnesses.⁶

The Christian faith is NOT a leap in the dark. Our faith is factual. It is based on the facts of eyewitness testimony from those who walked and talked with the living Christ. I can know that He lives because of those who walked and talked with Him along life’s narrow way!⁷

C. “AND PROCLAIM TO YOU”- 1 JOHN 1:2C

The privilege John had as one of the disciples who saw Christ, God Incarnate born in the flesh, was to testify, bear witness as an eye witness of the truth. And then it was his responsibility to “proclaim” this gift of eternal life. (Matthew 28:18-20, John 20:30-31, 2 Corinthians 5:14-15) to all those who had never seen Jesus, now writing some 60 years later after Jesus Christ had come in the flesh to die for our sins.⁸

To “proclaim” is a Greek word, (*apangellomen*) that means to declare with the authority of a commission. Proclaim emphasizes that the truth is communicated with a sense of being unshakably convinced of the message. Think of it, having been commissioned by Christ in Matthew 28:18-20 to make the message know to the ends of the world, they were all willing to die for this truth they bore witness to and proclaimed about Christ. Were the Apostles unshakably convinced about this truth...*that is also proclaimed to you?*

D. “THE ETERNAL LIFE, WHICH WAS WITH THE FATHER” - 1 JOHN 1:2D

What was the theme of their authoritative proclamation? The theme of “eternal life”, the life of God revealed in Jesus Christ and shared by all who put their trust in Him.⁹ The word “eternal” occurs 6 times in this Epistle and is the only adjective John uses to describe this life and it means pre-existent. It is unending in duration. John uses this word to describe the kind of life possessed by Christ in eternal fellowship with the Father. It is not an impersonal quality of life that comes from God but rather, the Word of Life, Christ.

“Which was” denotes past continuous existence of this life with the Father. A distinct personality of life, the pre-incarnate Christ, the very embodiment of eternal life! This doesn’t refer to an attribute, rather because of the preposition John uses to

portray this identity of life as distinct from the Father, yet in active fellowship and communion with the Father.¹⁰

“With” depicts a face to face relationship. It is the closest, existing relationship that exists in the mystery of the Godhead; between God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

“The Father” is an expression for God and is used 12 times in this Epistle. John proclaims with eye witness authority to the Incarnate Jesus Christ; Who pre-existed with past, continuous existence in this life with a distinct personality separate from the Father, yet in active face to face fellowship and close personal communion with the Father. What was the theme of the Apostles proclamation? That this Jesus Who they heard, saw and touched was in fact the Son of God born as a man, Who pre-existed eternally with the Father and now God has revealed Himself in human flesh, to provide salvation for all who would believe in Him.

E. “AND WAS MANIFEST TO US” 1 JOHN 1:2E

Wow! John writes with authority that all of this appeared to “us”, Christ’s disciples! They bear witness by personal experience and testimony to what they had seen over three years of life spent with the Son of God, Jesus Christ. This personal, pre-existent life that was with the Father, was visibly revealed in the Incarnate Christ. In Jesus Christ we are brought face to face with the true and living God. And John intends to underline this fact as a unique and historical, true reality by repeating this verb “manifest”, appeared!

May we be careful not to substitute a mere historical Christ that’s distant, for a personal commitment to Him by which He becomes both the Savior and the Lord of our life.¹¹

¹ MacArthur, John, *MacArthur Commentary Series on 1-3 John*. Moody Press: Chicago, IL, 2007. Pg.13-14.

² Erdman, Charles R., *The General Epistles: An Exposition*. The Westminster Press: Philadelphia, PA, 1919. Pg. 114.

³ Hiebert, D. Edmond, *The Epistles of John: An Expository Commentary*. Bob Jones University Press: Greenville, SC, 1991. Pg.35.

⁴ Hamilton, Ian, *Let’s Study the Letters of John*. The Banner of Truth Trust: Edinburgh, UK, 2008. Pg.1-2.

⁵ Stott, John R., *The Epistles of John*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company: Grand Rapids, MI, 1964, Pg. 61.

⁶ Stott, John R., *The Epistles of John*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company: Grand Rapids, MI, 1964, Pg. 61-62.

⁷ O’Donnell, Douglas Sean, *Reformed Expository Commentary: 1-3 John*. P&R Publishing Company: Phillipsburg, NJ, 2015. Pg.12.

⁸ MacArthur, John, *MacArthur Commentary Series on 1-3 John*. Moody Press: Chicago, IL, 2007. Pg.18.

⁹ Erdman, Charles R., *The General Epistles: An Exposition*. The Westminster Press: Philadelphia, PA, 1919. Pg. 114.

¹⁰ Hiebert, D. Edmond, *The Epistles of John: An Expository Commentary*. Bob Jones University Press: Greenville, SC, 1991. Pg.44.

¹¹ Boice, James Montgomery, *An Expository Commentary: The Epistles of John*. Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI, 1979. Pg. 25.