

Week One Study Guide - 1st John 1:1-4

Scripture

1 We proclaim to you the one who existed from the beginning, whom we have heard and seen. We saw him with our own eyes and touched him with our own hands. He is the Word of life. 2 This one who is life itself was revealed to us, and we have seen him. And now we testify and proclaim to you that he is the one who is eternal life. He was with the Father, and then he was revealed to us. 3 We proclaim to you what we ourselves have actually seen and heard so that you may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. 4 We are writing these things so that you may fully share our joy.

Questions

While Jesus was close to all of His disciples, it seems like John and Jesus were the closest. Many have said that John is Jesus' closest and most trusted friend. Who is your closest and most trusted friend? Why is that?

The Gnostics were a people group that believed redemption comes from knowledge of the divine light inside of you. While they believed in Jesus, they believed salvation came from something inside of you. As we can see in the text, and even more clearly later, John believes that redemption comes from the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. He believes people get salvation from the outside, which comes through faith in Jesus. What from the text helps make John a more credible source than the gnostics? (Sometimes the answers may be put in parentheses to help out with processing the information. John says his message is trustworthy because he has seen, heard, and touched Jesus).

Around 70 years after the death of Jesus John was still following Him. John has been persecuted yet he still feels joy and wants others to experience this joy. Why do you follow Jesus? Would you say it is out of obligation or due to the joy you experience while in relationship to Jesus? What makes you feel that way?

During the sermon on Sunday Pastor Steve asked if our relationship with Jesus was complete. Is there anything in your life that you believe is stealing your joy? Is there a sin or situation stealing your joy?

When you don't feel joy what are some things you can do to remind you that you have joy? (Remind yourself of God's love for you, talk to other Christians about your situation, ask God for help).

Devotional

Sports fans are sometimes delusional (I can be one of those delusional sports fans when it comes to the Packers). One moment they are cheering on a player, the next moment they are yelling at that same player. One moment they are happy about the player's performance, the next moment they are upset. While our relationship with an athlete may be based on their performance, God's relationship with us is not based on our performance. His love for us is based on what Jesus has done for us, not what we have done for us. The Gnostics were trying to teach that our relationship with God is based on what we do. That we have to have some sort of secret knowledge to have a relationship with Jesus. John strongly disagrees. He will later go on to say that a relationship with Jesus comes through faith and repentance. He has seen, touched, and heard Jesus (Vs 1). Due to that, we can trust what he says about Jesus.

In the same way that our relationship with God is not based on our actions, so our joy is not based on our circumstance. John has been following Jesus for a very long time, and he still has joy. Happiness is fleeting, but joy does not disappear. Happiness is based on emotion, but joy is based on our relationship with Jesus. That is why John is so adamant about inviting everyone he can to experience this joy (Vs. 4). Even when things are dark in our life we can have joy knowing that God is with us and has given us a relationship with Him through Jesus. Take time to pray that God will show you any sin or obstacles that may be preventing you from experiencing the joy He has for you in Christ.