



When he writes this letter, John is speaking with great authority and influence because at this point he is the **only apostle** still living: the only human being really who has had this intimate communion with Jesus in bodily form while He was on earth.

1 John 5:13 – John is writing so that those who have believed on the name of Jesus Christ might **know** that they have eternal life.

1 John 2:19 – What is going on in 1 John is a group of self-proclaimed spiritual elite created a schism in the church of Ephesus over a wrong view of **Jesus** and the believers were left there wondering “are we really **saved?**”.

1 John 1:1-4

This is the test: is the Christ that you have and believe in the Christ of the **Bible** and not something of your own making? Do you believe that He is God the Son, that He also came as a **man** among men and died as the substitute for sinners?

Verse 1 – John is laying a foundation that this is **historical**, this faith we have is founded in the Christ of God who came before the world.

Verse 2 – John is making the point of the **incarnation**. The eternal Christ who was with the Father from the beginning and indeed was God, this Christ appeared in the **flesh**, he became a man.

This doctrine of the incarnation has always been and will always be at the heart of truth and spiritual **authenticity**. Because only the Holy Spirit of God can break our rebellion against the authority of the incarnation and cause us to gladly submit to this one Jewish man as our absolute **King**.

Verse 3 – No one can have fellowship with Jesus unless you believe He is who **He** says He is in His Word. And no one can have fellowship with the Father except through the **Son**.

Jesus was a physical reality and the foundation of our faith is a historical fact, but that does not exonerate us from exercising a **personal faith** in Him.

1 Peter 1:8 – Our **faith** in the historical, physical, and eternal Jesus **saves** us just like the faith of the apostles saved them.

The grounds for **fellowship** in a Christian church can only be with those who are authentically Christian, who hold to the doctrine of who Christ is and what He has done.

There is no significant fellowship among people who do not share the same view of **Jesus Christ**.

Verse 4 (and 1-3) – When we believe Jesus is who He says He is, when our faith is grounded in the Jesus of the Bible, we have not only the responsibility, but the joy of **declaring** it unto others!

- 1) You must be on your guard against attempts among so-called believers to preserve fellowship on the basis of a shared **experience** rather than on the basis of a shared **theology**.
- 2) Clearly this text implies that no Christian should marry an **unbeliever**. Deep fellowship in the things that count most is **not** possible where we can't share the same understanding and, therefore, affection for Jesus Christ.
- 3) There is an increasing trend in churches to cultivate growth, fellowship, and members by **avoiding** theology and concealing the very distinctives that fill us with passion and zeal for the glory of God. The last thing we should ever do is water down **biblical** theology to the lowest common denominator of acceptability.

Be like John in verse 3: Here is what we believe about Christ. Do you **cherish** what we cherish?
- 4) The greatest miracle of Christianity is **Christ**. This is what Christmas is all about. “*Unto you is born this day a child who is Christ the Lord.*” The whole of Christianity stands or falls on that **truth**.

Don't miss Christ this Christmas – in Him is the **assurance** of our salvation, of our life, of our forever!