

Message #2**I John 1:1-4**

The Apostle John knew true doctrine, he had taught true doctrine, and now he needed to defend it. He and he alone from the apostles was left to give a defense of the faith and so he picked up his pen and wrote I John. He opens strong and he opens with grammar that is tough and it is very evident that the one penning this letter was a lot deeper than the average fisherman.

THE APOSTOLIC MESSAGE WHICH HAS BEEN PROCLAIMED CONCERNING JESUS CHRIST AS BEING THE ONLY MEANS OF ETERNAL LIFE IS APOSTOLICALLY FACTUAL, AND BELIEVING THIS IS NECESSARY TO HAVE FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD AND FULL JOY IN LIFE.

Biblical Christianity is based on historical fact. There were eyewitnesses who lived in history who saw it and wrote about it. One of those eyewitnesses is John.

PART #1 – Eternal life is found only in Jesus Christ, the God/man, and this is the message which the apostles factually proclaim. **1:1-2**

The first thing that catches your eye when you begin to read I John 1:1 is the neuter relative pronoun which is translated in English either “that which” (KJV & NIV) or “what” (NASV). What seems to be so odd about this is that it is not a masculine pronoun “he who.” This neuter is extremely important because it makes Jesus Christ out to be far more than just masculine; it makes Him God!

The relative pronoun “that which” or “what” connects to the phrase “the eternal life,” literally “the life, the eternal life” of **verse two**. Here is what John is claiming: **We have actually seen and touched with our own hands the Word of life and eternal life. In other words, what we have been proclaiming to you about Jesus Christ being the only means to eternal life, we have personally seen and handled. Life appeared in the person of Jesus Christ.**

Now in **verse 1** there are four realities which are brought out about Jesus Christ:

Reality #1 - Jesus Christ, who is the life, was from the beginning. **1:1a**

That prepositional phrase “from beginning” is very important as the verb “was.” The verb “was” indicates that Jesus Christ was and has always been the eternal life and He has been this from the beginning.

John does not say what beginning he has in view—the beginning of life, the beginning of time, the beginning of creation, or the beginning of the Gospel. There is no article before the word “beginning,” meaning the character and quality of beginning, not a specific beginning. John is claiming Jesus Christ is the beginning of everything. In other words, this one we saw and touched was no mere man; He was Creator!

Reality #2 - Jesus Christ, who is the life, is what the apostles have heard. **1:1b**

When he listened to the teaching of Jesus Christ, he was not just listening to the teachings of a man; he was listening to the teachings of life itself. The tense of the verb “we have heard” is perfect, referring to action which happened in the past which results were present at the time John wrote, and continue into the future.

Reality #3 - Jesus Christ, who is the life, is what the apostles have seen. **1:1c**

Again John stresses we saw this life with our own eyes.

Reality #4 - Jesus Christ, who is the life, is what the apostles have actually touched. **1:1d**

The aorist tense of the verb would indicate that John has a specific moment in mind when they touched the body of Jesus Christ, in realizing that He was God, to see if His body was normal. It is very possible that John has Luke 24:33-39 and John 20 in mind when Jesus Christ showed them his post-resurrection body (John 20:20).

There are two remarkable statements made about Jesus Christ—He is the Word of life and He is life. The Greek word “word” is logos, which refers to what is written and spoken by way of revelation from God. So combined, Jesus Christ is portrayed here as not only being He who speaks the Word, but He actually is God revealed to man and He is the life.

(Statement #1) - The life was manifested to us. **1:2a**

The aorist passive verb indicates that this life was physically manifested in the past. There are no more manifestations in the present or future until Christ comes in all of His glory.

(Statement #2) - The life was seen by us. **1:2b**

John is saying I am an eyewitness of the life. I saw Him. All the apostles did; in fact, that was a prerequisite for being an apostle (I Cor. 9:1).

(Statement #3) - The life was witnessed by us. **1:2c**

What John means here is that we testified everywhere we went that Jesus Christ is eternal life. They eventually witnessed to those in Jerusalem, then Judea, then Samaria, and the uttermost part of the earth.

(Statement #4) - The life was proclaimed by us. **1:2d**

These apostles preached Jesus Christ. They proclaimed a message about Him and notice what they persistently proclaimed:

1) He was with the Father and 2) He was manifested to us. That preposition “with” pros (προς) means Jesus Christ was face to face with the Father in everything. G. Abbott-Smith said the peculiar feature about this preposition is that it communicates close proximity (pp. 382-383).

What a unique individual. If you are honest with these two verses, you cannot help but see Jesus Christ is God. He had a real body but He was also really God.

PART #2 – The apostles have a purpose for proclaiming this message about Jesus Christ. **1:3-4**

John the apostle wants believers in every church to realize that they can have the same kind of fellowship with God the Father and with God the Son as they had. God the Father and God the Son may be considered to be two distinct persons of the Godhead and no one can have fellowship with One without the other. These apostles heard Him and saw Him and touched Him; that is pure fact of history. But what gave them their fellowship with God the Father and God the Son was their grasp of who Jesus Christ was.

God desires to have an apostolic closeness and fellowship with each of us. Here is where full joy will be found! It all starts with our belief in Jesus Christ for eternal life!