

# So That You May Know

## An Expository Study of the Epistle of 1John

### Chapter 2- John's Declaration **1John1:1-4**

#### 11. The Person of Jesus Christ Part 7

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WAOY Thursday 04/19/07; WOSM Thursday 10/09/08; WOSM Monday 10/17/22

Welcome again, my brothers and sisters in Christ. We are continuing our verse by verse “journey” through the Epistle of 1John and today we are going to begin to at “The Declaration of the Apostle John” as listed in **1John 1:1-4-** so let's read those verses together.

**1 What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life —**

**2 and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us —**

**3 what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.**

**4 These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete.**

Now on the last broadcast, we were exploring just *why* John went to such great lengths in these first four verses to describe his *own personal* contact with Jesus by discussing the heresy of Gnosticism that John was combating late in the first century.

And on the last broadcast, we saw how that after the Church had successfully dealt with the danger of the Antinomians and the Judaizers during the early days of Christianity- the heresy of Gnosticism attempted to creep into the Church to destroy it.

Now the Gnostics were a group who combined pagan beliefs with Christianity and Jude says that they crept or snuck into the Church to pervert the Gospel and to sow seeds of doubt and confusion about the Person of Jesus Christ.

And we studied last time that Gnosticism is a lot like the modern so-called New Age Movement so that there isn't just one New Age

religion, but an entire collection of offshoots of that paganism. We also saw that the pseudo Christian cults of Mormonism and Christian Science are modern day equivalents of many of the tenets of ancient Gnosticism.

Now there is much about Gnosticism that is complicated and hard to grasp, but if you can get this main point- you can get the gist of what Gnosticism is and why the Church fought against it in the first century. The Gnostics didn't believe that men are saved by Grace through Faith in Christ alone.

The Gnostics believed that saving Faith was the result of "receiving" or of "being enlightened" to hidden or secret information that was buried in codes amongst the ancient writings of the Gnostic mystics. The Gnostics didn't believe in the Words of Scripture- so they fought against the inspired writings of the Apostles and the Old Testament prophets and attacked the authenticity of the Bible. They still do this today. This is why the Christian Scientists and the Mormons, and all the other Gnostic cults that are alive today have "other revelations" about Jesus which are outside the orthodox and inspired writings that came from the heart and the mind of God.

The Gnostics believed that all "spirit" was good and that all "flesh" was bad. So, they taught that Christ was not a real live human being- because that would have made him evil and sinful. So, they taught that Christ was a spiritual "concept"- and not a real person.

Now we learned last time that it was primarily, the Apostle John who fought against the heresy of Gnosticism. And this is why John goes to such great lengths here in the first four verses of his Epistle to discuss his own personal contact with the physical Person of Jesus Christ.

John is doing several things here by writing about Jesus the way that he did. First of all, John uses the very same phrase to start his Gospel account and his Epistle that Moses used to start the Book of Genesis: **"In the beginning"**. And by doing this, John is tying both the Old and the New Testaments together and is showing the Gnostic heretics that this is the way things have always been. By John doing this, he is responding to the accusation that the Gnostics were teaching that the Apostles had corrupted the Gospel shortly after Jesus' Resurrection- which is what Gnostic cults do today as well.

In fact, Joseph Smith- the founder of the Mormon cult boldly said that God told him that the Apostles had corrupted the Gospel. It is interesting that at the same time that the Gnostics were teaching that the Apostles had corrupted the Gospel and so bring doubt upon the Books that were included in the canon of New Testament Scripture- they just so happened to have the “correct” books that needed to be in the Bible. My! Wasn’t that convenient?

That is where all of the so-called “lost books of the Bible” and the “Gospel of Thomas” come from. And now they have even uncovered a “gospel” that Judas supposedly wrote. But we need to understand, dear friends that these books were never “lost” we have always known where they were. No, these books were simply rejected because they were false Gnostic heresies put down on paper.

I laughed at the report from a silly New York Times reporter back in 2006- who was trying to give credibility to “The DaVinci Code” and other Gnostic books by saying that because they were old- that made them true. Beloved, there were liars back then just like there are liars today and the Gnostics were all false teachers who were not trying to bring anyone into the Truth- they were trying to destroy the Truth. So anytime that you hear that the Gospel was corrupted right after the Ascension of Christ- know that Gnosticism is alive and well and simply disregard it.

John is telling us here that Jesus was indeed a physical Man who had been physically born. And John give us his own personal declaration about just how physical Jesus really was. John says in verse 1:

**What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life —**

In this verse- John says that he literally heard the words that came out of Jesus’ Mouth as He spoke them. John says that he literally saw Jesus Christ with his own physical eyes. John says that he literally touched the physical Presence of Jesus while Jesus walked this earth.

And John could have even got more personal than this because in **John 13:25**, The Bible says that John literally leaned on Jesus’ breast at

the Last Supper. And all of these references to the physical Person of Jesus Christ was written here by John to refute the Gnostic teaching that Jesus was only a spiritual concept or a mystical revelation or a mist or a spirit- but was not really human.

But because what he wrote was inspired- John didn't stop with simply a description of Jesus' physical characteristics. John also said that in addition to Jesus being fully Human- that Jesus was also with God in the beginning- and was in fact God Himself wrapped in human flesh. In other words- John teaches here that Jesus was and is- God.

You see, the Apostle John knew that God's Plan for Man was the same in the New Testament as it was in the Old. There has never been more than one Plan of Salvation for Man. Moses and David and Abraham and all of the Old Testament Fathers were saved the very same way that we are saved today- by Grace and through Faith and not by works of Righteousness.

So John allowed a shot to go over the bow of the ship of the Gnostics by saying that what the Apostles taught about Jesus was the same way that it was from the very beginning- that there was never a time that Jesus was not with God.

But what John meant by that statement absolutely destroyed the Gnostic teachings. By saying that Jesus was with God in the beginning- John is clearly saying that Jesus *is* God. John taught that Jesus is God wrapped in human flesh and that He came down to live His life on earth just like we live our lives- except He lived completely without sin.

John says that Jesus was *with* God from the very beginning. So before God created anything- Jesus was with God. And that means that Jesus was *not* a created being- He was *not* simply an elevated Man- as the Gnostic Mormons teach- He was *not* simply a good man or a prophet or a teacher or a wise man- as many teach- and John was saying that Jesus wasn't simply a spiritual "concept" as the modern day Gnostics teach in Christian Science doctrines- but John was teaching that Jesus was fully Human with a physical body.

But by adding all of the other elements of Christ's Person here in the first four verses of his Epistle- John was also clearly teaching that in addition to Jesus being fully Human- that Jesus was also fully God.

So if we are to have fellowship with Christ- that is, if we are to be in right standing with God in Christ- then we must be in agreement

with what John says here about the Person of Jesus Christ. So anyone who teaches either than Jesus was God but not Human or who teaches that Jesus was Human but not God- either one- then he is not in agreement with the Apostle John's declaration- and is therefore off base and even perhaps apostate.

Please listen to me because this is real important. There is no such thing as being in right standing with God and being in opposition to John's declaration about Jesus Christ. The measuring rod that we need to judge whether or not our understanding of Jesus is true and correct- is that we are in agreement with John's declaration in these first four verses. Now look again at verse 3:

**what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.**

John says here that everything that we need to know about Jesus he has declared unto us- to the end that we may have fellowship or be in one mind and one accord or that we are in agreement with John and the other Apostles. And then John shows us why this is so important:

**... and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.**

There was never any doubt back then and there should be no doubt today that John and Peter and Paul and James and Jude and all the other New Testament writers were in perfect and total fellowship or unity or agreement with both God the Father and with Jesus Christ- His Son. So if we hope today- 20 centuries later- to be in that *same* fellowship- if we desire to be in that one single Christian fellowship; that one single Christian Church; that one single Christian Faith; that once and for all handed down to the saints Faith- it is mandatory that what we believe and what we teach about the Person of Jesus Christ lines up perfectly with that which John and the other Apostles teach in Scripture.

If we are at odds with what *they* taught- we are *not* in fellowship with either the Father or the Son and we are operating in isolation from those men whom God used to raise up the Church.

Now some have said, “*Well just who does John think that he is*”. I’ll tell you who John thought he was. John thought that he was handpicked and personally commissioned to be what he was- an Apostle- by none other than Jesus Christ Himself. And what John wrote here was inspired by none other than God the Holy Spirit Himself- as He moved upon John. And no human being on earth today can truthfully make that claim.

So we need to get off our high horse and we need to graciously humble ourselves to the authority of these inspired words and we need to honestly examine what we believe and what we teach about Jesus to make sure that we are saying the same things as John said here. If we say something else- if we add to it or take away from it- we are deviating from this apostolic declaration and we do not have the right or the authority to do that.

Brothers and sisters, if the dual nature of Jesus Christ stumps you- it is because you haven’t spent enough time reading about it and studying it and praying about it and meditating on it and talking about it and marveling at it.

If the Doctrine of the Trinity confuses you- then spend more time with it. If the concept that Jesus was fully God and fully Human in the same body at the same time without conflict or contradiction blows your mind; if it leaves you with your mouth hanging open; if it puts you in awe- then you are on the right tract to seeing Jesus as John declares Him to be and then you just might feel led to fall on your knees and clap your hands and worship our great and glorious Savior.

Well, I have to stop right here, but please join me on the next broadcast as we continue our “journey” through the Epistle of 1John. May God help us all.

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