



THE SWEETEST FELLOWSHIP THIS SIDE OF HEAVEN

Preaching and Teaching Resources

ADRIAN ROGERS





The Sweetest Fellowship This Side of Heaven

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The Sweetest Fellowship This Side of Heaven

SERMON REFERENCE: 1 John 1:1-4

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #2099

1 John 1 speaks of our fellowship as Christians, which comes through the life that we have in Jesus Christ. In order to experience and enjoy the sweetest fellowship this side of Heaven, the Apostle John identifies three things we must know beyond any doubt.

First, there is a fact established: “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life...” (1 John 1:1).

Many false teachers and deceivers will claim Jesus was not a physical, literal, bodily human who walked the Earth, or that He was not who He said He was. But in 1 John 1:2, John confirms that Jesus is an eternal, physical, spiritual fact: “...the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us...”

Jesus was fully God, fully man, and apart from His humanity, we cannot be saved. And as a man, He depended upon the same power that we can depend upon: the Holy Spirit.

Second, there is a fellowship experienced: “...that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ” (1 John 1:3).

Fellowship means, “to hold things in common”; those of us who have experienced the saving grace of God have much in common. We have become partakers of the divine nature; not only do we have fellowship with God, but we must also have fellowship with one another. We have the same new nature, re-born from the same womb of grace.

Finally, there is fullness enjoyed: “And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.” (1 John 1:4).

There is no joy like the joy of knowing one another in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Adrian Rogers says, “Happiness depends upon what happens, joy depends upon the Lord.” Happiness is at its fullest when it is mingled with joy; and that joy in the Lord is made full by our fellowship with one another.

Life Application

Are you in sweet fellowship with other believers? Consider the fact of Jesus established in the Gospel, the fellowship experienced and the fullness enjoyed when in the presence of other believers.



The Sweetest Fellowship This Side of Heaven

SERMON REFERENCE: 1 John 1:1-4

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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) The theme of 1 John is fellowship.
- b) John wrote five books of the Bible:
 - i) The Gospel of John
 - (1) The purpose of this book is to lead us to faith in Christ.
 - ii) Revelation
 - (1) The purpose of this book is to comfort saints, to help us understand the days in which we're living, and to give us a hope for the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus.
 - iii) The epistles of 1 John, 2 John and 3 John
 - (1) These were written to confirm saints.
 - (2) The theme for 1 John are the words "know," "fellowship" and "life."
- c) 1 John 1:1-4
 - i) This fellowship comes through the life that we have with the Lord Jesus Christ.
- d) People can exist and not have life.
 - i) 1 Timothy 5:6
 - (1) This speaks of an unsaved woman.
 - ii) John 10:10
 - (1) In this passage, Jesus was speaking to people whose hearts were beating, but He said that they did not have life.
 - (a) They had an existence.
 - (b) They did not have life that is full and free in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- e) Man is a spirit; and being spiritual, we need not just existence but life through the Spirit in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- f) Many people today are living life backward.
 - i) Rather than glorious, their lives are evil because they do not know the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and Lord.
- g) In order to experience and enjoy this life that is full and free, the Apostle John shows us three specific things found in our Scripture today.

2) A FACT ESTABLISHED (1 John 1:1)

- a) The devil always wants to distort and deny truth.
 - i) The greatest truth is the truth about the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - ii) The devil has been trying to confuse people as to who the Lord Jesus is, was and always will be.
- b) In John's day, there was a false cult known as the Gnostics.
 - i) The Greek word "gnosis" means "to know."
 - ii) Gnostics felt that they had superior knowledge.
 - iii) They believed that anything physical or material was evil, so they believed that the true Messiah could not have had a material, physical body.



- (1) They believed that the Jesus who was here on Earth was sort of a phantom and not real.
- c) John is going to show that Jesus Christ literally, physically, bodily walked here on this Earth, and he said that he was an eyewitness to that.
- d) There are still false cults today, and almost every false cult is wrong primarily about Jesus Christ.
 - i) If they are wrong about Jesus, it doesn't matter what they're right about.
 - ii) Jesus is God in human flesh.
 - (1) Jesus is co-equal and co-eternal with Almighty God.
 - iii) 2 John 1:10
 - iv) 2 John 1:9
 - (1) If a person is wrong about Jesus, then he doesn't know God.
 - (a) John 14:6
- e) Jesus is an eternal fact.
 - i) 1 John 1:1
 - (1) He is the Christ of the eternities.
 - ii) John 1:1
 - (1) Before anything began, Jesus was there.
 - (2) "The Word" is God's name for Jesus.
 - (a) Revelation 19:13
 - (i) Jesus is called in this verse the "Word of God."
 - (b) 1 John 1:1
 - (i) Jesus is called the "Word of life."
 - iii) A "word" is the expression of an invisible thought or an idea.
 - (1) Jesus is the visible expression of the invisible God.
 - iv) Jesus is God's first word.
 - (1) He was there in the beginning.
 - (2) John 1:1
 - v) Jesus is God's full word.
 - (1) Revelation 1:8
 - (a) Alpha and omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet.
 - (b) Jesus is God's alphabet; anything that God is going to say, He's going to say through Jesus and by Jesus.
 - vi) Jesus is God's final word.
 - (1) Hebrews 1:2
 - (2) When we've said "Jesus," we've said it all.
 - (a) You can't say anymore and don't need to say anymore.
 - (3) All of the revelation of God is wrapped up in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- f) Jesus is a physical fact.
 - i) 1 John 1:1
 - ii) There was audible evidence.
 - (1) John said that they heard Him.
 - iii) There was visible evidence.
 - (1) John said that they saw Him.



- (2) 1 John 1:1
 - (a) The word used for “looked upon” in this passage is the word we get our word “theater” from, which means “to look carefully.”
 - (i) John was with Jesus for three years, and he watched Jesus.
- iv) There was physical evidence.
 - (1) 1 John 1:1
 - (a) John said that they touched Jesus.
 - (2) Jesus Christ was in human form.
 - (a) He was born of a virgin, and He was as much a man as if He were not God at all.
 - (3) It is as much a heresy to deny the humanity of Jesus as it is to deny the deity of Jesus.
 - (a) He was God.
 - (b) He wasn't half God and half man.
 - (c) He wasn't all God and no man.
 - (d) He wasn't all man and no God.
 - (e) He was the God-man.
 - (4) If you deny the humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ, then you deny Christianity.
 - (a) Apart from His humanity, we could not be saved.
 - (i) He became a man to die on the cross.
 - (ii) Apart from the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins.
 - (b) Apart from His humanity, we have no example.
 - (i) We cannot follow as an example the God in the glory because we're human.
 - (ii) But we can walk as Jesus walked.
 - 1. Every miracle Jesus did, He did not as God would do, but as man filled with the Holy Spirit would do the miracle.
 - 2. All of the life that He lived, He lived as a man; and He depended upon the same power we can depend upon.
 - (iii) He's our Redeemer, example, comforter and friend because He's a man.
 - (c) Hebrews 4:15
- g) Jesus is a spiritual fact.
 - i) 1 John 1:1-2
 - (1) John states that he tells us what he saw so that we can believe.
 - ii) Jesus is not here now in a physical body, but the Holy Spirit of God reveals Him to us.
 - (1) As John heard Him, faith now becomes the ear of the soul.
 - (2) As John saw Him, faith now becomes the eye of the soul.
 - (3) As John felt Him, faith now becomes the hand of the soul.
 - iii) We can know the Lord Jesus through the Spirit.
 - (1) 1 John 5:9
 - (a) God sends the Holy Spirit to testify to the words of the apostles, and we have the words of the apostles.
 - (b) We are not dependent upon oratory, illustration or logic to convince someone.
 - (i) The Holy Spirit of God is here to testify that what John said is true.
 - 1. That is the witness of God.
 - iv) The Holy Spirit of God testifies unto the Lord Jesus Christ.



3) A FELLOWSHIP EXPERIENCED (1 John 1:2-3)

- a) John wants to share it.
- b) Anyone who sees it, hears it and knows it wants to share it.
 - i) This is why we're called witnesses and not lawyers.
 - (1) A lawyer argues a case; a witness tells what he has seen and heard.
 - ii) The only person who can't witness is the person who hasn't seen or heard anything.
- c) What is fellowship?
 - i) It is not coffee and donuts.
 - ii) 1 John 1:3
 - (1) The word "fellowship" is the Greek word "koinonia," which means "to hold things in common."
- d) Because of the established fact of Jesus, there is fellowship that is experienced.
 - i) We can have fellowship with one another.
 - ii) We have fellowship with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ.
 - (1) We have nothing in common with the Father.
 - (a) He is holy; we are unholy.
 - (2) 1 John 1:5-6
 - (a) There is a great chasm between us and Almighty God.
 - (b) God sent the Lord Jesus to take something that is common between us: human flesh.
 - (3) Jesus became a man and never discarded His deity.
 - (4) Jesus took on the nature of man that we might take on the nature of God.
 - (a) 2 Peter 1:4
 - (i) The word "partakers" here is the same word that is translated "fellowship" in 1 John 1:3.
 - iii) We have fellowship with God through the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - iv) Not only do we have fellowship with God, but we have fellowship with one another.
 - (1) When we are born of God, we share the same nature; and the Jesus in me will love the Jesus in you.
 - (2) We are born from the same womb: the womb of grace.
 - (3) Philippians 1:5
 - (4) Philippians 2:1
- e) The Bible teaches that a Christian is not to marry an unsaved person.
 - i) 2 Corinthians 6:14
 - ii) A twice-born person is a child of God; a once-born person is a child of Satan.
 - iii) There is no fellowship and no common life.
 - (1) The Christian wants to go to church on Sunday, but the unsaved person wants to sleep in on Sunday.
 - (2) The Christian wants to give, but the unsaved person doesn't want to give.
 - (3) The Christian wants to make Sunday a holy day, but the unsaved person wants to make it a holiday.
 - (4) Christians want to pray when a crisis comes, but a pagan ridicules prayer.



- (5) The Christian wants their children to be taught the things of God, but the unsaved person doesn't care.
- (6) Before long, the Christian spouse will begin acting like the unsaved spouse rather than the unsaved spouse acting like the Christian.
 - (a) This creates division in the home.
- iv) Ecclesiastes 4:12
- v) Never marry a person in order to reform them.
- vi) Never date a person whom you would not marry.
- vii) When we have the nature of God in us and we are born of the Spirit and partakers of the divine nature, then we are to seek out for a life partner someone who also has the same koinonia, that same fellowship with the Father and, therefore, with us.
- f) What holds our churches together is Jesus.
 - i) The Jesus in me will love the Jesus in you.
 - ii) When we love Jesus, we are going to love one another.

4) A FULLNESS ENJOYED (1 John 1:4)

- a) There is no joy like the joy of knowing one another in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- b) Everyone wants joy.
 - i) John said that he wrote this book that we might have joy.
 - (1) 1 John 1:4
 - ii) We can look all over for joy, but we won't find joy until we find it in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- c) Joy is the byproduct of fellowship with God and fellowship with the family of Christ.
 - i) Psalm 16:11
- d) Sin promises joy, but it never delivers it.
- e) Today, we have more entertainment, amusements, restaurants, etc.; yet, there is more loneliness, depression, alcoholism, drugs, divorce and suicide than ever before.
 - i) True joy is only found in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- f) Joy and happiness are not the same thing.
 - i) Happiness depends upon what happens.
 - ii) Joy depends upon the Lord.
 - iii) Philippians 4:4
 - iv) If you live for happiness, then you're a prisoner of circumstances.
 - (1) If circumstances change, then you're no longer happy.
 - (2) Jesus never changes.
 - v) Happiness is cosmetic; it is on the outside.
 - vi) Joy is character; it is on the inside.
 - vii) Happiness only meets your surface needs, but joy meets your deepest needs.
 - (1) Happiness is like a thermometer that registers conditions.
 - (2) Joy is the thermostat that controls the conditions.
 - viii) Happiness evaporates in a crisis; joy often intensifies in a crisis.
 - ix) Happiness is at its fullest when it is mingled with joy; when you know the joy of the Lord.
- g) In the life of the believer, there is a fullness of joy.
- h) 1 Peter 1:8



5) CONCLUSION

- a) Jesus is the Word of God.
 - i) He is speaking today because He loves you.
 - ii) He is the Word of life.
 - (1) It is the life that you need.
- b) 1 John 1:4
 - i) The Apostle John wrote these things that we might have fullness of joy.
 - ii) To know God and to know our brothers and sisters in Christ is fullness of joy.
- c) Have you received Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior?
- d) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- e) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16



The Sweetest Fellowship This Side of Heaven

SERMON REFERENCE: 1 John 1:1-4

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #2099

Be finding First John, that's right back near the back of the Bible, almost to the book of the Revelation. First John, and find the first chapter. And we're going to be studying the book of First John, it's not a very long book, only five chapters, and we're going to enjoy it. The title of our study, The Sweetest Fellowship This Side of Heaven, because the theme of First John is fellowship. You know, John wrote five books of the Bible. He wrote the Gospel of John and the purpose of the Gospel of John was to convince sinners. That is, to lead us to faith in Christ and then he wrote the book of the Revelation and the purpose of the book of the Revelation was to comfort saints, to help us understand the days in which we're living and to give us a hope for the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus. But then he wrote these epistles, these wonderful epistles and they are written to confirm saints. And so we thank God for this epistle that has for its theme the word know, K-N-O-W, and the word fellowship and the word life.

Look if you will now in First John chapter 1 as we read and we're going to share together the first four verses. The apostle John says, "That which was from the beginning which we have heard and which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and our hands have handled, of the word of life." Underscore the phrase the word of life. "For the life was manifested," underscore the word life, "and we have seen it and bear witness and show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us. That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us," underscore the word fellowship, "and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. These things write we unto you that your joy may be full." Underscore the word joy. Now, what is this fellowship, this wonderful fellowship? Well, it is a fellowship that comes through the life that we have with the Lord Jesus Christ. Now not everybody here and not everybody listening to me by television has life. You say, "If I don't have life, how could I be listening?" Because you can be existing and not have life. In First Timothy 5:6 the Bible speaks of an unsaved woman, it says this, "She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she lives." The walking dead, dead while they live. That's the reason Jesus said in John chapter 10 and verse 10, "I've come that you might have life and have it abundantly." Now He was talking to people whose hearts were already beating, blood flowing through their veins, but Jesus said you don't have life, you have an existence. An oyster has existence, but it certainly doesn't have life as we consider life today; the life that is full and free in the Lord Jesus Christ.

I was in Moscow shortly after communism imploded and was invited to go into the mayor's office. That was a great honor and a great responsibility and I took some Christian literature with me and sat around that big table in the mayor's office in Moscow, Russia. And I wondered what I would say to those people because they were turning from communism hopefully to capitalism. And I told those leaders there, I said, "Gentlemen, I want you to know something. While I believe that capitalism is far superior to communism, I want you to understand this. That they are both only two forms of materialism, and if that's all you have, just a better form of materialism, you've still missed it." And I was able to explain to them that man is a spirit, that we need spiritual life, not just existence, we need life through the spirit in the Lord Jesus Christ. And that's what I want to say to you today. Friend, it's not just simply existence, it's life, and what the apostle John here is speaking about is the word of life. If you take the word live and spell it backward, it spells evil and there are so many people who are just living backward and their life, rather than glorious, is really evil, because they do not know the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and Lord.



Now, in order to experience this life and enjoy this life, this life that is full and free, the apostle John tells us three things in these few verses that we've looked at. Now first of all he tells us that **there is a fact that is established**. Write it down, a fact established. Look if you will here in First John 1 verse 1, look at it, "That which was from the beginning which we have heard and which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and our hands have handled of the word of life." Now the devil always wants to muddy things. The devil always wants to distort and deny things and of course the greatest truth is the truth concerning the Lord Jesus Christ and so the devil, since the Lord Jesus Christ was here on Earth and even before He came, has been trying to confuse people as to who the Lord Jesus is, was, and always will be.

Now in this day, in John's day, there was a cult, a false cult, we don't have it today, at least by the name it had back then. They were called the Gnostics. You would spell that G-N-O-S-T-I-C-S, the Gnostics, and it comes from the Greek word gnosis, which means to know. And these were people who felt that they had superior knowledge, maybe we can just give them the name, the know-it-alls, they were the know-it-alls. And they were too sophisticated, they were too intellectual to believe that God could've come to Earth in human flesh because they really believe everything material was evil. That anything that was physical or material was evil; that's what the Gnostics believed. And so they believed that Jesus Christ could not have had, the true Messiah could not have had a material, physical body. They believed that the Jesus that was here on Earth was sort of a ghost, sort of a phantom, but not real. Now what John is doing right now, he's just going to knock Gnosticism right in the head. He's going to show that Jesus Christ literally, physically, bodily walked here on this Earth and he says, "I am an eyewitness of that."

Now let me say there were false cults in John's day, there are false cults in our day and almost every false cult is wrong primarily about Jesus Christ, did you know that? You can check them about Jesus. Friend, if they're wrong about Jesus, it doesn't matter what they're right about. I was in a house with some friends and two young boys who call themselves elders knocked on the door and they want to talk about Joseph Smith, whether Joseph Smith was a prophet. And I said, "Well boys, before we talk about Joe, let's talk about Jesus, because," I said, "If you're wrong about Jesus, it doesn't matter what you think about Joe, isn't that right?" And you see, they did not believe that Jesus is God in human flesh. They do not believe that Jesus is co-equal and co-eternal with Almighty God. Every false cult is off on the person of Jesus, almost every false cult anyway. And so here John is dealing with a false cult. And, you know the Bible says in Second John 1 verse 10, "If any come to your house and bring not the doctrine of Christ, don't receive him into your house, neither bid him godspeed." And let me give you another verse. Second John chapter 1 and verse 9, "Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God." Now it's just as plain as it can be. If a person is wrong about Jesus, he doesn't know God, because Jesus said in John 14:6, "I am the way, the truth, and the life and no one comes unto the Father but by Me."

So John starts out to establish who Jesus is. And remember now, we're talking about that this life is a fact, an F-A-C-T, a fact established. And he's saying here that Jesus is, now write it down, **Jesus is an eternal fact**. Look if you will in First John 1:1, "That which was from the beginning." He is the Christ of the eternities and John had already written in his Gospel in John 1:1, "In the beginning was the Word." Before anything began to begin, Jesus was there. And that is God's name for Jesus, the Word, "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God." Jesus is called the Word of God in Revelation chapter 19 verse 13, it speaks of Jesus coming in glory and it says, "And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood and His name is called the Word of God." Now that's interesting, isn't it? Jesus is called the Word here. We see here in verse 1 he's called the Word of life. John 1:1, he's called the Word of God.

Well what is a word? A word is the expression of an invisible thought, an idea. Jesus is the visible expression of the invisible God. Jesus articulates God. **He is God's first word**. He was there in the beginning,



"In the beginning was the Word." **He is God's full word.** He says over in the book of Revelation that He's the Alpha and the Omega, the Word of God, the Alpha and the Omega. You know what that means? The first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, alpha and omega. If he were speaking to us today he'd say he was the A and the Z. I have hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of books in my library. All of them are made up with just 26 letters. Every thought in my library is just 26 letters. And what Jesus is saying, "I'm God's alphabet. Anything that God's going to say, He's going to say through Me and by Me."

Jesus is God's first word, He's God's full word, and **He's God's final word.** The book of Hebrews says in chapter 1 verse 2, "God hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son." Now friend when you've said Jesus you've said it all. You can't say anymore and you don't need to say anymore. All of the revelation of God is wrapped up in the Lord Jesus Christ and He is a fact, He is an eternal fact. He's the Word that existed before anything else was created. He is the expression, the visible, physical expression of the invisible, spiritual God.

But not only is Jesus Christ an eternal fact, but write this down, **Jesus is a physical fact.** It's very important that you understand this. Now notice what John is saying in First John 1:1, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and our hands have handled of the Word of life." Now John says, "He wasn't a phantom, He wasn't a ghost," he said, "We have the **audible evidence.** We heard Him." Had they had tape players back in that day, you could've taped the voice of the Lord Jesus. And then not only was there audible evidence, there was visible evidence John says, "We saw Him," "That which we have looked upon," and John uses the word theaomai, it's the word we get our word theater from. It means to look carefully. John said, "Look, I was with Him for three years, I watched Him, I saw Him."

And not only was there the audible evidence, not only was there the visible evidence, there was the **physical evidence.** He said, "We handled Him, we touched Him." Let me tell you what Jesus Christ was like. Jesus Christ weighed 180 pounds, He had chestnut hair, He was six feet tall or something like that. I mean, I don't know what He was like, but there were the actual, physical dimensions. I'm saying that Jesus Christ was in human form. He was born of a virgin, He was as much a man as if He were not God at all. Now let me tell you this. It's as much a heresy to deny the humanity of Jesus as it is the deity of Jesus. You have to understand that. He was God, very God, He wasn't half God and half man. He wasn't all God and no man, He wasn't all man and no God, He was the God-man, never another like the Lord Jesus Christ.

But remember the humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ and if you deny the humanity of Jesus, you're denying Christianity! That's what John is saying. "Look, listen, we saw Him, we heard Him, we touched Him." The word of life. He is an eternal fact, but he is a physical fact. Thank God for His humanity. You see, apart from His humanity I couldn't be saved. He became a man to die on the cross, and apart from the shedding of blood there's no remission of sins. Apart from His humanity, I have no example. I can't follow as an example the God in the glory because I'm a human; He's not a human. But I can walk as Jesus walked, and I want to tell you something, friend, when Jesus Christ was upon this Earth, He did not pull rank on me. Every miracle He did, He did not as God would do a miracle, He did the miracle as man filled with the Holy Spirit would do the miracle. All of the life that He lived, He lived as a man and He depended upon the same power that Adrian can depend upon, day by day and moment by moment.

So he is my Redeemer because He's a man. He's my example because He's a man, and I want to tell you, He's my comforter and friend because He's a man. I don't have a high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of my infirmities. He was tempted in all points like as I am and thank God He knows and He cares and He understands. So what is John talking about when he's talking about this life? He's talking about an established fact.



But I want to tell you something else. Not only is He an eternal fact and not only is He a physical fact, but I want to say something else about Him, **He is a spiritual fact**. Now what do you mean by that? Well look and see what John is saying in First John 1 verses 1 and 2, “That which was from the beginning,” the eternal fact, “which we have heard and which we have seen with our eyes, which we’ve looked upon, and our hands have handled, are the word of life,” a physical fact, “for the life was manifest and we have seen it and bear witness and show unto you that eternal life.” Now wait a minute, these other people haven’t seen. No, that’s right. John says, “I am going to tell you what I have seen so that you can believe.” I have never seen Jesus, I’ve never heard Jesus, I’ve never touched Jesus, not with my hands, but I believe in Him because Jesus Christ is also a spiritual fact, He is not here now in a physical body but the Holy Spirit of God reveals Him. And as John heard Him, faith now becomes the ear of the soul. As John has seen Him, faith now becomes the eye of the soul. As John had felt Him, faith now becomes the hands of the soul. We can know Him through the Spirit. Let me give you a verse. John says over here in First John chapter 5, in the back, beginning in verse 9, “If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater. For this is the witness of God which ye have testified of His Son.” You see, God sends the Holy Spirit now to testify through the words of the apostles and we have the words of the apostles.

There was a college professor who was an atheist and he loved to ridicule his students. And so he asked his students, “Have any of you ever heard God?” Nobody answered. “Any of you ever seen God?” Nobody answered. “Have any of you ever touched God?” Nobody answered. He said, “So, there is no God.” And the class sat there, all of them cowed and so forth until one student lifted his hand and said, “Professor, may I ask a question to the class?” He said, “All right.” He said, “Have any of you heard the professor’s brain?” Nobody answered. “Have any of you touched the professor’s brain?” Nobody answered. “Have any of you seen the professor’s brain?” Nobody answered. He said, “Then we can conclude the professor has no brain, according to his logic.”

No, you see, John said in First John 1:1, “That which we’ve seen and that which we’ve heard, we declare unto you.” And then the Bible says in First John 5 verse 9, “If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater,” and today I am not dependent upon oratory or illustration or logic to convince you, thank God the Holy Spirit of God is here to say what he’s saying is true. That is the witness of God. Jesus is an eternal fact, Jesus is a physical fact, Jesus is a spiritual fact, and the Holy Spirit of God testifies unto the Lord Jesus Christ.

So, what is this life? The first point. It is a fact established. Second point, **it is a fellowship experienced**. Not only a fact but a fellowship. Now look if you will in First John 1 verse 2 and 3, “For the life was manifested and we have seen it and bear witness and show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us and that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you that ye may have fellowship with us.” Now, John wants to share it. John said, “I saw it and now I want to share it.” And anybody who sees it, hears it, knows it, wants to share it, Amen? That’s the reason why we’re called witnesses and not lawyers. A lawyer argues a case, a witness tells what he’s seen and heard and the only person who can’t witness is the person who hasn’t seen or heard anything.

Now, he says, I do this that you might have fellowship. What is fellowship? Fellowship is not coffee and donuts. Fellowship is not, as some people cutely say, two fellows in the same ship. What is fellowship? This is a very technical word, “That you may have fellowship with us.” It is the Greek word “koinonia.” Now get that word in your heard and in your mind. That needs to be in your vocabulary. It is the Greek word koinonia and it means “to hold things in common.” That is, this Jesus, this established fact, because of this established fact that is established, there is a fellowship that is experienced that we can have fellowship one with another. It



literally means to have something in common. Now notice who we have fellowship with. Notice he says in First John 1 verse 3, "Our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ."

Well, that brings up a real question. What do I have in common with the Father? Nothing, nothing. He's holy, I'm unholy; He is Almighty, I am a worm. And how can Adrian have fellowship with God? But yet the apostle John says, "Our fellowship is with the Father." I have nothing in common with the Father. Notice in First John 1 verses 5 and 6, "This then is the message which we have heard from Him and declare unto you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness we lie and do not the truth." We're in the dark, He's in the light. I mean there's a great chasm between us and Almighty God, so how can I have fellowship with Almighty God?

Here's how. This God, who knows that there's a chasm between Adrian and Himself and between you and Himself, sent the Lord Jesus Christ to take something that is common between us, human flesh. Jesus becomes a man and now He never discards His deity, but now He takes humanity and now we begin to have likeness, we become together. He takes on the nature of man that I might take on the nature of God and He says in Second Peter chapter 1 verse 4, you're going to love this, "We now have become partakers of the divine nature." Now, partakers of the divine nature, and the word partaker that is translated there, Peter translates it there, is exactly the same word that is translated fellowship over here in First John. We have the fellowship of the divine nature. You see, Jesus took humanity and therefore He became like I am that I might become like He is that we might have that He took the very nature of man that we might take the nature of God. And so I have fellowship with God through the Lord Jesus Christ. I mean, a worm like I am can walk and talk and can fellowship with Him and can sing, "I come to the Garden alone, when the dew is still on the roses and the voice I hear, falling on my ear, the Son of God discloses. And He walks with me and He talks with me and He tells me I am His own!" That's the fellowship, the koinonia that we have with Him because of the incarnation. And that's the reason old John is saying, "Look, He's a man! He's a man! We saw Him! We touched Him! We heard Him! He took the nature of man that we might take the nature of God." And we have become partakers of the divine nature.

And then you see, look. Not only then do we have fellowship with God, but it follows as night follows day, that we must have fellowship with one another. Because when I am born of God and you're born of God, the same nature that's in Adrian is in you, and the Jesus in me is going to love the Jesus in you. We have the same nature, we're born from the same womb, from the womb of grace and that's so important. That's the reason why the Bible calls that in Philippians 1:5 the koinonia of the Gospel or the fellowship of the Gospel. That's the reason in Philippians 2 verse 1 it's called the koinonia or the fellowship of the Spirit.

And by the way, let me say a word. How many of you are unmarried? All right, you're unmarried. Now let me tell you something. Don't you ever marry an unsaved person, don't do it, don't do it! For the Bible says you're not to be unequally yoked together with unbelievers and then he asked this question: For what fellowship, what koinonia hath light with darkness? Don't you realize you're twice-born when you're a child of God? And if they're not twice-born they're a child of Satan? You talk about in-law problems, you've got the devil for a father-in-law.

I mean, you think about it, There's no fellowship, there's no common life. I thank God for the fellowship I have with my wife and not just the love but the fellowship that I have with her, the things that we share in common. You see, listen, you marry an unsaved person or you want to go to church on Sunday. They don't, they want to sleep in on Sunday. It's hard enough to get to church when both of you are saved, Amen? The Christian wants to give, pagan says, I don't want to give. The Christian wants to make Sunday a holy day, pagan wants to make it a holiday. The Christian wants to pray when a crisis comes, the pagan ridicules



prayer. The Christian wants the children to be taught of the things of God, the pagan doesn't care. And before long, friend, you're going to be acting like the pagan rather than the pagan acting like you. You're going to have a division in your home and that's so many times the reason that divorce comes. There's no real koinonia, there's no real fellowship, you're three times more likely to get divorced.

The Bible says, "A three-fold cord is not easily broken." What are you going to do about the children when you marry an unsaved person and that unsaved person doesn't share the things of God with your children, you can't, the children are confused and mixed up. No, you just marry only a saved person and let me say something else. Don't ever marry a person to reform them. I mean, if they're not walking with God before. And I'll tell you something else. Don't even date a person that you would not marry if you fell in love with them. Just don't do it, just don't do it. I'm telling you, folks, that, listen, our fellowship is with the Father and with one another. When I have the nature of God in me and I am born of the Spirit and when I am a partaker of the divine nature, I have this fellowship with God, then I'm to seek out for a partner for life somebody else who has that same koinonia, that same fellowship with the father, and therefore with me.

And so, listen, this fellowship, it's a fact established. **It is a fellowship experienced.** And now here's the third thing, very quickly, it is a fullness enjoyed. Look, if you will in First John 1 verse 4, "And these things write we unto you that your joy may be full." There is no joy like the joy of knowing one another in the Lord Jesus Christ. And that's the reason we call this book the sweetest fellowship this side of Heaven.

Now I don't know about all of you, I don't know about all those folks up there, but I know one thing about every mother's child in this building, you want joy, I mean you want joy. And this is where joy is found. John says, "This is why I wrote this book, that you might have joy." A woman lost her house keys, she couldn't find them. She looked all over the house and she couldn't find them. She looked in her purse and there they were. You know why she didn't find them before she looked in her purse? She was looking in the wrong place because the keys were in her purse. Now you can look all over for joy, but you're not going to find joy until you find it in the Lord Jesus Christ. Joy is the byproduct of fellowship with God and fellowship with the family. Psalm 16 verse 11, "Thou wilt show me the path of life. In Thy presence is fullness of joy, at Thy right hand of pleasure is forevermore." You know, sin promises joy but it never delivers it. Many of you have hundreds of television channels coming into your house right now. We have more entertainment, more amusements, more restaurants, yet more loneliness and more depression and more alcoholism and more drugs and more divorce and more suicide than ever. Why? Because, friend, there's only true joy in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, you can be a lost person and be happy for a while. We're not talking about happiness, we're talking about joy. Happiness depends upon what happens, joy depends upon the Lord. The Bible says, "Rejoice in the Lord." If you live for happiness, you're a prisoner of circumstances because if the circumstances change then you're not happy anymore, but Jesus never changes. Happiness is a cosmetic, it's on the outside. Joy is character, it is on the inside. Happiness only meets your surface needs, but joy meets your deepest needs. Therefore, happiness is like a thermometer, it just registers conditions. Joy is the thermostat that controls the conditions. Happiness evaporates in a crisis. Joy, many times, intensifies in a crisis. Happiness is wonderful. We're talking about miles of smiles, but let me tell you something, friend, happiness is at its fullest when it is mingled with joy, when you know the joy of the Lord. And so, look, let me tell you about this life, this life, it comes from God, it is real. It is a fact, it is established, and it results in a fellowship experience, there's a koinonia, we have fellowship with God and fellowship with one another, and **then there's a fullness in joy.** We have joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Now let me say this. Jesus, friend, is the Word of God. He is the Word of God. And He's speaking here today, He's communicating, He's the Word of God. Let's just say that He's broadcasting today on station W-O-R-D.



He's broadcasting. And He's broadcasting because He loves you. Now would you say in the physical realm that there's no music in the air just because your radio is turned off? You see, just because you've turned off the radio, wouldn't you be a fool to deny the music? I mean, would you say it's not there just because the radio's not on? No. Let me ask you a question. Do you have your radio on today, do you have your antenna up? Jesus is here. He is here. Don't say He's not here, He is here, He's here, got a lot of folks tuned in to this station W-O-R-D. He is the word of life. It's life that you need and John said, "I wrote these things that you might have fullness of joy."

I'm going to tell you something. I believed what I believe when I started preaching it, but I believe it so much more now. I was saved as a teen and He's kept me for all these years. But I can honestly and sincerely say this and I know that God is listening. He means more to me today, far more than when I first met Him. I'm not finding hidden flaws. To know God, to know our brothers and sisters in Christ, friend, that is fullness of joy. That is fullness of joy.

Would you bow your heads? While heads are bowed and eyes are closed, you need to receive Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. Again, don't deny the music because your radio's turned off. Would you just open up now to the Word of God? Would you pray a prayer like this? "Dear God, I know that You love me and I know that You want to save me. Jesus, You died to save me. You promised to save me if I would trust You." Now listen carefully, tell Him this, "I do trust You, Jesus." Friend, tell Him that right now. Boys and girls, tell Him that. Husbands, wives, young men, young ladies. "I trust You, Jesus, I trust You now. Come into my heart, forgive my sin, cleanse me, save me." Pray it and it. "Save me, Jesus." Did you ask Him? Then tell Him, "Lord Jesus, I thank You for saving me. I yield my life to You. I turn from all sin. I will follow You wherever You lead me if You will only help me. I'm weak but you're strong. Begin now to make me the person You want me to be and help me never to be ashamed of You. Give me the courage, Lord, to make it public. Thank You, Jesus, my Lord. Amen."



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