



How To Be In Fellowship With God Now?

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“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 revealed, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was revealed 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.”

There was never any question during the time of the early church and the time after the last apostle had died (post-apostolic period) that the Apostle John was the author of 1 John. John never did mention his name in his writings, but the question of his authorship never came up until centuries later. Tradition and post-apostolic writing indicated that John wrote this in the latter years of his life. Tradition also stated that he was the last of the original apostles to die.

The Gospel of John begins in a similar manner to 1 John where it states,



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"¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God."

In the Gospel of John, John was referring to the creation, but in 1 John 1:1, John is referring to the beginning of Jesus' ministry, His resurrection, and His eternal nature.

How to Fellowship with God the Father? **Building on an Eyewitness Foundation**

Like Peter, John made it very clear that he was an eyewitness to the time of Jesus' ministry in this life, His sacrifice, His death and resurrection, and His ascension into heaven. But why was that necessary?

What Prevents Us from Knowing God Personally? The Barrier of Denial and False Teaching

During the later years of the early church, there was a growing group of people that denied the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Paul even wrote about this to the church in Corinth in 1 Corinthians 15:12-14,



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"¹² Now if Christ is preached, that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? ¹³ But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised; ¹⁴ and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain, your faith also is in vain."

At the end of World War II, after Nazi Germany had surrendered, the allied forces discovered the extent of the horror that existed in the concentration camps where Jews, critics of the Nazi regime, and populations considered expendable were exterminated in many inhumane ways. The Commanding General, Dwight Eisenhower ordered that everything be fully documented and filmed. As he stated, "If we do not document every bit of this horror, idiots in future years will claim that the none of this happened." Unfortunately, General Eisenhower's prediction proved to be correct.

In the same way, many people, academics, scientists, public speakers, have stated that Jesus was not resurrected from the grave, and he is not the Son of God. One of the premises of Islam is that Jesus was NOT the Son of God, but He was a prophet. Yet, none of these people were present when Jesus walked the earth. None of them dug up the dead body of Jesus to prove their claims. Therefore, such "claims" are irrelevant and would be considered "hearsay testimony" in any court of law.



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But John WAS there. He DID see the risen Christ. He DID touch Him. He DID see Him taken up into heaven, and he DID hear the promise of His return. Like the other Apostles, John had shown His authority through the demonstration of power that he received from the Holy Spirit. Therefore, his eyewitness account was backed by the power and authority of the Holy Spirit.

“...² and the life was revealed, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was revealed to us...”

As an inspired eyewitness account, John also testified that the Jesus Christ was, and is, eternal. There was no doubt in John’s words that he KNEW that Jesus Christ was the eternal Son of God. Why else would a strong, practical commercial fisherman like John, dedicate his life and heart to Jesus Christ? All the original disciples, other than Judas, were grown men of varying backgrounds and attitudes. None of them were people that would be easily convinced or manipulated. In fact, one was a tax collector and, another was a zealot! Yet, like John, they dedicated their very lives to their Lord and savior Jesus Christ. Would they have done that for a lie or some elaborate deception? Hardly!

John also referred to *“the eternal life, which was with the Father and was revealed to us”*. But that same eternal life was promised to ALL



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of God's children. In John 6:40, Jesus said,

"⁴⁰For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day."

In Romans 6:22-23, Paul wrote,

"²²But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life. ²³For the wages of sin is death, but the gracious gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

But what does eternal life mean? One person remarked, "That is a long time. What will we do? Where will we stay? Won't we get bored?" The problem with these questions is that they are all based on the idea of TIME. But the Living God is outside of time. There is no "time" with Him.



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A person that loves to read will sit down in a comfortable chair and begin to read. Then, later, that person looks up and realizes that hours had gone by! “Where did the time go?” The point is that people will briefly “lose track” of time when doing something that brings pleasure. Now, consider that mankind was created to be with God, but sin broke that relationship. Obedience to the Gospel and living a life of righteousness gives the hope of eternal life with God. But then that Christian physically dies, and he/she is now with God. FINALLY, that person is fully home in the presence of pure love and pure light. One can only imagine the joy and happiness. And time? It is irrelevant. In God’s presence, there is simply the experience of peace, protection, and happiness. No wonder John exclaimed at the end of Revelation, “Amen! Even so come Lord Jesus”!

“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.”

Some way wonder, “Why is this statement needed? If they are Christians, they should already know this.” But the answer should also be obvious. John had spent most of his adult life as an Apostle serving his Lord and Savior, and his Heavenly Father. Many of his readers were one or two generations past the actual events that occurred during Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection. Also, a growing number of Christians did not directly witness the early events in spreading the Gospel. With the growing heresies and false teaching that was present, John’s initial statement was a declaration of comfort and confidence in the reality and power of the Gospel.



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Note the word “fellowship”.

“...so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed, our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.”.

Fellowship means association, community, communion, joint participation, close social intercourse. It carries the idea of a close personal bond. This is more than meeting Christians at a home or at a location to share a meal. Yes, that is interaction between Christians, but John is describing a close spiritual bond with him and a shared spiritual bond with the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ.

This bond, this fellowship, gives life, spiritual life, to the individual. It involves the bond by which a person can be transformed in this life from a worldly person into a person that continually grows in love and righteousness.

What Hinders Us from Having Fellowship with God? The Break of a Spiritual Bond

But if that person turns away from that bond, then his/her faith weakens and eventually that former Christian will die spiritually. In Matthew 7:21-23, Jesus said,



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“²¹ ‘Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. ²² Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ ²³ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; leave Me, you who practice lawlessness.’”

It does not matter what a person does in the name of Jesus Christ. Many false teachers claim to teach in the name of Christ. But that spiritual fellowship was never established and allowed to grow and flourish. If there was no fellowship, no spiritual bond, then that person will be rejected.

But John declared and reaffirmed that bond was established with the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. It is easy to pass over the significance of that. Yet, the Living God, the Creator of this universe, has accepted every Christian as His child, and has opened the Way where every Christian has the hope of being able to stand in the presence of God. This has been mentioned in many other articles, but what God has done through His Son is astounding! David was thinking the same thing when he wrote in Psalm 8:3-5:



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"³ When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, The moon and the stars, which You have set in place; ⁴What is man that You think of him, and a son of man that You are concerned about him? ⁵Yet You have made him a little lower than the angels, And You crown him with glory and majesty!"

What greater love can there be than the love of the Living God?

What Are the 7 Purposes of Fellowship? Completing Our Joy in Christ

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

As previously stated, tradition records that John probably wrote 1 John in the latter part of his life. But really, such opinions are irrelevant. Regardless of his age, John held a deep love and compassion of his brothers and sisters in Christ. If he was older, then he probably did see other, younger, Christians as children in Christ. As an Apostle, he was writing to his readers to share that great joy through the hope and promise that he had through Jesus Christ; and he wanted to share that joy, that love, and that confidence with his readers then and today. The fellowship he proclaims serves profound purposes, which we can see woven throughout his message:



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1. **To Share in the Apostolic Testimony:** Connecting us to the eyewitness truth of Christ.
2. **To Have Communion with the Father and Son:** Establishing the primary, vertical bond of our faith.
3. **To Unite with Other Believers:** Creating a genuine, horizontal community of shared life.
4. **To Anchor Against False Teaching:** Providing confidence and discernment in the face of heresy.
5. **To Receive the Promise of Eternal Life:** Grounding our hope in the revealed, eternal Christ.
6. **To Experience Transformative Love and Righteousness:** Facilitating our growth into Christ's likeness.
7. **To Make Our Joy Complete:** Fulfilling the very heart of God for His people through shared life in Him.