

“Joy not Jitters!”

I. **INTRO:**

- A. Plato said, *We can easily forgive a child who is afraid of the dark, the real tragedy of life is when men are afraid of the light.*¹
- B. **Book Overview:** **God is Light** (ch.1,2); **God is Love** (ch.3-5).
- C. **3 main themes throughout:** *Light vs. Darkness; Love vs. Hatred; Truth vs. Error.*
- D. **Warren Wiersbe** notes in his *Outlines on the NT*: The Spirit used John to write the gospel of John, the 3 epistles, & the Revelation. [Watch how they **complement** each other & give us the *full picture of the Christian life*]
1. **The Gospel:** Emphasized salvation; **Past history**; Christ died for us; **The Word made flesh.**
 2. **The Epistles:** Emphasized sanctification; **Present experience**; Christ lives in us; **The Word made real in us.**
 3. **The Revelation:** Emphasized glorification; **Future hope**; Christ comes for us; **The Word conquering.**
- E. Throughout church History, often times “writings” were to counteract heresy that crept into the church! (E.g. Creeds & Councils) **Here John was dealing with Gnosticism & Docetism!**
1. **Gnosticism** – Pagan philosophy in which “*matter*” was thought to be evil.
 - a) Which led to 2 extremes:
 - (1) **Asceticism** (Flesh *fasting*) <-- --> **Sensuality** (Flesh *Feeding*)
 2. **Docetism**(Gk *to seem*) – Heresy that regarded the body of Jesus as an illusion.
 - a) **Q:** What would this teaching do to the crucifixion account?
 - b) *“He really didn’t suffer then! - The presence of the Son of God was just a masquerade!”*
 - c) Strongly refuted by **Ignatius** writing in the 2nd cent to the **Magnesians** (not milk of) who said, *“Be fully persuaded in the matter of the birth, suffering & resurrection in the time of the regime of Pontius Pilate, for these things were truly & certainly done by Jesus Christ.”*
 3. But really his letter is **practical not a theological treatise**(formal/systematic).
 - a) **Read** 5:19 & 1:4. We’re believers; We’re under the sway; We can have joy.
 - b) He lists cautions that will be detrimental to our **fellowship** & rob us of **joy**.
 - c) **How?** - *sin not confessed; lack of love to the brethren; love of the world*; will cause us to loose our **joy!**

¹ Christian Medical Society Journal, Fall 1975, V. VI #4, P. 30

II. **JOY NOT JITTERS!**

A. **JOHN'S PROCLAMATION!** (1,2)

B. THE *ETERNAL* CHRIST! (1a)

C. He existed before the world began. (This he really drove home already in his gospel)

D. THE *EARTHLY* CHRIST! (1b,2)

E. John **saw**, **heard**, & **touched** the physical Savior.

F. *Umami* - Taste is 1 of our 5 senses (Senses are the physiological methods of **perception**). For years we've had 4 main categories [bitter, sour, salty, sweet] but now Umami? **A new taste?** (Japanese word for savoriness; also brothy, meaty have been proposed)

1. Well, John didn't taste him, but we are to **taste & see that the Lord is good!**

2. I also learned of **supertasters**, those w/a taste sharper than average. Women are more likely to fall into this category, as are Asians, Africans, & South Americans.

a) Probably due to an increased number of *fungiform papillae* (FUN-ji-form pa-PILL-ay) (mushroom shaped projections on top of the tongue)

3. John was a **super-see'r**, **super-hearer**, **super-toucher**.

G. Though we cannot **hear**, **see**, or **touch** Jesus today...the apostles did, & we stand on their testimony!

H. We have **3 channels** of first hand knowledge that came to the Apostles!...**Ears, Eyes, & Touch!** - These were **Touchable & Tangible Truths** about the Historical Jesus!

1. **Ears** – we have heard.

a) Wow! and what words they heard!

b) The officers who went to arrest Christ were even amazed! - **Then the officers came to the chief priests and Pharisees, who said to them, "Why have you not brought Him?" The officers answered, "No man ever spoke like this Man!** (Jn.7:44-46)

c) Jesus said, **But blessed are your eyes** for they see, and **your ears** for they hear; for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to **see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.** Mt.13:16,17

2. **Eyes** – we have seen, we have looked upon, we have seen.

a) There is 3 main Greek words for "**saw**". We find them all in **Jn.20:5-8**.

b) **John saw** (Βλεπο-*Blepo*) Only indicates the object had impressed itself on John's eyes.

c) **Peter saw** (θεωρεω - *Theoreo*) To behold w/intelligence; perceive, or scrutinize.

d) **John saw** (Οραω - *Orao*) To see w/understanding...& believed.²

(1) It is this last word(*Orao*) that John uses **3 times** in 1Jn.1:1-3.

² James Montgomery Boice; The Epistles Of John; pg. 27,28.

3. **Touch** – our hands have handled.

- a) In the upper room Jesus said, "Behold My hands & My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me & see, for a spirit does not have flesh & bones as you see I have." Lk24:39
- b) Same word as *handled* in 1 Jn.1:1.
- c) These were *Touchable & Tangible Truths* about the Historical Jesus!

I. **JOHN'S PURPOSE!** (3,4)

J. John states 3 reasons for Jesus' Incarnation.

K. **THE VERTICAL REASON!** (3)

L. That we might experience the **fellowship** with both the **Father & Son**.

1. This was God's heart from the beginning (eg. Waking with Adam in the garden)

M. **Warning! Any "reconstructed Jesus" is no Jesus at all!"**

1. Don't buy into, "Well I think Jesus was like this..." – *We can't depict nor describe any other historical figure as we wish!*
2. **We can't say**, "I think **Elvis** played the Tuba; or that **Johnny Cash** always wore white; or that **Abe Lincoln** hated hats; or that **Ghandi** was Fat; or **John Wayne** was effeminate; or that **Kobe Bryant** is a short white guy that can't jump!"
3. **As** there is only one accurate way to describe any Historical figure, **so** there is only one way to describe the true Jesus.
 - a) Any other reconstruction of him or revision of Him is absurd.
 - b) We have to rely on the objective experiences that those around Him had.
4. 2 Cor. 11:4[NLT] **You seem to believe whatever anyone tells you, even if they preach about a different Jesus than the one we preach, or a different Spirit than the one you received, or a different kind of gospel than the one you believed.**

N. **Main point?** –Any other Jesus, who was not "*the Son of God in the flesh*" could never lead to fellowship w/the Father & Son.

1. We need this message today more than ever!

O. **THE HORIZONTAL REASON!** (4)

P. That we might experience the **fellowship** with **one another**.

Q. A good definition for fellowship is: "*The setting aside of private interest & desires & the joining in with another, or others, for common purposes.*"

1. **It's having things in common!** (e.g. you might share **American citizenship** in common, or have **coffee fellowship** in common; or **surf fellowship, bunko fellowship, or Wii fellowship** in common)

2. But John's talking about that unique fellowship which is only for those who **share life in Jesus Christ together!!!**
- R. Fellowship has been described using 2 English words: **Partnership** (God & I working together) & **Friendship** (God & I sharing the lives of friends together).
1. **Note:** the Horizontal & Vertical Fellowship!
 - a) You must have **Vertical** Fellowship 1st (hold up 1 vert. finger) **before** you can have the **Horizon** Fellowship(+)...note they intersect at the cross!!!
 2. If one of God's goals for us is this **Horizontal** Fellowship!
 - a) **Q:** How can we be content with that which **disrupts** that fellowship?
 - b) **Q:** How can we be content to **win men** to Christ; **but** fail to draw them into **vital & visible** relationships *w/one another*?
 3. **Apostles Creed** - "...I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; **the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. AMEN.**"
 - a) (communo sanctorum) "*the communion of saints*" – a fellowship of/with the saints.
 4. Christians, more often than not, could best be described **like a hand full of marbles...rather than grapes!** (i.e. constantly colliding & bouncing off one another)
 5. "Believers are not compared to **bears or lions or other animals that wander alone**. Those who belong to Christ are **sheep** in this respect, that they love to get together. Sheep go in flocks, & so do God's people!"³
- S. **Fellowship Isn't** our modern day definition? [usually attached to food i.e. *Food & Fellowship*]
1. Most churches even have a "Fellowship Hall!"
 2. It is much more than a **Christian social activity**.
It is much more than **enjoying food together**.
It is much more than **playing games** in a Christian atmosphere.
Or **chatting** w/one another about events this past week.
 3. These are **not bad**, and they do "**contribute**" to fellowship. **But in & of themselves they are not fellowship**. The Biblical meaning is **richer & deeper!**
 - a) **Ronald J. Sider said**, What happens when God grants the gift of genuine Christian fellowship? **Deep, joyful sharing** replaces the polite prattle typically exchanged by Christians on Sunday morning. Sisters and brothers begin to discuss the things that **really matter to them**. They disclose their **inner fears**, their **areas of peculiar temptation**, their **deepest joys!!!**

³ Spurgeon; pg.70 Spurgeon at His Best

T. **Fellowship Is...** Participation, partnership, sharing (i.e. true *koinonia*).

1. It is **to share together** (i.e. joint participation & partnership) & **to share with** (in the sense of giving what we have to others).
2. It is a **relationship** not an *activity*!

U. **THE *INTERNAL* REASON!** (4)

V. That our **joy** may be filled to the **full**.

1. **To make your excitement complete!** (Joy, that quiet inner excitement)
2. It is an full & unshakeable joy.
3. John the Baptist said, **He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled.** Jn.3:29

W. Fellowship w/the Father, & w/His Son; **leads** to fellowship w/other believers; **which leads** to Joy; **which leads** to enthusiasm & strength of spirit!

I want the **whole Christ** for my Savior,
 the **whole Bible** for my book,
 the **whole Church** for my fellowship,
 and the **whole world** for my mission field
 - John Wesley

Heb.10:23-25 **Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.**