

I John 1:1–4

I 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;

IN a book that details what is necessary to gain fellowship with the Father and the Son, and was written to confirm if a man has eternal life or not, this verse is remarkable in that the emphasis is directly centered upon the personal, albeit spiritual, relationship the apostle John had with Jesus Christ. He is the One Whom John hopes to expose the world to, and He is the One Whom John knows holds the key to gaining eternal life. Christ is the *Word of life*, that manifested form of God Who leads to life. John gives Jesus Christ this title because through Him God's knowledge of the way to gain eternal life is revealed. As the Word, Christ is God's revelation to man, revealing God to a world completely separate from Him.

(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, I John 1:1)
The Son of God may be called "the Word," because he is the medium by which God promulgates His will and issues His commandments.

The reason that a man is saved by Jesus Christ is because He is the living Word of God. Ultimately, to hold Jesus as Lord is to obey all of God's commandments. Where

through the Mosaic Law obedience to the law is what previously was purposed to lead men to life, now the lordship of God's Son is how men can eternally be saved. *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation* (Rom. 10:9–10). The Greek word for *confess* is #3670 *homologeó*. Its definition is "to speak the same, to agree."¹ *HELPS Word-studies* defines the word as "*homologéō* (from 3674 /*homouí*, 'together' and 3004 /*légō*, 'speak to a conclusion')—properly, to voice the same conclusion, i.e. agree ('confess'); to profess (confess) because in full agreement; to align with (endorse)."² These definitions reveal that to confess Jesus as Lord is to agree with God that His Son is Lord. The Greek word for *Lord* is #2962 *kurios*, which is defined as "lord, master, sir; the Lord."³ *HELPS Word-studies* further defines the word as "properly, a person exercising absolute ownership rights; lord (Lord)." The origin of *kurios* is "from *kuros* (authority)."³ What we observe from these definitions of both *confess* and *Lord* is that for a man to be saved, Jesus must be given full authority over the soul. Because God has given His Son authority over all things,⁴ to be saved men must agree with God's transfer of divine authority to Christ, and

1 Strong's Concordance

2 Strong's Concordance

3 NAS Exhaustive Concordance

4 Matt. 28:18 *And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. John 17:2 As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.*

Eph. 1:20–21 *Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:*

subsequently make Him Lord and Master of their lives. Accepting the Word and yielding fully to Christ's present heavenly authority are viewed by God as subjection to His will for man. Christ's lordship over a man's life takes the place of needing to obey every commandment of God. This obedience was necessary in the Old Testament in order to be saved,⁵ but in fact it is impossible,⁶ simply because of man's weak fleshly ability to keep divine law.⁷

(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, Rom. 10:9) "And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord." Here it means to acknowledge him as Lord, that is, as having a right to rule over the soul.

To make Jesus Christ your Lord is to give Him full authority over your life. By this it is meant that both His Word and His Spirit must rule the inner being. Rejection of either Christ's words or Christ's Spirit reveals rejection of divine law and cannot result in receiving the salvation promised by God through His Son. It should also

be noted that to receive Christ's lordship partially is to receive Him not at all. Consequently, not until Jesus is given full and complete dominion over our lives can God's salvation be given to us. It is obedience to the Son of God, via His Word and His Spirit, that produces true salvation for the soul. *And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him* (Heb. 5:9).

That which was from the beginning. It is important to recognize that before we were, Christ was.⁸ Just as the heavens and earth were created before man,⁹ so did Christ exist with God in the beginning. It is also at this time, before the world was formed, that God's purpose for the saved came into being. *According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love* (Eph 1:4).

(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, Eph. 1:4) *In him—* In Christ. The choice was not without reference to any means of saving them; it was not

Phil. 2:9–10 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: ¹⁰That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

5 Deut. 11:26–28 Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; ²⁷A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you this day: ²⁸And a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known.

I Sam. 12:14–15 If ye will fear the LORD, and serve him, and obey his voice, and not rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then shall both ye and also the king that reigneth over you continue following the LORD your God: ¹⁵But if ye will not obey the voice of the LORD, but rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then shall the hand of the LORD be against you, as it was against your fathers.

Jer. 7:23 But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you.

6 Jas. 2:10 For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.

7 Rom. 7:14–18 For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. ¹⁵For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. ¹⁶If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. ¹⁷Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. ¹⁸For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

8 John 1:1–3 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²The same was in the beginning with God. ³All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

9 Gen. 2:4–7 These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, ⁵And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground. ⁶But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground. ⁷And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

a mere purpose to bring a certain number to heaven; it was with reference to the mediation of the Redeemer, and his work. It was a purpose that they should be saved “by” him, and share the benefits of the atonement. The whole choice and purpose of salvation had reference to him, and “out” of him no one was chosen to life, and no one out of him will be saved.

Before the foundation of the world—This is a very important phrase in determining the time when the choice was made. It was not an “afterthought.” It was not commenced in time. The purpose was far back in the ages of eternity.

The Lord’s predestination of His people is what makes the Christian’s salvation so secure. The purpose of the Son of God coming into the world was to save those purposed by God for heaven, and it has proved to be astoundingly successful. Well did Isaiah state that unto us (or for our purpose), Christ was born. *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God,*

The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace (Isa. 9:6).

(*Benson Commentary*, Isa. 9:6) *Unto us a child is, or, shall be, born . . .* The human nature of the Messiah is here first set forth. He shall be the *child born, the Word made flesh*, and that *for us*; not only for us *Jews*, but for us *men*, for us *sinners*, and especially for us *believers*. *Unto us a son is given*—Or, *the son*, namely, of the virgin, spoken of [in] Isaiah 7:14;¹⁰ the *Immanuel*, the *Song of Solomon of God*, so called, not only on account of his miraculous conception, but because of his eternal generation, the *Word, who was in the beginning with God*, had *glory with the Father before the world was*, was loved by him *before the foundation of the world*, and *by whom he made the worlds*, and *created all things*. See John 1:1–3; John 17:5; John 17:24; Hebrews 1:2; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Ephesians 3:9; Colossians 1:16.¹¹ This person, the *Father’s own Son, his only-begotten Son, is given*, John 3:16;¹² *sent forth*, Galatians 4:4;¹³ *sent in the likeness of sinful flesh*, Romans 8:3;¹⁴ *though rich, and in the form of God, made in the likeness of men, poor, and of no reputation*, Php 2:7; 2 Corinthians 8:9;¹⁵ given to be our infallible Teacher, our prevalent Mediator, our almighty Saviour, our righ-

10 Isa. 7:14 *Therefore the LORD himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.*

11 John 1:1–3 *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²The same was in the beginning with God. ³All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.*

John 17:5 *And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.*

John 17:24 *Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.*

Heb. 1:2 *Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;*

1 Cor. 8:6 *But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.*

Eph. 3:9 *And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:*

Col. 1:16 *For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:*

12 John 3:16 *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

13 Gal. 4:4 *But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,*

14 Rom. 8:3 *For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:*

15 Phil. 2:7 *But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:*

teous Ruler, and our final Judge. Accordingly, *The government*—Of the church, of the world, yea, of all things, for the church's benefit, Ephesians 1:21–22;¹⁶ shall be upon his shoulder—That is, upon him, or in his hands; all power being given to him in heaven and on earth. In mentioning shoulder, he speaks metaphorically; great burdens being commonly laid upon men's shoulders, and all government, if rightly managed, being a great burden, and this especially being, of all others, the most weighty and important trust.

Which we have heard. Here John reveals what was the basis of his faith in the Son of God—it was what the apostle had heard Jesus speak. We can tell the depth and nature of a man by the wisdom and words that proceed out of his mouth. The words Jesus Christ spoke revealed an understanding and an enlightenment of heavenly truths previously unknown to man. Jesus revealed that for any to be saved they must be born again,¹⁷ and that for a man to save his life he must first lose it,¹⁸

and that for any man who believes upon the Son of God, out of his belly will flow rivers of living water.¹⁹ To John, Christ's words and the wisdom He spoke are what became the initial proof that Jesus was in fact God's Son and God's revelation of Himself to man.

Which we have seen with our eyes. Like John, Peter equally attested that he was an eyewitness; he had seen Christ's majesty. For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty (II Pet. 1:16). As much as John and Peter had heard Jesus speak, equally did they have the same opportunity to observe Jesus' person and the Son of God's walk in this world. The apostles observed with their own eyes multiple instances of Jesus' compassion,²⁰ His divine power,²¹ and Christ in His resurrected body.²² Seeing was believing, and thus, for John, there

II Cor. 8:9 For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.

16 Eph. 1:21–22 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:²² And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,

17 John 3:3–5 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.⁴ Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?⁵ Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

18 Matt. 16:25 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.

19 John 7:38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

20 Matt. 15:32 Then Jesus called his disciples unto him, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way.

Matt. 20:34 So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him.

Luke 7:13 And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.

21 Luke 4:14 And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about.

Luke 4:32 And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power.

Luke 4:36 And they were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, What a word is this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out.

Luke 5:17 And it came to pass on a certain day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judaea, and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was present to heal them.

22 Luke 24:36–37 And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.³⁷ But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit.

was absolutely no doubt that Jesus was exactly Who He claimed to be.²³ Other miracles the apostle observed included Jesus feeding the five thousand,²⁴ His calming the sea,²⁵ His casting out demons into a herd of pigs,²⁶ and His raising Jairus' daughter to life.²⁷ Like Nicodemus, the apostle knew that no man could do these miracles except God was with him. The validity that Jesus was the Messiah rested

on the wisdom of Christ's heavenly words, the power He manifested, and that God resurrected Christ from the dead. Observance of the Savior proved to John and the other disciples that God was indeed in Christ and that Christ was in fact the Son of God. *The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest,*

John 20:19–20 Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. ²⁰And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord.

23 John 4:25–26 The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. ²⁶Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he.

John 11:25–26 Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: ²⁶And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? Mark 14:61–62 But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? ⁶²And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

24 John 6:5–13 When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? ⁶And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do. ⁷Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little. ⁸One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him, ⁹There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many? ¹⁰And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. ¹¹And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would. ¹²When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. ¹³Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten.

25 Luke 8:23–25 But as they sailed he fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were filled with water, and were in jeopardy. ²⁴And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, Master, master, we perish. Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm. ²⁵And he said unto them, Where is your faith? And they being afraid wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him.

26 Matt. 8:28–33 And when he was come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way. ²⁹And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time? ³⁰And there was a good way off from them an herd of many swine feeding. ³¹So the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine. ³²And he said unto them, Go. And when they were come out, they went into the herd of swine: and, behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters. ³³And they that kept them fled, and went their ways into the city, and told every thing, and what was befallen to the possessed of the devils.

27 Luke 8:41–42 And, behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue: and he fell down at Jesus' feet, and besought him that he would come into his house: ⁴²for he had one only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she lay a dying. But as he went the people thronged him.

Luke 8:49–56 While he yet spake, there cometh one from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master. ⁵⁰But when Jesus heard it, he answered him, saying, Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole. ⁵¹And when he came into the house, he suffered no man to go in, save Peter, and James, and John, and the father and the mother of the maiden. ⁵²And all wept, and bewailed her: but he said, Weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth. ⁵³And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead. ⁵⁴And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, arise. ⁵⁵And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her meat. ⁵⁶And her parents were astonished: but he charged them that they should tell no man what was done.

except God be with him (John 3:2). “His miracles were his credentials.”²⁸

Which we have looked upon. This implies not simply seeing the Son of God and all that He both said and did, but an even deeper contemplation that John and the other disciples experienced as they became illuminated to the wonderful identity of the Savior. Just as Mary pondered the glory of the Son Whom she brought into the world,²⁹ so also the apostles marveled and were amazed at Christ’s person and the divine power exercised by Him.³⁰

I John 1:2 (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)

Ultimately, the apostle knew that Jesus represented to the world the eternal life of God. It was this eternal life that John sought to show and bear witness to. John

confirms Christ’s own words that since He possessed eternal life, He could give it to those who believed upon Him.³¹ The Son of God holds great spiritual power, such power that He can give eternal life to any who through faith believe in Him. Jesus’ words *I give unto them eternal life* are authoritative and agree with Christ’s purpose in coming into the world.³² Thus, if a man desires to receive eternal life, he must share a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. This is done by hearing Christ’s words and obeying them, as well as by believing in the Father Who sent Him.³³ There is but one door, one access point, by which sinners can find the hope of heaven, and it is through the very One sent by God to reveal God’s spiritual and eternal life to the world. That which a man has, he can give. Jesus, the Son of man and the Son of God, can therefore give God’s eternal life to as many as make Him their Lord. *And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son (I John 5:11).*

28 *Benson Commentary*, John 3:1–2

29 *Luke 2:10–19* And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. ¹¹For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. ¹²And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, ¹⁴Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. ¹⁵And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. ¹⁶And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. ¹⁷And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. ¹⁸And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. ¹⁹But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.

30 *Matt. 8:27* But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!

Matt. 21:18–20 Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered. ¹⁹And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away. ²⁰And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig tree withered away!

31 *John 5:24* Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

John 6:40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

32 *John 10:28* And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

John 10:10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

33 *John 5:24* Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

(*Barnes' Notes on the Bible*, I John 5:11) *And this is the record*—This is the sum, or the amount, of the testimony (μαρτυρία *marturia*) which God has given respecting him.

That God hath given to us eternal life—Has provided, through the Saviour, the means of obtaining eternal life. See the notes at John 5:24; John 17:2–3.³⁴

And this life is in his Son—Is treasured up in him, or is to be obtained through him.

Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed (John 6:27). A man's labor should not merely be regulated to feeding his body and things that might please it; rather, it should be directed toward that spiritual world that leads to the saving of the soul. It is this meat, which is the real sustenance of life, that provides the opportunity to receive everlasting life.

(*Barnes' Notes on the Bible*, John 6:27) *The meat that perisheth*—The food for the supply of your natural needs. It perishes. The strength you derive from it is soon exhausted, and your wasted powers need to be reinvigorated.

That meat which endureth—The supply of your spiritual wants; that which supports, and nourishes, and strengthens the soul; the doctrines of the gospel, that are to a weak and guilty soul what needful food is to the weary and decaying body.

To everlasting life—The strength derived from the doctrines of the gospel is not ex-

hausted. It endures without wasting away. It nourishes the soul to everlasting life.

And shew unto you that eternal life. The purpose of the apostles' earthly ministry was that all men might know that in Jesus Christ is life and that He is the light of all men,³⁵ without which they can only stumble in darkness.³⁶ *He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life* (I John 5:12). In this one single maxim is contained the entire Christian gospel. If men would believe and rely upon this truth, then very little other preaching would be needed to bring them to salvation. This also is the question that all who profess to believe in Jesus need to ask themselves. "Do I hold true belief in the Son of God in my heart, or do I merely know Christ's name in my head?" There is a great difference, then, between a man who only mentally knows the Lord's name and he who has allowed Christ's full authority over his life. The answer to this spiritual and contemplative question ultimately reveals whether a man is saved or not.

I John 1:3 That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

The Book of I John records certain immovable truths necessary for spiritual fellowship with God and the Son of God, Who came to reveal God to the world.³⁷ These divine revelations cannot be com-

34 John 5:24 Verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

John 17:2–3 As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. ³And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

35 John 1:4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

36 Prov. 4:19 The way of the wicked is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble.

John 12:46 I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.

37 John 1:18 No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

promised if a man truly desires sincere and genuine communion with both the Father and the Son. Each truth must be carefully considered and thoughtfully reflected upon, simply because each will reveal what is necessary for spiritual connection to the higher, heavenly, and more holy realm of the Spirit. Minimizing or neglecting even one of these great truths easily can result in forfeiting fellowship with the heavenly Father. He, then, who will not hear and choose to believe John's message, which is directly linked to John's own personal relationship with Jesus Christ, cannot be saved. For this reason, I John is an indispensable work, worthy of our highest interest and continued spiritual study. It was Jesus Who taught John, and it is Jesus Who has chosen to use John to teach us. Therefore, not to heed the inspired and spiritual words of Jesus' apostle John, is the same as rejection of Christ Himself.

I John 1:4 And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.

The Greek word for joy is #5479 *chara*. Its definition is "joy, delight."³⁸ John teaches us that those who sincerely maintain fellowship with the Father through His Son will possess a joy and inward spiritual happiness not found anywhere else in the world. This is that same indescribable joy that Jesus said He would give to His true followers.³⁹ It is this spiritual joy

that all who are truly pious will possess. *These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full* (John 15:11).

(Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers, John 15:11) These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you.—The better reading is, ... that My joy may be in you. The joy thought of is that which Christ Himself possessed in the consciousness of His love towards the Father, and of the Father's love towards Him. The brightness of that joy lit up the darkest hours of His own human life, and He wills that it should light up theirs. In the consciousness of their love to God, and of God's love to them, there would be in them, as part of their true life, joy which no sorrow could ever overcome. They were as men with troubled hearts. He has told them of the true source of peace. His own peace He has given to them. He tells them now of the source of joy, and has spoken the word that they may possess the very joy which was the light of His own heart.

Though Christ suffered in the flesh, He possessed a joy completely foreign to His accusers, betrayers, and political murderers. It is this joy that every believer of the Son of God will experience, filling his soul, refreshing his spirit, and encouraging his walk with God. *Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore* (Ps. 16:11). When a man truly believes, he will experience for the first time in his life the joy and peace of God

Matt. 11:27 All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

John 14:6–11 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. ⁷If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. ⁸Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. ⁹Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? ¹⁰Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. ¹¹Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.

Col. 1:15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

38 Strong's Concordance

39 John 17:13 And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

that only the Son of God can impart to men.⁴⁰ He who genuinely exercises faith in the Son of God will experience spiritual joy in his soul, a heavenly joy that proves not only the existence of a heavenly Father but also the true nature and disposition of heaven itself. The joy given to us by Christ teaches us that heaven is not a gloomy or oppressive habitation but rather a place of supreme happiness, freedom, and de-

light. Spiritual joy is an element of the nature of God,⁴¹ and it is what all of heaven reflects. By believing in the Son of God, men can experience a portion of that joy, which will be their full possession when they are received by Christ into heaven. This joy is aptly called *the joy of the Lord*⁴² because its source is the Lord, and it is a possession that only He can give to those who believe upon Him.

⁴⁰ Rom. 15:13 *Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.*

⁴¹ Gal. 5:22–23 *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,*
²³*Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law*

⁴² Neh. 8:10 *Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our LORD: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the LORD is your strength.*

