

1 John Series

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I. Reviewing the Prologue & Introducing the Preamble—fellowship with God the Father:

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| 1:1–4 | Prologue—call to sharing eternal life with God through the apostles |
| 1:5–2:11 | Preamble—daily interacting with the Triune God |
| 1:5–2:2 | Fellowship with God the Father at His Holy Integrity |

Explanation of the “Framework” approach I use (e.g., www.Bibleframework.org) and why I use it to teach the Bible to a secular culture with most Christians having an anti-biblical secular education. The Bible is real history, and since it includes not only God’s acts but His explanation of those acts—His “show and tell”—His Word is thus the ultimate authority we use to interpret history and our experiences in it. The consequence of such a framework approach is that we impose biblical ideas onto every area of life, clashing with the ideas of unbelief. (Slides 2 & 3)

1:1–4 review

1:1 *historical incarnation* implies that God enters human, physical form [mind-blowing to the Greek mind with its love of dualism] (Slide 4)

1:2 historical manifestation of God the Son implies the existence of *intra-Trinity personal relationships* that do not exist in other religions

- Hinduism = an impersonal god
- Buddhism = nirvana and destruction of personhood
- Islam = no personal relationship with Allah

1:3 *apostolic channel of revelation* (Bible, not the Church, is the final authority just as in the Old Testament the final authority was the Word of God coming through the Prophets, not the various syncretistic beliefs in the nation Israel—**Prov. 28:9** “*He that turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be an abomination*”)

Fellowship for John centers on this “eternal life” never shown before the Incarnation

1:4 joy of a pastor’s heart

Eternal life pre-existed creation of matter because it was a feature of the eternal, immutable Triune God. When we are given through Christ eternal life, *we enter into that personal relationship that characterized the intra-Trinity personal relationship.*

II. Preamble: daily interaction with the Triune God (1:5–2:2 God the Father)

1:5 “*This is the message which we have heard from him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness **at all***”

heard – auditory reception of the spoken words of Jesus

at all – emphatic structure in the Greek

Apparently, a jab at the false teaching affecting John's readers

A contemporary condition in our culture: relativism (what's good for you isn't necessarily what's good for me) (Slides 5 & 6)

Usual reasons for relativism today:

- Circumstances & generational experience *differ* from person to person
- A sense that it is intolerant to impose *one's* values on others

BUT there are oft-overlooked problems with relativism's subjectivism:

- Subjectivism says nothing about actions or objects themselves, *only autobiographical expressions* lacking basis for moral outrage over evil actions or belief in objective value.
- *Subjectivism is self-refuting* since every person inevitably experiences others' judgments of him or his labor to which he objects as "unfair" thereby asserting after all that objective transcendent standards exist
- The resulting anarchy of society-wide relativism *leads to totalitarian imposition* of the judgments of the stronger against the weaker to avoid social chaos

[Q & A about contemporary social discourse that tries to avoid absolute ethical values; a short dialog about "tolerance" and how that is a term misused today.]

Creator Who is Righteous & Just ==> transcendental standard over all society, people, governments. "God is light" = nature of God whether or not an Incarnation occurs. The problem of having a relationship with God centers on how sinners like us can have such a relationship with Him with this kind of moral nature.

Creator/creature distinction vs. pagan view. Only in the Bible is evil "bracketed" or limited (i.e., is there hope). In unbelieving paganism there can be no hope since good and evil eternally coexists. (Slide 7)

Theme of God's moral perfection in this epistle: **2:1, 29; 3:3, 5**

1:6-7

Note John's antithetical style (Slide 8)

Note his use of "we" ==> includes himself in the following imperatives

we lie - discord between talk and our walk

we do not practice the truth - (truth rooted in God's character = reality) (Slide 9)

See "truth" in **1:8; 2:4, 21; 3:18; 4:6; 5:6**

but if we walk in the light

3 phases of salvation: #1 regeneration; #2 sanctification; #3 glorification

walk as He is in the light

"perfection"?? = conforming to Him via His protocols (that clear all forensic challenges)

we have fellowship with each other

Key point of John = fellowship with other believers is _____ on fellowship with God

blood cleanses us from all sin

III. Conclusion

KEY DIAGNOSTIC QUESTION: “Do you think that some things are right or wrong for everyone throughout history?” “Why?”