

KNOWING THAT WE **KNOW HIM**

FELLOWSHIP WITH THE FATHER | 1 JOHN 1:1-4

It is so easy to lose our joy.

Most of us begin the Christian life with boundless energy and enthusiasm. We love spending time with God. We love hanging out with each other. We love talking about our faith. We love discovering new truth in Scripture.

Somewhere along the way, however, life takes over. We get busy. Our sense of joy slowly gives way to sense of duty. Our relationship with God becomes another item on an already overwhelming list of things to do. Some days we check the box. Some days we don't. But even when we check the box, it feels like that's all we are doing, just checking boxes.

John wants us to remember the joy we found in Christ through the gospel, and to experience even greater joy by continuing in Christ and the gospel. He begins his letter to the churches in the Roman Province of Asia by telling them, "We write these things to you so our joy may be complete."

John fears that we will lose sight of the gospel, and in the process lose our joy. He introduces us (or better yet, reintroduces us) to the Word of life, reminds us of the fellowship we have with the Father and each other through him, and invites us into the fullness of joy that comes through our vital union with Christ.

THE WORD OF LIFE (vv. 1-2)

¹ That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. ² The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us.

1. Who or what does John seem to be referring to in these verses?
2. What does the fact that John seems to be speaking about both Jesus and the gospel in the same breath tell us about the relationship between Jesus and the gospel?
3. What are some of the big truths about Jesus we learn from these verses?
4. How are each of these critical to our understanding of the gospel?

OUR FELLOWSHIP WITH THE FATHER AND THE SON (v. 3)

³ We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.

1. What do you think John has in mind when he speaks of "fellowship with the Father and the Son?"
2. How does our fellowship with the Father and the Son bring us into fellowship with one another?
3. Is it possible to have fellowship with one another that does not flow out of the fellowship we have with the Father and the Son? Explain your answer.
4. Is it possible to have fellowship with the Father and the Son that does not flow into fellowship with one another? Explain your answer.
5. What are some practical steps to experience more meaningful fellowship with God and each other?

THE JOY WE FIND IN THEM (v. 4)

⁴ We write this to make our joy complete.

1. What do you think John means when he talks about "making our joy complete?"
2. How would writing this short letter make John's joy complete?
3. How might reading this letter make our joy complete?
4. What is the most vital truth you've learned in this study?
5. How will you act on this truth in the days and weeks to come?

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