

# HOW TO ENJOY LIFE MORE

## 1 JOHN 1:1-4

*Are we enjoying life?*

*Is our walk with God a source of genuine joy & contentment?*

*Or, are we frustrated & discouraged?*

*Could it be that the reason we aren't really enjoying life, is because we're not walking in close fellowship with God?*

*How do we satisfy that desire deep inside us for intimacy?*

*–The kind that fills the empty longing deep down inside for a meaningful relationship.*

*–That fills the vacuum inside.*

*–That brings contentment.*

*Are we trying to fill that need by seeking in the wrong places?*

*Are we finding a truly satisfying relationship with GOD?*

**John writes his first letter to a church full of discouraged people, to help us discover how to enjoy life to the fullest!**

**Traditional view of the background of the book:**

**“Gnosticism”** –“incipient” vs. 2<sup>nd</sup> C. theology

“Incipient” Gnosticism

=> Judaizers' Theology

**VS.**

Timeless counsel to people of any epoch who aren't *enjoying* the Christian life, because they aren't walking with God.

Deals with issue of **Fellowship with God**—how to enjoy it fully.

**John has observed many professing believers who claim to know God but whose lives don't demonstrate the reality of what they profess.**

**These people aren't enjoying life!**

John apparently believes most are saved, but separated from fellowship with God.

Hints throughout the book concerning their condition, indicate they are . . .

–Not living holy lives

–Imitating the world and its patterns

–Criticizing and attacking one another

*...and then they wonder why they're not enjoying life!*

We'll never experience the joy that comes from fellowship with God while we live this way!

Since their lives are not consistent with a Christian lifestyle, John apparently suspects that some may not have eternal life

They may have never trusted Christ

Therefore, he concludes by mentioning life as a prerequisite for fellowship

*Only those who have trusted Christ have eternal life!*

*Only they can really enjoy fellowship with God!*

### **JOHN MENTIONS 4 PURPOSES for writing:**

1. 1:3 *“that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.”*

**That we might enjoy authentic FELLOWSHIP**

**– with other Christians – with God Himself**

That you may enjoy the fellowship we enjoy-with God and with each other!

2. 1:4 “we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.”

**That we might have complete JOY**

3. 2:1 “I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin.”

**That we might NOT SIN**

4. 5:13 “I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life”

**That we might KNOW that we have ETERNAL LIFE**

### **JOHN’S MESSAGE:**

Amos 3:3 “Can two walk together unless they agree?”

**If two people want to go somewhere together they must be heading the same direction!**

To have fellowship with one another, people must be going the same way!

**To enjoy fellowship with God, we must be like Him!**

While John’s language is simple and his basic outline clear, underneath his simple language is *deep theology*.

He doesn’t present it as organized systematic theology.

He presents it as a **multi-faceted diamond**—*it must be admired from all angles!*

John’s organizing principle is revealed in the introduction 1:1-4

1:1-2 “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon & have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—<sup>2</sup>the life was

*made manifest, & we have seen it, & testify to it & proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father & was made manifest to us—<sup>3</sup>that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you”*

He’s about to *testify* to what he has personally observed => 3 X

This isn’t just a theoretical book

His personal experience is basis of the book

He is about to share what he has seen himself.

**3 main sections**—each intro-duced by: *“This is the message ... [this is the testimony...]”*

Each section tells us something about God that he has witnessed.

He has learned this from his own experience and observa-tion—from watching Jesus!

Each part tells us ***something about God***, that we ought to ***imitate!***

**What is God like?**

1:5 *“This is the message ...*

**GOD IS LIGHT**

**1:5-7** God is holy--those who

want to enjoy fellowship with God must be holy.

Compare Lev. 11:45; 1 Pet. 1:15 *“You be holy, because I am holy!”*

**God is HOLY =>**

**to enjoy fellowship**

**with God, WE must be HOLY**

**1:5-3:10**

*(Brief Transition: 3:10)*

**3:11 “This is the message...”**

**=> 4:8 GOD IS LOVE**

**God is LOVE => to enjoy fellowship with God,**

**WE must LOVE each other **3:11-5:10****

*(Lengthy Transition: 4:13-5:10)*

*Transition unites our love for one another to possession of eternal life.*

**5:11 “And this is the testi-mony...” => 5:20**

**GOD (JESUS) IS LIFE**

To enjoy fellowship with Him we must possess eternal life.

**God is LIFE =>**

**to enjoy fellowship**

**with God, WE must have LIFE **5:11-21****

**HOLINESS + LOVE + LIFE**

**=> TRUE JOY**

***How do we accomplish this? –not by gritting our teeth  
& trying harder!***

**We can only accomplish this and enjoy fellowship with one another and with God, when we ABIDE IN HIM.**

**To abide in Him is to draw from Him all we need to sustain life.**

It comes from the vine! From Jesus!

Repeated parallels between 1 John and John 15

*We must abide in Him—draw from Him what sustains life!*

*[ABIDE => John 15:4-5; 2:6, 10, 14, 24, 27, 28; 3:6, 24]*

Notice how abiding in Him produces JOY (John 15:11)

*“These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full”*

*Abiding in Him leads to the JOY of fellowship with Him.*

*Fellowship and abiding in Him go together—and result in joy!  
John has personally experienced a close, intimate relationship with the Eternal God; so can WE!*

**What he is about to share, ...**

**he has heard with his own ears**

**he has seen with his own eyes**

**he has experienced in his own body.**

**=> Therefore he's sure of its truth**

**John is sure of his message because he has personally known the One Who is eternal life.**

*God has revealed Himself to us in His Son.*

*John experienced His presence personally.*

*WE can have fellowship with Him also.*

*We can experience His presence & enjoy a personal relationship with someone who knows everything about us—knows us better than we know ourselves—& yet WANTS to spend time with us!*

**Ps. 16:11** –*“In thy presence is fullness of joy!”*

*Two men on the road to Emmaus: **Luke 24:32**: “Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?”*

*That's what genuine fellowship with Him is like!*

*It produces a deep joy and contentment like no other relationship can produce!*

## PURPOSE OF OUR MESSAGE 1:3-4

What John learned following Christ he wants to communicate to us.

His purpose: that we might have fellowship with each other, & that we might have fellow-ship with God.

When this has been accomplished, we will together experience full joy.

These 3 characteristics of God must also be present in people who wish to have fellowship with Him—and even with one another!

*We too have to have something in common!*

*We must be going the same direction!*

*What could be better than to share these characteristics that unite us with God Himself?*

**HOLINESS + LOVE + LIFE => TRUE JOY**

**So, how are WE doing?**

**Are we enjoying life** more than we used to?

*If we're not enjoying life, and we want to enjoy it more, this book is for us!*

*If we're not enjoying life, we need to consider this whole issue of fellowship with God.*

*When we walk with God, we get more fun out of life!*

*Why do we keep looking for that inner joy everywhere else?*

We look in all the wrong places, & wonder why we never find it!

John affirms: “We write this so your joy may be complete!”

Fullness of joy is found in true fellowship with God Himself, and with His family!

Have WE found that authentic joy God wants us to enjoy?

ABIDE IN HIM, and enjoy that personal relationship with Him.