

Week of Meetings 01 1 John 1:

by Svend Christensen

Svend Christensen's sermon emphasizes the importance of fellowship with God and one another, highlighting assurance, joy, and the transformative power of love in the Christian life.

Duration: 40:12

Scripture: Psalm 37:4, Matthew 6:33, Mark 5:19, John 14:6, Romans 10:9, 1 Peter 3:15, 1 John 1:3

Topics: "Fellowship With God", "Sharing The Gospel"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by comparing the introduction of a book to the detailed description of a meal. He emphasizes the importance of truly knowing and experiencing the love of God in order to share it with others. The speaker encourages listeners to study the Bible and have communion with Christ, so they can go out and declare their faith to others. The sermon concludes with the reminder that after seeing and knowing Jesus, believers should bear witness and show others the eternal life found in Him.

Transcript

Nice to be here this morning. Turn with me, please, to the First Epistle of John. The First Epistle of John.

In the will of the Lord, we're going to bring a series on this epistle, simple messages on assurance and related subjects. The Epistle of John, chapter one. The key word in this epistle, no doubt, is fellowship.

Other key words, the words like know and love, are some of the outstanding words that stand out. Let's read from verse one, then. 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.

For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us. 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. This then, and these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.

This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth. But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

May the Lord bless to us the reading. You know, to the believer, every day should be a thanksgiving day. It's a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, says the psalmist.

And this should be the believer's continual occupation, and the highest occupation is it not to make a joyful noise unto the Lord. We shouldn't say thanksgiving day, but that only every day should be praising the Lord. And we have so much to thank him for.

Think of what he is in himself. By the way, can anyone hear me all right? There's a loud speaker here, and I have one that's still louder in here if you want me to turn it up. But I don't want to speak too loud unless it's necessary.

We don't want to give you the... I remember one time I went to a conference, and it turned out to be quite a small building. And there are three speakers that afternoon. And I took a seat right at the front.

Well, these men were of the temperament. When he finished in time to go to... These details were of James, you remember. ...for Jesus who lived in Ephesus, just like Paul.

Now, it's an amazing thing that in this epistle, it doesn't say it's not as much the word of God, but I'm not aware of any quotations here in this epistle from the Old Testament. Now, the theme, of course, is the Lord Jesus. And you might write, oh, the purpose of the... ...that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you.

Ye also may have... And truly all... Reason number one. Number two... One of chapter two. My little children, these things... The purpose, the writing, is that they sin not.

Warning against false teachers in chapter 226. These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. And then in John chapter 5, verse 13, an emphasis we'll be bringing out from time to time about assurance.

These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God. What a wonderful verse. How many, many people we have seen come into realization of assurance of eternal life.

These things have I written unto you that believe that you may know that you have... It's one of my favorite Greek scholars. Sixteenths of these times, but the other twentieth experience. And only what we experience is true.

It's one thing to say, I know the truth. One thing to characterize the Fathers in chapter two, ye have known Him. You can know another truth without really knowing Him.

It takes years of experience to go into maturity to really know Him. Paul said, after many years in the faith that I may know Him. So you can come to know Him, like when you get married.

You don't marry a girl unless you feel you know her. After twenty years you know her better. After forty years you know her still better.

We heard about a man yesterday in the radio who had been in a couple. They should know one another, shouldn't they? So when you really spend time with the Lord, that's when we know Him. And oh, that we may go into this in this real experimental way.

Now in the gospel, believe is the main word running through there. Here, know runs through the official. In the gospel, it's the reception of eternal life.

Here in the epistle, it's the reproduction of eternal life. Eternal life flowing out true from the Lord to the Holy Spirit out to others. Eternal life coming to us.

Eternal life is seen in Christ in the gospel, but especially should be manifested to us here in the epistle. Now coming down to chapter one, I'm not leaving you with many other introductory remarks. Verse one, that which was from the beginning.

Here you have the Lord Jesus, the God-man set before us in these two first verses. That which was from the beginning. Reminds us of the gospel of John again.

In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God, the Word was God. Like that. The Lord Jesus, He is the Creator, He is the Maker, He is the Almighty.

I'm the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the ending. Here you have the Deity of the Lord Jesus, and this is something John spreads out the system. Another here, the Deity of the Lord Jesus.

He's writing about this wonderful person, the Lord Jesus Christ. And then notice, which we have heard. I like this, it comes right, not only the past as to the beginning, but as to the present, which we have heard.

And down at the end of the verse, he says the Word of Life. The Lord Jesus is the one that's not only from the past, from the beginning, from the past, but He's right here, the Word of Life. In Him there is life, and He's the one that begins life.

He's the one that gives life. He is life in Himself, the Word of Life. This is the one we're dealing with.

The great I Am that John writes about in his gospel, this is the same one John is writing about in his epistle. And then he comes in with that personal note here, which we have heard, seen, looked upon, or hands have handled. The Lord Jesus Himself, the Word of Life, is the one they've handled and been in close touch with.

First in connection with heard, they heard the Lord Jesus. You remember, they were following... If you turn back, please, to the gospel of John chapter 1, and the latter part of that chapter, verse 37, after John the Baptist had pointed Him out, behold the Lamb of God, in verse 36, and the two disciples heard Him speak, and they followed Jesus. They heard Him.

They heard the Lord Jesus. He said to them, come, follow Me. We have personal experiences, John.

We know what we're writing about. This is not just a feeble, this is not some theory. We're writing to you from personal experience, personal contact.

We heard Him ourselves. What a wonderful voice to hear, when the sheep hear the shepherd's voice. For we heard it, John says, we heard His voice.

And this is the one we're telling you about. And today we need to hear Him by faith, through the Word of God. The true sheep, they hear His voice still.

The stranger, they'll not follow. We still hear His voice, as the Word of God comes to us through His servants. And then the second word, He says, we have seen Him.

Look at verse 39. When it said, Master, where dwellest thou? He said unto them, come and see. They came and saw where He dwelt and abode with Him that day, for it was about the tenth hour.

Come and see for yourself. The way you really get to know someone is to live with them. And they came and they dwelt with Him.

And this is the wonderful part about the Lord Jesus. John, after all these years of this old man now, at the end of this pilgrim journey, he can feel right so wonderful about the Lord Jesus. Word could fail us to rightly describe this wonderful person.

And He says, we went and we saw Him. We saw Him. We saw where He lived.

We saw how He lived. And we can talk to you now about Him. We've seen Him.

Then we looked upon Him. And I think that carries on beyond that. We not only went and we spent that little time with Him then, but we looked upon Him.

We observed Him. We watched Him. We scrutinized Him, if you like, for three and a half years while we were with Him.

We really examined Him. And He's the one we're telling you about. We can say to you there's no sin in Him.

There's no spot in Him. We love Him, says John. We love because He first loved us.

We've seen Him. Three and a half years we observed Him. We ate with Him.

We slept by Him. We saw Him in action. We heard the gracious words that were seeded out of His mouth.

And then He says we handled Him. And I think that we have the force here. Not only the life of Christ suggested and His whole ministry and taking us right to His death, but even after His resurrection.

You remember in the last chapter, the two chapters of the Gospel of John, He said reach forth by hand. He said to Thomas, we've handled Him. A spirit doesn't have flesh and bones that you see me have.

He said to Luke, we handled Him. He's real. He's real to us.

And when something is real to you, what do you want to do? You want to share it with others. And this is why we're writing this. When you really have something good, and when the love of God is in your heart, what do you want to do? They need people that really know the Lord Jesus experimentally like this.

Knowing Him first as Savior by faith. Hearing Him through His word. Understanding Him.

Seeing Him with the eyes of all hearts. Scrutinizing Him. I said where are you studying? We need to go out and declare this.

Then you have in verse 2, the Lord Jesus manifested at the word of life. We've handled the word of life. And again, He was manifested.

The word became flesh and He dwelled among us. And we beheld His glorious pages of the Holy Spirit. So now, in the verse 1 there you have the Lord Jesus.

The other one is love. And the third one is... Here you have the word of life. The Lord Jesus, the one who has life.

I've come that you might have life, He says. And that you might have it. He was life and He was the giver of life.

We have seen it, He says. In verse 2. Verse 1. For the light was manifested in verse 2 too. And we have seen it.

And bear witness. Bear witness. First we see the Lord Jesus.

Then we bear witness. Then we show unto you that eternal life. Which was with the Father and was manifest unto us.

First you see the Lord Jesus for yourself. This is the primary thing. If there's someone here this morning, what you need more than anything else, if you're not saved, you need to see the Lord Jesus through personal experience.

You need to know Him for yourself. And when you really know Him, I remember in my early experience of salvation, I was just like bursting inside. I couldn't contain myself.

I just had to tell somebody. And this is how John felt here. He just had to share.

Remember that program years ago on the radio? They used to have money, money, money, money, money. It used to come on there many years ago. John said, when you get something like this you want to share, we show it unto you.

We first bear witness and then show it unto you. Sometimes the order is different. When the Lord Jesus healed the man called Legion, He first told him, return to thine house and show them, and then to home to thy friends and tell them.

Here the order is reversed, but nevertheless there's a progression here. After you've seen Him, then you can't help but bear witness and then show unto you. And it's the showing that really counts.

May I say something practical here? Does your neighbor know that you're a Christian? Does your neighbor know that you're linked with the Lord Jesus? Do they see the characteristics of the Lord Jesus in you, in everyday living, in everyday deeds, in everyday talk? Are you the first one they can go to for help? The one they say, that person, he's like his master, he's so kind, he's so understanding, he's so loving. Do they see you like that? Do you bear witness by your life as well as by your lip? Later on we see the very contrast to that in verse 6. Have the eternal life. The seven titles given to the Lord Jesus in this epistle here, two of them here, one of the word of life, the second one here, eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested unto us.

Now, here you first have the personal experience, then the public testimony, they declared, and then you have this particular proclamation, we show it unto you from personal experience. Come into verse 3 and 4 now, we have the Lord Jesus the center of the fellowship into which we are brought. That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye may have fellowship with us.

John, why do you want us to fellowship with you? Oh, John says, because our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. And as they say, it's out of this world. It's out of this world.

The fellowship we have, like the Scotsman said, is better felt than telt. You must experience this to know it. And all fellowship is with the Father and with the Son.

And we want you to enjoy this fellowship. Now, what is fellowship? What do we mean by the word of fellowship? Sometimes people say fellowship is two fellows in a ship. But it's more than that.

Fellowship means a partnership. It's a joint participation in a common thing or common interest. It brings you right into a partnership.

This is a real fellowship. This is the thought of the word fellowship. Sometimes you ask people, are you in fellowship? And they all say, yes, I'm in fellowship.

But it's a sharing, it's having things in common. Then with who is the fellowship? With the Father and the Son from the divine side. From the human side, it's with one another.

That you might have fellowship with us. And oh, how wonderful fellowship is thus with the Lord. With the Father and with the Son.

And how wonderful it is with one another. Have you ever been stranded somewhere for six months where you never had any fellowship with the Lord's people? I've had that experience. I was only saved three months when I had that experience.

Or sent out to the edge of the Sahara Desert while serving with the Canadian Air Force. I was only saved a short time. And out there, we were just out in the edge of the desert.

We were about a mile from it. It was just so dirty and you couldn't, you just couldn't get near. You couldn't understand what they said.

The Air Force had no Christian fellowship among the boys that I knew. They were all unsaved boys. I was just a young believer.

And the only time I had a real wonderful time was when I could be with the Lord. When the boys vacated the little tents and they went to their... And I may say I was a happy... When I got back to England. Oh, when you're alone for a long time.

Christians make use of the fellowship. Sometimes people say, oh, you'll have to go to meetings all the time. This is the thought, isn't it? Do I have to go? The kids say that sometimes.

Why, if you love the Lord, oh, you just love to be in His presence. If it's only out of duty we go, that's not high enough a motive. We go that we may... What a fellowship, what a joy divine.

How good it is. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. God's desire is not to make Christians miserable, but He wants us to be joyful.

I want you to just be running all with joy. This fellowship is for your benefit. Oh, when you think of the great... I was just reading the other day in the Daily Hour, the largest dictionary that you're standing looking at.

He says you're at least... So you haven't got enough... We have no idea in our limited capacity... This great God exploring the wonders of His... It's just dazzling, isn't it? And this great God, He has brought us right into relationship with Himself. His Son has been manifested. Christ has come in and He has revealed the Father to us.

He has manifested the Father. He has brought us right into His own family and we are one with His children. And all this is for our good, that your joy may be full.

I should say there's something wrong with us if the God of this mighty universe that upholds all these things by the word of His power, there's something wrong with us if He fails to fill us with joy. And if we're not full of joy, it's not God's fault. He has made every provision for us to be Christians that are full of assurance and joy.

That's why there's so much about... I've written unto you, He says that you may have joy. That's the outcome of this fellowship. One, what came first through faith in the Lord Jesus.

You remember in 1 Corinthians 13, there's the three words there, faith, hope and love. And I may use them here. Faith, when we come into this fellowship, that's how we come into it, through faith.

And then as we go on in this fellowship, we enjoy it now, appreciate it because of His love and we enjoy the love of God in the fellowship and the future. But faith and hope are going to give away, but love will endure forever. And this is the love we are basking in now, that we're brought into now.

We're brought into this fellowship of love. And we may have that fullness of joy. Joy unspeakable and full of glory, the scripture says.

And of course that joy is based on the divine relationship with the Lord or fellowship with the Father and His Son. Thank God that joy is not dependent on happenings. You can be joyful even though you're passing through sorrow.

You can be joyful even though you have reverses financially and in trouble in your family. Whatever the stress and the strain or the trial may be that we have, we can still be more than conquered through Him that loved us. We can have this fullness of joy inwardly.

We can be above the clouds like when you fly way up in there, you look down, you see all the clouds below you that obscure everything below. All you see is the clouds, but we often join the sunshine. And so in your soul you can enjoy that joy unspeakable.

Are you in full fellowship with the Father and with His Son? Are you in full fellowship with your brethren? You know God wants us to enjoy one another. That doesn't mean to agree with everything they think or believe. But are you in fellowship with them? Do you enjoy the fellowship? God wants you to enjoy that fellowship.

So I see my time is gone. So we're going to close right here. I didn't finish, but I'm going to close anyway.

So I think it's better to stop in good time. If that don't speak any more than half an hour. So dear friends, isn't it wonderful? We know this wonderful God at all.

This wonderful One that's from the beginning, the Lord Jesus, the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the ending. We know Him as our very own Savior. And we know He's redeemed us all, brothers and sisters, that we'll have fellowship together so we can enjoy the good things of God.

And may we, as we leave this meeting, may we not sort of come down and get talking about everything material and earthly. Let's keep the fellowship about the things of God as we commune one with the other. Let's talk about the Lord while we're here.

Keep the conversation spiritual. Then it will not be wasted. We can talk about so much.

You say, it's a lovely day. Yes, thank God it is. But we all know it is.

We haven't had much rain lately. No, we haven't. We're all aware of that.

We're praying for rain. But let's get talking about the things of the Lord. Brother Bob Willie will ask you to come.

Sing a couple of verses of number 140. 140. O Christ in thee my soul hath found, and found in thee alone the peace, the joy I sought so long, the bliss still now unknown.

Now none but Christ can satisfy, none other name for me this love and life and lasting joy, Lord Jesus, found in thee. We'll sing the first and the last verses of 140.

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