

## FULLNESS OR WHOLENESS IN CHRIST

We went over **1 John 4 and 5** this summer yet haven't gone over chapters 1-3 this year. Let us begin.

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### **1 John 1:1-2 (What Was Heard, Seen, and Touched)**

"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, concerning the **Word of Life**— the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us—"

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[That should sound familiar to us. The gospel account of the Apostle John begins by saying, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. **In Him was life** [physical and spiritual], **and the life was the light of men**. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it." (**John 1:1-5**) "He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. [A remnant did though] But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." (**John 1:10-14**) John was making it quite clear to his readers that Christ Jesus was not a philosophy or just a figment of their imagination or a made up character. To drive that point home, after Jesus had risen from the dead, John recorded for us His appearing to His disciples. "And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them [doubting Thomas]. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "**Peace to you!**" [That word peace in the Greek is "eirene" (ay-ray-nay), from eirō, "to join, tie together into a whole") - properly, wholeness. That can certainly refer to that wholeness that we have in Christ, yet it can also speak to theirs and our wholeness, in the unity of the faith in Christ, as the body of Christ. "Then He said to Thomas, "**Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing.**" And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "**Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.**" Blessed are we then who have not seen Him yet believe. Something that may get overlooked in what Jesus was saying to Thomas. He called him by his name. Jesus knew him and Thomas knew his Lord and his God!]

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**1 John 1:3** "that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have **fellowship with us**; and truly **our fellowship is**

with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things we write to you that your joy may be full."

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[I liked what Biblehub.com said about that word "joy" which is the Greek "chara", which incidentally is the suffix to our word "character". "In the Greco-Roman world, joy was often linked to external circumstances, such as success, wealth, or pleasure. However, the New Testament redefines joy as a spiritual state that is independent of external conditions. This Christian understanding of joy is deeply connected to the hope and assurance found in Jesus Christ, His resurrection, and the promise of eternal life. The early Christians experienced joy even amidst persecution and suffering, viewing it as a testament to their faith and the presence of God in their lives."<sup>1</sup> And as we'll see, from what John says next, we truly find that wholeness or fullness of joy in our relationship with God and Christ Jesus and with one another, and our character is developed through our obedience to the will of God as we bear the fruit of the Spirit, "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control." (Galatians 5:22-23) ]  
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**1 John 1:4-10 Fellowship with Him and One Another**

"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. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses 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 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."

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You see how the Apostle John links "practicing the truth" and "walking in the light", which is in contrast to practicing sin, with our fellowship with one another, as sin not only separates us from our fellowship with God, by not having a "right relationship with Him, it also causes division amongst His people, as we then do not have a "right relationship" with others. John elaborates more on that in the following chapter. That excuse that some of us have used saying, "I'm not harming anyone by my sin that I do on my own in secret" is a lie, just as it is a lie to say that one never sins. The difference is in what we are practicing, righteousness which leads to life or sin that leads to death as the Apostle Paul said in **Romans 6:11-13**, "Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and

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1 <https://biblehub.com/greek/5479.htm>

your members as instruments of righteousness to God." Once again, in **Ephesians 2:8-10**, the Apostle Paul tells us, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."

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**1 John 2:1-11 [The Test of Knowing Christ]** "My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world. Now by this we know that we know Him, **if we keep His commandments**. He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. He who says he abides in Him ought himself also **to walk just as He walked**. Brethren, I write no new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you have had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which you heard from the beginning. Again, a new commandment I write to you, which thing is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away, and the true light is already shining. He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now. He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him. But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes."

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[The commandments of Jesus are summed up for us in what Jesus said was the Great Commandment and the second that is like unto it, to love God with all of our heart, soul, strength, and mind and to love our neighbors as ourselves. (**Mark 12:30-31**) We love Him because He first loved us. (**1 John 4:9**) We then follow His example and lay down our life for Him and for others as Christ Jesus has layed down His life for us. As Jesus said, "**Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.**"(**John 15:13**) ]

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**1 John 2:12-29** "I write to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake. I write to you, fathers, because you have known Him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you have overcome the wicked one. I write to you, little children, because you have known the Father. I have written to you, fathers, because you have known Him who is from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the wicked one. Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away,

and the lust of it; but **he who does the will of God abides forever.** Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, **they would have continued with us;** but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us. But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things. I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and that no lie is of the truth. Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son. Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also. Therefore let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, **you also will abide in the Son and in the Father.** And this is the promise that He has promised us—eternal life. These things I have written to you concerning those who try to deceive you. But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him.

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While, as a child of God, we have the Holy Spirit that leads us into all truth, as Jesus put it, and we are beyond blessed to have His spoken and then written Word to teach us the will and ways of God, nevertheless there is certainly a place for us to be taught and to teach. As we read last week in the book of James, James says, "My brethren, let not many of you become **teachers**, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment. For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body." (**James 3:1-2**) Similarly, the Apostle Paul, in speaking of differering callings or ministries given to us by God through the Holy Spirit, said, "And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually. And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third **teachers**, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way." (**1 Cor. 12:26-31**) Paul then gives us the "Love Chapter", **1 Cor. 13**, to which in summary is Paul saying, without love, all of our zeal and efforts are meaningless, and he concludes by saying, "And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love." (**1 Cor. 13:13**) Speaking then of that love that we have from Christ, it is so that we "may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ— from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to

the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love. (**Eph. 4:15-16**) Edifying, (Greek "oikodome"), construction term meaning to build up.

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**1 John 2:28-29** "And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming. If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him."

**1 John 3** (The Command to Love) "Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure."

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[How does one go about purifying ones' self? Last week we read in the book of James, "Blessed is the man who **endures temptation**; for when he has been approved [dokimos: "In ancient Greek culture, "dokimos" was often used in the context of metallurgy, where metals were tested for purity and quality], he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised **to those who love Him.**" That "dokimos" is the same word used by the Apostle Paul in speaking to his spiritual son Timothy, saying, "Be diligent to present yourself **approved** to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." There's two elements of action involved and necessary in that. Spending time in God's Word and then also spending time with God, all the while though keeping in mind, "We are His workmanship"! "Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it; unless the Lord guards the city, the watchman stays awake in vain." (**Psalm 127:1**) Likewise Jesus, in addressing the abiding in Him and our essential need for Him, gave us a beautiful analogy saying, "**I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.**" (**John 15:5**) ] Also as Jesus declared, "**I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.**" (**John 14:6**) From here to eternity! The Apostle Peter gave that analogy of being refined, as in precious metals, "In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen **you love**. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls." (**1 Peter 1:6-9**) Once again though, we are not alone individually in our faith that is in Christ Jesus. The end goal, so to speak, is that God is presently building His church, for His eternal kingdom, "till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of

God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." (**Ephesians 4:13**) ] As He is working in us, we are then building one another up in in the love of Christ!

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**1 John 3:4 (Sin and the Child of God)** "Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness."

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[Jesus gave the warning to those who practice lawlessness saying, "Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who **practice lawlessness!**'" (**Matthew 7:22-23**) ]

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**1 John 3:5-24** "And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin. Whoever abides in Him does not [practice] sin. Whoever sins [practices sin] has neither seen Him nor known Him. Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. Whoever has been born of God does not [practice] sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin [continue in sin], because he has been born of God. In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not **practice righteousness** is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother. For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another, not as Cain who was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous. Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you. We know that we have passed from death to life, because **we love the brethren**. He who does not love his brother abides in death. Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And **we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren**. But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. And by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him. For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment. Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us."

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