



## 1. The Power of Testimony

*1 Joh 1:1 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. 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. 4 We write this to make our joy complete.*

I have been thinking of studying John's first letter for some time. It's a letter about relationship. It's about our relationship with God and our relationship with one another. This seems a right time to look at relationship. You've now discovered what I'm like as a Pastor and in the meanwhile, new people are coming into the Church. We need to learn to be part of the same family of God in this Church as well as growing in our relationship with God. This is a critical book - a defining moment as it helps us to understand what living as a Christian is in relationship with God and our brothers and sisters in Christ.

So what of the man - John. We know exactly who he was. He was one of Jesus' closest disciples - part of the trio of Peter James and John. He was the brother of James and a son of Zebedee. He had been a fisherman and his readiness to follow Jesus perhaps indicates a friendship with Jesus earlier than the start of His ministry. They got to see things other man never did - the transfiguration I'm sure was a high point.

But John wasn't just privileged in that way. He became a close friend to Jesus. He describes himself in the gospel as the disciple whom Jesus loved.

He also seems to have lived the longest amongst the disciples. Revelation seems to have been written late in the first century when John finds himself on the Isle of Patmos - a long way from home. He also seems to have died of natural causes at a time when the other disciples had not.

After Paul, he's the second most prolific writer in the NT having a gospel, three letters and a prophetic book to his name.

Both the gospel and the letter have the same feel about them and the letter seems to follow the gospel.

*John 20:30 Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. 31 But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.*

*1 John 1:3 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. 4 We write this to make our joy complete.*

It seems to follow. One book is written for people to have live and the other is written almost after it so people may have fellowship with them like they have fellowship with the Father. If we have eternal life - how should we then live. 1 John tells us.

This book is testimony. It isn't based on theology in the way Paul's writing are. This man speaks because he has a testimony to give because he was the disciple who literally walked close to Jesus. There are three ways in which this letter is a testimony:

👤 A personal testimony - we were there - we touched Him

*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.*

We come from a tradition where the Word is important. Where we say we must preach the truth of God. Explain to people what God has said.

But our faith is a living faith. As we understood this morning - it's not about rules but about relationship. And we have that relationship. John stood testimony. He was an eyewitness. The word of an eyewitness counts for much. Never underestimate the power of your testimony. Non-one can take it away from you. Make sure you always have memory of it. If necessary write it down so when the tough times come, you'll remember

👤 A testimony about God - the Logos

*-this we proclaim concerning the Word of life.*

*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.*

And what's that testimony? It's a profound one. Our testimony is one of a personal relationship. God has revealed Himself to us. It sometimes doesn't feel like that does it? But that's the truth of it. Why do you think that I've stressed that so much over the last few months. We are the children of God. We have eternal life. I remember that I started with the questions given to me a college. What sort of God? So what? If we are the children of God. If He has revealed Himself to us, you can see how that relationship should outwork in our lives in obedience to Him. People should see and know that we are His because we act like who we claim to be.

👤 A testimony to encourage others to follow

*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. 4 We write this to make our joy complete.*

1 John is a book, not merely about our relationship with God, but about relationships with one another. I'm not sure whether he is addressing Christians or not here. But we see two directions here. Firstly we have fellowship with the Father and the Son. Then we have fellowship with one another. What we are going to see over the next few weeks is that the two are linked. The quality of our fellowship with one another reflects the quality of the fellowship we have with God. The quality of our relationship with God will reflect itself in the quality of relationship with one another. It's a challenge isn't it. Sick churches are only symptomatic of poor relationships between the people of God and the one they vow to serve.

**There is an old saying - If you feel far away from God, which one of you moved. The answer is God hasn't. He doesn't change.**

**Do you feel far from God this evening. He wants you to have that testimony that John had. You already do. Count your blessings.**

**Poor relationships with Christians. Well, think hard about your relationship with God too. You probably have to repair both.**



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