

It's all about the Center Pt. 2

I John 1:1-4, CBC, Wednesday, September 24, 2025 193 Jesus, Thy Blood vv. 1-2

Last time, read first four verses, and worked on background—who wrote it? Evidence seems to be John the Apostle--whole web of pieces about John's gospel, Revelation, and the Epistles—they play off one another and must do much homework as look into the pieces given; gave you just a little bit of some of those pieces and some arguments to show part of process before concluded that I John seems to be written by John the Apostle (see Carson/Moo/Morris Intro pp. 229-254), **1. Be careful about throwing out what you've "always heard"** – this happens when lose trust in one or group of people where heard things **2. Examine slowly**—does no good to ignore—life is bound up in some of these studies—can't study all, must assume some things, but make use of tools like one I showed you last time when have cause to examine roots (Carson, Moo, Morris); John is said to have been pastor of church at Ephesus following fall of Jerusalem in AD70; date tied to Gospel of John, guess somewhere between 85-95 AD before believe exiled to island of Patmos under Emperor Domitian; while II & III John are clearly letter form, this one comes as more of a sermon, pamphlet, tract to specific group addressing similar problem; **though no specific group mentioned, personal** (cf. 2:19 went out from us, uses I you we, calls them dear children/friends—he knows them and their situations Stott, Intro, familiar w churches around Ephesus as see in Revelation w 7 churches--**book not so much like we used to argument/sermon today—tight alliteration and forward motion; starting point is setting foundation (I Jn. 1:1-4), ends w purpose I Jn. 5:13**—in b/n wanders on things important, circles back and covers them again **Main theme:** New English Bible titles I John "Recall to Fundamentals" Marshall, p. 1, or tests by which we can know if we are in Christ—start here and will have good skeleton to be filled out w rest of NT—especially helpful to reading gospel of John (deals w same issues—Jesus IS the Son of God—20:31); **written not so much to test to see whether they were saved, but pastorally to assure them that they were based on their profession that Jesus is the Son of God;** you can know fellowship with God through Jesus Christ 1:3-5; **so where was the the confusion?** Denial that Jesus was Christ, the Son of God, come in flesh—I Jn. 2:22, 4:2-3, 5:1,5, didn't believe that His death was needed for forgiveness of sins 5:6-7, didn't accept His commandments as binding 2:4—believed possible to live w/o sin 1:8, 10—thought they were 1:7 in light & fellowship w Him, seemed to have inside track—based their truth about God on spiritual revelations 2:20, 27, yet 2:9 did not love their brothers as their **knowledge gave right to pull away, the sinlessness gave independence, confidence—freedom from needing cross;** "As a result of the confusion, these believers began to question whether they really knew God, whether they really were experiencing eternal life, and whether they were really in the truth." Kruse pp. 2-3 **this book answers why all of these things were essential, foundational to Christian belief; we immediately want to know error and focus on sniffing it out; looked at many of movements called heretical and saw elements of them—but THEY not root;** larger problem which is what drives Paul in Galatians to say if anyone preaches different gospel, let him be accursed, which supposedly drove John from the bathhouse when Cerinthus inside b/c enemy of the truth, made Polycarp call Marcion first-born of Satan—what is that danger? Listen to Marshall writing about this "Links can be found with Paul's opponents at Corinth, with Cerinthus, and with Ignatius's opponents. It seems most likely that the opponents were Christians who felt that they had moved beyond the elementary stages of orthodox theology to a new position which called orthodox affirmations into question. They were like men kicking away the ladder on which they have climbed to the heights and leaving themselves without any visible means of support. Relying on their belief that they were inspired by the Spirit and claiming a direct knowledge of God, they thought that they no longer needed Jesus or his teaching. Under the influence of Docetism they argued against a real incarnation of the Son of God in Jesus, and probably adopted a view like that of Cerinthus or Basilides, that the Christ or Son of God inhabited Jesus only for a temporary period. Probably Weiss goes too far in saying that they attached no significance at all to Jesus; it is more likely that he had a nominal importance for them. On the whole, then, a combination of reliance on spiritual experiences and a Gnostic type of world-view led the opponents to a form of Christianity in which Jesus Christ no longer occupied a central position." p. 21-22 **how does Jesus lose the central position as Living Head in our lives, in the church specifically with our thoughts about God and life of service for Him?** nominal place for Jesus as get lost in specifics; **very important to get foundation,** emergent church, so yesterday, but seeking to find truth in ancient practices of ancient church—throw off boundaries while seek TRUE boundaries/tradition; looking for what fathers have said—if in doubt, throw it out & just keep the "real, the deep"; **how do we determine what is "real?"** (Ted Kluck co-wrote book w Kevin DeYoung and in article read "Field of Grace" Aug. 2025 World said that that movement respawned as deconstruction) **this book simple, right?** Assurance that can have relationship with God? Yes, but this very purpose I Jn. 5:13 can lead to more messes—what about place of Spirit 2:27 **have no need for anyone to teach you?** seems that in some parts, John says can live life of sinlessness 3:6—is "love" all you need to define Christian 4:7—**sin which leads to death 5:16—can you get beyond forgiveness?** Marshall, p. 7 what does water, Spirit, blood mean in 5:6-8? Be careful: black/white statement—by this we know the children of God, etc. **must recreate who "they" were to find why THESE the lines that clarified—then can draw parallels for us;** where's your head right now, fully engaged in study as means to know God, walk w Him? do you find self distracted or just looking for nugget to help you through the night, the nugget to knock your children/spouse into line, to make your showing up here "worth your time?"—if you engage in these big questions & blows mind, throws havoc on human nature's desire to **settle &**

then not think about it anymore; but purpose not just RIGHT with this and all other issues Christians wrestle with, but instead essential part of the gospel says that God is w you, personally, loves you, cares for you. Kruse, wrote to bolster assurance of such people by providing w criteria they could use to evaluate claims being made by secessionists and to reassure themselves they were in the truth; So let's start—if, these believers were “in the right, but shaken as to ‘the truth’”, how do you bolster assurance? Church blows up, Christians disagree--What is usually important in deciding who right in truth was? What do we usually hear said when Christians disagreeing, when deciding whether church is healthy or not? give me facts, let me see people working through issues in loving, kind, accepting, serving manner showing love Jesus; argument makes sense to us; problem? So what? We can have all of these in different versions of Christianity—(years ago, reading a book from someone outside our circles “Almost Christian”—women pastor in United Methodist from Princeton talking about what we learn about what we are teaching our children from what is happening to them ie. disappearing, values, etc. talks about the theology of niceness—emphasizes what agree, not what disagree—it b/ms the common language b/n us, helps people from diff. backgrounds not feel any of tension of diff.—when comes to gospel, like drunken driver, able to go off road on both sides and we still say basically traveling down same road; think about our discussion from Galatians where we road tested a couple of definitions of the gospel—the one was so broad that all could subscribe and never be tied to Jesus, deal with sin, need atoning death, live under His Lordship for His purposes by His strength; what do we have right in chapter 1 that addresses these glaring aberrations in the gospel? V. 5 walk in light as He is in Light – why important? Look at first verses, where is the subject & verb of first sentence? NIV sticks in early so no suspense; but for us, in verse 3—we proclaim – important part is the object – first discussing the message of life, then talking about fellowship, then find message & fellowship tied to person who is life—Jesus Himself--God

Numbers 35:30 ‘If anyone kills a person, the murderer shall be put to death at the evidence of witnesses, but no person shall be put to death on the testimony of one witness.

Deuteronomy 17:6 “On the evidence of two witnesses or three witnesses, he who is to die shall be put to death; he shall not be put to death on the evidence of one witness.

Deuteronomy 19:15 “A single witness shall not rise up against a man on account of any iniquity or any sin which he has committed; on the evidence of two or three witnesses a matter shall be confirmed.

Deuteronomy 30:6 “Moreover the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, so that you may live.

Joshua 2:10–11 “For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. 11 “When we heard it, our hearts melted and no courage remained in any man any longer because of you; for the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath.

Judges 13:22 So Manoah said to his wife, “We will surely die, for we have seen God.”

Psalms 90:2 Before the mountains were born Or You gave birth to the earth and the world, Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.

Isaiah 43:10–13 “You are My witnesses,” declares the LORD, “And My servant whom I have chosen, So that you may know and believe Me And understand that I am He. Before Me there was no God formed, And there will be none after Me. 11 “I, even I, am the LORD, And there is no savior besides Me. 12 “It is I who have declared and saved and proclaimed, And there was no strange god among you; So you are My witnesses,” declares the LORD, “And I am God. 13 “Even from eternity I am He, And there is none who can deliver out of My hand; I act and who can reverse it?”

Habakkuk 1:12 Are You not from everlasting, O LORD, my God, my Holy One? We will not die. You, O LORD, have appointed them to judge; And You, O Rock, have established them to correct.

Micah 5:1–2 “Now muster yourselves in troops, daughter of troops; They have laid siege against us; With a rod they will smite the judge of Israel on the cheek. 2 “But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Too little to be among the clans of Judah, From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, From the days of eternity.”

Luke 20:34–36 Jesus said to them, “The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage, ³⁵ but those who are considered worthy to attain to that age and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; ³⁶ for they cannot even die anymore, because they are like angels, and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection.

Luke 21:13 “It will lead to an opportunity for your testimony.

Luke 24:39 “See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.”

John 1:4, 14 ⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. ¹⁴ And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 3:11 “Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know and testify of what we have seen, and you do not accept our testimony.

John 4:42 and they were saying to the woman, “It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this One is indeed the Savior of the world.”

John 5:24 “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.

John 5:46 “For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me.

John 8:56 “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad.”

John 20:31 but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.

Acts 1:8 but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.”

Acts 17:27 that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us;

Romans 10:17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.

2 Corinthians 4:4–5 in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. ⁵ For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Jesus’ sake.

Ephesians 2:20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone,

Hebrews 1:3 And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

1 John 5:13 These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.