

It's all about the Center Pt. 4

I John 1:1-4, CBC, Wednesday, October 8, 2025 275 How Firm a Foundation

Men's Fellowship Chapter 3 (summarize, but starting on p. 48—Chapter 4 Sovereignty—p. 58 What does idolatry have to do with evangelism?)

Conference (some only go on Saturday)—**Membership Class**; 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 wars? 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**; (book I was reading as well as “Conversion” book warned about theology of niceness as center) remember us road testing 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; so must identify the center—remember, subject and verb of first sentence in v. 3 **we proclaim important part is the object**, that's where starts

I. Identify the Center vv. 1-2

v. 1 what was from the beginning, origins of this gospel of Jesus—is it beginning of Jesus' ministry/incarnation here? Kruse believes so b/c tied to other words culminating in incarnate Christ; we were there from beginning; but this along w “with the Father” in v. 2 rings w Jn. 1:1 which roots Jesus' existence b/r time as we know it; looked at Scripture after Scripture showing eternal nature of God—BUT whether eternal nature main focus or implied, saying that what is before you, before all of us—what we can see/know, NOT JUST “out there” or back then, but it has come to our senses; **this is real, it is now—no separation b/n what is and our experience—what we have heard; what we have seen w our eyes** WE eyewitnesses; **what we have looked at**—word similar, but focus on studying, seeing what comes into focus (**do you know what we've got here?** (Jn. 1:14 same word—we saw, beheld His glory, I Jn. 4:14) fully seeing, contemplating, drawing inferences from, **and touched w our hands** didn't even realize what we were touching; Yarbrough, “John saw and touched the deceptively mundane stuff of eternal redemption” p. 29—real physical Jesus, **concerning the word of life** CENTER something about existence that goes on—life! is there any alternative to death? much in OT, ie. **Deut. 30:6**, Yes—word of life! **Jn. 1:4** message tied with person, **v. 2 and the life was manifested** transcendent God spoken of w awe in OT, seen by us; NO WAY we could experience all of v. 1 and not say “**the life was manifested**”; contra those who denied Jesus is the Christ I Jn. 2:22, 4:2, II Jn. 7 **and we have seen, and testify, and proclaim to you the eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us**—desire here to reiterate that this Jesus is the Eternal One, God Himself; HERE, same substance as, quality of life is same as God Himself, eternal, not something handed out, but something wrapped up, originated in God Himself I Jn. 5:11-12 Jn. 1:2 **He was in the beginning with God** not known apart from communion w Father; Burge, “He who existed from limitless eternity has entered time and space and taken up residence here on earth.” P. 53; --**Word of life** is message proclaimed about deity historically manifested in humanity by US humans; **Heb. 1:3, II Cor. 4:4-5**, we rubbed shoulders w this transcendent one!!!! In face of these slightly different focuses—the “niceness” of those who hold “different views,” John says that the things taken in by senses of him and other apostles—things as mundane as looking and touching—these are the things of life! The eternal life which was w Father; truth, verified by all means possible back then—it all comes back to who listen to—think—**what keeps us from coming back to these words as final source of truth/life—eyewitness accounts of One who was from the beginning?** why are we so susceptible to similar but wrong teaching about this God? What is REAL center we proclaim even when say **proclaim Jesus?** we so democratic, Yarbrough says we have “**enthroned a metaphysic** (nature of reality, existence, being—what exists and how it exists) **of naturalism in influential circles.**” P. 35 want to hear all facts b/r throw our lot in—okay, but which facts? How do we put them together? means eyewitnesses mean little if runs counter to convictions of reigning naturalistic certainties—English? want to see what others we respect think; then easier to judge by experience alone or opinions of how those facts should be put together; “**Though from John's point of view truth would by no means be antithetical to much of what naturalistic science affirms today, it would be markedly less reductionist. Truth is as much a matter of what God, by word or deed, in creation or redemption, has revealed as it is of what humans observe and infer. Ideally, divine revelation and humble human inference work together, and when they do, truth in a full sense can emerge. Precisely this concurrence of divine self-disclosure and human reception is what John writes about here as he ‘testifies’ or ‘bears witness.’**” Yarbrough, P. 36 **What does this mean?** **THEN, thoughts about what it says?** NOT just what you perceive, but what He has revealed—not opposed, but God's means of revelation important which included Eyewitness, testimony of others as a means of obtaining truth; THEY not focus, but MUST be included b/c part of His means--forces us to include what others have seen, verified, not just us; **not AGAINST natural means—very normal** **Num. 35:30**, Jesus quotes **Deut. 19:15** in **Matt. 18:16** if he does not listen, take one or two more w you so that . . . , Paul uses this verse to back up his credibility in II Cor. 13:1, also I Tim. 5:19 @ an elder)—Jesus sent out disciples as His witnesses **Lk. 21:13, Acts 1:8, 2:32, 3:15** Yarbrough, p. 36, —your “greats” pointed to me **Jn. 5:46, 8:56**, hearing led to belief--**Josh. 2:10-11, John 4:42**, saving faith **Rom. 10:17** **John saying—you've been shaken, but choose to believe gospel you've been given b/c these facts have been affirmed by credible witnesses of this Word of Life** (Starts w basis for authority to speak—authority of an eyewitness—we testify) (**Jn. 20:31, I Jn. 5:13**), but authority of testimony not end, but reminded right as we start this study where the focus should be—subject and verb follow the object—**HIM, we proclaim**—Stott calls it the authority of commission—says experience was personal, the commission is derived—to testify, must have seen and heart Christ for themselves, to proclaim, must have received a commission from him; **should be more concerned about “what” is being said then “how” it is being proclaimed—easier, harder, more drama, more logical argument, etc.**—the object here is what matters—John starts w origins of gospel he proclaims and it centers on Jesus; God, the transcendent One has come in the flesh to us in person of Jesus; clears out fantasy with in the flesh reality—message embodied in person of Jesus (fully human even as fully divine)—we didn't even

realize to full extent what we had right away—this is LIFE—your answer to feelings of gloom, tension, death—
how focused are you on the object—what does your life show? Easily distracted from Jesus even as talk about Him? brought devastating effects on these groups of believers as it does for us individually and corporately

II. The Center Determines Fellowship

the center is the glue, no matter what we say about what we believe/value, how would you determine the glue holding us together?

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.

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

John 1:4, 14 ⁴In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. ¹⁴And 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."

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

1 Corinthians 1:20–23 Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? 21 For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. 22 For indeed Jews ask for signs and Greeks search for wisdom; 23 but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness,

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. ⁵For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Jesus' sake.

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.