



**Scripture: 1 John 1:1–4**

**Big Idea:** Fellowship is a BIG deal!

**Catching up**

Today, we are going to begin talking about the book of 1 John. Not the Gospel of John. This is a totally different book. John is a Gospel, which means it's written to tell the story of Jesus' life when He was on this Earth.

1 John is a letter written to Christians who are now trying to live out the life Jesus calls us to live. We're going to learn some big things in 1 John: how critical it is to love one another, how to know 100 percent that we are saved, how to get back at it even if we mess up, and plenty more topics.

**Exploration (What do we think?)**

1. Start by reading 1 John 1:1–4.
2. John is talking a lot about what he saw, touched, and heard when Jesus was on this earth. He's describing a memory from his own life. What's one of your earliest memories? Try to describe it based on things you can see/touch/hear.
3. There are a lot of opinions about who Jesus is, what He said, what He commands, what He did, etc. What are some different ideas some people have about Jesus? (*He's the Son of God, just a good teacher, liar, never existed, just a good man, etc.*)
4. How do we know who to listen to and who not to listen to about Jesus? Do you think it would be helpful to hear directly from someone who actually saw, walked with, and listened to Jesus while He was on this earth? Why or why not? (*John is someone who did exactly that. This is why he was considered to have something the early church recognized as "Apostolic Authority." That's essentially a fancy way of saying John was a credible source when it comes to explaining who Jesus was, what He taught, and what He did.*)
5. John is going to continuously come back to the idea of "fellowship." Does anyone know what the word "fellowship" means? Can you give me an example of what that looks like?
6. Fellowship comes from the Greek word "koinonia." Pull out a phone or tablet. Go to GotQuestions.org and search "what is koinonia?" Read

together to find out what this word “fellowship” means. Discuss what you find and any questions that arise from that.

7. John is writing this letter because he cares deeply about the spiritual growth of the people he is writing to. Who has been a person like the apostle John in your life—a person who has convinced you of Jesus’ love and cared about your spiritual growth? How have they helped you grow? Have you ever thought about doing that for someone else in return?

### **Story Time (What does the Bible say?)**

1. John makes a point of saying that he has heard, seen, and touched Jesus. How have YOU “seen,” “heard,” and “touched” Jesus. In other words, can you describe specific times in your life where you felt Jesus was doing something in your life? Maybe it was a time when you were on a trip with the youth group. Maybe it was time you were reading the Bible on your own.
2. Re-read verse 2. What is the message John is proclaiming? (*Eternal life*)
3. John keeps saying, “WE have heard, WE have seen, WE have touched ...” Who do you think is the “we” he’s talking about? (*The disciples. He’s saying, “I’m a credible witness to who Jesus is. I saw him, I talked with him, I listened to him, I watched his mouth move as he spoke, I touched him.”*)
4. What does it mean to have eternal life? How do we receive that? (*John 3:16*)

### **Lining Up With God (What does it mean for us today?)**

1. Let’s figure out what this means for us today. In verse 3, what does John say is the purpose of us having eternal life? (*That we can have fellowship with one another and with God and Jesus*) That means fellowship is a HUGE deal. In other words, if there’s a Christian you aren’t getting along with, maybe you hate them, maybe you speak bad about them, or maybe you just keep your distance and ignore them ... that’s a HUGE problem. We’ll find out later that John says if we say we love God but hate a brother or sister in Christ, we’re still living in darkness.
2. Think really hard, don’t answer it out loud ... is there any Christian, someone who should be a brother or sister to you, whether they’re in a different church, in this church, or maybe even in this room, that you just don’t like? Maybe it’s that you really despise them or maybe it’s just that they annoy you so you don’t really acknowledge them. Either way, it’s a

huge problem to store that in your heart. We should actively try to be kind to one another.

### **Tangible Takeaway**

Challenge: Find one person in our group that you can intentionally try to spend time with outside of church to become better friends. Additional challenge: If you know of anyone you are holding anyone against or anyone holding something against you, go and seek reconciliation with them to the best of your ability.