

FIRST JOHN

INTRODUCTION: This letter is a bit unique in that it neither identifies the author nor to whom it is specifically addressed. Yet, is universally agreed by scholars as well as the church fathers* to have been written by John the Apostle in circa **90-95 AD** while he lived in Ephesus,



A major theme of this letter addresses the error of “*Gnosticism*.” These “*secret knowledge*” heresies were distorting the truth about Jesus. John is very plain about how dangerous and contrary to Christ many of these philosophies were.

CHAPTER 1:1-4

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.

How do these verses compare to the opening chapter of the Gospel of John? Who or what is John referring to?

Why do you think John is so insistent that he was an eyewitness of Jesus?

Notice John not only says he'd “**seen**” Jesus, but he'd also “**touched**” Him. Why might this be so important?

What is John's expressed goal in **verse 3** for writing this letter?

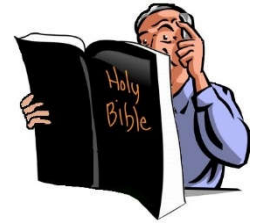
Why would confidence in their relationship with God and Christ produce joy in John?

Points to Ponder

Do you think there is a need to combat “Gnosticism” yet today? Why or why not?

What does it mean to have fellowship with one the Father and His Son?

Why would this be a prerequisite to having fellowship with one another?



*** Polycarp, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Eusebius, and other early church leaders credited authorship of this letter to John the Apostle.**