

[¹ Who was from the beginning, Who we have heard, Who we have seen with our eyes, Who we beheld and our hands handled, concerning the Word of Life; ² and the Life was manifested, and we have seen Him and bear witness and proclaim to you the Eternal Life, Who was with the Father and was manifested to us; ³ Who we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, that you also may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.

[1 John 1:1-3]

As we begin Today's Thought, you may have noticed that the pronoun 'what' (which is found in every version I checked), I have replaced with the pronoun 'Who'. I did this because I cannot bring myself to refer to my Lord Jesus as a 'what'. I know this is speaking of Jesus because 1 John 1:1 refers to this "Who" as "the Word of Life".

Regarding this consider three verses. In John 1:1 we read "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Then in John 1:4 we are told that "In Him was life, and the Life was the Light of people." 1 John 1:1 refers to "the Word" as "the Word of Life", and 1 John 1:2 calls Him "the Eternal Life, Who was with the Father and was manifested to us". John 1:14 then teaches us that the Word that was in the beginning, and "was with God, and... was God", "became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth". These are some of the reasons I choose not to refer to my Lord as a 'what'.

Now I hope you noticed that in 1 John 1:3 John is inviting those to whom he is writing to have "FELLOWSHIP" with himself and others of like belief. The Holy Spirit then moves John to define what is the "FELLOWSHIP" John is inviting them and us to join in. That "FELLOWSHIP is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ"! But there is another "FELLOWSHIP" we need to consider and for which we should seek. Consider two passages.

In closing the second letter to the Corinthians in 2 Corinthians 13:14 Paul is moved to bless them saying, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the FELLOWSHIP of the HOLY SPIRIT, be with you all". The second passage is in Philippians 2:1 where Paul is moved to say to them, "If therefore there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any FELLOWSHIP of the HOLY SPIRIT". Do you see that the FELLOWSHIP we should seek is with the FATHER and JESUS the Son and with the HOLY SPIRIT?

In 1 Corinthians 5:11 the Holy Spirit moves Paul to write and instruct them "not to associate with any so-called brother if they should be an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler". In fact, they, and we today, are instructed "with such a one do not eat". I would add we should **NOT HAVE** fellowship with anyone who is involved in such sins. Why?

The answer to that is in 2 Corinthians 6:14 where we are commanded to "not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or WHAT FELLOWSHIP HAS LIGHT WITH DARKNESS? But what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? But what agreement has the Sanctuary of God with idols? For we are the Sanctuary of the living God...".

Then in 2 Corinthians 6:17-18 God commands us to "COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST and BE SEPARATE," says the Lord. 'And DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN; and I will welcome you. And I will be a Father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to Me,' Says the Lord Almighty".

Why is it so important for us to heed these commands and not have FELLOWSHIP with the world? Listen to what the Holy Spirit says through James the brother of the Lord in James 4:4.

Adulteresses, do you not know that FRIENDSHIP WITH the WORLD IS HOSTILITY TOWARD GOD? Therefore, WHOEVER CHOOSES TO BE a FRIEND OF the WORLD MAKES THEMSELF an ENEMY of God.

Let me close Today's Thought on FELLOWSHIP with what I call the "let-us" salad of Hebrews 10:22-24:

- "Let us DRAW NEAR WITH a SINCERE HEART IN FULL ASSURANCE of FAITH, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water" [10:22]!
- "Let us HOLD FAST the CONFESSION OF OUR HOPE WITHOUT WAVERING, FOR the ONE WHO PROMISED IS FAITHFUL" [10:23]!
- "Let us CONSIDER HOW TO STIR ONE ANOTHER UP TO LOVE and GOOD DEEDS" [10:24].

Hebrews 10:25 then tells us that these three things are accomplished by,

NOT FORSAKING (abandoning) our own ASSEMBLING TOGETHER, as is the habit of some, but ENCOURAGING ONE ANOTHER; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near.

Now heed the warning in Hebrews 10:26-27 which says,

For IF WE CONTINUE TO WILLFULLY SIN AFTER RECEIVING the KNOWLEDGE of the TRUTH, THERE NO LONGER REMAINS a SACRIFICE for SINS, BUT a TERRIFYING EXPECTATION of JUDGMENT, and of a BLAZING FIRE that is ABOUT TO CONSUME the Ones OPPOSING.

Will you please join with me in a closing prayer?

O Father God, I come before You today praising You that You and my Lord Jesus and Your Holy Spirit desire to have fellowship with us who have sinned. I praise You that You have told us that if we come out from the sins of the world and be separate from them, that we will then have this fellowship. Again, today I come not only asking for myself but also for those praying this prayer with me, that You would clearly reveal to us in Your Word, the Bible; and through the leading of Your Holy Spirit the way to obtain and maintain this fellowship. Strengthen us to draw near to you in sincerity of heart and full assurance of faith that we may hold fast our hope without wavering. Teach us how to stir one another up to love and good deeds to Your glory. Move us to come together at the appointed times that we might do these things and gain these fellowships. I pray and ask for this mercy and grace in the name of Jesus and by the power and authority that is in His name. Amen!

Please meditate and pray on these things!

Louise and I pray this will help to both enlighten and encourage you to **know in a greater way** the **One** promising in His Word to never leave you or forsake you [Hebrews 13:5; Deuteronomy 31:6, 8]!

Because *I AM STRIVING TO HAVE ETERNAL FELLOWSHIP WITH MY GOD!* – tom!