

1 John 1:3-4 Koinonia—Fellowship with Christ and One Another

3 what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.

These first three verses serve as the prologue of this epistle. First John is written to encourage us, as believers, to persevere in our belief in Jesus the Christ, the Word made Flesh, the incarnate Son of God. In 1st John, he lists 4 purposes in writing:

1. so that he and his readers may have fellowship with one another and with God, and with His Son Jesus Christ.
2. As believers we might experience the joy of Christ (1:4).
3. That we “may not sin” (2:1).
4. So we might have assurance of our salvation on the basis of their belief in Jesus (5:13).

For John, one’s behavior springs from one’s belief. So, if a believer believes the wrong things, he or she will do wrong things. Sin results from unbelief.

what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also

The main point is “**We declare to you that which we have seen and heard.**” With our verses last week and this week, John wants to communicate his understand of eternal life, as a life in relationship with the living Savior who gives us eternal life, because He Himself is Himself eternal life and gives eternal life to all who believe in Him. John is trying to help us, as believers, understand the necessity of a relationship, in the sense of a vital mutual relationship, with both fellow believers, and God.

so that you too may have fellowship with us;

Koinonia is A Dynamic Relationship Between Believers

Koinonia means a close association, involving mutual interests and sharing. it means communion, fellowship, close relationship, generosity, participation, sharing, brotherly unity, all at once. It’s often translated so many different ways, using several different English words, because in encompasses the whole of sharing Christian life with one another. John, in his first letter, uses koinonia to describe what connects us to God and to each other through Christ. The essential element of koinonia is participation in Christ, as One Body of Christ—Jesus is who connects us all, no matter what cultural or denominational differences would try to separate us, we have Christ in common, we are One in Christ. And Jesus wants this fellowship with us, but it is based on following Jesus the light of the world. Jesus will not walk in darkness, He will instead lead us into the light. Jesus wants this fellowship with us, but it is only possible when we follow Him. Jesus said in John 14:23 23 Jesus answered and said to him, “**If anyone loves Me, he will follow My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our dwelling with him.** This fellowship with Jesus, fellowship with God is based on loving Jesus and following His Word. We are One in obedience to Jesus, walking in the light, as He is in the light. And that means that we are one with each other as well. We are one the Spirit, we are One in the Lord. This is what Jesus purchased for us on Calvary.

and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ So, koinonia is not just about fellowship between believers, it’s fellowship in Christ, fellowship with Christ and with The Father through Christ. This is what Jesus was praying from in His High Priestly Prayer for the Church in John 17:21 **that they may all be one; just as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me.** Paul instructs the Philippians in 2:2, make his joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit and intent on one purpose—faithfully spreading the gospel. To stop fighting so much for themselves and start fighting for each-other, regarding one another as more important than themselves.

Jesus points out the necessity of remaining in fellowship with Him, abiding in Him, in John 15:4-5 **4 Remain in Me, and I in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself but must remain in the vine, so neither can you unless you remain in Me. 5 I am the vine, you are the branches; the one who remains in Me, and I in him bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.** We must abide

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with Him, remain with Him, remain in fellowship in the light with him so that we are cooperating with His loving plan for our lives. And how do we remain in Jesus' love, as He has commanded us to? He answers in verse 10: obedience. He says **10 If you keep My commandments, you will remain in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and remain in His love.** So, we have fellowship with Jesus through obedience to Him, abiding in His love. And not only does this fellowship with Jesus, give glory to God, and produce fruit for God, and for us to be rewarded for in eternity, but it also produces one more thing. Jesus continues in John 15:11 says **11 These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full.** So, we see that it is fellowship, abiding, remaining in Jesus in obedience that gives us full joy, complete Joy.

4 These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete.

So, we can see that the Joy that we have in Christ is strongly connected to the fellowship that we have with Christ, as we abide in Him. And we see that our Joy in Christ is made complete, full, as we have fellowship with Him, and with each other. The Word of God reminds us over and over that love for our brothers and sisters in Christ is evidence of our love for God. (Rom 12:9–13; Gal 5:13–15 Eph 5:1–9; 1 Pet 1:22–2:1). And we've all experienced the robbing of Joy that can happen when we fail at fellowship. Fellowship is a hallmark of the Church, and when it's absent, we immediately know that we have been robbed of something that Christ has given us. Abiding and being in right relationship with God in fellowship with Him is what drives our love for one another from the inside out, and causes us to want to be in fellowship with one another. And it's out of these two relationships, with God and with Fellow Believers that we receive the Joy of the Lord.

Joy made complete through obedience

¹⁰**If you keep My commandments, you will remain in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and remain in His love.** ¹¹**These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full.**

So, we see that obedience to God, and abiding in His love is the other means by which we receive the Joy of the Lord. We can only abide, remain, and have fellowship with Jesus if we walk in the Light, just as He is in the Light. We remain and dwell in the Father's love through obedience to Him in our daily lives. In understanding the importance of fellowship with one another and fellowship with Jesus, we can grow in our fellowship with God as well as other believers, we will find that we have more love for Him, and through Him have more love for others as well.