The Word of Life
1 John 1:1-4

Background on 1 John (“Walking in Light and Love”):
- Written by the Apostle John in Ephesus
- Composed c. 85-90 A.D.
- Addressed to 2nd & 3rd generation Christians in Asia Minor
- A response to Gnosticism

Acts 20:28-30
“Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.”

Gnosticism (gnosis = knowledge):
- The way of salvation is through secret knowledge.
- Matter is evil; the spirit is good.
- The body is evil; the spirit within is good.
- The goal of life is to grow spiritually while purging the influence of the body.

Gnosticism gives rise to 2 unbiblical lifestyles:
Asceticism- Seeks freedom from the world and its passions through rigid self-discipline.
Licentiousness- Indulges in worldly passions because the body is evil and doesn’t matter.

Gnosticism gives rise to 2 key doctrinal heresies:
Docetism- Jesus was a spirit and only appeared in bodily form.
Cerinthianism- Jesus was fully human, but was granted a temporary divinity.
* These heresies are attacks on the Incarnation and the Substitutionary Atonement of Christ.

Key threats to the Church confronted in 1 John:
1. Cultural Accommodation
2. False Christology
3. Lapsed Morality
4. Disunity

1 John 1:1-4
“What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life—and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us—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 things we write, so that our joy may be made complete.”

4 Fundamental truths about Jesus Christ:
1. Jesus is the God who was from eternity (v. 1)

John 1:1-2
“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.”

“Word” = Logos

John 8:58
Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am.”

2. Jesus is the God who took on humanity (v. 1-2)

John 1:14
“And 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.”

“looked at” = theaomai (to gaze intently upon)

“See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.” And when He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet.

3. Jesus is the God who invites us into fellowship (v. 3)

“fellowship” = Koinonia (a deep sharing of things in common)

John 10:10
“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.”

“Our heart is restless until it rests in you.” – Augustine

4. Jesus is the God who ushers us into joy (v. 4)

Psalm 16:11
“You will make known to me the path of life;
In Your presence is fullness of joy;
In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.”

“The banner of joy will only fly over the castle of your life when the King is in residence there.” – Robert Rainey