

A SERIES OF DEVOTIONS BASED UPON JOHN'S FIRST EPISTLE

A PERSONAL ENCOUNTER WITH JESUS

1 John 1:1 "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."

Imagine what it must have been like for John and Jesus' other disciples to be in His presence, personally hear Him preach and teach, observe Him perform miracles and watch Him contend with those who opposed Him. These opening words of John here in his first epistle and the words that will follow flow out of his personal encounter with Jesus for over three years. He had an intimate relationship with Jesus as marked by Jesus at His crucifixion telling John to take His mother Mary to be John's own mother.

The devotions that follow will attempt to capture John's intimate knowledge of all Jesus said and did for your edification. Through His eyewitness experiences, observations and personally painful hours at the foot of Jesus' cross the Holy Spirit inspired him to write the approximately 2500 words of his first epistle. This epistle is very impactful in communicating the forgiveness of sins that is yours through your faith in Christ Jesus.

John's writings emphasize God's undeserved, genuine, total and complete love for you. John 3:16's message of God's love for the entire population of the world through 1 John 4:10-11 express so clearly God's love for you and its impact upon your life, "This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another."

He vigorously wrote words of opposition to the false teachers at that time, that by the way still exist today, who taught that Jesus did not come as a true human being. His epistle emphasizes Christ Jesus, come in the flesh for God's the Father's purpose of making us righteous and saving us without our own works by the shedding of Jesus' blood alone.

Prayer: Lord, bless me in my faith through the words of John to know Your love for me and in faith receive the forgiveness of my sins Jesus earned for me through His earthly life, death and resurrection. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Jesus, Thy boundless love to me No thought can reach, no tongue declare;
Unite my thankful heart to Thee, And reign without a rival there!
Thine wholly, Thine alone I am; Be Thou alone my constant flame.

O grant that nothing in my soul May dwell, but Thy pure love alone;
Oh, may Thy love possess me whole, My joy, my treasure, and my crown!
All coldness from my heart remove; My ev'ry act, word, thought be love.

This love unwearied I pursue And dauntlessly to Thee aspire.
Oh, may Thy love my hope renew, Burn in my soul like heav'nly fire!
And day and night, be all my care to guard this sacred treasure there.

In suff'ring be thy love my peace, In weakness be Thy love my pow'r;
And when the storms of life shall cease, O Jesus, in that final hour,
Be Thou my rod and staff and guide, And draw me safely to Thy side!
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God bless us as we together devotionally journey through this Holy Spirit inspired writing of John.