

**BRYAN STATION BAPTIST CHURCH**

# ***THE PIONEER BAPTIST***

**INDEPENDENT • MISSIONARY • ESTABLISHED 1786**

*“Preaching the same truth since before Kentucky was a state.”*

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## **27TH ANNUAL MISSION BIBLE CONFERENCE - October 27-29-2008**

It seems that the years fly by! Once again the Bryan Station Baptist Church welcomed our brothers and sisters in Christ from all over to join with us in worship and fellowship. And what a time we had! Many have told us that it was one of the best conferences they have attended. We were fed God's word (and some delicious food from the church kitchen!). Thanks be to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for blessing us with such sweet fellowship! We look forward to next year's conference - October 26-28, 2009. Mark your calendars now and plan to be with us!

# CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

By: C. D. Cole

I John 1:1-10 *"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life: (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."*

## SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF THE EPISTLE

It is simple and yet profound. It abounds in monosyllables: such words as light, love, truth, life, death, God, Christ, etc. These are common words of one syllable and yet their full meaning is beyond human understanding. Take the word "light" - what is it? Science cannot explain what light is. The Bible tells us that God is light; that He is love, and that He is Spirit, and all three descriptions of God are

beyond finite minds.

It is an epistle of contrasts. John sets one thing over against another in the same sentence; for example: love and hate, light and darkness, life and death, truth and falsehood, flesh and spirit, sin and righteousness, children of God and children of the wicked one, Christ and Satan.

It is marked by sublime positiveness. John seems to take delight in saying, "We know." I John 2:3, 5, 18; *"And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments...But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him...Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time."* I John 3:2, 14, 19, 24; *"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is...We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death...And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him...And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us."* I John 4:6, 13; *"We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error...Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit."* I John 5:2, 15, 18, 19, 20. *"By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments...And if we know that he hear*

*us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desire of him...We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not. And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness. And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life."*

John had no doubt about his authority and knowledge which was based upon his personal experience with Christ. What John knew came from Christ, Whom he had heard, Whom he had seen, and Whom he had touched.

Common and popular expressions we hear today are such as, "I am not sure," "I guess it is so," "I suppose so," or "I hope so." It reminds us a Xenophanes, who said, "And no man knows distinctly anything, And no man ever will." And Byron, who said, "Well didst thou speak, Athena's wisest son. All that we know is, nothing can be known."

But in matters of religion we can be positive because we have an infallible Bible. When we believe what the Bible says, we can well afford to say, "We know."

The trouble with Robert G. Ingersoll was not that he was an atheist, that is, one who denies the existence of God. He resented being called an atheist. He was an agnostic, that is, one who does not know. He did not say there was no God, but that one cannot know that there is a God. "I do not know" was his sin. Apart from an inerrant, and infallible revelation from God, all of us would be agnostics. We could not know anything about many

things such as the origin and destiny of things, heaven and hell, how to be saved, etc. Our knowledge of the most vital and eternal things is faith knowledge. It does not come from human reasoning or scientific investigation, but from the Bible.

John is the only New Testament writer who uses the word antichrist. I John 2:18: "...antichrist shall come..." 2:22: "He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son." 4:3: "...spirit of antichrist..." II John 2:7: "For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist." In these verses John says there were many antichrists in his day. He describes an antichrist as anyone who denies the Father and the Son, and who does not confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.

### THE THEME OF THE EPISTLE

This brings us to the theme of the epistle, which is the living Christ through Whom we have fellowship with the Father and with one another. The key word in I John 1:3 is "fellowship."

In the first three verses we have Christ set forth,

As the Word of life. A word is a means of communication and revelation. By words our thoughts are communicated and our character is revealed. So God communicates His thoughts to us and reveals what He is through His Son, Jesus Christ. John 1:1, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

As pre-existent in eternity. Christ was in the beginning because He was without beginning. John 1:2, 3, "The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made."

As manifested in time. The Word of life became incarnate in human

flesh so that He could be heard and seen and touched. Galatians 4:4, "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman..." Matthew 1:20-21, "...fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." Luke 2:46-47, "And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers." This was before his personal ministry.

As known by personal experience. John's evidence was that of an eyewitness. He could say that he had heard with his ears, he had seen with his eyes, and he had handled with his own hands this human person who was the word of life. John was known as the disciple whom Jesus loved. John 13:23, "Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved." John 19:26-27, "When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home." John 21:7, "Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord..." John was very close to Jesus, he was on the mount of transfiguration. Matthew 17:1-2, "And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light."

As authoritatively declared. John preached and wrote about the Word of life that became incarnate in human flesh. John 21:20, 24, "Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom

Jesus loved following: which also leaned on his breast at supper... This is the disciple which testifieth of these things: and we know that his testimony is true." Revelation 1:1-2, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw."

### THE PURPOSE OF THE EPISTLE

John writes so that his readers might have fellowship with the Father and with the Son and with fellow-believers. Fellowship means partnership. It is the common possession of an experience. John writes that others might share with him what he knows about Christ.

John wrote to counteract heresy on two particular points: the person of Christ and the sinfulness of man.

The error about the person of Christ became known as Gnosticism. The Gnostic claimed to have spiritual knowledge.

Concerning the person of Christ, it denied the incarnation that Christ came in the flesh. Jesus was not the Christ but the son of Joseph and Mary. The Christ came upon Jesus at His baptism and left Him at the cross so that Jesus and not the Christ suffered. This error John wrote to combat. He says the spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God.

Concerning the sinfulness of man, the Gnostic heresy took two directions. The heresy was based upon belief that matter was necessarily and inherently evil. This led to Antinomianism on the one hand and to the claim of sinless perfection on the other. These two forms of heresy are existing today.



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 Alfred M. Gormley, Pastor  
 Don Waltermire, Assistant Pastor

**SCHEDULE OF SERVICES:**  
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 Sunday Evening Worship—6 p.m.  
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