

# A TOTAL COMMITMENT TO THE BIBLE IN 2024 – 1 JOHN 1:1-4

1/07/2024

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**LESSON OBJECTIVE:** Through the message of 1 John 1:1-4, to grow in our total commitment to the Bible as we begin the year of 2024.

**CONTEXT:** John (the apostle and author of the Gospel of John and Revelation) writes to an audience who has just experienced the departure of many from their congregation who denied the truth that Jesus is the Christ. His stated purpose in writing his first epistle is as follows: “I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life” (1 John 5:13). As the letter unfolds, three core “tests” of true Christian faith appear: a true confession of Jesus Christ, a true love for God’s people, and a true display of Christlike holiness.

## LESSON: A TOTAL COMMITMENT TO THE BIBLE IN 2024 – 1 JOHN 1:1-4

### I. Reasons for a Total Commitment to the Bible in 2024

#### A. *Because of What the Bible Is (v. 1-3a).*

- i. John opens up his first letter by telling his readers exactly what he is doing. He is testifying about the “word of life” to them.
- ii. What is this “word of life”?
  - a) It is an eternal reality – *“That which was from the beginning...”*
  - b) It is also an incarnate reality – *“which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands...”*
  - c) The *“word of life,”* therefore, is Jesus Christ himself – the eternal Son of God who became flesh, dwelled among us, and suffered, died, and rose again to redeem us from our sins and secured for us eternal life.
- iii. John begins his letter, then, by clarifying for us what the apostolic testimony is. It is the testimony about eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ.
- iv. But this isn’t just John’s subject. The entire Bible – from Genesis to Revelation – reveals this message to us so that we can believe it and so that, through repentance and faith, we can enter into a relationship with God himself.
- v. So, why should we have a total commitment to the Bible in 2024? Because the Bible, and the Bible alone, is *“able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus”* (2 Timothy 3:15). It alone contains the authoritative message about

who Jesus is and what Jesus has done. And we know that because the apostles themselves (as John says here) testify to it.

- vi. But that's not the only reason from this passage why we should have a total commitment to the Bible in 2024.

### **B. Because of What the Bible Does (v. 3b-4).**

- i. John follows his description of the “*word of life*” that is the subject of his teaching with two purpose statements. In other words, he wants his readers to receive this message for two reasons: fellowship (v. 3b) and joy (v. 4).
- ii. As we embark upon the year of 2024, we don't know everything that will happen. We don't know what successes or tragedies we may face. We don't know who will be elected President of the United States. We don't know which way the stock market will turn or what our next medical exam will reveal.
- iii. However, this passage shows us one important truth that we *can* know about 2024. And it is this: if you commit yourself to the Bible in 2024, you will experience fellowship and joy.
  - a) You will experience fellowship with God as you grow in your personal knowledge of him through his Word. And you will experience fellowship with other believers as we unify around God's life-giving, Spirit-inspired Word.
  - b) You will also experience the joy of knowing God and being transformed by his Word. We are shaped into Christlikeness by staring at Christ – “*And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit*” (2 Cor. 3:18).
- iv. Do you want 2024 to be a year of growing in your relationship with God, growing in godly friendship with others, and growing in the fullness of joy? If so, then what you must do in 2024 is make a total commitment to the Bible.
- v. So, how do you do that? At our church, what does it look like to make a total commitment to the Bible?

## **II. Resources for a Total Commitment to the Bible in 2024**

### **1. The First Baptist Bible Reading Plan**

- i. Every year, our church produces a unique First Baptist Bible Reading Plan.

- ii. While this plan doesn't take you through the whole Bible, it does take you through a significant portion of Scripture.
- iii. But the best part about the plan is that it is specifically designed for our church. Each week, in addition to normal weekly reading, you also read the passage that will be preached on Sunday morning and the passage that will be taught in Sunday School.
- iv. Think about how much our fellowship would increase if each of us came to church every week already having read the passage we'll hear in the sermon and the passage we'll study in Sunday School.
- v. Not only this but think about how much your fellowship with God will thrive and your joy in Christ will expand if you spending time with him each day through our First Baptist Bible Reading Plan!
- vi. Our goal is that every member and regular attender of our church would be walking in Scripture together by following the First Baptist Bible Reading Plan. Please join us in this!

**\*Note to teacher: Make sure to have a copy of the Bible reading plan to display\***

## **2. *The Sunday School Workbook***

- i. Last year, our Sunday School classes began a 12-year journey through the books of the Bible. That means that if you and your family stick with us at First Baptist over the next decade or so, you will have studied through the entire Bible!
- ii. If all you do for the next decade is show up to Sunday School and follow the First Baptist Bible Reading Plan, you are well on your way to growing exponentially in your relationship with God, community with other Christians, and joy in Christ.
- iii. However, we also provide you an opportunity to go even deeper by studying through the Sunday School Workbook. This is a resource that we make available to you each quarter that takes you through an in-depth Bible study on the book(s) of the Bible that we are studying in Sunday School that quarter.
- iv. There are tons of ways you can use this resource. You can study it on your own throughout the week. You can study it with your spouse on Saturday evening. You can meet with a group from your Sunday School class each week and discuss it together.
- v. No matter how you use it – even if you only do a portion of it each week – this resource will help you go even deeper in your relationship with Christ at our church.

**\*Note to teacher: Make sure to have a copy of the Sunday School Workbook to display\***

### **3. First MDWK**

- i. First MDWK is one of the most remarkable ways for your whole family to grow at our church.
- ii. Each semester First Adult MDWK classes feature engaging and relevant teaching from our pastors on important topics for the Christian life. Our goal in offering these classes is to help you and your family become “all of life” disciples of Jesus Christ.
- iii. Our church also tries to remove as many barriers that would prevent you from coming to MDWK as possible. They provide dinner prepared in our church kitchen by our church’s chef. They provide excellent kids and student programming. They provide opportunities for you to spend time with friends and experience the joy of Christian community.
- iv. Committing to MDWK is a wonderful way to make a total commitment to the Bible in 2024. You will grow in your knowledge of God’s Word, and as a result you will grow in fellowship with God, community with others, and joy in Christ. Make it a point to start coming this week as we begin the Spring semester!

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. What stuck out to you from the lesson/passage today? What was interesting to you? What was encouraging? What was convicting?
2. As you look back on 2023, what was your commitment to the Bible like? Where did you see growth in your relationship with God through his Word? Where do you wish you would have grown more?
3. What are some of the habits and routines that you and your family have to keep you rooted in God’s Word? What new habits and routines might you like to begin in 2024?
4. Which of the resources for a total commitment to the Bible do you and your family plan to use in 2024? What led you to this decision?

**PRAYER PROMPT:** *Pray that God would enable you to have a greater commitment to the Bible in 2024 and that through your commitment you would grow in your fellowship with him, community with other believers, and joy in Christ.*



**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH**  
JACKSONVILLE