

# CAN PEOPLE REALLY CHANGE?

## Series: 1 John

**Introduction:** Can people change?

- Can personalities change?
  - There is a difference between personality and character.
  - What role does character play?



**1 John 1:1-4** (NLT) *We proclaim to you the one who existed from the beginning, whom we have heard and seen. We saw him with our own eyes and touched him with our own hands. He is the Word of life. This one who is life itself was revealed to us, and we have seen him. And now we testify and proclaim to you that he is the one who is eternal life. He was with the Father, and then he was revealed to us. We proclaim to you what we ourselves have actually seen and heard so that you may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We are writing these things so that you may fully share our joy.*

### **John's Background:**

- Business man – fisherman
- Called to follow Jesus even though he and brother James had a reputation
  - Jesus called them “sons of thunder”
- He was loyal

**Mark 9:38-40** *John said to Jesus, “Teacher, we saw someone using your name to cast out demons, but we told him to stop because he wasn’t in our group.”*

*“Don’t stop him!” Jesus said. “No one who performs a miracle in my name will soon be able to speak evil of me. Anyone who is not against us, is for us.”*

- He thought he was protecting Jesus' ministry
  - He couldn't stand disrespect
- A man of passion and a short fuse
  - He wanted to call fire down to destroy

**Luke 9:55** *When James and John saw this, they said to Jesus, "Lord, should we call down fire from heaven to burn them up?"*

**Luke 9.56** *Usually at the bottom of your Bible, it says: "And he said, you do not know what kind of spirit you are off; for the son of man did not come to destroy people's lives, but to save them"*

- Yet in his writings, John uses two words more than any others in the Bible – "Truth" and "Love".
  - "love" or related word used 40 times.
- How does one change from being a "son of thunder" to being "the disciple whom Jesus loved"?
- Did Jesus love John more than the other disciples?
  - NO, he loved all equally
- It was John's (and our) response to Jesus' love that makes the difference.

## 1. John's Testimony About Jesus

**1 John 1:1** *We proclaim to you the one who existed from the beginning, whom we have heard and seen. We saw him with our own eyes and touched him with our own hands. He is the Word of life.*

### (a) Word of Life

- Is eternal – was at the beginning
- "logos" (Greek) conveys His powerful self-expression in creation, revelation and redemption in OT
  - Word is not just a word
  - Jesus is the eternal message, the creative Word, the living expression of God
  - He is the source of life.

(b) We have heard

- The most common statement made about Jesus is that He spoke with authority.
  - Think about all the times that Jesus spoke, and something happened.

(c) We have seen

- They experienced Jesus with their own eyes (eye-witnesses).

(d) We have touched

- Touched physically
- Touched spiritually

## 2. Who do you Fellowship With?

- Fellowship = all in the one ship
- Where are those you fellowship with taking you?

**1 John 1:3** *We proclaim to you what we ourselves have actually seen and heard so that you may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.*

- Fellowship with us...Historic Christian faith
- Fellowship with Father and Son
- Praying in the Spirit is the key

**John 16:13-16** *When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own but will tell you what he has heard. He will tell you about the future. He will bring me glory by telling you whatever he receives from me. All that belongs to the Father is mine; this is why I said, 'The Spirit will tell you whatever he receives from me.'*

- Speaks only what He hears
- He will bring glory to Jesus

### 3. You Were Made for Joy

**1 John 1:4** *We are writing these things so that you may fully share our joy.*

**song:**

*He touched me, oh He touched me,  
and oh, the joy that floods my soul.  
Something happened, and now I know  
He touched me, and made me whole.*