

# Who Comes First? - Lesson 2

For 2022, what is your great priority? What is the one thing you want to accomplish more than anything else? Is there a priority in your life?

Sometimes we set priorities and they are not really priorities, only preferences. Difference between a priority and a preference is we must meet the priority, and the preference is no great deal if we do not meet it.

Our priority at CIMC is to always put Christ first in every aspect of our ministry. He must be the reason we are doing what we are doing. If we are doing something without considering Christ, then it must be set aside. Christ comes first.

Priorities must always come at the beginning, so you know why and how you are proceeding. John sets the priority for his letter to the Christians in his introduction. Christ must always come first in the lives of Christians.

**Matthew 6:33 ESV “But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”**

Without Christ there is no hope for eternal life. He is the Lord of Lords and King of Kings.

**1 John 1:1–4 ESV “1:1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—**

**1:2 the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us—**

**1:3 that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.**

**1:4 And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.”**

## John's Witness.

**John 1:14–15 ESV “1:14 ¶ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.**

**1:15 (John bore witness about him, and cried out, “This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.’”)**

John gives his personal testimony to who Christ is. He testifies he has personal knowledge of Christ because he was with Christ. John's testimony is a progression of knowing Jesus more

intimately to really understand who He is. From hearing about to seeing, from seeing to looking on, from looking on to touching, John came to fully understand that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

The more we study God's word and dig deep into the depths of the Word of God, the greater our faith grows to fully trust and know that Jesus Christ is the Messiah, the Son of God.

**Romans 10:17 ESV “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.”**

## **John heard.**

He heard about the Lord Jesus Christ. He heard John the Baptist proclaim that Jesus is the Lamb of God.

**John 1:29–34 ESV “1:29 ¶ The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!**

**1:30 This is he of whom I said, ‘After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.’**

**1:31 I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel.”**

**1:32 And John bore witness: “I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him.**

**1:33 I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’**

**1:34 And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.””**

## **John saw.**

He saw Jesus with his own eyes. When John the Baptist proclaimed that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah, John saw the Lord at a distance. He had a passing glance at Christ.

The Greek word, ὀρώω horao, properly, to stare at.

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**1:15 (John bore witness about him, and cried out, “This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.’””**

## **John looked upon**

**John 1:35–39 ESV “1:35 ¶ The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples,**

1:36 and he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God!”

1:37 The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus.

1:38 Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, “What are you seeking?” And they said to him, “Rabbi” (which means Teacher), “where are you staying?”

1:39 He said to them, “Come and you will see.” So they came and saw where he was staying, and they stayed with him that day, for it was about the tenth hour.”

The Greek word, θεάομαι , theh-ah'-om-ahee; a prolonged form of a primary verb; to look closely at, i.e. (by implication) perceive (literally or figuratively); by extension to visit. Instead of just staring at the Lord, John went and visited Jesus, seeing Him day after day. He spent time with the Lord. Probably one of the greatest sights he saw Jesus was on the Mount of Transfiguration.

**Matthew 17:1–8 ESV “17:1 ¶ And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves.**

**17:2 And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light.**

**17:3 And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him.**

**17:4 And Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah.”**

**17:5 He was still speaking when, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.”**

**17:6 When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces and were terrified.**

**17:7 But Jesus came and touched them, saying, “Rise, and have no fear.”**

**17:8 And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only.”**

## **John touched.**

**Luke 24:33–43 ESV “24:33 And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem. And they found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together,**

**24:34 saying, “The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!”**

**24:35 Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread.**

**24:36 ¶ As they were talking about these things, Jesus himself stood among them, and said to them, “Peace to you!”**

**24:37 But they were startled and frightened and thought they saw a spirit.**

**24:38 And he said to them, “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts?**

**24:39 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.”**

**24:40** And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet.

**24:41** And while they still disbelieved for joy and were marveling, he said to them, “Have you anything here to eat?”

**24:42** They gave him a piece of broiled fish,

**24:43** and he took it and ate before them.”

Throughout Jesus’ ministry, while the disciples were with Him, He touched them. But there was no greater touch than when they touched His hands to feel the nail prints where He had been nailed to the cross. Then they realized He had truly been raised from the dead. He was resurrected.

John touched the Lord.

John’s testimony in the beginning of his letter is simple: “I know who I heard, saw, spent time with, and touched that Jesus is truly the Son of God, the Messiah.”

What a testimony! Therefore, we can take with great assurance that John is testifying to who the Lord is and how we can know Him.

## John’s proclamation.

**1 John 1:1–4 ESV** “1:1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—

1:2 the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us—

1:3 that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.

1:4 And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.”

## Jesus Christ is the Creator of All.

Notice these verses:

**Genesis 1:1 ESV** “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.”

Word translated “God” is the Hebrew word **אֱלֹהִים** }elohiym, el-o-heem´; plural of 433; gods in the ordinary sense; but specifically used (in the plural thus, especially with the article) of the supreme God. It is plural which means it is referring to the Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit).<sup>1</sup> Jesus Christ is the Son of God and He was with the Father and Holy Spirit in the very beginning.

John 1:1–3 ESV “1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

1:2 He was in the beginning with God.

1:3 All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.”

1 John 1:1–2 ESV “1:1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—

1:2 the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us—”

Hebrews 11:3 ESV “By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.”

Colossians 1:15–20 ESV “1:15 ¶ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

1:16 For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.

1:17 And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

1:18 And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.

1:19 For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,

1:20 and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.”

John is testifying Jesus is the Christ, the Word of God who is the creator of all things. He is truly the Lord of Lords and King of Kings. John is testifying to who Christ is and why we should follow Him.

## **Jesus Christ is the Word of God.**

1 John 1:1–3 ESV “1:1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—

1:2 the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us—

1:3 that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.”

**Revelation 19:13 ESV “He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God.”**

To see the Lord, one must see Christ. He is the Word of God. He is God, manifest or revealed in the flesh. When Christ was born in the manger, it was not His beginning. He is God and is eternal. He was in the beginning with the Father. It was Christ who was walking in the garden of Eden in the cool of the day. It was Christ who appeared to Joshua.

When Christ was born in the manger, God took upon Himself humanity in order to die on the cross to bring salvation to all who believe.

## **Jesus Christ is the life.**

**1 John 1:1–2 ESV “1:1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—**

**1:2 the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us—”**

Life comes from the Lord. When God created Adam and Eve, He breathe into them the breath of life and they became a living soul. God gave them life and a soul so they will live forever.

**Genesis 2:7–8 ESV “2:7 then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.**

**2:8 And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed.”**

When Adam and Eve sinned, it brought death into the world. They died spiritually and began dying physically. Because of Adam’s sin, death is passed down from one generation to another because we have all sinned.

**Romans 5:12–15 ESV “5:12 ¶ Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned—**

**5:13 for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law.**

**5:14 Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come.**

**5:15 ¶ But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man’s trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many.”**

**Romans 5:17–19 ESV “5:17 For if, because of one man’s trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of**

**grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.**

**5:18 ¶ Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men.**

**5:19 For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous."**

Christ came to restore life by dying in our place on the cross of Calvary. He gave His life as ransom or payment for our sins. He gave his life so we might have eternal life in Him. There is no eternal life outside of Jesus Christ.

**Romans 6:23 ESV "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."**

## **John's Desire.**

**1 John 1:3 ESV "that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ."**

Interesting that John writes "we" have seen, heard, and proclaim. Not only John, but others who know Christ are telling others about Jesus. John is fulfilling the Great Commission of making disciples (followers of Jesus).

**Matthew 28:18–20 ESV "28:18 And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.**

**28:19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,**

**28:20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.""**

The beginning of making disciples is proclaiming that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Messiah. It begins with a testimony and John begins his letter with testifying that Jesus is the Christ.

He calls us to fulfill the Great Commission and make disciples, then we must tell others about Jesus Christ. We cannot remain silent, we must share Jesus.

## **John's Fellowship.**

**1 John 1:3 ESV "that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ."**

When a person knows Christ as Lord and Saviour, fellowship begins with the Lord and His children.

The word translated “fellowship” is the Greek word, **κοινωνία koinonia**, koy-nohn-ee´-ah; from 2844; partnership, i.e. (literally) participation, or (social) intercourse. Fellowship is a partnership, communication, interaction between individuals.

When we fellowship with the Lord, He speaks to us through His Word and Holy Spirit. We speak to Him through prayer and obedience.

The fellowship goes deeper because now we have fellowship with His children. We are part of the family of God; we are brothers and sisters in the Lord. Fellowship brings unity. Fellowship brings love. Fellowship bring closeness.

**Romans 8:14–17 ESV “8:14 For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.**

**8:15 For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!”**

**8:16 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,**

**8:17 and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.”**

**Ephesians 4:1–7 ESV “4:1 ¶ I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called,**

**4:2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love,**

**4:3 eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.**

**4:4 There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—**

**4:5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism,**

**4:6 one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.**

**4:7 But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ’s gift.”**

The devil wants to destroy the fellowship of believers. He seeks to destroy the unity, but Christ brings us together because we are part of one family. We need to see one another as part of the family of God and strive to keep unity within the family.

**Psalms 133:1–3 ESV “133:1 ¶ Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!**

**133:2 It is like the precious oil on the head, running down on the beard, on the beard of Aaron, running down on the collar of his robes!**

**133:3 It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains of Zion! For there the LORD has commanded the blessing, life forevermore.”**

One of the most beautiful fellowships is when God's children dwell together in love and unity. The psalmist writes it is sweet and precious, like the dew of Hermon that falls on the mountains of Zion.

How precious when we understand the beauty of fellowshiping together in love, peace, and unity. What a sweet blessing it brings.

## John's Goal.

**1 John 1:4 ESV "And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete."**

John knows that joy begins with Jesus. Joy in knowing Christ. Joy in knowing one's eternity is secure. Joy in having eternal life. Joy in fellowshiping with the Lord. Joy in fellowshiping with other Christians. Joy in telling others about Jesus.

Joy is found in the Lord.

My joy is complete when I know Jesus.

My joy is complete when I fellowship with my family.

My joy is complete when I see others come to Christ.

My joy is complete when I see Jesus.

**2 John 1:4 ESV "¶ I rejoiced greatly to find some of your children walking in the truth, just as we were commanded by the Father."**

The Greek word translated "complete" is πληρόω pleroō, play-ro'-o; from 4134; to make replete, i.e. (literally) to cram (a net), level up (a hollow), or (figuratively) to furnish (or imbue, diffuse, influence), satisfy, execute (an office), finish (a period or task), verify (or coincide with a prediction), etc.: — accomplish, x after, (be) complete, end, expire, fill (up), fulfil, (be, make) full (come), fully preach, perfect, supply.<sup>2</sup>

**Psalm 23:1–6 ESV "23:1 ¶ The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.**

**23:2 He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters.**

**23:3 He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.**

**23:4 ¶ Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.**

**23:5 ¶ You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.**

**23:6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever."**

## Things to Consider:

Luke 15:1–7 ESV “15:1 ¶ Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear him.

15:2 And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, “This man receives sinners and eats with them.”

15:3 ¶ So he told them this parable:

15:4 “What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country, and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it?

15:5 And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing.

15:6 And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.’

15:7 Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.”

1. Do you know who Jesus really is?
2. Do you tell others about Jesus?
3. Do you have joy in fellowshiping with the Lord and His children?
4. Are you bringing joy and unity to the family of God?

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<sup>1</sup>Strong’s Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary of the Old Testament, s.v. “paragraph 1.

<sup>2</sup>Strong’s Greek Dictionary of the New Testament, s.v. “paragraph 1.