

## **FOUR QUALITIES OF SPIRITUAL ATTAINMENT** **(A Study in I John Part I)**

**1 John 2:12-23** 12 I write to you, little children, Because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake. 13 I write to you, fathers, Because you have known Him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, Because you have overcome the wicked one. I write to you, little children, Because you have known the Father. 14 I have written to you, fathers, Because you have known Him who is from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, Because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, And you have overcome the wicked one. 15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world — the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life — is not of the Father but is of the world. 17 And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever. 18 Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour. 19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us. 20 But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things. 21 I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and that no lie is of the truth. 22 Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son. 23 Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also. NKJV

I. Within the First Epistle of John there are four distinct type of people he speaks to each type of person is a spiritual attainment:

A. τεκνίον *teknion* (tek-nee'-on); an infant.

1. While this word means infant, it comes from a word τίκτω (*tikto*) that describes that which is produced. It is from this word the Greeks used *technologia*, which describes a systematic treatment of art. It is from this word we get the word, technology.
2. We are God's technology, we are His art. But like any technology, it must function according to design. We must understand that in Greek thinking (which we must keep in mind that the Apostle John who was Hebrew, is attempting to use Greek being that he is speaking to a Western audience), an art is not simply the painting, or the sculpture. Actually that is the product of the art. By definition *art* is a skill acquired by experience, study and observation.
3. The infant is one who is learning to function. Notice what the infant is concerned with and what he or she must attain (there are at least eight things):

- a) Sin and the need to know they are forgiven of their sins.
- b) That Jesus is not the judge, but their advocate.
- c) Keeping his commandments.
- d) They are to be confident and not be ashamed.
- e) Who ever is born of God does not sin, but does righteousness.
- f) Believe on the Son and Love one another.
- g) Greater is He that is in You, than He that is in the System.
- h) Keep yourself from idols.

B. παιδία (paidía) παιδίον (pahee-dee'-on) a childling (of either sex), a half-grown boy or girl

- 1. Being classified as "little children" is not a derogatory statement, after all Jesus said:

**Matt 18:2-5** 2 Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, 3 and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. 4 Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. 5 Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me. NKJV

- 2. The phrase in English "little children" is mentioned twice in the first epistle of John, the paidia is concerned with attaining (there are four things):

- a) Discovering who the Father is.
- b) The anti-Christ, being seduced by false teaching and learning the voice of the Holy Spirit.

C. νεανίσκοι (neanískoi) νεανίσκος (neh-an-is'-kos) a youth (under forty)

1. The young men, or the youths, have attained not a theology or a way of thinking, but a way of being (they have only three aspects):
  - a) Overcoming the wicked one.
  - b) Being strong (forceful).
  - c) Abiding in the expression (Word) of God.

D. πατέρες (patéres) from πατήρ (pat-ayr') a father

1. Fathers interestingly are only concerned with one thing, knowing the One called, Beginning.

II. The four attainments mentioned in personalities are also mentioned at the very beginning of the epistle, but not as persons, infants, little children, youths, and fathers, but experiences, which is the true concept of attainment.

**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 upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life — NKJV

A. The four experiences of attainment are: heard, seen, looked upon, handled.

1. Heard - ἀκούω (akoo'-o) to hear
2. Seen - ὁράω horao (hor-ah'-o); properly, to stare at (by implication) to discern clearly by extension, to attend to; by Hebraism, to experience; passively, to appear
3. Looked Upon - 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
4. Hands Handled - χεῖρ (khire); perhaps from the base of the hand ψηλαφάω (psay-laf-ah'-o); to manipulate, i.e. verify by contact

III. The Life is the Light.

**1 John 1:2-10** 2 the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us — 3 that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. 4 And these things we write to you that your joy may be full. 5 This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. 6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. 7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. 8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us. NKJV

## **THAT WHICH WAS FROM "BEGINNING" THE LIGHT (A Study in I John Part II)**

The Apostle John immediately begins his epistle from the standpoint of the highest level of attainment and speaks to all his disciples. He speaks from the standpoint of a father and one who has handled, in other words has made personal contact with that which was from Beginning.

The first thing we must remind ourselves of, is the definition of the word, "Beginning". (For those who have been through The Genesis Factor, we have gone through this in detail in class one; but for the sake of the entire congregation we will do a quick review.) The word, "Beginning" is referring not to the beginning of something like the starting line of a racetrack, but like the painter of a painting. The Greek word for, "beginning" is the same word as "principality"; it is referring to the person who is the author or chief. Thus, it is referring to the painter and not painting. So when John spoke of "Beginning" he was speaking of the Father, the Divine Source of all things.

**1 John 1:1-2** 1 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, concerning the Word of life — 2 the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us — NKJV

**1 John 1:2** καὶ ἡ ζωὴ ἐφανερώθη, καὶ ἑωράκαμεν καὶ μαρτυροῦμεν καὶ ἀπαγγέλλομεν ὑμῖν τὴν ζωὴν τὴν αἰώνιον ἣτις ἦν πρὸς τὸν πατέρα καὶ ἐφανερώθη ἡμῖν

καὶ ἡ ζωὴ ἐφανερώθη, καὶ ἑωράκαμεν καὶ μαρτυροῦμεν καὶ ἀπαγγέλλομεν ὑμῖν τὴν ζωὴν τὴν αἰώνιον ἣτις ἦν πρὸς τὸν πατέρα καὶ ἐφανερώθη ἡμῖν.

ἐφανερώθη (efanerœithē) – was become visible. Its root word, φανερός phaneros, means shining. (Please take note that the ultimate point and visibility here is about that which is shining; in other words this is referring to Light.)

ἑωράκαμεν (heerákamen) – to discern clearly. Thus, the apostle was telling us that the Light was shining and we saw its shining.

μαρτυροῦμεν (marturoúmen) – and simple terms, this word means witness, much like a witness in legal proceedings. However the concept of μαρτυροῦμεν (marturoúmen), comes from the Greek word μάρτυς (martus) which means to witness to the death, or to stake one's life upon it.

ἀπαγγέλλομεν (apangéllomen) – which again in simple terms, would mean to announce. However this word sounds very much like, anangelo, which would be

a message. However in Greek thought, ἀπαγγέλλομεν (apangéllomen) refers more to a religious context. In many cases its usage is referring to close the Greek god, Hermes, the messenger of the gods. It is also interesting to point out that Hermes, the messenger of gods, had a numerical value of four; which brings the light why the Apostle John brings the revelation of the four qualities of spiritual attainment.

**1 John 1:3-4** 3 that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. 4 And these things we write to you that your joy may be full. NKJV

Notice to key intention of John's epistle. His intention was for the disciples to have fellowship at the spiritual level of the Father. His intention was for his disciples to mature completely. He did not want them to get stuck being an infant, a child or a youth. He did not want them to get stuck at simply hearing, seeing or even gazing. The total objective was to come into complete contact, into intimate union with "Beginning", the Divine Source of all creation, the Father. As far as the Apostle John was concerned, fullness of joy was truly possible at that level of attainment, at that level of revelation.

Not too long ago I heard a rabbi say that at each level of spiritual reality we come in contact with, the experience is so powerful that the joy and beauty feels like it cannot get better than this. I could not help but think that to be so true. Each time we seem to taste some new revelation, some new experience, some new breath of Spirit, some new dimension of attainment in God, it seems to be so joyful. But here, the Apostle John is telling us that when your hands have handled, when you are intimate in union with the Father, and reached and maturity of level a father, then your joy will be truly full! He is telling the reader, we want to have true fellowship with you and true fellowship really occurs that this level.

**1 John 1:5-7** 5 This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. 6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. 7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. NKJV

He is telling us that we need to leave the world of physicality, and begin hearing, seeing, studying and contacting God in a completely different dimension. He defines God as light, which is so profound if we consider what we have discovered about light in the world of science since the time of the Apostle John. But let's not just dwell on all of that at the moment, John says, "If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie..." So what does it mean to walk in darkness, and what does it mean to walk in the light?

**1 John 2:10-11** 10 He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him. 11 But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes. NKJV

John tried to make it as simple as possible, "He who loves his brother abides in the light..." "He who hates his brother walks in darkness..." Yet this is more than simply loving a person or not; because infants would have difficulty with this, because everything is based on a legalistic right and wrong way of living. Children would have difficulty because they see everything through the lens of us and them; who is part of our group and who is not (the Anti-Christ syndrome). The youth really start approaching this in a basic form, because they make it more about conquering the wicked one in their life rather than pointing the finger at another. But in the highest realm of spiritual attainment called fathering, it is no longer about right and wrong, not longer is it about are they a part of my group, and it goes beyond just conquering the Ego, the sIn in my life. It now becomes about union, being one, and dwelling in the light from the perspective of the Source of All Life. He sees all people from the perspective of spiritual reality, from the perspective of a constant bestowal of through him to others. He sees the darkness not as antagonistic, but simply where His light needs to shine.

So how does one see the light in the darkness? Light shining in darkness, doesn't really light anything. For example the second you leave the earth's atmosphere, even on a sunny day, the sky still turns black. If you take a flashlight into a pitch-black field and turn it on, you will not see anything even if you shine it out in front of you. Why? Because for light to shine in the darkness, it has to have something to reflect upon.