

The First Epistle of John: How Do We know That we know?



Review



- **Context**
 - Time of doctrinal and ecclesial unification
 - Persecution, crisis of leadership
 - Heretics leave the church but profess to be believers, leading to confusion for those who stay – are they believers? How do we know?
- **The challenge of the proto-Gnostics**
 - Flesh evil, spirit good
 - The “super-spiritual” with secret knowledge
 - Bad behavior and no love
- **The three tests and Bolero**

An Outline of First John



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- **I The Preface (1:1-4)**
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- **II The Apostolic Message And Its Moral Implications (1:5-2:2)**
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- **III The First Application of the Tests (2:3-27)**
 - -obedience, or the moral test
 - -love or the social test
 - -belief or the doctrinal test
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- **IV The Second Application of the Tests (2:28- 4:6)**
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- **V The Third Application of the Tests (4:7- 5:5)**
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- **VI The Three Witnesses and Our Consequent Assurance (5:6-17)**
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- **VII Three Affirmations and a Concluding Exhortation (5:18-21)**
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ECHOES



Genesis	John's Gospel	1 John
<p>In the beginning God said Darkness/light Spirit Goodness of creation</p> <p>Humans made in God's image</p>	<p>In the beginning Word Light/darkness Holy Spirit True light came into the world Witness/testimony Children born of God Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world Grace and truth World</p>	<p>from the beginning – 8x Word of life Light/darkness Spirit of God Word of life made manifest Witness/testimony Children of God Sin and forgiveness</p> <p>Truth world</p>

1 John 1: 1-4



- **John's testimony**
 - Its reliability
 - Its subject
 - Its purpose

The Reliability of John's Testimony



- Why is it so important?
- There is more to believing than simply seeing
 - Jesus of Nazareth died on a cross in Jerusalem
 - Jesus Christ died on a cross in Jerusalem for our sin.

The Subject of John's Testimony



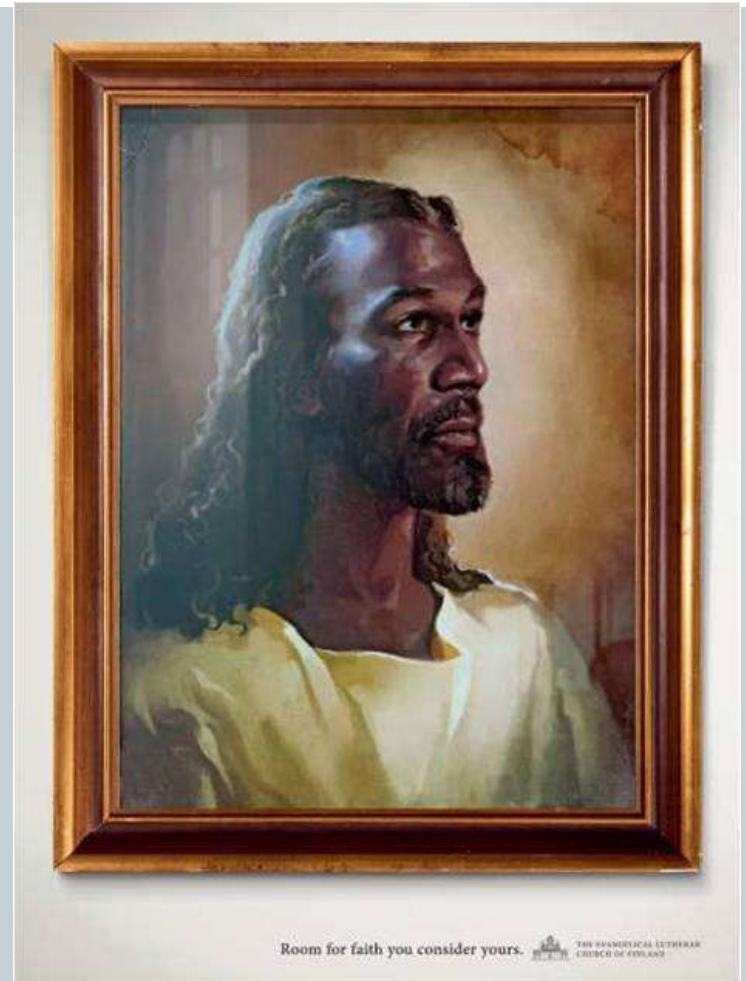
- The incarnation
 - Did Jesus just “seem” to be human? – **Doceticism**
 - Was Jesus just the source of secret knowledge to escape the bondage of the material world? – **proto-gnosticism**
 - Was Jesus just God's adopted son? – **Arianism**
 - Was Jesus just a model man and good teacher who pointed us to God? **Some 20th C theologians**
- John emphasizes the physical presence of the eternal Son – transcendent and immanent
- What do we lose if there is no incarnation?


What does the mystery of the incarnation mean for us in the 21st Century?



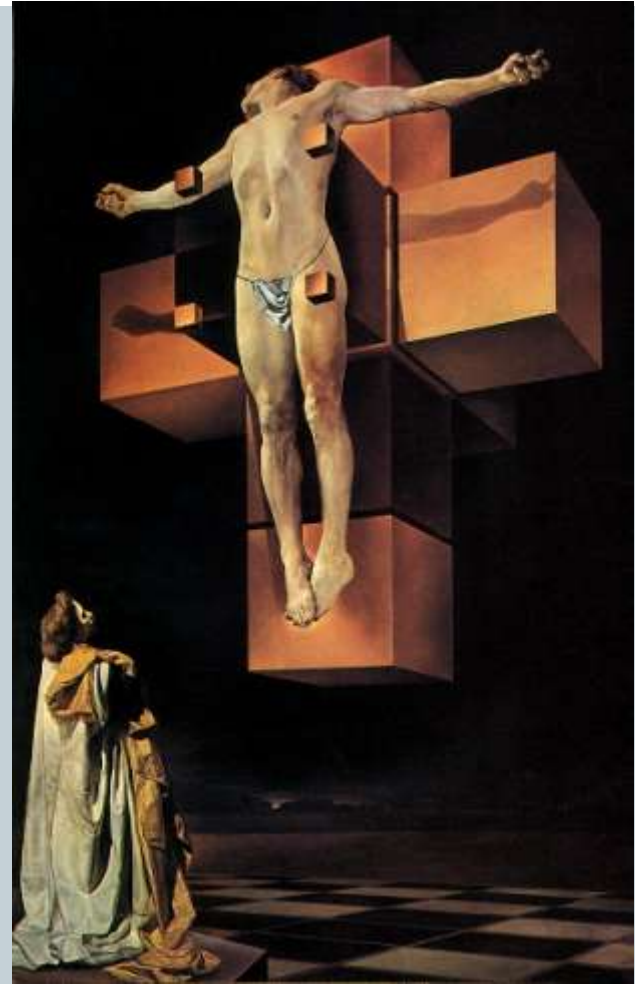
A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS

A Jesus we can relate to?



Room for faith you consider yours.  THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF FINLAND

Human Jesus or Divine Jesus?



God Taking on Flesh?



The Awe Factor of God



- <https://vimeo.com/35068735>

The Incarnation Embedded in the Creeds



- I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.
- And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
- I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting.

The Purpose of John's Testimony



- Fellowship
- Joy

An Assignment for Next Week



- **1 John 1: 5 – 2:2**
 - Echoes and tests