

“We have touched Him with our hands” 1 John 1:1-2:2

“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— 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— 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. And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.

This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.”

“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— 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.”

These are without any doubt among the most beautiful verses of the Scripture. This is Jesus’ beloved disciple John writing, guided by God’s own Spirit. And he remembers and shares his experience that only a few were privileged to enjoy.

He saw the risen Jesus, the risen Son of God. He saw the One, who was from the beginning. He was chosen to see Him with his own eyes, to hear Him with his own ears, to look upon the Eternal Son and even ... to touch Him with his own hands.

It was so different to see Jesus after His resurrection. All they had seen and understood before was that – Jesus was someone really special. But even the closest disciples couldn’t grasp the magnitude of what they were witnessing.

That the Word of Life was among them, the Supreme Being, the One who is the source of everything that exists, the One who carries in Himself the very source of life, the eternal life, never ending life, – that He was among them as one of us.

Only after the resurrection this reality begun to sink in. That the Life itself, the Word of Life had manifested Himself and made Himself available to our eyes, to our ears and even to our hands.

How would it be to touch the Word of Life, the creative power behind everything? What would you give just to have such an opportunity?! We can at least a little bit relate to John's excitement writing these words. But just imagine how keen you would be to share such experience if you had one? And this is what John is doing.

He just couldn't keep it to Himself. This marvellous experience didn't belong to him, it was not meant to be kept in secret, it belonged to entire mankind, every single human being had to be made aware of it.

"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."

Why couldn't John keep silent? Because the power of the Word of Life which He had seen and heard and experienced, didn't remain just in the past as a nice memory. Once the Word of Life touches you, He infuses you with His power and sends you into His mission. To do what? Just listen, this is so beautiful!

To invite, to bring everyone into the divine fellowship with the Father and the Son. You see, when you continue to proclaim the testimony about the Word of Life, which we have received from John and the other eyewitnesses, it is not simply sharing some important information.

When you do that, by speaking about the Word of Life, you actually invite and welcome others into this fellowship with the Father and the Son. When the Word of Life is spoken, the Spirit of Life accompanies Him, creating new hearts, and embracing people into this wonderful divine fellowship with the entire Trinity and also with all the people of God from every age and every corner of the world.

This is why John says: "We are writing these things so that our joy may be complete." But of course, our joy overflows whenever someone new is welcomed into this divine fellowship, the Church. What can be better?!

One more sinner has turned from darkness to light, from false idols to the living God. One more brother, one more sister, one more beloved child of God, with whom we will spend eternity together, has been rescued from lies and death. Joy upon joy...

"This is the message we have heard from Him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with Him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth."

What the Holy Spirit reminds us speaking through John is very important. We need to hear it again and again, that is, that we can't serve two masters. We can't walk at the same time in light and in darkness.

We can't at the same time to ignore and neglect our God the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, while claiming to be Christians. It is impossible. As John puts it, – then we lie and don't practice the truth.

“But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.” How wonderful a promise! How comforting and how encouraging!

If we try to follow our Lord Jesus Christ, if we try to walk in the light, by God's grace, of course, and enabled by His own Spirit, if we try to live out His will, His design for our lives, then we, indeed, have the fellowship with our Triune God and with all God's children. We can experience it and rejoice in it.

It doesn't mean that we become sinless and perfect. Not at all. But something very significant happens. Something that takes care of our sin and guilt and shame, – the blood of Jesus, God's true Son, cleanses us from all our sins.

John speaks about the Holy Sacrament. About the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ which He gives us for the forgiveness of all our sins. I wonder, how did John the apostle approach the Sacrament? How did He feel receiving it?

Probably kneeling with awe, with trembling, with indescribable reverence and joy, knowing, as He clearly knew, that the same Word of Life, whom he had seen and touched, comes to Him to be seen and touched again. This time – in the bread and wine of the Holy Sacrament.

And the same Word of Life comes today to us, manifests Himself, and gives His true body and blood for the forgiveness of our sins, for us to see it, to touch it, to taste it, and to receive it as God's greatest gift. To be literally fed with life, with eternal life.

Praise be to the Lord for all His goodness to us!

“If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” If we confess our sins, our confession is like a key to the door of our prison cells, it enables us to walk out to live in freedom.

With all the burdens and chains of sin thrown away. Our God has prepared this key for us and offers it to us, but He doesn't force our hand to use it. He wants us to make this step voluntarily.

“If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.” It is just so foolish. He made us, He knows us, every desire of our hearts, every thought of our minds, every word of our tongues, and every action of our bodies.

He knows everything. How foolish it is to deny what He already knows. And how liberating it is to live in honest openness and truth, accepting God's gift of forgiveness, allowing Him to cleanse and restore us, and rejoicing in the fellowship with the Father and the Son.

"My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin." Once called by the Word of Life, by God's grace let's try to do our best to live as children of light. It is a joyful task and a great privilege to be Jesus' disciples, even if it is not the easiest thing to do and takes a lot of discipline and commitment.

"But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ." And if we fail, and we do, yes, we all do, then we have someone who will take care of our sins and failures. "For He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world."

He is the One who has taken the sins of the whole world and of every single person upon Himself, He has claimed the responsibility for all of them and He has already suffered justice for all of them on the Cross. So, there is no more condemnation to God's beloved children.

Now, tell me – when we have received this message through John the apostle, how could we not be excited together with him?! The Word of Life, the One who was from the beginning has manifested Himself to us. We all have received this privilege, – we all have been invited into the fellowship with the Triune God.

We have been cleansed by Jesus' blood, and we all are also invited to participate in what John called "complete joy", as we too are sent to proclaim the Word of Life to everyone as John did.

I pray that the Word of Life bless us with the same excitement, with the same joy, with the same wisdom and courage and clarity as He did for John, so that we too may proclaim the same truth, with the same simple and bold words as John did, and when the time comes, would see the Word of Life with our own eyes, just as John did. Amen.