

Studies in 1 John

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Introduction to 1 John

John's first letter is like a family photograph album. It describes those who are member of the family of God. Just as children resemble their parents. God's children have His likeness too.

When a person becomes a child of God, he receives the life of God - eternal life. All who have this life show it in definite ways, John points out.

1. They acknowledge Christ as their Lord and Savior.
2. They love God.
3. They love the children of God.
4. They obey His commandments.
5. They do not go on sinning.

There are some of the tests of eternal life. John wrote this letter so that all who manifest these traits may know that they have eternal life. Chapter 5-13. At this time of writing the false sect of the Gnostics had arisen. This belief was Jesus was a man, and Christ was not a person but an influence that came out from God. Jesus was not Christ, rather the Christ came upon Jesus at this baptism and left Him before He died on the cross. With teachers around who believed this it is no wonder that John urged his readers to try the spirits. These false teachers did not have the marks of the true children of God. John comes on strong that a person is either a child of God or he is not. There is no in-between. That is why the epistle is filled with such extreme opposites as "light and darkness", "love and hatred", "truth and lie", "death and life", "God and the devil".

Theme of the letter is "Fellowship" mentioned 4 times in Chapter 1. Love is mentioned 32 times. It was near the end of the apostolic age and love for Christ was waning. The world was stealing the affections of the believers. Hence the emphasis on "Love". Love of God - Christ - the brethren.

v. 1 "That which was from the beginning". "He who was from the beginning". The eternity of the Lord Jesus. The re-existence of Christ. John 1:1 "In the beginning was the word" and "Before Abraham was I am". Consider some of the Theophanous. Next we are introduced to the incarnate Christ. John describes His humanity. (read the rest of the verse) This is the greatest mystery or miracle of all time. "God manifest in flesh". I Timothy 3:16. The Christ of God became a real man. John 1:16. Give Me a drink - asleep on the boat - wearied - poor - wept. The disciples saw this. John was chosen to record it. Perfect man - the storm - Perfect God - the grave or Lazarus. "I came forth from the Father (Deity) and can come into the world (Humanity) I leave the world and go to the Father (Glory). Finally in the verse John refers to the one he has described as the "Word of Life." This is a word John alone uses to describe the Lord.

v. 2: Most commentators believe that the "I" in life should be capitalized. Making Life to mean the Lord. He was manifested or revealed. "Eternal Life" is also a title given to Christ. John says, "He was with the Father, but was "manifested to us".

v. 3: The thought fellowship and the family is introduced here. Verses 1 and 2 is the expression of the doctrinal foundation of all true fellowship. True fellowship is in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. John says here we

have described to you what we as eye-witnesses, have seen and heard that you also may have fellowship with us. (The human side of fellowship). True fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son, Jesus Christ. (The divine side of fellowship). Fellowship is partnership and communion with fellowship – believers and with the triune God.

v. 4: When we are in fellowship with God and our brethren then our joy is full, complete. When our fellowship is unbroken, Peter says, “we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory”. “Heavenly joy”. God’s Joy – like His peace passes all understanding. When we are fellowshiping with God. Worry – anxiety and care disappears. The peace that cannot be described keeps our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

v. 5: After having stated the foundation of all true fellowship John goes on to tell us that there are certain conditions to be met before we can enjoy this fellowship. First of all John reveals the characters of God. “God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.” This means that God is absolutely Holy – righteous – pure. Being the essence and embodiment of light there is no darkness in Him. This means three things:

1. God Himself is absolutely pure – no sin in Him
2. God being pure cannot look with favor on any form of sin.
3. Being light, nothing is hidden from Him.

“All things are naked and bare in the sight of Him with whom we have to do.” Exodus 15:11 v. 6: This verse can apply in two ways.

1. To the believers. On tiny iota of darkness or sin in our life breaks our fellowship with God. His eyes are as a flame of fire Revelations 1.

2. It probably was aimed at the professors. They said, “we have fellowship with Him” – but they continued to walk in darkness. John says that they were liars and did not practice the truth.

In Verses 5 and 6 we have a contrast between light and darkness. Metaphorically, the word darkness is used of moral and spiritual darkness – the darkness of sin. It is impossible to fellowship with God and walk in darkness – sin. Conversely, it is impossible to walk in sin and fellowship with God. Anyone who pretends to be doing so is a liar, and is not practicing the truth. A professor or a believer out of fellowship. Judas would be an example of this.

Our Lord said to His disciples: Matthew 5:14-16; Ephesians 5:8; John 8:12; Philippians 2:5. Light is an emblem of holiness. It is what God is. Satan’s kingdom is a kingdom of darkness, of moral and spiritual evil. Ephesians 6:2. At our conversion we were transferred from Satan’s dark kingdom into marvelous light. Light and darkness cannot mix. One of God’s first creative acts was to divide light from darkness – it must ever be so. The two cannot exist at one and the same place. 2 Corinthians 6:14. John makes a distinction between our “words” and our “Walk”. Our walk is more important than our words. “If we say that we have fellowship with God and walk in darkness we are liars”. Notice also verse 8 and 10. “If we say”.

Note what the scripture says about our walk: Romans 6:4; Romans 13:12-13; 2 Corinthians 5:7; Galatians 5:16;

Ephesians 5:2 and 5:15. The Christian's walk determines if he is in fellowship with God or not. The walk also differentiates between the children of God and the children of the devil.

v. 7: Fellowship with God and our brethren is guaranteed when we walk with the Lord. "And the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin". The word "cleanseth" is in the present continuous tense. This means that the blood shed at Calvary, by which we are justified (Romans 3:26) maintains our standing before God. It does not mean that we are constantly being cleansed by the blood. It rather means that the one cleansing received at conversion has continuing value. Christian's are cleansed once by the blood of Christ. They are washed constantly by the word of God from defilement along the way.

v. 8: There are those who believe that at conversion the old nature is eradicated. Sinless perfectionists - eradicationists. To hold such doctrine, John says, is to deceive oneself, and it is untruthful.

v. 9: In order to maintain Christian fellowship - with God and believers - there must be "confession of Sin". The promise of God's word is that if a believer confesses his sins, God is faithful and just to forgive. He is faithful to forgive confessed sins, because He has promised. He is just to forgive them because this forgiveness was purchased by Christ on the cross. Then finally God promises to cleanse the repentant saint. The point here to remember is that sin breaks fellowship with God. Repentance and confession restores fellowship.

Note the difference between judicial cleansing verse 7 and parental forgiveness verse 9. The happy family spirit is restored.

v. 10: Finally, in order to be in fellowship with God we must not deny that we have committed acts of sin. God has stated in His Word that “all have sinned”. To deny this is to make God a liar. From these verses we see that fellowship with God does not require lives of sinlessness, but rather requires that our sins should be brought out into His presence, confessed and forsaken.

1 John 1

The author John is the disciple whom Jesus loved. Date: A.D. 95. The theme is fellowship.

Near the end of the apostolic age, errors were creeping into the church, there were attacks on His Deity, and professors were infiltrating into the church. Antichrists were arising and becoming more vociferous.

Compare Colossians 1: Love for Christ was beginning to wane (Letter to Ephesus). The world was stealing the hearts and affections of believers.

John points out that a person is either a child of God or he is not. There is no in between. Some of the features of the child of God:

1. He has eternal life.
2. He loves God.
3. He loves the children of God.
4. He obeys God's commandments.
5. He ceases to practice sin.

v. 1: That which was from the beginning. Revelation 13:8; 1 Peter 1:19.

The eternity of the Lord Jesus. Compare John 1:1.

"Glorify them with the glory that I had." The pre-existing of our Lord Jesus. His appearances in the O.T.

The Humanity of the Lord Jesus. John 1:14. The greatest mystery of all time. God Manifest in the flesh. I Timothy 3:16. He became a real man. The disciples saw this and John saw it and recorded it. John 16:28.

Concerning the word of life. The subject of the Epistle, compare voice with word. Hebrews 1:1.

v. 2: Capitalize “L” in Life.

He was manifested, revealed and unveiled. He was also revealed as the “Eternal Life”. He was with the father. He was made visible unto us.

v. 3: We are introduced to the incarnate Word before the thought of fellowship is expressed. What is fellowship? Partnership. The formation of the family is children. The new birth is fellowship of saints. The fullness of fellowship is with God and with Christ.

v. 4: When we are in fellowship our joy is full. There are two ways of having fullness of Joy.

1. We keep His commandments and we bear fruit.

2. We are in fellowship with God, Son and brethren.

Peter speaks of “joy unspeakable” and cannot describe His joy. His peace passes all understanding. Psalm 16:11. This is experienced here and now. “Thou will show me the path of life”.

v. 5: God is the light and in Him there is no darkness at all. There are conditions for fellowship and some of them are revealed in the rest of the epistle. But John first of all reveals the character of God. God is light, absolutely Holy, Righteous and Pure. Being this “there is no darkness in Him”. Exodus 15:11. God is light. Paul on the Damascus Road and The Mount of Transfiguration.

One tiny spark of darkness in our life breaks that fellowship. We cannot hide our sin from Him because all things are open and bare in the sight of Him with whom we have to do. Revelations 1.

v. 6: John is now about to distinguish between mere professors and actual professors. He selects seven keys to show the difference and introduces them by the word "if". This verse would give us the picture of a professor despite their words. They are out of fellowship with God and walk in darkness (the opposite of light).

v. 7: Believers. A picture of a believer in fellowship with God and His fellow Christians. The Word and the Holy Spirit play an active part in this. Walking in the light. Genesis 17:1. Enoch walked with God. Those that walk in the light (believers) are cleansed from all sin by the blood of Jesus Christ. All our sin has been atoned for. This would describe our state before God. We are cleaned once by the blood of Christ, but we are washed continually by the Word of God. John 13:4-10, Ephesians 5:26.

v. 8: If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, not God nor our neighbors.

v. 9: Sin breaks our fellowship, confession restores it. Psalms 22. Unconfessed sin is the greatest hindrance to spiritual power and growth.

What are some of the sins that can break this fellowship and hinder this power, growth and joy?

1. He is the Spirit of Truth. John 14:2
2. He is the Spirit of Faith. II Corinthians 4:13
3. He is the Spirit of Holiness. Romans 1:4
4. He is the Spirit of Glory. I Peter 4:14

Please note: We do not ask for forgiveness. We confess, repent, and acknowledge sin. As Sinners we came in repentance and our sins are forgiven. He is faithful and

righteous to put away our sin and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

This teaches us that to have a life of fellowship with God does not require a sinless life, but it does require sin to be confessed and forsaken.

1 John 2

v. 1&2: In these two verses John gives God's perfect standard for his people. He also gives his gracious provision in the event of failure.

God's perfect standard is set out in the words "These things I wrote unto you that ye sin not". God's standard for his dear children is absolute perfection. God cannot condone sin—he utterly condemns it. To the woman taken in adultery, He said "Go and sin no more".

God's provision for our weakness

In the event of failure, God has graciously made provisions for us. And if any man sins, we have an advocate with the father. An advocate is one who comes to the aid of another in time of need. This is exactly what the Lord does for us when we sin.

Notice also, we have an advocate with the Father. His is still our father even when we sin. This reminds us that even though sin breaks a believer's fellowship, it does not break his relationship. As in the natural family, so it is God's family, nothing can ever affect this relationship. A son may disgrace his father, but he is still a son by birth.

v. 2: Not only is Christ our advocate with the Father, He is still our Father even when we sin. This reminds us that even though sin breaks a believer's fellowship, it does not break his relationship. A son may disgrace his father, but he is still a son by birth.

Note the blessed truth, "Not for our sins only, but also for the sins of the whole world". Thank God for the

greatness of the sacrifice and the sufficiency of the blood of Christ to save the world. But it only works for those who trust and believe.

The superscription on the Cross was written in Hebrew, Greek and Latin. These were the principal languages of the then known world. It thus proclaimed to all the world that Jesus Christ is the Savior for men every where.

v. 3-6: The true masks of the believers

1. Obedience to the commandments of God
2. Keeping the Word of God
3. Walking as Christ walked v. 7-11: We have an exhortation to love one another. This is not a new Commandment, it is old Commandment.

v. 12-14: John indicates those to whom he wrote.

The fathers - mature in Christ

Young men - those who are in conflict for Christ

Little children - the babies in Christ v. 15-17: We are exhorted not to love the world.

1 John 3

v.1: The thought of being born of God grips John with wonder, so he calls upon his readers to consider the wonderful love that brought them into the family of God. God could have saved us without making us his children, but the quality of God's love is seen in that he brought us into His family as children. Abba – Father. The difference between being a child or a son. The emphasis is on being born into the family, child. A son can be adopted, a child is born.

Behold – look earnestly upon – consider with the kind of love, the unique quality of the Father's love in that he has made us His children. The world does not recognize us as such.

They do not understand us sometimes. John says this is what we must expect because they did not understand the Lord Jesus when He was on the earth. He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received Him not. Since the true child of God has the same characteristics, we cannot expect the world to understand us.

v. 2: However despite what the world says, God says that we are His children now, and this is our quality of future glory. "It doth not yet appears what we shall be". We cannot appreciate what this relationship means while on earth. I Corinthians 2-9. But we do know that when Christ raptures us, we shall be changed, we shall be like him. This does not mean that we will be physically like the Lord Jesus. The Lord will have his own unique appearance, and will bear the scars of Calvary

throughout eternity. Each of us will have our own distinct features and we will be recognizable as such. The Bible does not read that everyone will look alike in heaven. The thought is that we will be morally like the Lord. He will be free from sin, defilement, sickness, sorrow and death. Each day that we live the process of becoming like Christ should be going on. But the process will absolutely complete when “we see Him as He is.”

v. 3: Every man says John who has the hope of seeing Christ and being like him, purifies himself even as Christ is pure. The hope of seeing Him brings into focus the rapture. If we live our lives as if Christ was crucified yesterday and coming tomorrow we would be continually purifying ourselves. The imminence of the rapture should have a sanctifying effect on every believer.

v. 4: Give a better translation.

Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness, and sin in lawlessness. This is a picture of an unbeliever. This is the opposite from what is taught in v. 4.

v. 5: This verse tells us why Christ came into this world, “to take away our sin”. For a Christian to keep practicing sin would be a denial of the purpose for which Christ came. Furthermore a Christian cannot live in sin because it would be a denial of the one whose name he bears. “In him was no sin” – Peter, “He did no sin”- Paul, “He know no sin”. Our Lord was sinless – “The manna rested on the dew” For one to call oneself a believer and continue in the same old ways of life, is an impossibility.

v. 6: Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not, whosoever practices sin has never seen Him, and certainly does not

know Him. This verse contrasts the true believer with one who has never been born again. The subject here is not isolated acts of sin but rather its practice. Christians do sin – this breaks our fellowship, but not our relationship.

v. 7: Little children let no man desire you. The Gnostics made great claim as to their knowledge, but were very careless about their personal lives. There should be no confusion on this point. A man cannot have spiritual life and go on living in sin. On the other hand, a believer can only live a spiritual life because he has the righteous nature of Christ in him.

v. 8: Most children are like their parents. This is true of God's children and of the devils children. The thought in this verse is "He that practiceth sin is of the devil". The devil has kept on sinning from the time he fell. His children follow his example. Continuous sense. In contrast, the coming of our Lord Jesus was to destroy the works of the devil. It cost the Lord Jesus so much to put away sin. The attitude of His children should be to abhor that which is evil and to abstain from the appearance of evil.

v. 9: Whosoever is born of God doth not practice sin. This verse represents the impossibility of one who has been born of God going on in sin. The reason for this is that His seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

The Question of "the seed". Common beliefs – new nature – the Holy Spirit – Word of God. As I see it, it is a combination of the three, which produces new life. Because these things are in the believers he cannot sin

habitually. This then is the fourth distinction of the children of God and the children of the devil.

1. Obedience

2. Love

3. Doctrine

4. Righteousness and Godly living

Those who do not practice righteousness are not of God. There is no in-between, no gray area. There are none who are half in and half out. In contrast God's children are known by these righteous lives. John then reverts back to the subject of love which he had discussed in chapter 2.

v. 11: From the beginning of the Christian dispensation the believers had been taught to love one another. This is not mere affection, but we should love each other as Christ loved us.

v. 12: Instructs us that we are not to be like Cain we did not love his brother Abel – he murdered him. The reason Cain hated and murdered Abel was because his works were evil, while Abel's were good.

v. 14: Note the change that comes to one at conversion. The believers whom they once hated they now love. John says that this is an evidence of salvation. Those who do not love God's children never have been home again.

v. 15: In the eyes of the world hatred is not counted as a very wicked thing. In the eyes of God it is murder. Hate is murder in embryo form. The thought and motive is there – the act might not be committed.

(Quote the second part of the verse.) John does not mean that a murderer cannot be saved. He rather is

saying that a man who hates his fellow men is a potential murderer and is not saved.

V. 16: The Lord showed what true love was like – he laid down his life for us. This is in contrast to Cain. Our love for the brethren should be so great that, if necessary, we should lay our lives down for them.

V. 17: Love is practical. Our lives should be a continual giving out for our brethren. If we have an abundance and fail to share it with brethren in need, John says the love of God is not in him.

v. 18: Our love should be practical. Not in word or tongue – but in deed and in truths.

v. 19: Such manifestations will assure us that we are in God's family and give us confidence to approach him.

V. 20: This is rather a difficult verse to understand. The words heart and conscience seem to be interchangeable. It is serious when our conscience convicts us of our actions, at its best conscience fail sometimes, but God knows everything about us fully and absolutely.

v. 21: This is describing a believer who has a good conscience before God. This is not a person who has been living sinlessly, but one who has confessed and forsaken his sins. By doing this he has confidence and boldness in prayers.

v. 22: Whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him. Such a statement could only apply to one who was living in close vital intimacy with the Lord. Living like this we get to know the Lord's will, and knowing His will we would not ask for anything outside of it. So that, when we ask something, we know that it is His will, we receive it.

Look for a moment at the conditions for answering prayers

1. We must have a clear conscience – no outstanding sins. v. 20-21
2. We must keep his commandments. v. 22
3. Our lives must be pleasing to Him. v. 22
4. We must believe in the Lord Jesus. v.23
5. We must love one another. v. 23 v. 24: John says that any person who keeps these commandments dwells or abides in Christ and he abides in Him. We know that he is in us by the Holy Spirit.

1 John 3, part 2

v. 1: “Behold what manner (kind) of love,” etc. God could have saved us without making us children. (Compare II Samuel 14.) Abba – Father. Explain the difference between “Sons” and “children”. Born of God and born into the family of God.

v. 1b: The world does not recognize us as such. They did not recognize the Lord either. We are God’s masterpieces. Ephesians 2:10.

v. 2: We are God’s children now. Ephesians 5:27. We cannot fully appreciate what this means. But we know that when Christ comes we shall be changed and we shall be like Him. Have a body like unto his body of glory, etc. We shall see Him as He really is.

v. 3: Every man that has this hope, etc. “Blessed hope”. The expectation of the coming of the Lord has a sanctifying effect on the believer. The coming is certain, but the time uncertain. Consider Mark 13:33-37.

v. 5: Quote.... "In Him was no sin." The intimate disciple. This is one of the three key passages which deal with the sinless humanity of the Lord Jesus. I Pet 2:22: "He knew no sin." The intellectual disciple. The temptation. Manna resting on the dew.

v. 6: Says he does not.

v. 9: Says He cannot. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." The believer does not practice, or live in sin. Commit sin. New Nature (see v. 5-6). Old nature - flesh. Romans 7:20 "now if I do that which I would not, it is no more I that does it, but sin that dwelleth in me." Paul is simply saying that it is the old nature that sins, not the new. The reason "His seed remaineth in Him and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." What is the seed? Some think the seed is the new nature - Holy Spirit - Word of God. It could involve all three, because the seed is there and because of what it has produced it is impossible for a born again believer to practice sin. John tells us in his Gospel what is really expected from a believer.

1. John 3:6 Born of the Spirit - Indwelling

2. John 4:14 Springing up - Infilling

3. John 7:37-39 Flow rivers - Outflowing v. 9: The characteristics of the children of God.

v. 10: The characteristics of the children of the devil.

v. 11: John seems to revive the subject of love which he dropped in Ch. 2. This is the message of the Lord Jesus "that we should love one another."

v. 12: This is the first record instance of a man who hated his brother. The reason is given for his hatred. His

works were evil – his brother's were righteous. His father was "the wicked one". Abel's father was God.

v. 13: The antagonism of the world against believers. They hated the Savior – so they will hate you. John 15:18-20.

v. 14: We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. The assurance of salvation. II Corinthians 5:17.

v. 15: "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer". Hatred is murder in embryo form. Hatred is the motive – murder is the act. The man who hates like this, John says, has not eternal life... He is unsaved. "No murderer hath eternal life abiding in him."

v. 16: in contrast to the murderer of v. 15 and Cain v. 12, John gives us the highest expression of love. "He laid down his life for us." This example should be followed by us. We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

v. 17: Love is practical, sacrificial love. If we have an abundance ourselves and we do not share it with our brothers in need, John says "the love of God does not dwell in us". He who was rich became poor.

v. 18: Our love has not to be in theory. Our love should be expressed in deed and sincerity. The reward – a cup of cold water, etc. See James 2:14-16.

v. 22: And whatsoever we ask we receive of Him. This is not a carte blanche statement. God does not grant all the answers to our prayers that we desire. Such would be disastrous. There are certain stringent conditions to be kept ere such a sublime promise could be claimed.

1. We must keep His commandments. V. 22

2. Believe on the name of His Son, Jesus Christ. V. 23

3. We must love one another. V.23

This means living close to the Savior, creating an intimacy with him, being in fellowship with Him. Doing this we make His will our will – then in our prayers the Holy Spirit fills us with the knowledge of His will. So that as we pray we ask according to His will, then we receive in their entirety the things which we ask.

v. 24: Dwelling in Him, God dwelling in us. I am my Beloveds, my beloved is mine. Christ is mine – Praise God. But I am Christ's.

v. 27: He reminds them of their anointing.... He says that it "abideth in you". Describe the difference of the old and N.T. saints relative to the Holy Spirit. David said "take not thy Holy Spirit from me." John says "He abideth with you." "And shall be in you". So a spiritual believer is fully equipped to discern false teaching because he has the Spirit of God in his heart and he has the Word of God in his hand.

v. 28: John 15 abide in Him.... Live in fellowship with him....that we may have confidence and not be ashamed at His coming. The judgment seat of Christ. II Corinthians 5:10. We must all appear. "Must I go and empty handed."

1 John 4

“God is Love”

This is the third of John’s three great statements concerning the nature of God.

The others are found in: John 4:24, I John 1-5.

In the original language the word God is persuaded by an article and would read, “The God is love”. This means that the statement is not reversible; it cannot read “Love is God”.

How do we know that God is love?

v. 9: tells us that God’s love towards us was manifested or revealed in Jesus Christ. John 3:16. God sent His Only begotten Son into the world. Christ is the only begotten Son in sense that He has no brothers or sisters.

The purpose for sending Christ was “that we might live through Him”. There are two important truths revealed here

1. The pre-existence of Christ

2. The eternal Sonship of Christ

“God sent his Son into the world. Isaiah 6. Christ existed before He was sent into the world. If He had not Never could have been our Life (v.9) our propitiation (v.10) or our Savior (v.14)

v. 10: “Herein is love” literally “the love” – perfect love. This love is unrelated to anything which humans could do. “Not that we loved God” “But that He loved us”. This perfect love flowed “toward us” and is expressed in the

gift of Jesus Christ. Ezekiel 47. God's love cannot be compared with or related to human love. These are rare examples, says Paul of a person dying for an upright man. There are other examples of people who have given their life for a good person. Their cares are very rare indeed. According to Romans 3, in God's eyes no person on earth is righteous. In His eyes no one is good "There is none that doeth good" yet God loved us, but there is more.

Romans 5 assures us that it was when we were without strength, i.e. morally weak (v.6), Sinners (v.8) and Enemies (v.10), that Christ died for us. "God is love". This is not only amazing but incredible. This love cannot be measured - scale - plumb - length - breadth. It is a love which transcends all human thoughts. Ephesians 3:18-19. Maybe able to comprehend ... And to know love, etc. God's love is "a depth without a bottom" "A sea without a shore". Like shoreless seas, thy love can know no bounds; deep, vast, immense, unfathomed, hard profound, hard I love thee!

What shall separate us from the love of Christ. See v. 17. "Boldness in the day of judgment." He came to seek and to save that which was lost. The woman with the issue of blood and the woman taken in sin. He came to save you. Luke 15.

False Teachers And Prophets

2 Peter 2; They will bring into the church destructive heresies. They will deny the Lord that brought them (Cain). They are presumptuous - self-willed - speak evil of authority. They speak great dwelling words of vanity. All this is done in the name of religion. 2 Timothy 3. They creep into houses and lead captive silly women.

The men profess Christianity but they preach another gospel. See Galatians 1, 6 & 9. Describe what the Gospel is: 1 Corinthians 15. He died for our sins etc. – was buried – and raised the third day, etc.

In v. 2-3 John gives the test that is to be given these false teachers. “What think ye of Christ?”

v.2: Every spirit or teacher who confesses Jesus is Christ who has come in the flesh is of God.

v. 3: And every teacher who does not confess that Jesus is Christ, who is God manifest in flesh is not of God.

This attitude to the person and work of Christ determines whether they are of God or not. Quote the verse of poetry here. “What think ye of Christ is the test” etc.

What some men did with Jesus

1. The rich young rulers rejected Christ and His claims outright.
2. The rich farmers excluded Him from His life and thoughts.
3. The multitudes totally and absolutely rejected Him
4. Felix declined Him as Savior
5. Agrippa was almost persuaded to believe in Him.

Describe Paul’s commission

Philippians jailer’s commission

Thomas’ attitude

What do you think of Christ?

v. 8: God is love. See verses 9, 10, and 14

See v. 17 now. "Herein is love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment."

v. 1: All believers have the Holy Spirit. Ch 3:24. But there are other spirits..... Teachers (false); Peter and Jude. We have to test - try - prove, these false teachers. These men profess to accept Christianity, but they preach another gospel. Galatians 1:6-9.

What is the Gospel? 1 Corinthians 15. We wrestle not against flesh and blood... but against principality and powers. Against rulers of the darkness of this world.

v. 2-3: John gives the test by which these teachers are to be proven. The incarnation. The virgin birth - the person of Christ. The confession - God in Christ reconciling the world. Every spirit or teacher who confesses that Jesus is the Christ incarnate comes from God. And every teacher that does not thus acknowledge Jesus Christ is not of God. "What think ye of Christ: is the test. To try both your state and your scheme: you cannot be right in the rest, unless you think rightly of Him"

v. 4: Greater is He that is in you, etc.

v. 8: God is love. The following verses give us a description of God's love.

1. In the past God's love was manifested to us as sinners in the gift of His Son. V. 9-11.

2. In the present God's love is manifested to us as saints in His dwelling in us. V. 12-16.

3. In the future God's love will be manifested to us in giving us boldness in the day of judgment. V. 17-18.

Firstly we have God's love for sinners. He sent His "only begotten" Son. Unique Son. Quote v. 10, God's love is linked with redemption.

v. 11: Since God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

v. 12: If we love on another... God dwelleth in us and His love is perfected in us. i.e. God's love has reached its goal. "No man hath seen God at any time," see John 1:18. God made himself known to the world through the Lord Jesus. God is now making His love known to the world through believers.

v. 13: We dwell in Him and he dwells in us. We know this because he has given us his Spirit. His Spirit bears witness with our spirit, etc. The importance of the person and ministry of the Holy Spirit.

v. 14: Divine love in action.

1. The Father sent the Son. The heart rending price paid.

2. The Savior of the world. The boundless scope of Christ's work.

v. 15-16: God dwelling in the believer. The believer dwelling in God.

v. 17: Herein is love made perfect. It is not our love that is made perfect. It is God's love that is made perfect with us. John is now taking us to the future when we will stand before the Lord. "We will stand before Him with confidence and boldness... because the sin question has been settled once and for all. Glorious truth: "As He is (now in heaven) so are we in the world."

v. 18: There is no fear in love: perfect love casteth our fear. Perfect love:

1. He sent His Son to die for me.

2. He loves me enough to dwell in me.

3. I can now look to the future with confidence and without fear.

v. 19: We love. Because He first loved us. The only reason we can really love is because His love is perfected in us v. 12. Quote vs. 20-21.

1 John 5

In the first three verses we have the results of faith in God

1. There is the new birth.
2. There is love for God and fellow believers.
3. There is obedience to God's commandments.

1. The new birth is not an intellectual assent, but rather a committal of one's life to Jesus as the Christ. The N. B. involves the intellect - emotions - will.

2. An obvious result of the new birth is that we will love God and also will love his children as well. Notice we are to love all believers - not just those of a certain denomination or fellowship.

3. Then finally those who are born again will obey God's commandments. True believers are characterized by a desire to do the will of God. A believer's love for God is measured by his obedience to God's commandments. If you love me, keep my commandments. When John says that the commandments are not grievous, he does not mean that they are not difficult... they are sometimes. He means rather that born again people love to obey them.

v. 4-5: "Love not the world." "Be not conformed to the world". We learn in these verses the secret of victory over the world. The world system is great monstrous scheme of temptation, designed by the devil to draw men away from God. Men of the world are completely taken up by the things of time and sense. The born again believers can overcome the world through His faith in

God. He can see things in the true eternal perspective.
Hebrews 11:24-27.

v. 6: this is He that came. Etc. This is a difficult verse.
“This is He that came by water and blood.” Consider the alternatives.

1. The blood and water which flowed from the Savior’s side.

2. The water refers to the Spirit and the blood refers to the blood shed on the cross.

3. Some believers think it refers to the natural birth of the Savior

4. Then there is a fourth, to which I lean. To contrast the Gnostic theory, John says that he came by water (His baptism) and blood (His atoning death). Note the emphasis, “Not by water only, but by water and blood”. John is saying here that Jesus was just as much the Christ when He died on the cross as when He was baptized in the Jordan. The Spirit of truth bears witness to the truth.

v. 7: This verse is not found in the best manuscripts.

v. 8: Our belief in Christ to be the Son of God is substantiated by a threefold witness. The Spirit – the water – and the blood.

The spirit bears witness to the truth that Jesus Christ is God and that He is the only Savior of the world. The witness of the Spirit is found in the word of God.

Then there is the witness of the water. This refers to the baptism of Christ. At this time God publicly proclaimed, “This is my beloved Son,” etc.

Finally there is the witness of the blood. On the cross, the Lord bore witness that he was the Son of God. He laid down His life – no one took it from Him. His blood settled the sin question forever.

As these witnesses agree concerning the Deity of Christ and the perfection of His work.

v. 9: Quote. We trust and accept the word of our fellow men everyday. We should trust more the witness of God, who cannot foil or lie.

v. 10: Anyone who disbelieves God's record of His Son is a liar.

v. 11: John summarizes the Christian message. Think for a moment of these tremendous truths.

1. God Has given to men eternal life.

2. The source of this life is His Son.

v. 12: The evidence of this verse is inevitable. "He that hath the Son hath life". "He that hath not the Son of God hath not life". The teaching is unmistakable. Eternal life is not found in education, philosophy, science, religion or church. To have eternal life one must have the Son of God. Eternal life is inseparable from Jesus Christ.

v. 13: In this verse John states the purpose for which he wrote the letter. The purpose is that there are those who have believed on the name of the Son of God may know that they have eternal life. Another precious truth here is that assurance of salvation through the word of God. Our salvation does not depend on our hoping, guessing, or feeling. John states in the clearest possible manners that those who have truly believed in the Lord Jesus have eternal life.

v. 15-16: When we know the Lord Jesus as Savior we can go before the Lord with confidence. John describes this confidence in these verses. Any prayer requests made to God, which is in accordance with His will, He will answer. How can I know His will? God's will is revealed in the scriptures. So we should study God's word, that we may know God's will, then we can pray intelligently.

v. 16: In this verse John gives two examples.

1. One way in which a believer can have confidence in prayers

2. Another is which confidence is not possible.

The first case is that if a follower believes who is engaged in some sort of sinful activity. This sin is not the type that would bring death on the person committing it. One can pray for this person with confidence, God will recover this one from his sinful ways. On the other hand there is a sin unto death, for which a believer should not pray for. The question now is, what is that sin? There are a number of suggestions.

1. 1 Corinthians 11-30 Sin persisted in and left unconfessed.

2. The sin of murder. If a Christian commits murder we should not pray for the death sentence to be commuted. God has state in His word. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed."

3. Some believe this sin to be blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.

4. Others believe that this sin unto death is some special form of sin such as that committed by Moses and Aaron, Annanias and Sapphira.

5. Some believe that this sin is the sin of apostasy, this explanation probably fits the context. The Gnostics were apostles. Intellectually they had been convinced of the great truths of the Christian faith, some had even made a profession of faith. After having tasted of the good things of Christianity they turned their back on them and rejected them. The Christian has no liberty to pray for the restoration of such because they have sinned unto death.

v. 17: This verse points out that there are various degrees of sin. There are sins, which do not carry the death penalty, and sins which do.

v. 18-21: John brings his letter to a close by reiterating the great certainties of the Christian faith. We know that whoever is born of God sinneth not. We know that we are of God's and the world lieth in wickedness. John sees two spheres "In Him" - "In the wicked one". We know that the Son of God has come. The incarnation. John began his letter with the incarnation, now he closes on the same note. "That we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is True."

v. 21: Keep yourselves from idols: This is not idols carved out of wood. But the putting of something that is false in place of the true. John is urging his readers not to allow anything to come between them and God.

I John 5:1

v. 1: "Whosoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God". I want to talk to you about faith - "faith in God". The Savior admonished those who listened to Him on one occasion to, "Have faith in God". Faith is more than mere belief. Inconvincibly the Amplified New Testament

interprets the word “Believe” as trust in – cling to – rely on. This is a very important point, for there are many who “believe in a historical Jesus and the martyr Jesus, but who are still on their way to a lost eternity. John says here that “Whosoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God,” or born again. Belief and faith in the God Savior is necessary for salvation. John uses this word believe which is coupled with faith 100 times in his writings. In the first 10 verses of this chapter it is mentioned 6 times.

There were three in John’s day who did not believe that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ. (They believed in Jesus). This disqualified them from being saved. Paul had the same problem with some of the people in Colosse. While they believed in Jesus their belief was limited. For instance these people taught that between a Holy God and a host of angels formed a bridge of which Christ was the lowest form, therefore He was not Deity, and was not the expression of the “fullness of the God head”. Such belief is contrary to the revealed word of God. The belief on faith that saves, is that which trusts in – clings to – and relies on the hand of Jesus Christ.

Three examples:

1. The Roman centurion Luke 7:1-10
2. The widow of Zarephath Luke 4:25-26; 1 Kings 17:1-7
3. The lepers of Syria Luke 4:27; 2 Kings 5:1-15

Describe these two incidents in the light of the context. The scene in the synagogue at Nazareth and the parchments to be read were given to Him. (vs. 18-19) Isaiah 61:1-2 v. 20: Every eye was fastened on Him V. 21: This day is the scripture fulfilled in your ears.

v. 22: The congregations were amazed at His words, they were presented with a challenge. Is not this Joseph's son?

Faith Illustrated

"Except you are converted and become as a little child you cannot enter the kingdom of God". Matthew 9:22, Matthew 9:29, Matthew 7:50

Do you know anything of the saving faith?

"For by grace are you saved through faith" etc.

"Lord I believe, help my unbelief".

I John 5: 1-10

"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. This is not intellectual assent but rather a giving of one's whole being to Jesus as the Christ. As prophet He revealed the way of salvation. As Priest He works out that salvation. As King He confers that salvation upon us.

Note the four things in the first three verses which are the result of faith.

1. We are born of God.
2. We love God.
3. We love all true believers.
4. Obedience to God's commandments.

v. 3: His commandments are not grievous. Mathew 11:28-30.

v. 4: The secret of victory over the world.

1. Born of God ... New Birth.

2. Our faith. The Christian armor. Ephesians 6

Loins girded – breastplate – feet shod – shield of faith – helmet of salvation – sword of the Spirit – praying always.

The World: What is the World?

Everything that would hinder us from keeping God's commandments or that would draw us away from God. 1 John 2:15-17. Demas, the world system is a vast scheme of temptation to draw all men away from God.

1. Because we are born of God. Because greater is He that is in you than he that is against us. Who is He who is in us? Ch 3:24

2. Through our faith, by our faith we put the correct value on things. By faith we view the eternal rather than the temporal. Hebrews 11:26. When we see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ – the glory of this world pales into obscurity. II Corinthians 3:18.

v. 5: Who else overcomes? Those who believe that Jesus is the Son. "All power is given unto me, etc."

v. 6: This is He who came by water and blood. Describe the Gnostics' belief. Water – his baptism. Blood – His death. Not by water only, but by blood. The Atonement. "It is the Spirit that bears witness – the Spirit is truth".

v. 7: Not included in the original text.

v. 8: The witnesses omit "in earth". Having described the Person and Work of the Lord Jesus, he now calls three witnesses to verify the facts.

1. The Spirit through the Word.

2. The Water at His Baptist – The miracles – The Scriptures – The Father.

v. 10: If we do not believe God – we make Him a liar.

v. 11: God has given eternal life to men. The source of this life is His Son.

v. 12: The inevitable conclusion. He that has the Son has eternal life. He that does not have the Son does not have eternal life.

I John 5:10-21

v. 10: The Witness. The Holy Spirit. (See v. 8) “Believeth on the Son of God” (v. 8); Believeth not God” – makes Him a liar. The record that God gave of His son.

v. 11: This is the record. Not feelings. That God has given to us eternal life. This life is in His Son.

v. 12: He that has the Son has life”. Blessed assurance. “He who has not the Son of God does not have life”

v. 13: “these things” – this Epistle. John 20:30-31. Chapter 1:4 The object of writing “that your joy might be full”. To know that we have eternal life, is the sure way to “joy in God”. There are certain identification marks given to those who have eternal life.

1. They no longer practice sin.

2. When they sin they confess their sin.

3. They keep God’s commandments. They have hid God’s Word in their hearts.

4. They love all brothers and sisters in Christ.

5. They confess Christ with life and lip.

6. They possess the Holy Spirit.

7. They overcome the world.

8. They stand fast on the doctrine of the Deity of the Lord Jesus.

9. They know that they have eternal life.

v. 11-13: These verses are one of the great sources of our assurance of salvation. We do not trust the opinions of men nor our feelings, we trust the unalterable and unfailing Word of God.

v. 14: This is the confidence – boldness. Because we have eternal life we have this boldness to ask anything! ... according to His will ... we know that he hears us. Note the principle involved here ... according to God's will. How can I know God's will? God's will is revealed in a general way in the scriptures. This fact should prompt us to a closer study of God's Word. Our prayers would be more intelligent, more in line with God's will.

v. 15: If we are assured that He has heard us then we know that He will answer our prayers in his time.

v. 16: An example of boldness in prayer. Sin not unto death.

1. An example in which confidence is not possible.

2. The sin not unto death. (Confidence possible)

This sin is not one which would bring about the death of the person committing the sin. One can pray for his recovery with confidence. "In God's will." On the other hand there is a "sin unto death". Physical. There is no forgiveness for this sin, therefore it would be wrong for anyone to pray for such an one guilty of this sin. The preacher who left the Lord's work. Etc.

What is the sin unto death?

1. 1 Corinthians 11:30; Some had died who had not discerned the Lord's body. They had not judged this sin.

2. The sin of murder. We should not pray for his release from the death penalty.

3. The sin committed by Moses and Aaron, Annanias and Sapphira

4. The sin of apostasy. Chapter 2:19

An apostate is one who has accepted the great truths of the Christian faith – has been intellectually convinced that Jesus is the Christ – has professed Christianity then completely renounces the faith and the Lord. To pray for these people is a waste of time. We cannot expect God to answer prayers for them. They have sinned the “sin unto death”.

V. 17: This verse shows the difference in the degrees of sin. There are sins which are not of such a serious nature as to cause death. There are degrees in sins, and there are degrees in punishment.

Romans 2:12: Sinned without the law shall also perish with the law. Sinned in the law shall be judged by the law.

Matthew 11:20-24: Cities wherein most of His mighty works were done, because they repented not. Woe to you Chorazin – Bethsaida – more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon. Capernaum exalted – more tolerable for Sodom than for you. Saved shall suffer loss at the judgment seat of Christ.

v. 18: “We know that whoever is born of God does not sin.” Does not practice in sin. The reason follows – He that is born of God (Christ) keeps Him. Thank God the

believer does not keep himself, but Christ keeps him. We are protected from the devil.

v. 19: "We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness". Two spheres. In Him In wickedness ... in the wicked one ... the god of this world.

V. 20: "We know that the Son of God is come". The incarnation – God manifest in the flesh. See chapter 1:1 and John 1:18.

He is confuting the Gnostic theory here. He is given us an understanding, etc. He has revealed the Father to us. We are in Him (God) and in His Son Jesus Christ. Co-equal – co-eternal. Blessed Lord Jesus. This is the true God. This is eternal life.

V. 21: Keep yourselves from idols – "Beware of any teachings which are opposed to these realities." Keep yourself from false teaching.

Abiding in Christ

v. 6: Whosoever abides in Him does not sin.

Abiding in Christ

The secret of a holy life and a fruitful life is to abide in Christ. John 15.

When a new graft is placed in a vine, there is a two fold process that takes place. The first process takes place in the word. The graft shoots its little roots and the stem grows up into the graft. This is called the structural union. The graft becomes one with the vine. The second process is when the sap of the vine enters the new graft. This is manifested in growth, young shoots, leaves and fruit. This is the perfect union. The branch is abiding in the vine and the vine is abiding in the branch. The words "Abide in Me" found in John 15 refer to that which we have to do. We have to trust and obey. We must reach out to Him and cling to Him. We have to seek counsel in Him. We have to detach ourselves from all else. As we do this our character is formed and our heart prepared for the full experience of "I in you".

Have you had the experience of praying earnestly for the infilling of the Spirit and the indwelling of Christ and wonders why you have not made more progress. The reason often is the "I in you" cannot come until He "abides in me" is fully maintained. Before the branch or graft could know the infilling of the vine, it must grow into the vine. It must abide in it before the sap can flow through to bring forth fruit.

The abiding in Christ produces two things. It produces fruit and it produces holiness. See Psalms 1 in this connection. Illustrate further with the story of the Hampton Court vine. The pruning process - the pruning knife. Grandfather clipping the children's wings. John says "if we abide in Him we will not sin". We will become more like Christ. A Christian should be different from those in the world. Christ was different. God opened the heavens - this is my son etc. Never a man spoke like this man. He does all things well. You are the Christ the Son of the living God, Transformation. Truly this was the Son of God. The next thing John says is "whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him, neither known Him." This is in contrast to the previous statement. The person who abides in Christ is a Christian. The person who sins has not seen the hand and does not know him.

v. 7: John says to all believers don't listen to anyone who would tell you differently.

He who does not sin, has been saved by the grace of God and lives like His Lord and Masters.

v. 8: He who commits sin lives in sin and loves sin is of the devil. Etc Mark 7. Satan deceives, blinds and binds people. Eve in: Genesis 3, 2 Corinthians 6:6, Luke 13:16. Luke 22:3.

v. 9: Whosoever is born of God does not commit sin. Does not practice or live in sin. Describe the old nature and the new nature. Romans 7:20. "Now if I do that which I would not, it is no more I that does it, but sin that dwelleth in me". Paul is simply saying here that it is the old nature that sins - not the new. God's seed remains in him and he cannot sin, because He is born of God. What is the seed? Some think that the seed is the

new nature – the word – the Holy Spirit. It involves all these: we are born again of the incorruptible word, born of the spirit. The result of this is the new nature is implanted within.

v. 9: The characteristics of the child of God.

v. 10: The characteristics of the child of the devil.

Sanctification

The term “sanctification” is used in two ways.

1. Separation to God.
2. The course of life befitting these so separated.

There is also the manward aspect. Sanctification of a believer is demonstrated as he separates himself from evil things and evil ways. This sanctification is God’s will for each believers 1 Thessalonians 4:3. Our sanctification is one of God’s purposes in calling us by the Gospel. See verse 7.

Sanctification is taught in the word and comes by the applying of the word to our daily lives; John 17:17. We are exhorted to follow and grow in holiness (Hebrews 12-14). The Holy Spirit is the agent in sanctification (Romans 15:16). Being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. Also see 1 Corinthians 6:11.

The word is used 10 times in the New Testament, 5 times it is translated sanctification and 5 times believers.

The subject of sanctification and consecration run side by side.

At conversion we were saved – justified – sanctified by God. Sealed – Baptized – filled – sanctified – by spirit.

The Great Blessing of Eternal Life

The great blessing of eternal life is the gift of God. Witnesses that Jesus is the Son of God. The historical witness. The witness of men to Jesus Christ (v. 9). This is He that came by water and blood (v. 6). These things point to two historical facts in our Saviors life. The public ministry of the Lord was opened with His baptism (by water). And was closed by His crucifixion (by blood). The verse says “not by water only but by water and blood”. The importance of blood for salvation. Cain’s blood less religion. Hebrews 9:22; John 19:34; Luke 24:39. A spirit has not flesh and bones etc.

The Spiritual witness

“The witness of God is greater” (v. 9) “the witness of the Spirit”.

v. 8: “It is the Holy Spirit who bears witness, because the Holy Spirit is the Truth”. Paul wrote “The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God”. Romans 8

The believers assurance of eternal life based upon three things:

1. The work of Christ.
2. The word of God.
3. The witness of the Spirit.

There are other witnesses to the fact that Jesus is the Son of God the Savior of the world. See John 6.

1. John the Baptist – behold the hands of God
2. The works which Jesus did

3. The Father – the transfiguration

4. The scriptures – you search the scriptures etc.

The demons also bore witness that He was the Son of God.

v. 10: “He that believes on the Son of God has the witness within himself: The Spirit of truth. Ephesians 1:13. After you believed you were sealed, etc. He that does not believe on the Lord Jesus has made God a liar. Because he has not believed the record God has given of His Son. This is very strong language.

v. 11:

1. Divine gift – God has given

2. Lasting gift – Eternal life

3. Personal gift – To us

4. Certain gift – In His Son v. 12: He who possesses the Son has life “Eternal”. He who does not possess the Son of God does not have eternal life – the second death.

Revelation 20:14 v. 13: This is the key verse to the Epistle. That you may know that you have eternal life.