

I JOHN

Synopsis: *^ The letter is named after the author, the apostle John. Though he does not identify himself in the book, no other book of the New Testament comes down to us with stronger claims of genuineness than this according to Guy N. Woods in the Gospel Advocate Commentary. One emphasis of the letter is the certainty of eternal life. See 5:13, *“These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.”*

Author: John

Chapters: 5

Background: *^ John probably wrote the three epistles shortly after writing the Gospel Account. In the Gospel of John, the key word is “believe”; in I John, the key word is “know.” “Know” and its derivatives are found thirty to forty times in the book. The emphasis is on confident certainty.

John’s constant use of the word “know” is a play on words. The Greek word for “know” is *gnosis*, and John is combating the Gnosticism of his day. Gnostics claimed special knowledge and because they believed all matter is evil they rejected the humanity of Christ. In I John, as in the Gospel Account, the apostle emphasizes that Christ became flesh (4:2, 3; II Jn. 7; John 1:14).

John emphasizes the importance of obeying God (2:4) and living a godly life (3:10). It is a book filled with love (the word is used over fifty times). The letter is thought to have been written from Ephesus about A.D. 90.

Five Great Lessons*

1. We can know if we are obeying God.
2. Obedience is proof of our love.
3. Beware of false teachers.
4. It is impossible to love God and the world at the same time.
5. To be in proper fellowship with each other; we must be in fellowship with God.

Outline*

- I. Remain faithful and continue in fellowship with God and with one another (Ch 1).
- II. Keep His commandments and do not love the world (Ch 2).
- III. Obey God and do not continue in sin (Ch 3).
- IV. Love God and do not follow man (Ch 4).
- V. There is proof of your obedience and salvation (Ch 5).

*Butterworth, Ken. *God Hath Spoken: An Open-Bible Study Series – New Testament Workbook*, 2006.

^Roper, David. *Through the Bible: A Systematic Study of the Old and New Testament Scriptures*, 1999.

Lessons ^

We can have confidence in knowing that “if we walk in the light...the blood of Jesus...cleanses us from all sin” (1:7). “Walking in the light” does not mean living perfectly. Rather, it refers to a lifestyle, the result of a heart set on obeying the Lord.

If our conscience is tender, we will at times feel guilt, but God’s desire is that, as a rule, we have confidence before Him (3:21). If our desire is to please Him, it is important to remember “God is greater than our heart” (3:20). “God wants us to enjoy the trip to heaven!”

Seven tests of Christian fellowship: 1:6; 1:8; 1:10; 2:4; 2:6; 2:9; 4:20.
Fellowship means a joint participation, sharing and association.

Selected*+

- 1:5-10 Christians are to be faithful and not “perfect.”
- 2:3-6 Christians prove their love by accepting and obeying God’s commandments.
- 2:15, 16 What is in the world? Lust of the flesh, eyes, and pride of life Cf. garden & Jesus’ temptations
- 3:9 The Christian will not continue to practice sin.
- 3:18 Love not just in word or tongue but in deed and in truth.
- 4:19 We love Him because He first loved us.
- 5:4 What is the victory that overcomes the world? Our faith

When We Sin^ – I John 1:5-2:3

- I. Remember: The blood of Christ continually cleanses (1:7).
- II. Remember: God is faithful to forgive our sins (1:9).
- III. Remember: We have an advocate with the Father (2:1).

Conclusion: What confidence! These promises are only for the child of God committed to living for God. Are you a faithful Christian? You need to be!