

Small Group or Individual Bible Study
First Letter of John
Chapter 1

John opens his letter by stating that he is writing what he has seen, heard and touched. That he knows Jesus was a real person and that he really died and rose from the dead. God is light and anything opposed to God and the Gospel of Jesus is darkness. The message from God is that the blood of his son Jesus and only that cleanses us from sin.

1. Name three ways in which John had contact with the Word of Life.

1:1 _____

2. What proof does John offer the believer that Christ was manifested?

1:2 _____

3. What is one of John's purposes for telling about Christ?
1Cor 1:9 - call to fellowship; 1 Jn 5:13 - reason he wrote

1:3 _____

4. Name two of the members of the Trinity having fellowship with believers.

1:3 _____

5. State one reason that John is writing this epistle.

1:4 _____

6. What message is John passing on to his readers?
James 1:17; John 1:4-5, 9, 3:19, 8:12, 12:35-36; Eph 5:8 - walk as children of light;
1 Jn 2:9&10; 1 Pet 2:9; Matt 5:14-16; God is Father of Light - Jn 8:44; Satan father of lies.

1:5 _____

7. What makes liars out of us?
James 2:14 - faith but no works; James 2:18 - show faith by works; 2 Cor 6:14-16; John 3:19-21;
Proverbs 4:19

1:6 _____

8. State the basis of fellowship between two believers.
Isa 2:5; 1 Cor 6:11 - washed & sanctified; Eph 1:7 - through His blood; 1 Tim 6:16; Heb 9:14 - blood of Christ superior to all sacrifices; Rev 1:5-6

1:7 _____

9. How are we cleansed of sin?

1:7 _____

10. How is it possible for us to deceive ourselves?
Jn 16:7-8; Rom 3:10ff; Rom 6:15-18

1:8 _____

11. What must we do to have our sins forgiven?
Psalms 32:1-5; Psalms 51:1-4

1:9 _____

12. How often will Christ forgive us our sins?

1:9 _____

13. When we confess our sins, what else does Christ do besides forgiving us?

1:9 _____

Comment on verse 1:9 - The word “confess” is the key to understand what this verse means. (According to Strong’s dictionary.) The Greek word used here is *Homologeō*. Homo means “the same as” and logeo means “to speak or say”. Confess here means to say the same thing. That is, to say the same thing about our sin that God says about it. It is not just saying we are “sorry”. Only when we say the same thing about our sin as God does can we be changed. According to this verse, when we confess God cleanses us from unrighteousness. This is much more than forgiveness. Once we see our sin as God does, then we begin to be changed. Our calling is to be changed into the likeness of Jesus.

14. What two conditions exist if we try to say that we have not sinned?

Psalms 130:3- if God kept up with our sins....; Job 15:14

1:10 _____

15. What do you think it means when John says His Word is not in us?

1:10 _____

16. In verses 6 through 10 of this chapter the word “if” occurs in each verse, five (5) times total. Each time it occurs it implies a condition to be fulfilled. Re-read each verse and write a one or two word description of the condition and what fulfills it for each “if” in each verse. Some of the modern translations are not phrased this way. You may have to use a more literal one here.

1:6 if _____

1:7 if _____

1:8 if _____

1:9 if _____

1:10 if _____

First Letter of John - Chapter 2

In this chapter John writes so that they might not sin. He points out that when anyone does sin they have Jesus as a go-between for them and the Father. They have known the truth from the beginning of their walk as Christians and the false teachers are not of the truth. They should realize that. Love is a motivating force for Christians and hate is to have no place in them. He tells them there is a common source for their temptations and it is worldly and of their flesh.

1. If a person does sin, what help is available to him?

Jn 13:33; Rom 8:26-39 - intercedes; 1 Tim 2:5 - mediator; Heb 7:25 - intercessor; Heb 7:26 - righteous High Priest just what we need; Heb 9:24 - in the presence of the Father for us

2:1 _____

2. For whose sins did Christ make propitiation (NIV: atoning Sacrifice)? That is: Met the legal demands of death for sinners. Eze 18:20, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (KJV)

Propitiation is a very important word and concept. Occurrences: Rom 3:25; I Jn 4:19; Heb 2:17

2:2 _____

3. How may we tell whether or not we know Christ?

Jn 14:15; Jn 15:10; Rev 12:7 - mark of the Saints; Rev 14:12 - perseverance of the Saints

2:3 _____

To you what does John mean to "know Christ"? Does it mean being saved or being in fellowship with Him?

John 17:1-3

4. What are we if we claim to keep Christ's commands when we actually do not?

Titus 1:10 - empty talkers; Titus 1:16- unfit for any good work

2:4 _____

5. How may we have the love of God perfected in us? Hint: we can't keep what we do not know.

2:5 _____

Comment on verse 2:5 - The perfect love of God will be in us only to the degree that we live and think according to the pattern which is in God's word. It stands to reason that if we do not know His word, we will not recognize the pattern.

6. What is our standard for walking (living our lives) as Christians in our daily lives?

1 Pet 2:21-22ff

2:6 _____

7. There appears to be a contradiction in what John says in vs. 7 then vs. 8. What do you think he is saying or eluding to? Note the last part of vs. 8 is the key to understanding this.

2 John 1:5-6 - old command; Ro 13:12; Eph 5:8; 1 Thess 5:4f

2:7-8 _____

8. Contrast the difference between the one who hates his/her brother/sister and the one who loves his/her brother/sister.

2 Pet 1:4-10

2:9-10 _____

9. Tell three things about the person who hates his brother.

Pb 4:19; Jn 12:35; Titus 3:3

2:11 _____

10. What is the cause of these conditions? (This is why we should not be surprised when lost people live un-Godly lives.)

2:11 _____

Comment on verse 2:11 - Nothing moves us from God's light into Satan's darkness quicker than hate. I cannot be led by the Spirit of God with hate in my heart.

11. Why is John writing this epistle to the little children? (Spiritually immature, new believers?)

2:12 & 2:1

(1) _____

(2) _____

12. Give the reason for John's writing to the fathers. (Word also means parents)

2:13 _____

13. Why does John write to the young men?

2:13, 14 _____

14. John commands the Christian not to love two things. What are they? Note: the word for "world" does not refer to the physical world in which we live. Rather, it is used to denote human life and society devoid of God.

2:15 _____

15. What three categories describe the temptations or sins of the world?
Gen 3:6 - sin of Eve; Matt 4:1-11 - temptation of Jesus

2:16 _____

NOTE: See the separate comment sheet for 1 John 2:16 & Luke 4, if it is available, for my comments on these temptations. It should be after the last page of the study.

16. Genesis 3:6 is the story of Eve's temptation and sin. How do the three categories in 1 Jn 2:16 fit into mans fall from life into spiritual death?

Genesis 3:6 _____

17. Luke 4:2-14 tells us of Jesus being tempted by the devil yet without giving in to the temptation and committing sin. Can you see how the three temptations the devil put before Jesus fit into the three categories we found in 1 Jn 2:16 and Gen 3:6? (Jesus temptation also Matt 4:1-11)

Luke 4:2-14 _____

18. What will one day happen to the “world” and what happens to the child of God?

2:17 _____

19. We do not know exactly what John meant by “the last hour”, but what evidence does he offer that they were living in it?

2:18 _____

20. There is only one antichrist. He is mentioned in Daniel 9:26ff. But there were many around in John’s day who had the spirit of the antichrist. He most likely is speaking of the Gnostics. The spirit of the antichrist is alive and active today. How does John recognize those who have the spirit of the antichrist?

Acts 20:28-30

2:19 _____

21. How is the believer and these false teachers contrasted?

Matt 13:11 - know mysteries; Jn 14:26- Holy Spirit teach all things; Acts 10:38;
2 Cor 1:20-22

2:20 _____

22. Having made the distinction between the believer and those who have the spirit of antichrist, what further reason does John give for writing?

2 Peter 1:12; Jude 1:5

2:21 _____

23. What is one way the antichrist will be recognizable?

2:22 _____

24. What is the characteristic of those who deny the Son?

John 5:23; John 10:30; 2 John 1:9-11

2:23 _____

25. After contrasting the antichrists and the believer, what does John tell the believer to do?

John 15:4-7; Luke 1:2; Col 3:16

2:24 _____

26. What has the believer heard from the beginning according to 1 John 1:1 & 5?

27. To abide in Christ really means to have a continuing fellowship with the Son. How do we do this according to 1 Jn 1:7 and 2:5 & 6?

2:24 _____

28. What has God promised to those who abide?
Rom 5:21; Gal 5:22-23

2:25 _____

John 15:4 & 7 _____

29. The words *these things* are much like a *therefore* in that it points to something we need to know and understand. What are the *these things* which are referred to in 2:26?
(I have heard it said that anytime you see a “therefore” in scripture you should look and see what it is there for. Other phrases which often point to something important we need to know are “these things” or “for” or “if”, as in Chapter 1.)

2:18, 22, 23 (hints) _____

30. What term/word does John use for those who are seducing believers and with who are these seducers linked? (vs. 22ff)
John 8:44; 1 Tim 4:1

31. What safeguard do we have against the seducers of our faith?

2:27 _____

32. “You have no need for anyone to teach you” (NASB) really means “that anyone keep on teaching you”. Why is there no need for any man to teach a believer, ie keep on teaching?

2:27 _____

33. What reason for abiding in Christ does John give?

2:28 _____

34. Because Christ is returning for us, what should our attitude be?

1Corinthians 15:58; 2 Titus 4:8

2:28 _____

35. What happens to a person which gives the believer the power to live, act and even think as Jesus would, and wants us to also? Or what gives us a new nature?

John 3:3-5; 1 Peter 1:3; 1 Peter 1:23; 2 Peter 1:4

2:29 _____

36. Why does man need to be born again (re-born) to be spiritually alive?

Genesis 2:16-17

First Letter of John - Chapter 3

John tells them it is an awesome thing to be considered children of God by him. One day it will be fully revealed just what it means to be children of God. We live pure lives because of that motivation. Jesus came to take away sin and lived a perfect life, not just so he would be an example for us, but that he would be the perfect sacrifice for us. The greatest commandment from God is that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ and all that represents. We are to abide in Him and He will abide in us. John pleads with his children in the faith not to let anyone deceive them.

1. What has the Father given us?

Rom 8:14-17; 2 Cor 6:18; Gal 3:20; Gal 4:5

3:1 _____

2. Because of the love given to us by the Father, what is our inherited position?

3:1 _____

3. If we are children of God, what are we in relation to Christ?

Rom 8:16 & 17 _____

4. Why are we not known as "Children of God" by the world?

3:1 _____

5. At what point in time will the sons and daughters of God be fully like Christ?

Rom 8:19; Rom 8:29 - God's plan, we are to be like Jesus;

1 Cor 7:1 - will bear His image;

2 Cor 3:18 - transformed by the Spirit;

Col 3:4 - we will be revealed with Jesus in glory;

2 Peter 1:4 - born again as children of God & partakers of divine nature

3:2 _____

6. To what extent will we see Christ at the time of His return?

3:2 _____

7. Every Christian who is waiting for Christ's return has a particular type of life to lead. What is it?

Rom 15:12 - in Christ the Gentiles hope; 2 Cor 7:1 - cleanse ourselves from all defilement;

1 Peter 1:3 - born again as children of God

3:3 _____

8. Who or what is the pattern for purity in the life of the Christian?

3:3 _____

9. Give a definition of sin.

3:4 _____

10. Why did Christ come down to earth?

2 Cor 5:21 He became sin on our behalf;

1 Peter 1:18-20 - redeemed with precious blood;

Titus 2:14 - purified us to Himself

3:5; Jn 3:17 _____

11. How does John say that we can avoid sin? (Habitual sin)

3:6 _____

12. What is the legal position of the person who accepts Christ?

3:7 _____

13. What type of person is of the devil?

3:8 _____

14. Why was Jesus born on the earth?

Colossians 2:15

3:8 _____

15. Why does the Christian refrain from continually sinning as a pattern of life?

Matt 7:18; Rom 6:2

3:9 _____

16. In contrast to an attitude of sin, what should the Christian do?

1Peter 4:8

3:11 _____

17. Describe the example given to illustrate the truth of 3:11 in the next verse.
Psalms 37:12; Hebrews 11:4; Hebrews 37:12

3:12 _____

18. What does John give as a genuine sign that we have passed from spiritual death to life?
Gal 5:22; Eph 1:15; Col 1:4; Heb 13:1; 1 Pet 1:22; 2 Pet 1:7

3:14 _____

18. Since Christ gave his life for us, what should we do for our brothers and sisters in Christ?

3:16 _____

19. If a Christian has wealth, how should he use it?

3:17 _____

20. What does John say are two inadequate way of trying to show Christian love?

3:18 _____

21. If we love in deed and truth and yet our heart seems to condemn us, what may we rely on?

3:20 _____

22. How great a knowledge does God have of the heart of man? How does he know?
Hebrews 4:13

3:20 _____

23. What gives us confidence before God when we go to him in prayer? Explain what this means exactly to you.
Hebrews 4:15-16

3:21 _____

24. What are some conditions which normally must be fulfilled before we can expect God to grant the request we ask of Him? Do you think this is always true or almost always true?

3:22 _____

25. What does Jesus say is the “commandment”?

Deut 18:15ff - a prophet to come; Mark 9:7 - “listen to Him”; John 6:29; Acts 16:31 -“ believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved.”

3:23 _____

26. What do we do for Christ to dwell in us or what shows it and how do we know that He dwells in us?

1Cor 3:16 - temple of God; Gal 4:6

3:24 _____

First Letter of John - Chapter 4

Once again John returns to a discussion of the false teachers. He gives additional marks which identify the false teacher in contrast to the child of God. Knowing the division which is brought about by false teaching, John also reminds the Christians to love one another. Our motivation to love God and others is based on the fact that Jesus loved us and gave His life for us when we were un-loveable. The believers are told that we are to test the spirits and we can do this because we have the Spirit of God in us.

1. What is every believer to do when he sits under the ministry of a teacher or preacher? Why is this necessary?

Pb 14:15 - naive believe everything; 1 Cor 12:10 - distinguishing spirits as a gift;
1 Thess 5:20-21 - do not despise prophecy; 1 Tim 4:1 - fall away;
2 Tim 3:13 - deceived & deceiving

4:1 _____

2. What test does John say to use to try or test the teachers and what they teach?

1 Tim 3:16

4:2 _____

3. What relationship to God, if any, does a teacher or preacher have if he denies that Jesus came in the flesh? What spirit does this denial represent?

2 John 1:7 - deceiver & antichrist

4:3 _____

4. Why or how have the children of God overcome the false teachers?

Romans 8:31 - if God is for us; Rom 8:37 - conquer through Him

4:4 _____

5. How does the world react to the false teacher and why?

2 Tim 4:3

4:5 _____

6. How or why may the spirit of truth and the spirit of error be determined? Also how may the children of God be distinguished from those of the world?

1 Cor 2:12-14

4:6 _____

7. What is the source of Christian love for the brethren?

Gal 2:22 - fruit of the Spirit; 1 Thess 4:9 - taught by God to love; 2 Tim 1:7 - Spirit of love

4:7 _____

8. Why can a believer who does not love the brethren not know God?

NOTE: The kind of love John is not talking about is not a feeling.

Eph 2:1-7

4:8 _____

9. How was God's love towards us shown by Him?

Rom 5:8; Rom 8:32

4:9 _____

10. What clarification does John add regarding the love of God?

1 Pete 3:18; Jn 3:16; 1 Jn 4:19

4:10 _____

11. What is Jesus' relationship to our sins?

4:10 _____

12. What is the basis we as believers have to love other believers?

Ephesians 5:2

4:11 _____

13. How may we know that God dwells in us? And what happens to the love of Christ which dwells in us?

4:12 _____

14. How may we know that we dwell in Christ?

1 Cor 2:12

4:13 _____

15. What is John's personal testimony regarding Jesus?

4:14 _____

16. In whom does God dwell?

Rom 10:9; Phil 2:11; 2 Jn 1:7

4:15 _____

17. What is the relationship between the one who dwells in love and God?

4:16 _____

18. What is our position at the day of judgment because of our love for God?

4:17 _____

19. What does this verse say removes fear?

Rom 8:15

4:18 _____

20. People who fear what God will do to them or have them do for Him are not fully convinced of what fact?

4:18 _____

21. What fact really motivates our love for God? (This is a normal human trait and is not necessarily wrong.)

Eph 2:3-5 - loved us even when we were in sin

4:19 _____

22. This is a very strong statement John makes. In what way may the believer prove his love for God whom he has never seen?

4:20 _____

23. What is God's commandment to the Christian here through His spokesman John?
1 Pet 4:8 - one of the things this means

4:21

First Letter of John - Chapter 5

John concludes his letter by presenting faith as a very important principle which will see the child of God through every conflict. He recaps some important things in the letter such as: being born of God, belief in Jesus, eternal life is in Jesus, resisting temptation, not committing sin, loving fellow believers and overcoming the world and its influence on our lives.

1. Who is born of God?

5:1 _____

2. John turns a statement which he made earlier around in this verse. How may we tell that we love other believers?

5:2 _____

3. How is the love of God displayed in the life of the believer?

5:3 _____

4. Why do you think the commandments of God are not a burden to keep?
Matt 11:28-30 - yoke easy burden light

5:3 _____

5. Who has the power to overcome the world? What do you think John means by overcoming the world?

5:4-5 _____

6. What weapon or thing in our lives do we use to overcome the world, or any obstacle?
1 Cor 15:57 - God gives victory through Jesus

5:4 _____

7. Who does John say in this verse that bears witness to Christ's coming, and why?
John 1:31-33 - baptized by John at start of ministry;
Mark 14:24 - blood of covenant;
John 15:26 - Spirit will testify

5:6 _____

8. Name three who bear to Jesus' ministry and the new covenant?

5:7-8 _____

9. The Spirit is plain, but what do you think John means by the water and the Blood?

John 1:31- start of ministry; John 19:34 - end of ministry;

Hebrews 9:12 & Hebrews 13:12 - fulfillment of ministry

5:7-8 _____

10. Whose witness is the greatest according to John?

Acts 17:31 - raised Jesus from dead; John 5:36 - works testify.

5:9 _____

11. Who has the witness or testimony with himself / herself and why?

Romans 8:16; Galatians 4:6

5:10 _____

12. What gift has God given to the believer?

Romans 6:23 - wages of sin; John 3:16

5:11 _____

13. What is the difference between the believer and the non-believer?

John 3:18; John 3:36

5:12 _____

14. John once again gives a reason for writing to them. What is it?

List all of the reasons you can find he is writing this letter.

Look back: 1 Jn 1:4; 1 Jn2:1; 1 Jn 2:13; 1 Jn 2:14; 1 Jn 2:21

5:13 _____

15. How can we have confidence that God hears us when we pray and make requests of Him?
Ephesians 3:12 - boldness & confidence; Hebrews 4:16 - confidence at Throne of Grace

5:14 _____

16. What does this verse say that we are assured of if He hears us?

5:15 _____

17. In light of these two verses can you explain why we do not always get what we pray for?

5:14-15 _____

18. According to what you know about God's will and knowing what His will is, how do you think you can know how to pray God's will? (May be several ways.)

5:14-15 _____

19. If we see a brother or sister in Christ sinning, what are we to do according to John?

5:16 _____

20. If we pray, what will happen to the brother or sister? (Note: Bible commentaries are not clear what is meant by "sin unto death", although many explanations and theories do abound.)

5:16 _____

21. What constitutes sin, according to this verse?

5:17 _____

22. What does the believer do regarding sin? (May be premeditated sin??) And in what way can Satan and his spirits affect the believer?

James 1:27; Jude 1:24

5:18 _____

23. Contrast the condition of the believer and the rest of the world.
Galatians 1:4; 2 Cor 4:4; Eph 2:2

5:19 _____

24. What valuable thing has Christ given to the believer through the Holy Spirit?
Luke 24:45

5:20 _____

25. In the last eight verses, vss. 13 - 20, John uses the word “know” seven times. What are the things John says we know?

5:13 know _____

5:15 know _____

5:15 know _____

5:18 know _____

5:19 know _____

5:20 know _____

5:20 know _____

26. What is the last bit of advice John gives?
1 Cor 10:14; 1 Thess 1:9

5:21 _____
