

Bible Study
First Letter of John
Instructions and information on how to use this Bible Study

This Bible study was written for small group use and discussion but has been modified for individual study. I believe it can be of great help toward effective study even without a leader. I believe it is a sound method for study as it consists of just what is found in the Word of God. It is not meant to be a commentary. I have made comments on very few verses. If you desire that format there are many available for you. This is a do-it-yourself Bible Study. Following are instructions as to how it can best be utilized.

Here are some basic facts about this study and how to best utilize it. There are questions for almost every verse in the letter. The questions are numbered separately for each chapter and just below the question at the start of the blank line, you will find the Chapter and Verse reference for that question. Some of the questions have very obvious answers and almost seem too simple. They serve to get us to read the verse carefully. Other questions are more difficult and others have an answer which may require an opinion or some knowledge not in the individual verse. It is important that the answer to each question be written down on the study sheet. This will keep you from skipping over any questions. If you come to a question to which you can not find a satisfactory answer, don't give up. Ask someone else. The exact answer to my question may not be apparent because the study was built around the New American Standard Version.

You will notice just below most of the questions there are scripture references. These verses may or may not help answer the question. Their primary purpose is not to help answer the question. They may help re-enforce what John says in the verse. It may expand on what the verse says or give additional information we need to know that is not contained in the verse. The scripture references came from the New American Standard Version margins and a work called the Treasury of Scripture Knowledge. If you have a study Bible some of them will be in your margin. Just a note here. You will see notation such as Rom 3:10f or Rom 3:10ff. This is normal notation for "verses following". One "f" means a few verses, or to the end of the paragraph, and "ff" usually means to the end of the chapter. If you have wide margins in your Bible you may want to write all of them in your Bible as I have. Or maybe just the ones which speak to you. I encourage you to make a few notes in the margins of your Bible when you feel the Spirit is speaking to you in a special way. It is very important that you look up and read each and every verse reference on the Bible study sheet. You may want to circle or underline each verse reference on the study sheet after you have read it so that you will not miss any.

Start the study by first reading the article on the Apostle John. It gives a little information about the man John who wrote this letter and other books of the Bible. More information may be available just before this letter or just before the Gospel of John in your Bible. I encourage you to read those also.

Next read the article on Gnosticism. This belief was one of the earlier heresies against the Christian church during its early development. You will learn this pagan religious belief was probably the key reason John wrote this letter to these believers and many of the things he says should be interpreted in light of this belief.

Now take the time to read the entire epistle of First John. It is not important to try to understand it at this time. Just lightly read through the short book to familiarize yourself with the layout of the book and get some idea of what John has to say.

When you actually start the study you will want to read one paragraph at a time, then answer the questions for each verse in that paragraph. Chase down the verses references at each question before writing down the answer to the question.

Scripture memory is an important part of any serious Bible Study. Here are some suggestions for memory verses. You may find other verses which speak louder to you and want to memorize some of them. I encourage you to commit some verses to memory. Anyone who seriously tries can memorize verses. You may find that the wording of many modern translations seem to make them difficult to memorize for many people. King James Version, New American Standard Version or the New King James Version are much easier for me to commit to memory than most of the modern translations. The easiest method is to create flash cards on 3 X 5 cards, or something similar, with the verse on one side and the address on the other. Most people have little trouble memorizing a verse every week if they really try. I have found that most people do not understand the value of memorization and are not willing to really try. The following are key verses and are therefore good verses to memorize:

- 1 John 1:5
- 1 John 1:9
- 1 John 2:16-17
- 1 John 3:1-2
- 1 John 4:10
- Gospel of John 1:1-5 is good because the first fourteen (14) verses of that Gospel summarizes most of what John says in his letters.

Here is a recap of the Bible Study instructions:

1. Read the article on John.
2. Read the article on Gnosticism.
3. Read the entire book of First John.
4. Start the study by reading one paragraph at a time. Your translation may use different marks to indicate a paragraph, such as a bolder first letter of a word or verse number.
5. Look up all of the scripture references below the question if there are any (Circle them on the sheet as you look them up so you will know which ones you have chased down).
6. Write the answer to each question. You may have to analyze the verse carefully.
7. Keep a small note book handy for making notes when you believe the Spirit is speaking to you.

Apologies: Although I have not plagiarized any work some of the comments here may not have originated with me. Like most people, I don't have many original thoughts and the when things come to mind I have no idea where I may have read them or heard them.

Electronic copies of this and other studies may be available as "pdf" files on my web site
<http://lightinside.org>

***Serving the King,
Aaron Bruce***