TTB Class Outline: 1 - 3 John

I. CONTEXT & OVERVIEW

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- B. Timeline

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- A. **Remain Reside** (1 John 2:6, 10, 14, 17, 24, 27, 28; 3:6; 9, 14, 17, 24; 4:12, 13, 15, 16)
- B. **God is LIGHT** (1 John 1:5, 7-9; 2:10)
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- D. Walking
 - 1. In Fellowship (1 John 1:1 2:14)
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- 3. Obey God's Will (1 John 2:4, Mark 12:30, Lu8uke 10:27)
- 4. Imitate Christ (1 John 2:6, Matthew 5:13)
- 5. Love Others (1 John 2:7-11, *2:9*, 3:14-15, 3:16-18, 4:20-21)
- 6. Relationship to the World (1 John 2:15, Galatians 1:4)
 - a) 3 Categories of Sin (1 John 2:16-17):
 - (1) Lust of the Flesh (Luke 4:3)
 - (2) Lust of the Eyes (Luke 4:7)
 - (3) Pride of Life
- 7. Prove Christ is Righteous by Your Life (1 John 2:22, 2:29, 3:1-10)
- G. **Right Belief** (1 John 4:1-5:11)
 - 1. WHAT SHOULD WE BELIEVE?
 - a) Jesus Christ has come in the flesh (1 John 4:1-2, 5:20-21)
 - b) Deity of Christ (1 John 4:15, 5:5) He is the Son of God, the only begotten Son.
 - c) God is Love (1 John 4:8, 4:12, John 3:16, 4:9-10)
 - d) Christ is our Savior (1 John 5:10-12, 2:2, 4:10, Romans 3:25)
 - 2. GOD AND LOVE
 - a) Love is the supreme test of our Christian Faith (1 John 3:14, 1 Cor 13, 4:7-8, 4:16, 4:19-21)

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- 1. REWARDS OF LIFE
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 - b) Power of prayer (5:14-15)
 - c) Power of intercession (5:16)
 - d) Victory (5:4-5, 5:18)
- 2. BELIEVE & KNOW (1 John 2:3, 5; 3:2, 5, 14–16, 19, 24; 4:2, 6, 8, 13; 5:2, 13, 15, 18–20; 2 John 1:1; 3 John 1:12)

I. The Bible Project Outline

- 1. The Word of Life (1 John 1:1-4)
- 2. Walking in the Light of Jesus (1 John 1:5-3:10)
- 3. God is Love (1 John 3:11-5:17)
- 4. God and Jesus as One (1 John 5:18-21)
- 5. A Warning for Those Denying Jesus (2 and 3 John)

III. HIGHLIGHTS

A. 1 John 1

- 1. Life Revealed
- 2. Light and Darkness
- 3. Confession

B. 1 John 2

- 1. Advocate & Atonement
- 2. How We Know that We Know Him
- 3. REMAIN ABIDE
- 4. Old, Not New, But New
- 5. Warnings about the World (Antichrist, Lies vs. Truth)

C. 1 John 3

- 1. Children of God vs. Children of the Devil
- 2. Actively Resting (Abide) Love in Action

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- 2. Knowing God through Love (Remaining/Abiding, No Fear in Love)

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- 5. Face to Face

G. 3 John

- 1. Truth Children & Walking in It
- 2. Gaius vs. Diotrephes
- 3. Face to Face
- 4. Truth Love Deeds

REFERENCES & RESOURCES

1. Bible Project Guide/Videos

https://bibleproject.com/guides/books-of-1-3-john/

(also see YouTube for videos)

- 2. IPV Commentary New Testament, by Keener
- 3. What the Bible is All About, by Henrietta Mears
- 4. Word studies and Word Cloud Images

https://www.blueletterbible.org/

- 1 John https://www.blueletterbible.org/images/wordclouds/imageDisplay/wc 621jo b
- 2 John https://www.blueletterbible.org/images/wordclouds/imageDisplay/wc 632jo b
- 3 John https://www.blueletterbible.org/images/wordclouds/imageDisplay/wc 643jo b
- 5. Class notes, recordings, and Interactive Timeline

https://www.joshuatallent.com/bible/

https://time.graphics/line/728507

- 6. Venture Church Pastor's Comments From our Yearly Bible Reading Plan in YouVersion
- 7. Images https://www.bibleplaces.com

OPENING PRAYER

Lord,

Thank you for this time we have together.

Thank you for our incredible church, pastors, and staff that have created a place for us to gather together and learn more about you.

Father, thank you for sending your son to earth for us. Thank you for adopting us as your sons and daughters.

Jesus, thank you for coming to earth, living a perfect life, then giving your life as a sacrifice for us. Thank you for saving us and redeeming us. Thank you for the promise we have for eternal life.

Thank you Holy Spirit for coming to be with us and reside in us.

I ask for your presence to be tangible tonight. Great Teacher, please show us the depth of The Truth in your Word.

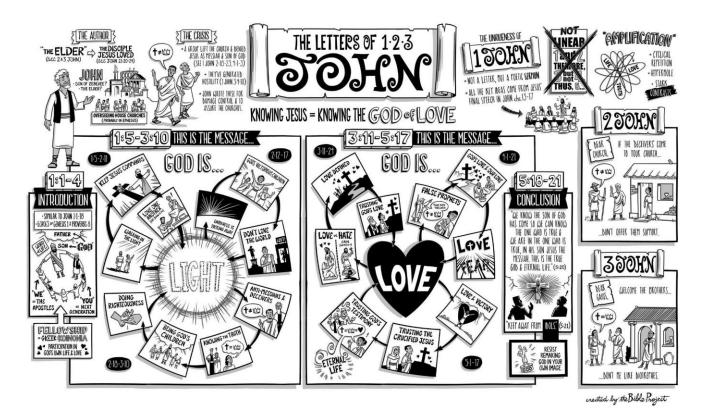
Lord, please help us to truly KNOW you.

Help us to understand the depth of your great LOVE and The TRUTH In your Word.

Help us to not only learn more about what it means to follow you, but even better - to know what it means to ABIDE, RESIDE, AND REMAIN in you.

In Jesus Name, Amen

I. CONTEXT & OVERVIEW



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About 1-3 John

The books of 1, 2, and 3 John address a changing tide in the early Church—deceivers and teachers who no longer acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah or the Son of God. John says that all legitimate teachers will share the **truth about Jesus** and the <u>cross</u>, <u>love others sacrificially</u>, and s<u>pread love and light rather than fear</u>.

The Big Idea

Following Jesus means entering into a way of life that is permeated with God's own life and love, beginning now and carrying on into eternity. To know Jesus is to know the creative God of life-giving and self-giving love.

ABOUT 1 JOHN

Authorship

Most likely John (author of the Gospel of John), eyewitness to Jesus

- 1 John is an anonymous letter but 2 and 3 John are written by someone called "the Elder."
- The language and style of all three letters are identical to each other as well as to John's
 Gospel, so most people think that all of them were written by the "disciple whom Jesus loved"
 (John 21:20-24).
- This person, however, is yet another enigma. He could be John son of Zebedee and one of the twelve disciples or another John from among Jesus' early disciples, who was later known as the Elder.
- Whichever John it is, he is now in his old age and overseeing a network of house church communities, likely around ancient Ephesus.

Genre

More like a homily (sermon) vs. a letter. Resembles form of a letter-essay, addressing specific situation of readers

Situation

- From clues within the gospel accounts and the letters, it seems that these communities were made up mostly of Jewish followers of Jesus.
- Same as Fourth Gospel: encourage Christians expelled from the synagogues
- Concerned about situations not addressed in the Gospel
- We also learn that they had recently gone through a crisis, which motivated John to write these letters
- He mentions that a group of people have broken off from these churches who no longer acknowledge Jesus as Israel's Messiah or as God's Son (1 John 2:18-23; 4:1-3).
- To make matters worse, they are stirring up hostility among those who stayed behind (1 John 3:4-10).
- Though they may have expelled false teachers but needed love for one another
- Tempted with the heresy of compromise... Developing toward full-blown gnosticism. *See
 Picture Wolves*

GNOSTICISM: ancient heresies - secret knowledge as a path to salvation. Salvation through knowledge.

Idolatry and **heresy** advocated by false prophets:

- Docetists (doh-SIST-ists) believed Christ was divine but only seemed to become human
- Cerinthians (suh-RIN-thee-uns) believed that Christ Spirit merely came on Jesus but denied that he was actually the one and only Christ
- Gnostics (naa-stuhks) defined sin in various ways, believing they were incapable of committing real sins, although their bodies could engage in behavior true Christians considered sinful

Primary troublemakers were **secessionists** (formally withdrew from Christianity)

- People who have been part of the Christian community that John addresses but who had withdrawn from that community.
- John advocates testing the Spirit by two main tests:
 - 1. **Moral-ethical test:** keeping the commandments, especially love of the Christian community
 - 2. Faith Test: the right view of Jesus
- All these **compromises** helped the heretics better adapt to their culture's values... but **led them** away from the truth proclaimed by the eyewitnesses who had known Jesus first-hand.

Wolves

Many false prophets have gone out into the world (1 John 4:1).



Jesus warned of false prophets in the Sermon on the Mount, comparing them to wolves: "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves" (Matt 7:15). Paul likewise compared false teachers to wolves: "I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock" (Acts 20:29). This picture shows a wolf at Haibar Nature Reserve in the Negev.

ABOUT 2 JOHN

- Warning to a specific house church.
- The people who deny Jesus, whom John calls the "deceivers," are probably going to come looking for validation or support.
- John specifically tells the church that they are not to offer any.

Authorship, Date

- Written in the same timeframe as 1 and 3 John.
- Little stylistic difference between 1 and 2 John.
- Writer identifies himself as "The elder" This is likely the same John who wrote the gospel of John, as well as 1 and 3 John
- Private correspondence to an individual Written to the "elect lady"

Nature of the Letter

- Second John may function as an official letter, the sort that high priests could send to Jewish leaders out-side Palestine.
- The length is the same as that of 3 John; both were probably limited to this length by the single sheet of papyrus on which they were written

Situation

- Second John addresses the problem of the same secessionists that 1 John addressed.
- For the secessionists, Jesus was a great prophet like John the Baptist and their own leaders, but he was not the supreme Lord in the flesh (cf. 1 In 4:1-6; Rev 2:14, 20).

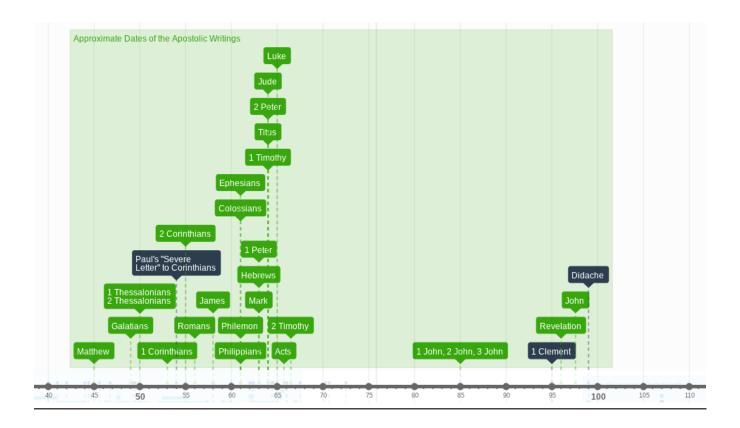
ABOUT 3 JOHN

- This is a "letter of recommendation" for **Demetrius**, a traveling missionary (vv. 7-8) who needs to be put up by a local *church while he is evangelizing in their area (cf. comment on Mt 10:11-13, 40-42).
- For the first three centuries of the church's existence, **congregations met in homes** (for further details on this practice, see Romans 16:5.)
- In this letter to Gaius, a house-church leader, John is apparently attempting to counter the
 opposing influences of Diotrephes (dee-OT-ruh-fez) a different house-church leader who is
 asserting his own authority and rejecting missionaries backed by John's apostolic authority.

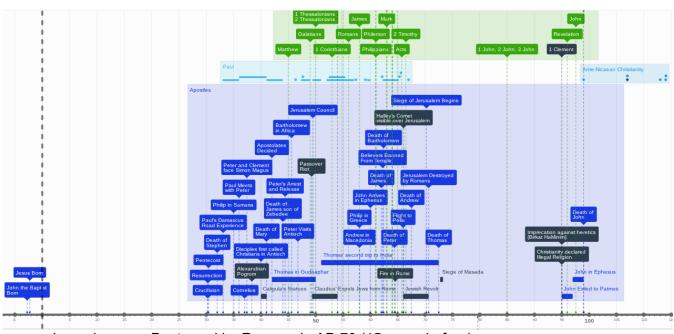
Timeline

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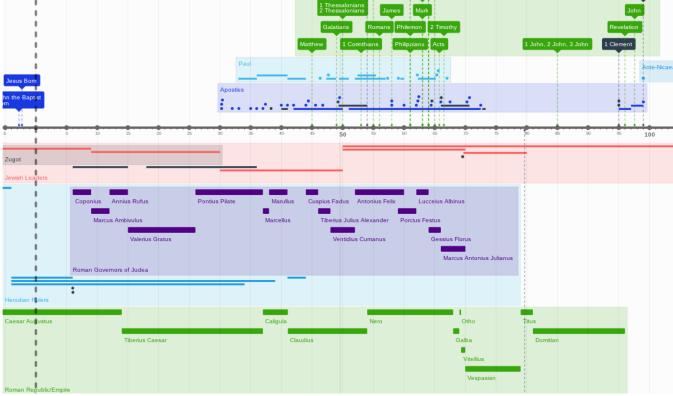


- Written approximately AD 85 (1942 years ago)
- · John was likely the last living apostle, so eyewitness testimony of Jesus was fading
- About 20 years after 2 Timothy (AD 66) and the Death of Paul (AD 67) who was martyred by Nero
- Revelation (AD 96) and John (AD 97) were written after 1-3 John



Jerusalem was Destroyed by Romans in AD 70 (15 years before)

- Death of Thomas was in AD72 (13 years before)
- John was later exiled to Patmos (AD 95-97) and then was in Ephesus (AD 97-99) before his death (AD 99)



- The Roman Empire was under Emperor Domitian (duh·mi·shn) ruled AD 81-96 AD
 - Known for authoritarian rule and persecution of dissenters.
 - Not as brutal as Nero, but increased pressure on Christians, especially those who refused emperor worship

A Perishing World

The world is passing away, as are its lusts (1 John 2:17).

If John wrote this letter late in his life, Domitian (reigned AD 81–96) may have been the sitting emperor. A temple to Domitian stood proudly in John's adopted hometown of Ephesus. Today, it lies in ruins.



II. THEMES

Remain - Reside

(1 John 2:6, 10, 14, 17, 24, 27, 28; 3:6; 9, 14, 17, 24; 4:12, 13, 15, 16)

1 John 2:6 – The one who says he REMAINS in him should walk just as he walked.

1 John 2:10 – The one who loves his brother or sister REMAINS in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him.

1 John 2:14 – I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, God's word REMAINS in you, and you have conquered the evil one.

1 John 2:17 – And the world with its lust is passing away, but the one who does the will of God REMAINS forever.

1 John 2:24 – What you have heard from the beginning is to REMAIN in you. If what you have heard from the beginning REMAINS in you, then you will REMAIN in the Son and in the Father.

1 John 2:27 – The anointing you received from him REMAINS in you... just as it has taught you, REMAIN in him.

1 John 2:28 – So now, little children, REMAIN in him so that when he appears we may have confidence...

1 John 3:6 - Everyone who REMAINS in him does not sin...

1 John 3:9 – Everyone who has been born of God does not sin, because his seed REMAINS in him...

- 1 John 3:14 The one who does not love REMAINS in death.
- 1 John 3:17 ...how does God's love RESIDE in him?
- 1 John 3:24 The one who keeps his commands REMAINS in him, and he in him...
- 1 John 4:12 If we love one another, God REMAINS in us...
- 1 John 4:13 This is how we know that we REMAIN in him and he in us...
- 1 John 4:15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God—God REMAINS in him and he in God.
- 1 John 4:16 ...the one who REMAINS in love REMAINS in God, and God REMAINS in him.

God is LIGHT

(1 John 1:5, 7-9; 2:10)

1 John 1:5

This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is LIGHT, and there is absolutely no darkness in him.

1 John 1:7

If we walk in the LIGHT as he himself is in the LIGHT, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.

1 John 2:8

Yet I am writing you a new command, which is true in him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true LIGHT is already shining.

1 John 2:9

The one who says he is in the LIGHT but hates his brother or sister is in the darkness until now.

1 John 2:10

The one who loves his brother or sister remains in the LIGHT, and there is no cause for stumbling in him.

God is LOVE

(1 John 4:8, 16)

1 John 4:8

The one who does not love does not know God, because GOD IS LOVE.

1 John 4:16

And we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. GOD IS LOVE, and the one who remains in love remains in God, and God remains in him.

Walking

- In Fellowship (1 John 1:1 − 2:14)
- As Children of God (1 John 2:15 3:24)
- In Love (1 John 4:1-21)
- In Knowledge (1 John 5:1-21)
- In Truth (2 John 1-13)

In the Way (3 John 1-14) *See Image - Walking in the Way*

Walking in the Way

And this is love, that we walk according to His commandments (2 John 6).



John the Baptist referred to the ways of the Messiah as "straight" (Matt 3:3), and Jesus described the way that leads to life as "narrow" (Matt 7:14). John likely refers to this same idea when he urges his audience to walk according to the commands of Jesus. This path is located near the Hagar Qim temple on the island of Malta.

Exalts God. God is...

- Light (1 John 1:5)
- Love (1 John 4:8,16)
- Righteous (1 John 2:29)
- Life (1 John 5:11 12)
- Truth (2 John)
- Good (3 John)

Right Behavior - Seven "Fruit"/Behavior Tests

(1 John 1:1 – 3:24)

- 1. Walk in the Light (1 John 1:6, Eph 5:13, 1:7)
- 2. Admit You are a Sinner (1 John 1:8, 1:9)
- 3. Obey God's Will (1 John 2:4, Mark 12:30, Lu8uke 10:27)
- 4. Imitate Christ (1 John 2:6, Matthew 5:13)
- 5. Love Others (1 John 2:7-11, *2:9*, 3:14-15, 3:16-18, 4:20-21)
- 6. Relationship to the World (1 John 2:15, Galatians 1:4)
 - 3 Categories of Sin (1 John 2:16-17):
 - 1. Lust of the Flesh (Luke 4:3)
 - 2. Lust of the Eyes (Luke 4:7)
 - 3. Pride of Life
- 7. Prove Christ is Righteous by Your Life (1 John 2:22, 2:29, 3:1-10)

Right Belief

WHAT SHOULD WE BELIEVE?

- Jesus Christ has come in the flesh (1 John 4:1-2, 5:20-21) *See Picture Coming in the Flesh*
- o Deity of Christ (1 John 4:15, 5:5) He is the Son of God, the only begotten Son.
- o God is Love (1 John 4:8, 4:12, John 3:16, 4:9-10)
- Christ is our Savior (1 John 5:10-12, 2:2, 4:10, Romans 3:25)
- GOD AND LOVE
 - Love is the supreme test of our Christian Faith (1 John 3:14, 1 Cor 13, 4:7-8, 4:16, 4:19-21)

Coming in the Flesh

Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God (1 John 4:2).



After John the Baptist baptized Jesus, he also made a confession of Jesus's identity (John 1:29-34). This photograph shows the general area where the baptism may have occurred. A small tributary of the Jordan River, the Wadi Gharrar is fed by five or six springs. Tradition holds that these springs provided the water that was used by John the Baptist for baptizing. Those who support this tradition note the reference to "Bethany beyond the Jordan" as the place John was baptizing (in the Gospel of John), which was not necessarily a location on the river itself.

Rich Rewards

(1 John 5:12-21)

- REWARDS OF LIFE *See Image "Reward"*
 - Assurance of eternal life (5:13) *See Image The Hope of Resurrection*
 - Power of prayer (5:14-15)
 - Power of intercession (5:16)
 - Victory (5:4-5, 5:18)
- BELIEVE & KNOW

(1 John 2:3, 5; 3:2, 5, 14–16, 19, 24; 4:2, 6, 8, 13; 5:2, 13, 15, 18–20; 2 John 1:1; 3 John 1:12)

- 1. "KNOW" used more than 30 times
- 2. Wants readers to believe that Jesus is the Christ & KNOW that you have eternal life
- 3. Suggestion: Underline "KNOW" in these books

"Reward"

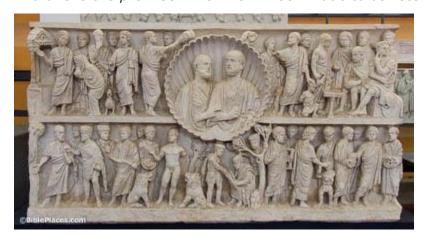
But that you may receive the full reward (2 John 8).



The word "reward" (Gk. *misthos*) is used in many contexts to refer to pay or wages, remuneration for work done (e.g., Luke 10:7; Jas 5:4); in this context, it likely refers to recognition or recompense (by God) for the moral quality of an action (cf. Matt 5:12; 6:2). John uses the same word elsewhere in connection with eternal life (John 4:36). This concept is similar to Paul's reference to the "prize" (Gk. *brabeion*) of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus (Phil 3:14; cf. 1 Cor 9:23-27). The idea is illustrated here by a prize amphora. Every four years in Athens, the Panathenaic games would be held in honor of Athena. The prize amphorae like the one shown here would be filled with 42 quarts (40 L) of olive oil from sacred groves of Athena. On one side would be pictured the event for which the prize was awarded. The other side would have a depiction of Athena.

The Hope of Resurrection

And this is the promise which He Himself made to us: eternal life (1 John 2:25).



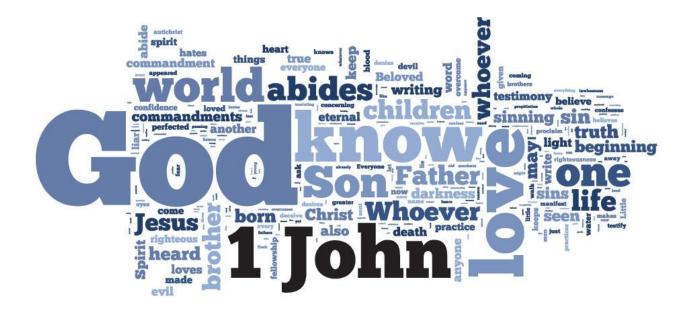
The promise of eternal life is a promise of life even after death; it is a promise of resurrection. This Christian sarcophagus, called the sarcophagus of two brothers, dates to the 4th century. It seems to anticipate the resurrection through the depiction of the faith of numerous characters from both the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament.

The Bible Project Outline

https://bibleproject.com/guides/books-of-1-3-john/

- The Word of Life (1 John 1:1-4)
- Walking in the Light of Jesus (1 John 1:5-3:10)
- God is Love (1 John 3:11-5:17)
- God and Jesus as One (1 John 5:18-21)
- A Warning for Those Denying Jesus (2 and 3 John)

III. HIGHLIGHTS





1 John 1

Life Revealed (v1-3)

- Jesus was the Word of LIFE
- Eternal LIFE that was with The Father and revealed to us
- We have seen, heard, and declare it for fellowship with us (believers), and with the Father, and with His Son, Jesus.

Light and Darkness (v5-7)

- v5 God is LIGHT and there is absolutely no darkness in Him
- v6 You can't say you have fellowship with him and WALK in darkness
- v7 If we WALK in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin.

Pastor Di:

John uses the imagery of <u>light</u> and <u>dark</u> here, but he has used it before. In his gospel (1:9) he describes Jesus as "the true light that gives light to every man" and in (8:12) he quotes Jesus saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life". And here in his letter, (1:5) John declares that <u>God is light</u>, there is no darkness in him."

I have a personal love for the imagery of Jesus as light...in darkness, all things are attracted to light. We live in darkness and as representatives of Jesus we are to walk in and radiate light. That's hope for a dark world.

Confession (v8-9)

v8 We are lying and deceiving ourselves if we say we have no sin in us.

9 If we CONFESS our sins, he is faithful and righteous to FORGIVE us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (CSB)

1 John 2

Advocate & Atonement (v1-2)

He is writing so that his "little children" (term of affection and spiritual fatherhood) "may not sin", but then follows with "but if anyone does sin, we have an <u>advocate</u> with the Father - <u>Jesus Christ</u> the righteous one is the <u>atoning</u> sacrifice for our sins!

Atoning means to make amends or reparation; make or become united or reconciled.

G2434 ἱλασμός hilasmos

- I. an appeasing, propitiating *See image Propitiation*
- II. the means of appeasing, a propitiation

Propitiation

He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for those of the whole world (1 John 2:2).



The term "propitiation" (Gk. *hilasmos*) refers to something offered as an appeasement for sin. It is used in the LXX to refer to a sin offering or a sacrifice made to atone for sin (cf. LXX Ezek 44:27). Sacrifice was a regular part of the rites that took place at pagan temples in the 1st century. The altar was typically a central focal point in front of any temple. At least five temples (including this one) have been discovered at Pompeii, giving some indication of how common they were in the 1st century AD.

How We Know that We Know Him (v3-6)

3 This is how we know that we know Him: if we keep His commands

- ... whoever keeps his word, truly in him the love of God is made complete...
- How do we know we are in Him? That we remain in Him?
 - We should walk just as he walked.

REMAIN - ABIDE

Pastor Christian:

John does not want these believers to drift out of fellowship with Jesus.

The text gives us clues that they are being drawn away into errant religious ideas and tempted by the "love of the world."

So John keeps calling them back to the Truth about Jesus, their calling in His name, and the urgency of the days. The church has been living in the last days since Jesus was resurrected and established his church.

Within his encouragement to live the Jesus way, a core theme of this letter shows up <u>ABIDE</u>. Did you catch it? John encourages us to <u>abide or remain</u> in Jesus (same word) 8 times in this chapter and 23 times in the short letter.

Jesus urged us to <u>abide</u> in him as a branch <u>abides</u> in the vine. John says the same thing - stay within Jesus. When you drift, quickly turn to Him, and let Him bring you back into alignment.

Abiding takes choice. Sometimes a hard choice against our will. We do not need to perform some Herculean task - Jesus has accomplished the GREAT WORK, we simply have to rest in it, stay in it, contend against our broken nature and the world for the gift of it. We choose. We give thanks. We develop our identity in Jesus. We obey and repent; Growing in maturity until He returns and our reunion is happy.

Old, Not New, But New (v7-8)

7 Dear friends, I am not writing you a <u>new command</u> but an <u>old command</u> that you have had from the beginning. The <u>old command</u> is the word you have heard. **8** Yet I am writing you a <u>new command</u>, which is true in him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining.

IVP COMMENTARY

2:7-8

In antiquity, paradox was one graphic way of forcing an audience to think through the meaning of one's words; John used it here ("old, not new," "but new"). The love commandment was old, always part of God's word (Deut 6:5 and Lev 19:18, cited by Jesus - Mk 12:30-31) but also new, based on a new and ultimate example (Jn 13:34).

Many Jewish traditions that used the light-darkness imagery for good and evil portrayed the present age as ruled mainly by darkness but the age to come in terms of the triumph of light.

v9-11 Go on to explain about how hating a brother or sister is walking in darkness and loving their brother and sister REMAINS in the light.

Warnings about the World (Antichrist, Lies vs. Truth) (v18-26)

In the last hour, heard that antichrist is coming, and now many antichrists have come (v18). You have an <u>anointing</u> from the Holy One - so you know the truth (v20) and no lie comes from the truth (v21).

Antichrist: Liar; One who denies Jesus is the Christ; One who denies The Father and The Son

Goes back to REMAINING/ABIDING with God (v24 - 27).

Remember the anointing you received - helps you discern between the <u>truth</u> and <u>lies</u> so you're not tricked by those trying to deceive you (v26-27).

1 John 3

Children of God vs. Children of the Devil (v1-10)

1 See what great love the Father has given that we should be called <u>God's children</u> - and we are! 2 We are God's children now...

10 This is how <u>God's children and the devil's children become obvious</u>. Whoever does not do what is right is not of God, especially the one who does not love his brother or sister.

Pastor Di

Verses 1-10: The way this section is usually interpreted is that a person who continually or repeatedly sins is not a believer. A believer can sin, but only on occasion.

According to Bibleref: "While this is possible, the specific context is about the results of a relationship with Christ. True fellowship with Christ cannot result in sin-this is part of John's defense against the claim that the gospel gives people an excuse to do wrong."

The truth is: a true believer is marked by a changed life.

I heard Graham Cooke say it like this recently: when we become Christians, our sin nature is removed/dead/gone, but we can still have sin habits.

I am so thankful that sin habits can be changed as we abide in Him and renew our minds, becoming more and more like Christ.

Actively Resting (Abide) - Love in Action (v11-18)

Christian Lindbeck

We cannot forget John's theme - <u>Abiding in Christ.</u> That is, actively resting in our new identity within the Life of Jesus.

Actively resting? Yes. We choose to trust, not squirm; to not frantically manipulate, to not worry or be anxious. We contend to embody and enjoy our gifted new identity-and that first looks like abiding in Jesus.

So the contrary is equally and naturally True - we do not rest or settle into sin. Sin is not our abiding place. Of course not!! It is obvious from this very passage and John's instructions elsewhere that Christians still sin and have Jesus as our intercessor and his forgiveness.

The question is, where is your life planted? Where does it rest or abide? In Jesus or in sin? The two cannot live together. A true child of God may sin, but the good conviction of the Holy Spirit send them running back to their Father God to make things right. A real Christian can get exhausted or at the end of their rope, the invitation of Jesus sends them running to sit in their Father's lap.

Christians are marked by love because they are radically loved. Those who abide in sin are marked by hatred because that is the natural state of evil.

This is meant to encourage us - we are children of God abiding in Jesus!!

1 John 3: 16-18 (CSB)

16 This is how we have come to **know love**: He laid down his life for us. We should also lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters.

18 Little children, let us not love in word or speech, but in action and in truth.

1 John 4

Test the Spirits (Antichrist vs. Spirit of Truth) (v1-6)

See image - Testing

Testing

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God (1 John 4:1).



Romans took steps to avoid being cheated or deceived in commerce. One way in which this was accomplished was by an official set of volume measures placed by the authorities at the

market. Similar objects have been recovered from numerous places across the Roman empire. Anyone with a concern about deception related to volume at the marketplace could use a set of official measures like this to determine if they were being shorted.

- v1 DO NOT believe every spirit!
- There is a Spirit (capitalized) of truth (from God) and there is a spirit of deception
- How do you know if the spirits are from God or not?
- Brings up antichrist again. v3 spirit of the antichrist won't confess Jesus so they are NOT from God
- "...Which you have heard is coming; even now is already in the world."
- So they are "in the world" and of the world, and the world listens to them, but not us...
- v4 "You are from God, little children, and <u>you have conquered them</u>, because <u>the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world."</u>
- We are from God and listen to him.
- This is how we know the difference between lies, deception, and the spirit of the World verses the Spirit of Truth, the Holy Spirit.

Knowing God through Love (Remaining/Abiding, No Fear in Love) (4:7 - 5:4)

I'd like to slow down and dive a bit deeper into the next passage. Please turn to 1 John 4 verse 7.

I'd like to ask everyone to read through this to yourselves, slowly - from 1 John 4:7 through 5:4.

I suggest:

- Underlining and/or highlighting the words LOVE and REMAIN and circling or marking the word COMPLETE
- Please jot down anything the Holy Spirit is highlighting to you.
- Also, one idea is to read this through, and every time you see "LOVE" replace it with "God,"
 "Lord," or "Jesus" because as it says in verses 8 and 16: "God IS Love."

(Pause for a few minutes so everyone can read)

- v7 Love one another because love is from God, and we are born of God
- v8 God is love. If you're not loving, then you aren't knowing God.
- v9 Jesus is God's love reavealed to us our atoning sacrifice
- v12 If we love one another, God remains in us and his love is made COMPLETE in us.
- v14 We have SEEN and TESTIFY seeing/knowing, then testifying go together
- What is your witness/testimony like? Are you telling it? Can you not help yourself but to share about Jesus or is something stopping you?
- V15 Confession Jesus is the Son of God (Spirit of Truth) God REMAINS in him and he in God
- v16 This means we KNOW and BELIEVE the LOVE of God. REMAIN in this LOVE. GOD IS LOVE. REMAIN in LOVE.

v17 - This is how LOVE is made COMPLETE

v18 - There is NO FEAR in LOVE. Perfect love drives out fear!

Pastor Di

Fear is associated with punishment. Those who know and follow Jesus have been fully forgiven of their sins and can be free of fear of future punishment.

Amongst believers, fear of future punishment indicates an incomplete or immature relationship with God.

v19 - Why do we love? Because He first loved us.

V20 - You can't say "I love God" and hate your brother or sister - you are a liar.

21 And we have this command from Him: **The one who loves God must also love his brother and sister.**

Leads us to Chapter 5.

1 John 5

Law of Love (from end of 4 - v4)

v3 - Keeping the "law of love" is not a burden when lived this way.

It comes naturally because we BELIEVE, KNOW, and EXPERIENCE God's great love.

This is how his LOVE is made COMPLETE in us.

This is the VICTORY we live from.

v4 - God's love, and our faith in Him and in this love, conquered the world

Certainty of God's Testimony (v5 - 13)

Question - What does the blood, water, and Spirit mean?

I have Pastor Sean's comments from our YouVersion plan and also some information from the IVP Commentary.

Pastor Sean King

The Spirit, Water and the blood. Anyone curious about that? I was.

There are two main thoughts on this

1. Jesus' baptism in water and His blood on the cross. Upon His baptism the Spirit descended on Him and resided in Him even in His death. John may have been refuting the claims of a man named

Cerinthus who claimed that the Spirit came on Jesus and made Him God at His baptism, left Jesus before his last breath. That Jesus was not God incarnate but became God.

2. The 2nd thought is that John is referring to the blood and water that came from Jesus' side on the cross, confirming that He was actually dead.

In either case the point is made that Jesus was fully God at birth and fully man at death

God has given us eternal ife in His Son! Believe in Him to have this.

Effective Prayer (v14 - 17)

v14-15 - Confidence in this:

If we ask ANYTHING according to His will He hears us.

We will have what we ask.

Everything before this passage is all about abiding and residing in God, in His love. If we live in and through Him, then this is true for us.

? Question - v16-17 Sins that lead to death and don't lead to death and prayer

1 John 5:16-17

16 If anyone sees a **fellow believer** committing a <u>sin that doesn't lead to death</u>, he should ask, and God will give life to him—to those who commit sin that doesn't lead to death. There is <u>sin that leads to death</u>. I am not saying he should pray about that. 17 All unrighteousness is sin, and there is <u>sin that doesn't lead to death</u>.

IVP Commentary

5:16-17.

Given the use of "life" for *eternal life and "death" for its opposite in this epistle, a <u>"sin unto death" (KJV)</u> would seem to be <u>a sin leading one away from eternal life (cf. Gen 2:17; 3:24).</u>

The two sins John would likely have in mind would be <u>hating the brothers and sisters</u> (the secessionists' rejection of the Christian community) and <u>failing to believe in Jesus rightly</u> (their false doctrine about his identity as the divine Lord and *Christ in the flesh); see comment on 3:23.

The *Old Testament and Judaism distinguished between <u>willful rebellion</u> against God, which could not <u>be forgiven by normal means</u>, and <u>a lighter transgression</u>. More relevant here, some ancient Jewish texts (e.g., the *Dead Sea Scrolls, *Jubilees) also spoke of a <u>capital offense</u> as "a matter of death," which was normally enforced by excommunication from the community rather than literal execution.

Those who were sinned against could secure forgiveness for their opponents by prayer (Gen 20:7, 17; Job 42:8), but a <u>sin of willful apostasy</u> from God's truth nullified the efficacy of second-hand prayers for forgiveness (1 Sam 2:25; Jer 7:16; 11:14; 14:11).

John is presumably saying: <u>God will forgive erring believers</u> at your request, but <u>those who</u> <u>have gone completely after the heresy are outside the sphere of your prayers</u> or (on another interpretation) simply must directly *repent to receive forgiveness.

Conclusion (v18 - 21)

We are born of God, not sin.

Evil one does not touch us.

Confidence/knowing we are of God - His children.

We are IN HIM.

Pastor Christian

John closes this letter the same way he has carried it all along, urging Christians to <u>remain in Jesus.</u>
More than 20 times he repeats the call to abide, and more than eight times he reminds us that in Christ we overcome. To <u>abide</u> in Jesus is to find light, life, love, and victory. These are never separated. Right belief, right love, and right action go together.

On the other hand, to abide in sin is to abide in hatred and wrong behavior, which leads to death.

John is not writing an evangelistic tract, but an encouragement to believers under pressure. They were surrounded by false teaching that tried to split body from spirit, faith from love, belief from behavior. But John says NO, you have received the gift of life in Jesus, who is fully God and fully man. You have been reborn with him, so live that life. Open the gift, enjoy it, embody it. The Spirit gives us power to overcome and to live the only life worth living, life with Jesus toward the Father.

Lord Jesus, we choose and celebrate this LIFE in you. Fill this day with the wholesome pleasure of being aligned with you and the Father by the Spirit, amen.

Also significant at the end - Guard yourself from idols.



Word cloud courtesy of Blue Letter Bible

2 John

Intro Highlights

Private correspondence to an individual.
Writer identifies himself as "The elder"

Written to the "elect lady" (will dive into this a bit in a minute)

Warning to a specific house church. The people who deny Jesus, whom John calls the "deceivers," are probably going to come looking for validation or support. John specifically tells the church that they are not to offer any.

Pastor Christian:

I think it's always fun to ask, why is this here? Of all the things that could have been included in the Bible, why did the Holy Spirit and the early church choose this? When it comes to short letters like 2 John or 3 John, that question feels especially relevant. The answer is actually quite good.

First, this letter was written by an apostle who walked with Jesus, who talked with Him, touched Him, ate with Him, and learned directly from Him. The early church treasured every word from one of the original Twelve.

Second, 2 John is so close & personal. While many letters were written for wide circulation, this one, like Philemon, addresses a single situation and therefore gives us an intimate view of first-century Christian life, hospitality, and the issues facing the church. Watching them handle actual situations gives us direction.

Finally, we get to see John's core theology expressed again. The elder insists what we believe, how we love each other, and how we live are inseparably connected in Jesus, the one who perfectly unites the spiritual Truth into the world.

Take a minute to be thankful that we still hold these few precious words from the elder apostle and get to read them together nearly two thousand years later!

Mysterious Lady

v1 - To the Elect Lady and her children, whom I love in the truth...

Pastor Di:

For a quick read on who this mysterious lady is that John is writing to, see https://www.gotquestions.org/elect-lady-2-John.html

"Elect" means "chosen" or "chosen by God" to be a part of the church Because she believed in Jesus Christ

Some think the lady is not an individual but a symbol of the church as a whole or a local body of believers, but that interpretation makes it difficult to explain who her "children" are.

There are actually two elect ladies mentioned in 2 John.

At the end of the letter he says "The children of your elect sister greet you"

Have "elect lady" who receives the letter

And "elect sister" whose children (her nieces and nephews) also know John Both were chosen by God, redeemed by Christ, and made part of the family of God.

Her Children

v4 - see that only some of her children are walking in truth

This can be very difficult.

I want to encourage you that the prayers of parents are unique, full of authority and are POWERFUL to protect children by the blood of Jesus Christ, remove strongholds, and bring freedom and salvation.

>>>Testimony of Satanic leader in a cult, raised as a Christian

His parents found out out and prayed for him (for years)

He encountered Jesus while performing a satanic ritual and was RADICALLY saved, and now has a ministry teaching parents and people about the supernatural and how to pray.

SATANIC CHURCH LEADER MEETS JESUS

https://youtu.be/QDhQUSFrLbE?si=8i22OvPH9eH8rVfK

Truth & Love

"Truth" and "Love" each occur 5 times each in this book

v2 - We must test all the teachings "for the truth's sake" - the truth as it is in Christ Jesus *See Image - Truth Personified*

v5 - We will love one another when we walk in truth, not just admire it

This makes me think about how if we are **abiding and residing** and **KNOW** the love of Christ, that we cannot help but walk in love because "Christ's love compels us" (2 Cor 5:14)

> The proof of our love is in our walk. <

"And this is love: that we walk in obedience to his commands (2 John 6)

Truth Personified

For the sake of the truth that lives in us and will be with us forever (2 John 2).



Apollo was the Greek deity of truth and prophecy, among other things. This picture shows a statue of Apollo playing a lute. This statute is considered to be a Roman interpretation of a 5th-century BC original. It was photographed at the Vatican Museums.

Antichrist vs. Doctrine of Christ

v7-11: Liar & Antichrist

False teachers - "deceivers" - can recognize them - they will not confess Jesus Christ came here in the flesh.

Didn't believe in His humanity, incarnation, would not call him Lord, denied His deity.

v8-9: REMAIN in Christ

Watch yourselves so you don't lose what you've learned

REMAIN in Christ's Teaching

- What are you remaining in
- What are you allowing into your home and heart what teaching/teachers?
 - O What media movies, TV, social media?
 - O What books and studies?
 - What people and teachers what voices are you listening to?

Test of the Gospel

> Apply this test of the Gospel...<

- to some of the popular religious movements of our day (Christian Science, Spiritualism, New Age, Witchcraft, Scientology, Meditation – anything that denies Christ)
- To the media, books, teachers, relationships you have

> Don't be friendly with these false teachers/teachings or even entertain them — otherwise you are sharing in their wicked work! *See Image - Hospitality*

Our focus should not be "naval gazing" or about "what I think," and also not about what someone else thinks.

Keep our eyes on Christ.

Ask ourselves questions like:

- What has Christ said?
- What is He to you?
- Is He the Son of God?

Hospitality

If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house (2 John 10).



The reference in this verse may be to traveling teachers who were seeking hospitality (free lodging and meals). The house shown here is one of a series of six luxurious residences located on terraces on the side of the hill south of the Library of Celsus at Ephesus. The oldest building dates to the 1st century BC and continued in use as a residence until the 7th century AD. It is unknown whether John ever entered these houses, but their owners may have known of him and his work, particularly if, as tradition holds, he lived in Ephesus for many years.

Face to Face

v12 - ... I hope to come to you and talk face to face so that our joy may be complete.

- Reminded me of how important this is.
- Do we ever neglect this due to busyness, or having things in the wrong order of precedence?
- Face-to-face relationships matter so much!





3 John

INTRO HIGHLIGHTS

3 John is written to a member of a house church named Gaius.

John asks Gaius to welcome the legitimate missionaries that will be arriving soon because the leader of that church community, **Diotrephes (dee-OT-ruh-fez)**, is acting like a jerk and rejecting people that are associated with John the Elder.

Truth - Children & Walking in It (v2-4)

- v2 Highlights perspering in every way and good health this is what he prays for his friend
- v3 Gaius is walking in fidelity to the truth walking in the truth
- v4 One of my favorite verses is 3 John 1:4:

I have no greater JOY than this: to hear that my children are walking in TRUTH.

Gaius vs. Diotrephes (dee-OT-ruh-fez) (v5-12)

v5 Gaius was acting faithfully and others testified to his love v6 John encourages him to support missionaries - they are "coworkers with the truth"

v9-10 Diotrephes (dee-OT-ruh-fez) "does not receive our authority", "sladering us with malicious words", and expels believers from the church.

Pastor Di:

Such a short little section but I find the dichotomy between hospitality to believers and lack of hospitality/welcoming of other believers so interesting. Showing hospitality helps us "work together for truth" (v 8)

3 John 11

Dear friend, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. The one who does good is of God; the one who does evil has not seen God.

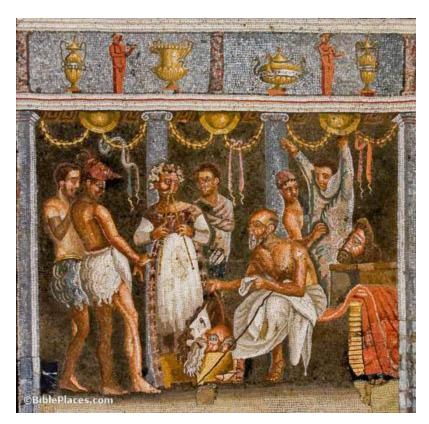
<u>"Not Seen"</u> means <u>not discerned</u> or <u>experienced</u> - has enjoyed <u>no vision</u> of Him and <u>does not know Him at all.</u>

See Image - Imitation

Gaius was a bright spot in dark world – keeping the love of Christ burning brightly. We can either be like Gaius, helping in the kingdom, or like Diotrephes (dee-OT-ruh-fez), hindering the cause.

Imitation

Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but imitate what is good (3 John 11).



This mosaic depicts actors preparing for a play; the seated man is the choregos, a wealthy patron who financed the chorus. The other men are in various stages of dressing for their roles as they choose masks (left) and don costumes that go with the part they are to play. This mosaic was photographed at the Naples Archaeological Museum.

Face-to-Face

v14 Again, he closes with his hope to see them soon and talk "face to face" emphasizing the importance of fellowship and being together.

Truth - Love - Deeds

Some final comments from Pastor Christian.

Pastor Christian:

Truth - Love - Deeds Right Belief - Right Affection - Right Behavior Head - Heart - Hand

These three essential elements of an authentic Christianity live in a continual triune relationship with each empowering and informing the other.

Otherwise behavior can become self-righteous religion or just wrong. Love can become sloppy or empty/unapplied. Truth becomes too hard edged or un-lived. But, the Gospel keeps calling us back to the good news that God loves us, restored us in the Son, and is diligently working to bring our heads, hearts, and hands back into full alignment with him.

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord,

Thank you Lord, for this time we have had together. Thank you for your insight, revelation, and a deeper understanding of the knowledge of you. Thank you for your LOVE and TRUTH that sets us free.

I pray that we we will continually surrender everyone and everything in our lives to you - our thoughts, our hearts, our spirits, and our actions.

Please give us all **repentant** hearts for the things you may have uncovered tonight or will uncover in the coming days - where we have been believing lies and following the wrong Father, teachers, instruction, or things. Help us to remove idolatry from our lives in every form. May we only follow, listen to, and abide in You - The One True God.

Help us to to **renounce** the lies of the enemy and stand on Your Truth.

Remind us of our authority to **rebuke** the enemy. We have victory, protection, and position in Christ that is delegated to each one of us through the cross, resurrection, and intercession of Jesus Christ.

Lord, strengthen us to continually **resist** the enemy in our daily lives - keeping our spiritual armor on, standing strong, staying alert, and guarding ourselves against his schemes.

I bless my friends here - that they would continually live in You, in Your LOVE... ABIDING, RESIDING, and REMAINING in You and Your incredible LOVE ALWAYS.

I bless them with continually **receiving** from You, Father, Jesus, and Holy Spirit, all that they need for life and godliness - replacing all the lies of the enemy with The TRUTH. I bless them with receiving deep healing and freedom from You. I bless them with continually walking in Your LOVE.

In Your Name I pray. Amen