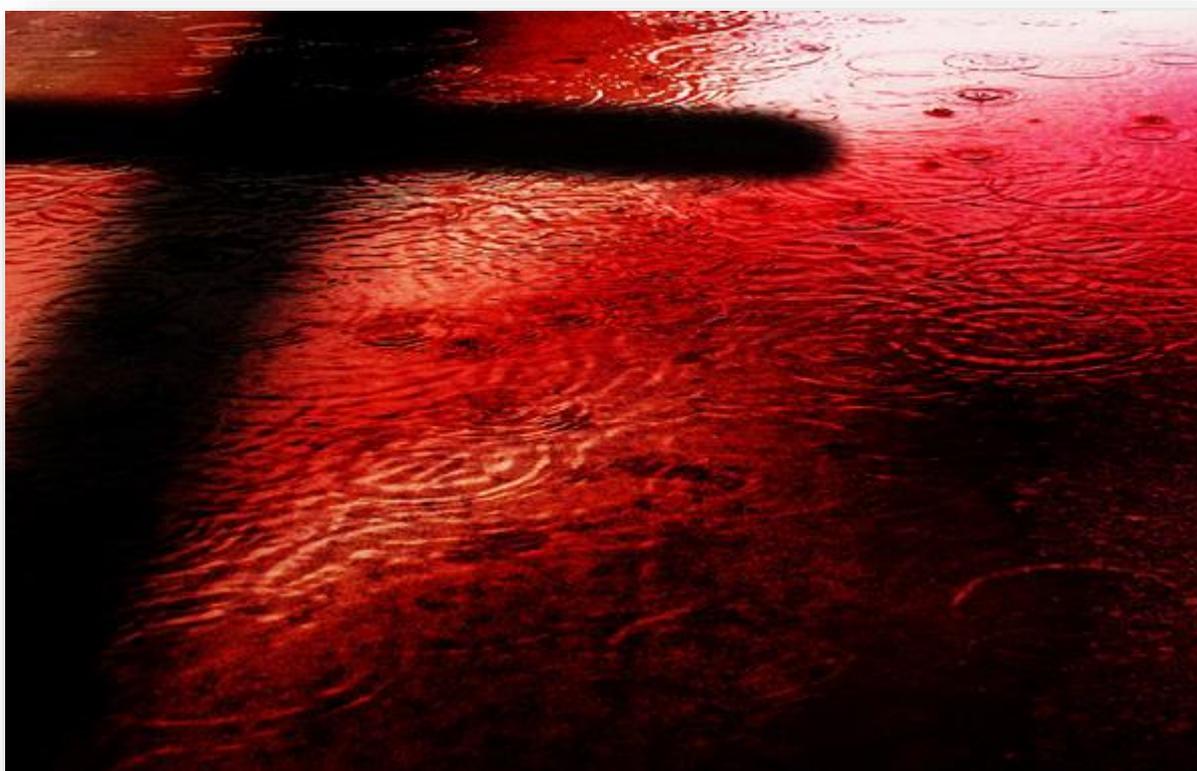


Book of 1John

Synopsis



Introduction

Book No	62
Name	1John
Written By	John
Testament	New
Category	Epistles
Date Written	Approx. 85 – 90 A.D
Place Written	Ephesus
Audience	All Believers
Purpose	To reassure Christians in their faith and to counter false teachings
History Covered	NA
Chapters	5
Verses	105
Key Verse	These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God. (5:13)
Key People	❖ John ❖ JESUS
Key Places	❖ Ephesus

Purpose of the Book

There are strong similarities between the Gospel of John and 1 John. The tone of the epistle is friendly and fatherly, reflecting the authority that age and apostleship bring. The style is informal and personal, revealing the apostle's intimate relationship with God and God's people.

Hearing these discussions, even Christians can begin to wonder and doubt. Is Jesus really God? Did he come to save sinners like us? Does God care about me?

First John was written to dispel doubts and to build assurance by presenting a clear picture of Christ. Entering history, Jesus was and is God in the flesh and God in focus.

He was seen, heard, and touched by the author of this letter, John the apostle. John walked and talked with Jesus, saw him heal, heard him teach, watched him die, met him arisen, and saw him ascend. John knew God; he had lived with him and had seen him work. And John enjoyed fellowship with the Father and the Son all the days of his life.

The elder statesman in the church, John wrote this letter to his "dear children." In it he presented God as light, as love, and as life. He explained in simple and practical terms what it means to have fellowship with God.

At the same time, false teachers had entered the church, denying the incarnation of Christ. John wrote to correct their serious errors. So John's letter is a model for us to follow as we combat modern heresies.

John opens this letter by giving his credentials as an eyewitness of the Incarnation and by stating his reason for writing (1:1-4). He then presents God as "light," symbolizing absolute purity and holiness (1:5-7), and he explains how believers can walk in the light and have fellowship with God (1:8-10). If they do sin, Christ is their defender (2:1-2). John urges them to obey Christ fully and to love all the members of God's family (2:3-17). He warns his readers of "antichrists" and the Antichrist who will try to lead them away from the truth (2:18-29).

In the next section, John presents God as "love"—giving, dying, forgiving, and blessing (3:1-4:21). God is love, and because God loves us, he calls us his children and makes us like Christ (3:1-2). This truth should motivate us to live close to him (3:3-6). We can be sure of our family relationship with God when our life is filled with good deeds and

love for others (3:7-24). Again, John warns of false teachers who twist the truth. We should reject these false teachers (4:1-6) as we continue to live in God's love (4:7-21).

In the last section, John presents God as "life" (5:1-21). God's life is in his Son. To have his Son is to have eternal life.

Prominent in 1 John is the positive note of Christian certainty. Thirty-nine times the verb "know" occurs. Christian truth is beyond the realm of speculation, because it is irrevocably moored to the historical event of Jesus Christ and the apostolic witness to that event. In addition, Christians possess the anointing and witness of the Holy Spirit to assure them of the truth about God, Christ, and their own spiritual standing.

Three tests prove the genuineness of Christianity: the test of belief (4:2), the test of obedience (2:3), and the test of love (4:20). The same affirmations are stated negatively.

The one who professes to be a Christian, but who cannot pass the test of belief (2:22), the test of obedience (1:6), and the test of love (4:20), is a liar. John brings all three tests together in 5:1-5, where he indicates that a profession of Christianity is false unless it is characterized by correct belief, godly obedience, and brotherly love. The same tests are valid today.

Do you know God? Do you know Christ? Do you know that you have eternal life? First John was written to help you know the reality of God in your life through faith in Christ, to assure you that you have eternal life, and to encourage you to remain in fellowship with the God who is light and love. Read this letter written by one overwhelmed by God's love, and with renewed confidence, pass on his love to others.

Overview

- ❖ 62nd book of the BIBLE, 23rd in the New Testament, 18th of the 21 epistles and 4th of the 7 epistles written by various authors
- ❖ John:
 - Was one of the original 12 apostles.
 - Was one of the inner circle of the apostles (Peter, James, & John).
 - Was the "disciple whom Jesus loved." John 13:23
 - Was one of the first two disciples called by Jesus.
 - Was one of the "pillars" of the church at Jerusalem. Galatians 2:9
 - Near the end of his life, John lived in Ephesus.

- Near the end of the 1st century, John was exiled to the island of Patmos.
- ❖ John authored five books of the New Testament.
 - John
 - 1 John
 - 2 John
 - 3 John
 - Revelation
- ❖ Only Paul authored more New Testament books than John.
- ❖ A number of reasons were involved in writing 1 John.
 - To add to their joy. 1:4
 - To help them guard against sin. 2:1
 - To confirm the truth that the faithful have overcome the evil one. 2:12-14
 - To strengthen their faith in Christ and assure them of eternal life. 5:13
- ❖ John teaches that:
 - God is light.
 - God is love.
 - God is life.
- ❖ John teaches about:
 - Love
 - Fellowship
 - Forgiveness
 - Confession
 - Blood of Christ
 - Sin

Hebrew Names of GOD used in 1John

NA

Revelation of JESUS CHRIST

John emphasizes both the deity and the humanity of Jesus, declaring that in Him God fully entered into human life. A test of Christianity is correct belief about the Incarnation (4:2, 15; 5:1).

Jesus is our Advocate with the Father (2:1). Sin is incongruous in the life of a Christian; but if he does sin, Jesus pleads his case. Jesus is the propitiation for our sins (2:2; 4:10). See note on Romans 3:25.

Jesus is also Savior, sent by God to rescue us from sin (1:7; 3:5; 4:14). Only through Him can we have eternal life (5:11, 12).

John presents the Second Coming of Jesus as an incentive to remain firm in the faith (2:28), and he gives assurance that our complete transformation into Christ's likeness will occur at His return.

Work of THE HOLY SPIRIT

John describes a threefold ministry of the Holy Spirit in this epistle. First, God's gift of the Spirit to us assures us of our relationship to Christ, both that He abides in us (3:24) and that we abide in Him (4:13). Second, the Holy Spirit testifies to the reality of the Incarnation of Christ (4:2; 5:6–8). Third, the Spirit leads true believers into a full realization of the truth concerning Jesus, that they may successfully oppose the heretics who deny that truth (2:20; 4:4).

Mega Themes of 1John

SIN

Even Christians sin. Sin requires God's forgiveness, and Christ's death provides it for us. Determining to live according to God's standards in the Bible shows that our life is being transformed.

We cannot deny our sin nature, maintain that we are "above" sinning, or minimize the consequences of sin in our relationship with God. We must resist the attraction of sin, yet we must confess when we do sin.

LOVE

Christ commands us to love others as he loved us. This love is evidence that we are truly saved. God is the Creator of love; he cares that his children love each other.

Love means putting others first and being unselfish. Love is action—showing others we care—not just saying it. To show love we must give sacrificially of our time and money to meet the needs of others.

FAMILY OF GOD

We become God’s children by believing in Christ. God’s life in us enables us to love our fellow family members.

How we treat others shows who our Father is. Live as a faithful, loving family member.

TRUTH AND ERROR

Teaching that the physical body does not matter, false teachers encouraged believers to throw off moral restraints. They also taught that Christ wasn’t really a man and that we must be saved by having some special mystical knowledge. The result was that people became indifferent to sin.

God is truth and light, so the more we get to know him, the better we can keep focused on the truth. Don’t be led astray by any teaching that denies Christ’s deity or humanity. Check the message; test the claims.

ASSURANCE

God is in control of heaven and earth. Because his word is true, we can have assurance of eternal life and victory over sin. By faith we can be certain of our eternal destiny with him.

Assurance of our relationship with God is a promise, but it is also a way of life. We build our confidence by trusting in God’s Word and in Christ’s provision for our sin.

Life Lessons in 1John

Truth	Lesson
<p>Growing in Godliness</p> <p>John speaks strongly about living godly lives. He clearly teaches that our knowledge and love of God will be evident by our obedience to His Word and love for our brothers and sisters in Christ. We are not to simply talk about love, but to love practically by giving to and caring for those in need. Simply put, if we know and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Understand that obedience is the clear mark of a person who knows God. Obey God’s Word so that His love will mature in you. ❖ Walk in the righteousness of Jesus; this is evidence that you belong to Him. ❖ Do not continue in willful sin. Doing so denies Jesus’ work in you; He came to remove sin from us. Walk in His righteousness.

<p>love Jesus, then we are to live and love as He did.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Love your brothers and sisters in Christ. Know that both love and righteousness are evidence of your salvation. ❖ Show God’s love practically to others. Give to those in need. ❖ Love one another. ❖ Pray and intercede on behalf of Christians you see participating in sin. Pray that they would turn from their sin and that God would give them life.
<p>Cultivating Dynamic Devotion</p> <p>Get to know the Holy Spirit. Welcome Him in your life daily. When you read Scripture, ask Him to give you insight and understanding so that you will become grounded in the Word, able to discern between true and false teaching.</p> <p>Ask the Holy Spirit to enable you to know God more, to teach you to pray, to worship, and to love the Lord more deeply. The Spirit comes to reveal Jesus to us.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Walk in the fullness of the anointing and presence of the Holy Spirit. When you read the Bible, ask the Holy Spirit to anoint you and give you revelation to understand truth. Understand that the Spirit is a safeguard against false and deceptive teaching. ❖ Know that God is in you because He has put His Spirit in you. Devote yourself to loving Jesus, recognizing that God’s Spirit enables you to truly love Him. ❖ Worship and praise the Lord, thanking Him for His great love. Recognize that even your ability to love Him is given to you by God.
<p>Pursuing Holiness</p> <p>In John’s writings, we are called to live holy lives, set apart to live and love as Jesus did. Because God is love, He calls us to express that love in our relationships with others. Therefore, we are not to hate our</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Do not be blinded by the darkness of hatred. ❖ Understand that it will cause you to fall in your walk with the Lord. Turn away from hatred; ask for forgiveness for any hate in your heart.

<p>brothers and sisters in Christ. Forgive offenses quickly so that your hurt and anger do not turn to bitterness and hatred. Do not believe the lie that the world has much to offer; it offers only lust and pride. Separate yourself from idolatry; be pure and holy in your love for God.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Ask God to heal you and enable you to forgive, knowing that Jesus paid the price for the wrong people have done. ❖ Understand what is always behind anything the world offers: “the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.” Recognize this is the basis for all sin, beginning in the Garden when Satan first tempted Eve (Gen. 3:6). Do not love the world or what it has to offer. ❖ Do not have anything to do with idols or idolatry. ❖ Rid your home and your life of idols of any kind.
<p>The Walk of Faith</p> <p>The greatest expression of faith is to believe in Jesus as Lord and Savior and receive the precious gift of eternal life.</p> <p>In our life of faith, we are to welcome and respond to the conviction of the Holy Spirit so that our hearts are clean and free from condemnation. We are to test the spirits against the truth about Jesus Christ as found in the Bible. Anything that denies the lordship and incarnation of Jesus is not from God and should be rejected. The life of faith can be free from fear, knowing that perfect love casts out fear. Live with your hope and faith</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Believe and receive God’s promise of eternal life in Jesus Christ. ❖ Believe that God loves you and calls you His very own child. ❖ Keep your heart free from sin by being quick to confess. In that way, your heart will not condemn you. Be confident in prayer, knowing that the Holy Spirit lives in you. ❖ Test the spirits to know if they are from God or not. False prophets and teachers will arise to deceive. Know that all teaching and every spirit must agree with the Bible’s teachings about Jesus. ❖ By faith, receive the love of God in Jesus Christ. Stand against fear, knowing that perfect love casts out fear.

<p>firmly established in the Person and work of Jesus Christ.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Know that your faith in Jesus Christ has eternally secured your victory in overcoming the world. ❖ By faith, pray and receive eternal life in Jesus Christ. If you do not know Jesus as your Lord and Savior, pray right now asking Him to forgive you for the wrong you have done. Ask Jesus to be in charge of your life as Lord and to give you life forever with Him. Believe that when you pray this Jesus saves you and makes you His own. ❖ Pray according to God's will, and believe that you have what you ask for.
<p>Steps to sharing the love of GOD</p> <p>GOD revealed Himself to us through JESUS CHRIST that we might have the light of life within by the presence of the HOLY SPIRIT. Our mission is to let the light abide within us and shine forth to the glory of GOD. This produces light in the lives of others, extending the fellowship of GOD. Love for others is the sure sign that GOD lives in us and that we are in the fellowship of HIS love</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ be full of joy. Have fellowship with GOD and HIS people ❖ let GOD's Word live in you so that you can live in GOD and have eternal life ❖ understand that righteousness manifests itself in righteous behaviour ❖ practice righteousness. Love your brother ❖ understand that fear shows an absence of love ❖ know that CHRIST's presence always results in love
<p>Keys to wise living</p> <p>The wise take time to discern the spirit behind any teaching or word of ministry. Unless the literal incarnation of JESUS CHRIST the virgin born son of GOD is professed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ understand that the best evidence for new birth is in your conduct and behaviour ❖ know that continued hatred is impossible for those in CHRIST and will inevitably be levelled at believers by the world

<p>the spirit is not from GOD. The outworking of faith is obedience to GOD's commands and the result of obeying GOD is love manifested to others</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ know that love denies its own interests on behalf of others and is expressed practically ❖ exercise discernment when listening to any teaching. Make sure all teaching conforms to GOD's Word ❖ know that all lawlessness is sin
<p>Vital keys to dynamic church life</p> <p>Unity is a vital key to power in the local church. The enemy seeks to destroy this unity by placing deceiving decoys within congregations to cause division and strife. When Christians refuse to accuse and reject one another choosing instead to forgive and to love. Strife is replaced by unity and the church receives the power of the SPIRIT</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ be open and transparent in all you do ❖ admit your weakness to GOD ❖ trust HIM to cleanse and forgive ❖ recognize that the devil brings about all separation and division in the body of CHRIST

Praise Points in 1John

- ❖ Jesus Christ, who has been revealed to us (1:1)
- ❖ The fellowship we have with his Son, Jesus Christ (1:3)
- ❖ His forgiveness of sin (1:9)
- ❖ The eternal life that flows from fellowship with God (2:25);
- ❖ The love he has lavished on us in making us his children (3:1)
- ❖ The transformation he works in us as we live in him (3:6)
- ❖ His promise to be present with us (3:24)
- ❖ The discernment provided by the Spirit to keep us from error (4:1)
- ❖ His love for us, which he showed by sending his Son to die for us (4:9-10)
- ❖ The confidence he gives us that he will listen when we make our requests (5:14-15).

Worship Insights in 1John

This community of love is gathered around a common confession: that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Therefore, it is a worshiping community, for the basic act of Christian worship is to honor Jesus as Lord and Messiah, God's Son. Christian worship and community are negated when this confession of faith is compromised. John has strong words for people who deny that Jesus is the Christ. He calls them "antichrists" and declares that they have no place in the community of faith. In fact, he says, "These people left our churches because they never really belonged with us" (2:19). John's warning is a reminder that worship should never be the vehicle for advancing the agenda of the "world" or prevailing culture. Instead, Christian worship exalts Jesus as the Lord of all and invites all people to enter into the life that he alone can give.

In his first letter, John did not mention worship rites or ceremonies. But the things he says about life in Christ correspond closely to many specific elements in Christian worship practiced throughout the centuries. Compare the following traditional worship activities to the noted references in 1 John, and see how historic Christian worship incorporates and expresses truths about our walk with Christ as encouraged by the apostle John.

Historic Christian worship includes confession of faith, declaring what God has done through Jesus Christ (1:1-3; 3:23). In worship we confess our sins and receive forgiveness through Christ (1:9; 2:1). Christ is present with us as we worship, a foretaste of his promised presence in the future (3:2). In the Lord's Supper, Christians recall the sacrifice of Jesus' body to bring about the forgiveness of sin (4:10). Worship incorporates our requests to God for our needs and the needs of others (5:14-16).

- ❖ Worship begins with the revelation of Christ, the Word of life (1:1).
- ❖ Confession of sin is part of worship, for Jesus has taken away the sins of all the world (2:2).
- ❖ Love for the world is incompatible with a life of true worship (2:15).
- ❖ We can praise God for making us his children through Christ (3:1).
- ❖ Members of the worshiping community must show love to each other (3:14-17).
- ❖ We must test those who claim to speak for God, confirming their words with Scripture (4:3).
- ❖ God's love is brought to full expression through our acts of love (4:12).
- ❖ The signs of water, blood, and the Spirit testify to the truth about Jesus (5:7-9).

- ❖ We must pray for other believers who have stumbled into sin (5:16-17).

An Outline of 1John

- I. The Way of Life: 1Jn_1:1-10**
 - A. From the Beginning: 1Jn_1:1-4
 - B. God is Light: 1Jn_1:5
 - C. The Walk in the Light: 1Jn_1:6-10
- II. The New Relationship: 1Jn_2:1-29**
 - A. The Advocate: 1Jn_2:1-6
 - B. A New Commandment: 1Jn_2:7-17
 - C. Abide in Him: 1Jn_2:18-29
- III. Truth and Love: 1Jn. 3:1-4:21**
 - A. See What Love: 1Jn_3:1-18
 - B. Test the Spirits: 1Jn. 3:19-4:6
 - C. Love is an Event: 1Jn_4:7-21
- IV. Discipleship: 1Jn_5:1-21**
 - A. Not Burdensome: 1Jn_5:1-12
 - B. Keep Away from Idols: 1Jn_5:13-21