

1 John Bible Study

Dear ladies,

It is my hope & prayer that this study of 1 John will be mutually edifying this summer! I'll say right at the outset that it is a rather hard book to understand (at least to some more linearly-structured brains) as there is a lot of "circling back" to previous themes but I recognized some similar structure to James and a few similar themes as well. So, I tried to include lots of references to James to cement ideas together. Of course, we'll see just how similar and closely tied the Gospel of John and the epistle of John actually are as well! I included a table already started but with blanks for you to fill in more comparison verses. I'll cite my sources at the end of this letter; just know that any great insight is most assuredly from these sources and not from me! ☺

I am a lover of details so it was hard for me to summarize in some areas, so please be understanding if at times, it seems choppy or that there are more questions than answers! (Now you know how I felt too!) Also, John's "black and white" understanding of many things often rubs me the wrong way. It doesn't always sit comfortably with me but the Bible must lead us, not what feels most comfortable.

One more thing that may be helpful in studying 1 John; I learned that often times when it seems like there's a conclusion, it refers back. I was always waiting for a colon and then the conclusion but that's not always the case. I'll give you an example to better explain.

1 John 4.16-17, "So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as he is so also are we in this world." I somehow expect it to read By this is love perfected with us: _____. But that is the conclusion from verse 16, so really it's more like: by this is love perfected with us, that God abides in us and we, who love, abide in God.

Many blessings to you in this study! I'll definitely miss joining with you!

In Christ,

Jodi Vreugdenhil

References:

ESV Study Bible

"Letters to the Church" by Karen H Jobes

Bible Study Magazine issues Sept/Oct 2014, Nov/Dec 2014

I. Witness to the Word of Life (1:1-4)

II. God Is Light (1:5-4:6)

A. Walking in the Light (1:5-2:11)

- 1. Confessing sin (1:5-2:2)**
- 2. Keeping the commands of God (2:3-11)**

B. Reasons for Writing (2:12-14)

C. Warnings (2:15-29)

- 1. Do not love the world (2:15-17)**
- 2. Do not deny the Son (2:18-29)**

D. Being Children of God (3:1-4:6)

- 1. Children who do not sin (3:1-10)**
- 2. Children who love one another (3:11-18)**
- 3. Children who know the truth (3:19-24)**
- 4. Children who test the spirits (4:1-6)**

III. God Is Love (4:7-5:12)

A. Love One Another (4:7-21)

B. Believe in the Son of God (5:1-12)

IV. Concluding Assurances and Warnings (5:13-21)

A. The Assurance of Eternal Life (5:13-15)

B. The Sin That Leads to Death (5:16-17)

C. Final Assurances (5:18-20)

D. Keep Yourselves from Idols (5:21)

1 John	Gospel of John
1 John 1:1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life	John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.
1 John 1:5 This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.	John 8:12 Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."
1 John 2:1 But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.	John 14:16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever
1 John 2:8a At the same time, it is a new commandment that I am writing to you	John 13:34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.
1 John 2:8b ...because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining.	John 1:5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.
1 John 2:9 Whoever says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in darkness.	John 8:12 Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."
1 John 2:23 No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also.	John 14:6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.
1 John 2:25 And this is the promise that he made to us—eternal life.	John 17:3 And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.
1 John 3:13 Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you.	John 15:18 "If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you.
1 John 3:23 And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us.	John 15:12 "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.
1 John 4:16a So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us.	John 6:69 and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.

1 John	Gospel of John
1 John 5:6 This is he who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ; not by the water only but by the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth.	John 15:26 “But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me
1 John 5:13 I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life.	John 20:31 but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

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Key Verses / Verses to Memorize

1 John 1:8-9 If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 2:1-2 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

1 John 3:1 See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

1 John 4:4 Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

1 John 5:5 Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

1 John Study #1 – Introduction

1 John seems to give reassurance (“we/you KNOW”) and is not intended to persuade. As you read through the letter, you will notice that there was probably a split in the church and that quite possibly those who left were gnostics (believe that salvation is based on esoteric-private, belonging only to a few-knowledge).

Read all of 1 John.

1. List opposing themes (antithetical).

2. List verses that mention:

God the Father

God the Son

God the Holy Spirit

3. List verses that mention LOVE.

4. List verses that mention knowing or confidence.

1 John Study #2 – Chapter 1

Read 1 John 1.

1. Verses 1-4 serve as the introduction to the letter. Why is he writing? How does he prove his authority?

2. Compare vs 1 with John 1:1

3. Verse 5 says that God is Light. Compare with James 1:17.

4. Verse 6 paraphrases the false claims of those who left. Use vs 6 & 7 to answer how do/can people walk in darkness? How do you practice or do the truth? (We often talk about knowing the truth so “doing” the truth is a twist on this.)

5. Verse 7 talks about having fellowship with one another. What makes deep fellowship with one another possible? How can we stand with each other, all in equal need of Jesus’ cleansing? Is this true at Lynwood?

6. Verse 9-Cleanse or Purify. Define or do a word search. Lev 16:30 talks about the OT Day of Atonement in connection with cleansing. Bask in **The** Day of Atonement that has already happened once for us (Heb 7:27).

7. Why is vs 9 not uncharacteristic of God? Look up "God's Business Card" Ex 34:6-7.

Challenge / Personal

8. Praise & thank God for the possibility of being able to have fellowship with Jesus! After all, He lived in a different time and place and it's pretty amazing to be able to actually have fellowship with someone from a different time and then with a Holy God too yet!

1 John Study #3 – Chapter 2

Read 1 John 2.

1. Verse 1 calls Jesus our Advocate. Who do we normally think of when we think of Advocate? (Rom 8:26) Research Advocate.

2. Verses 3-6 talk about our walk of life.

a. Do you find verses 3-4 too simple or too black & white? Where is grace here?

b. The ESV uses the word “abide” a lot in the Gospel of John & in 1 John. Do a word study on “abide”. (vs 6)

c. Verse 6-live as Jesus did or walk as He walked. What way is that?

3. Verses 7-8 In what way is this an old commandment? In what way is this a new commandment? And what is the commandment? (See Lev 19:18, John 13:34)

4. Draw a table comparing/contrasting vs 12-14 for each group of people.

5. Not Loving the World, vs 15-17.

a. Find a verse in James that talks about this.

b. We often think in terms of sexual passions or lusting. What else could desires/passions refer to? (1 Pet 4:2, 1 John 2:17)

6. Verses 18, 22 talk about the antichrist. Interesting note: the term "Antichrist" is used only in the letters of John, nowhere else in the Bible. Use these verses to describe antichrist(s).

7. Verse 20 is a verse of comfort and something to remember when we feel confused about issues of life and Christianity. Also reference John 14:26 and praise God that we have been anointed!

8. What truth is vs 23 a proof text for? See also John 10:30.

9. Verses 26-28 whose anointing did they receive? (refer back to vs 20) What is louder in your life: the Holy Spirit or the world/your flesh/the devil? How can we make the Holy Spirit louder?

10. In verse 28, confidence is mentioned; there are lots of references to confidence in 1 John. Where does confidence fit into our "faith" definition?

Challenge

11. Define righteousness (referring to vs 29). This verse also talks about practicing it. How do we do that? Isn't it a state of being, instead of an act of doing?

1 John Study #4 – Chapter 3

Read 1 John 3.

1. Verse 1. Meditate on what that really means. Then pray praise and thanks to God for that adoption!

Why doesn't the world know us? John 1:12, 16:3

2. Verses 2-3 What will we be? See also Phil 3:21, 1 Cor 13:12

3. Verse 4-research "lawlessness".

4. Verse 6 and 1 John 2:4 are pretty blunt. What do you say to a doubting Christian who is burdened by his/her sin who reads this verse? What will you counsel your soul when you feel this way?

5. Verses 9-10 are also very black & white. Wouldn't we say that it's by faith? A person's works/actions can be deceitful because Christians still sin and unbelievers do "good" things. How are we to know? Again, John has to add "loving" the brother in the mix.

6. Verses 11-18 Love One Another. More strong language but John is in good company. Who else said this? Given the love themes in the Gospel and letters of John and in 1 Cor 13, can love be overstated?

a. Vs 13 Use John 15:18 to shed more light on this.

b. Vs 16 what is the essence of love? See also John 15:13. How do we do this?

c. Vs 17-18 Find a similar reference in James. How does this look like today?

7. Verses 19-21 what is our assurance? See also Rom 14:22

8. Find another reference in James about asking and receiving (1 John 3:22).

9. Verse 24 talks about the Holy God abiding in us! Pause a moment to think about what that means. See also 1 John 4:13, Rom 8:9

1 John Study #5 – Chapter 4

Read 1 John 4.

1. Verses 1-3 Test the Spirits

a. 1 John's litmus test for the spirits seems too simplistic. Is it really that easy today? Does it all boil down to that?

b. Read vs 2-3 carefully, what 2 truths/doctrines are mentioned there? See also Rev 2:2, 1 Cor 12:3. Why are both these truths important? See Heidelberg Catechism Q&A 15-19.

2. Verse 4 is a verse of great truth, comfort and promise! Try to memorize this phrase in order to do battle with the evil one. See also 1 Cor 2: 12.

3. Verses 5-6 the line is drawn in the sand. Who are "they"? Reference John 14:17, 15:19, 16:13.

4. Verses 7-12 More on Love.

a. Do these verses sound familiar? They should; John is circling back to what he wrote in previous chapters and verses. Find some examples.

b. Is it easier to love or to confess Jesus Christ is from God, come in the flesh?

c. Verse 8 “The person who lacks love shows himself to be unchanged at the core of his being by the gospel message.” (ESV Study Bible) Discuss this quote and verse.

d. Verses 9-10 What is the love of God? (John 3:16, Rom 5:8-10)

e. What are the 2 conclusions drawn in vs 11-12? (John 1:18)

5. Verse 16 we have come to know and to believe God's love for us. Explore this more. How have we come to know? To believe? Reference 1 John 3:24, John 6:69.

6. Verses 17-18 give the same answer to two different questions. How can we have confidence in the day of judgment? Why is there no fear in love?

7. What is the connection in vs 20-21 between loving God and loving our brother? Are we guilty of this (saying we love God but hating our brother)? 1 John 2:9, 11

4. Praying for one another vs 16-17. Is there such a thing as being “too lost”?
Reference Matt 12:31-32, Heb 6:4-6, 10:26.

5. The evil one does not touch us? Vs 18, 1 John 3:9, John 17:12

6. Vs 20 is a series of “we know” statements. This repetition is a rhetorical device to emphasize an idea but also to “persuade, inspire, motivate and encourage” (Wikipedia). Name the things we know from this passage, and then thank God because “true knowledge of God is a gracious act and gift of God” (ESV Study Bible). This should keep us humble!

Challenge

7. Where is grace in this study? Also, Psalm 27:4 talks about gazing on Jehovah’s beauty? Do you see Jehovah’s beauty here?