

# **A simple overview of 1 John**

Analytical rather than exegetical

- **I was taught as a teen in 1970, that when we are doing a BOOK STUDY the main points to look for in our introduction are the following.**
- Who wrote it?
- To whom did he write?
- Where did he write it?
- When did he write it?
- **What was the occasion of his writing?**
- **What was the purpose for which he wrote?**
- What were the circumstances of the author when he wrote?

- What were the circumstances of those to whom he wrote?
- What **glimpses does the book give into life and character of the author?**
- **What are the leading ideas of the book?**
- **What is the central Truth of the book?**
- **What are the characteristics of the book?**
- **Outline the book.**
- We were taught that if we can find these introductory things we will find our study fairly stimulating.

- **Today we will harp on the following aspects of the book.**
- **What was the occasion for writing?**
- **What was the purpose for writing.**
- **What are the leading ideas of the book?**
- **What is the central Truth of the book?**
- **What are the characteristics of the book?**
- **A few outlines of the book.**
- We will mention a few general things about the book before giving more detail about issues in the first section of the book

**KEY VERSE & KEY WORD**

- **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 "**  
**(1 John 5:13).**
- **The fact that God has given us Eternal life is clearly stated in the key passage of this book (5:11 –13).**
- **There we are told that God has given us Eternal life, that this life is in his Son, and that we do not have this life if we do not have the Son of God.**

- **THE KEY WORD IS “KNOW”**
- **Since the book of 1 John is a book of intimate fellowship, it is no wonder then that the word “know” and two derivatives “known” and “knoweth” appear 38 times in this short epistle.**
- **I believe that the central theme of the book can be stated in one word –ASSURANCE, and that the Christian life is a life of victory that is characterized by discernment.**

- Many say that we are presumptuous to say that we **know**.....but John in 1 JOHN says that **we CAN KNOW & THAT GOD HAS GIVEN US THE INFORMATION SO THAT WE CAN KNOW.**
- **Peter in 2 Peter 3:18 stresses that KNOWING is necessary to grow in grace!**
- How are we doing? **DO WE KNOW?**



- **THEME or CENTRAL TRUTH OF THE BOOK**
- **Assurance of Eternal Life** is the obvious theme or central truth of the book in keeping with the frequent use of the words **‘know’** and **“life”**, and the fact that this is the first topic that John seems to get of his mind.
- **1 John is thought by many to be a set of tests which help us to know or be assured that we really do have eternal life.**
- **The main tests that determine whether we can be assured of eternal life include:**
- **Do we habitually maintain fellowship with God?**
- **Are we habitually obedient to the Lord?**
- **Do we habitually display love toward other believers?**
- **Is our lifestyle habitually determined and guided exclusively on the basis of the correct doctrine regarding the Person of Christ?**
- **Do we habitually have confidence in the Lord instead of in man or ourselves**

- You are probably wondering why I have been stressing the word “habitually.” An important characteristic we must master in interpreting the book of First John, is **the importance of understanding the significance of his use of the present indicative tense in the Greek to present a strong sense of continuity.**
- When John uses the present tense, he is using it to signify a great deal more than something taking place in the present time. **The emphasis is on the action of the verb rather than on the time element in the sense that he is stressing the "lifestyle" of the person.**
- For example, "walking" is referring to the overall lifestyle or habitual practice of the person, not what the person is doing at any particular point in time.
- John is stressing by his use of the present indicative tense that the action is continued or habitual action. Thus chapter 1: 5 would be best translated, “ If we habitually or continually live a lifestyle characterized by walking in darkness, and claim to have fellowship with Christ we are habitually or continually living the lifestyle of liars!”

**There are six basic and fundamental truths to be grasped from reading 1 John. These are.....**

- 1 Assurances of Salvation- (the central theme of the book).**
- 2 Fellowship with God.**
- 3 Obedience to the Lord.**
- 4 Love Toward Other Believers.**
- 5 Correct Doctrine Regarding the Person of Christ.**
- 6 Confidence in the Lord(developed in chapters 4 and 5).**

**Note that John has interwoven the above concepts as he teaches that maintaining Fellowship with God involves.**

- 1- Obedience to the Lord.**
- 2- Love Toward Other Believers.**
- 3- Correct Doctrine Regarding the Person of Christ.**

- **The first portion of the Epistle presents eternal life as manifested in perfection in Christ on earth.**
- **This life, imparted to the believer, enables its possessor to have fellowship with divine Persons and to experience fullness of joy.**
- **In the second portion of the Epistle, the apostle brings before us the two great characteristics of the divine life in its manifestation down here - obedience to God and love to our brethren.**
- **The practice of these two qualities, or the failure to exhibit them, becomes the test as to whether the profession of knowing Christ (verse 4),**
- **abiding in Christ (verse 6),**
- **and walking in the light (verse 9), is true or not.**

# OUTLINE

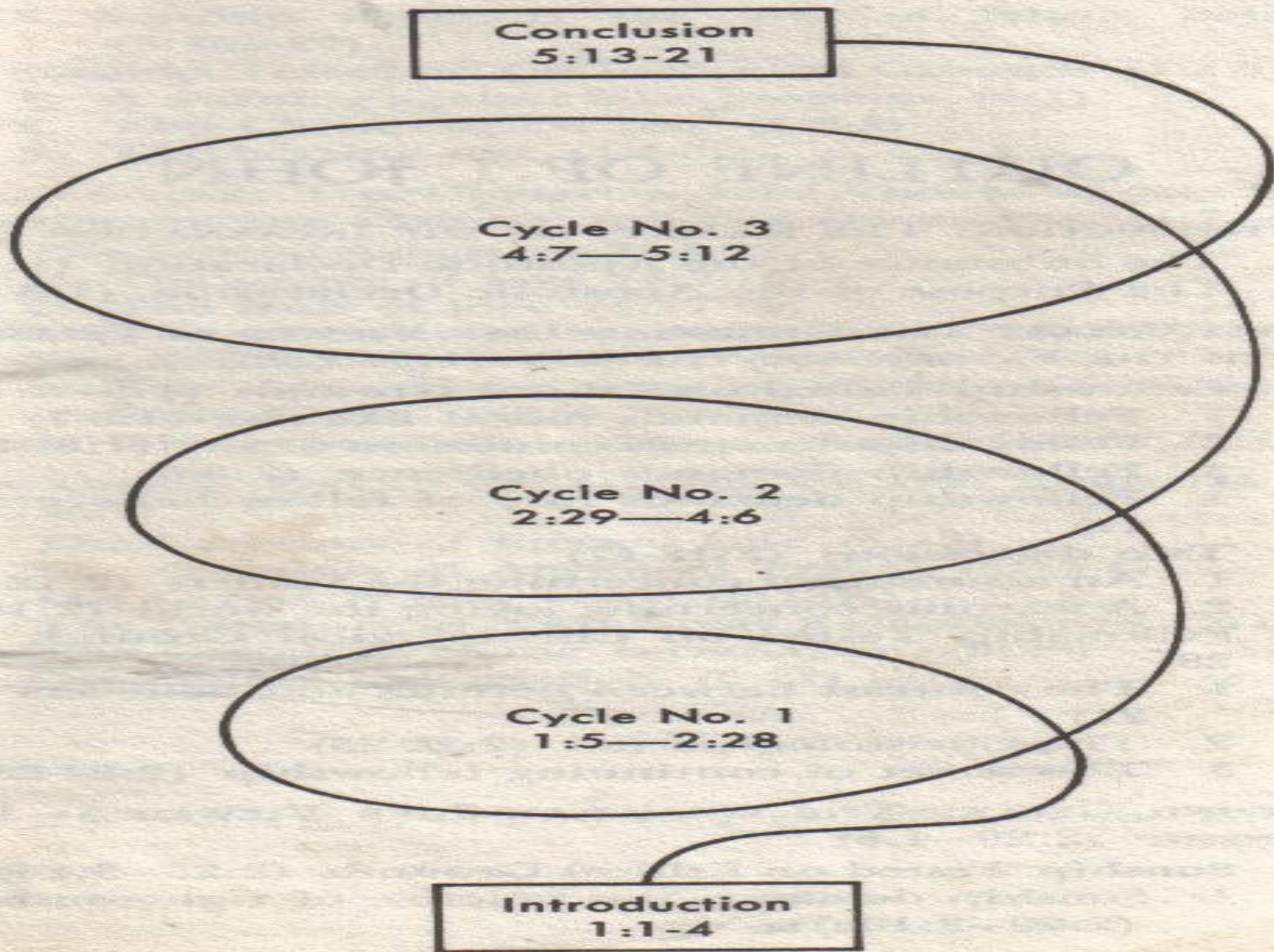
- Here is Gundry's outline on First John.
- **PROLOGUE: the eyewitnessed incarnation of Christ, the Word of Life, as the basis for Christian fellowship (1:1-4).**
- The Criterion of Righteous Conduct ( 1:5-2:6)
- The Criterion of Mutual Christian Love (2:7-17)
- The Criterion of Incarnational Christology (2:18-28)
- The Criterion of Righteous Conduct (2:29-3:10a)
- The Criterion of Mutual Christian Love (3:10b-24a)
- The Criterion of Incarnational Christology (3:24b-4:6)
- The Criterion of Mutual Christian Love (4:7-5:3)
- The Criterion of Righteous Conduct (5:4-21)

- **Gundry shows by his acknowledgement of a prologue, an important similarity between this epistle and John's gospel, assisting in proving the authorship of the epistle.**
- **In this very simple but most helpful outline, Gundry shows how John repeatedly comes back to his discussion of the three important topics of**
- **1- the believer's conduct in righteousness,**
- **2- the importance of believing correctly about the incarnation, and**
- **3-the fundamental issue of Christian love in the Christian life.**

- **Burdick expands on this opinion about the characteristics of First John by stating. “The structure of 1 John is not easily discernable. At first glance, one may think that it really has no logical organization. Careful study, however, shows that the epistle is a very closely knit fabric of truth, difficult to unravel, but not without logical order. It is most intricately organized, similar in many ways to a symphonic composition.**
- **There are several recurring themes- righteousness, love and belief in the incarnation --around which interesting variations are developed, with each added treatment rising to a new height.**
- **The whole work comes to a grand finale (5:13-21) in which the keynote of the piece is sounded repeatedly with force. Over and over again John declares the fact of Christian assurance: We know that we have eternal life! We know that God answers prayer! We know that the Son of God has come.**



- The organization of the epistle has been described as a spiral as shown in the accompanying figure adapted from Lenski.
- The introduction sounds the keynote of the incarnation of Christ.
- This is followed by three cycles of thought, each of which advances above and beyond the preceding section.
- In each cycle the discussion revolves around two recurring themes:
  - (1) the correct view of Christ and
  - (2) the resultant life of righteousness and love.
- The high point is reached in the concluding section where the grand theme of Christian assurance is heard again and again.”



- These three distinct cycles of thought form in their combination a beautiful picture of truth and a cumulative application of the main line of instruction .
- **GOD IS LIGHT 1:5, hence fellowship with God depends on our walking in light.**
- **GOD IS RIGHTEOUSNESS (2:29), hence fellowship with God depends on our doing righteousness.**
- **GOD IS LOVE (4:7-8), hence fellowship with God depends on our possessing and manifesting love.”**

**OCCASION FOR WRITING 1**  
**JOHN 1 & 2**

- **OCCASION FOR WRITING**

- Many authors seem to merge the Occasion and the Purpose of the writing of this lovely letter. However, **I believe that whereas the purpose is explicitly stated in the text as we will discuss**, the occasion has to be inferred from the historical background and from proper and correct insight of the precious nuggets of truth that are presented.
- The occasion for writing first John was, the same for writing most of the other epistles in the New Testament – **to correct erroneous doctrines which were insidiously pervading the early church.**
- The mingling of the tares with the wheat that Jesus had predicted in the parables of the kingdom in the absence of the king in Matthew 13 had begun! **And so we see that John highlighted, discussed and debunked several erroneous teachings prevalent in his day (and in ours).** Though not fully developed in John's day, these errors were certainly a precursor to "Gnosticism", and are also addressed by Paul in Colossians.
- **A list of these errors is presented below for chapter one.**

- **CHAPTER ONE**

- **Jesus was not real- He was not both God and Man (1-3).**
- **We can have fellowship with God and walk in darkness (6).**
- **Sin does not break our relationship with God (6).**
- **We don't have a sin nature (8).**
- **We don't sin now that we are saved(8).**
- **We have never sinned/we don't sin any more (10).**

- **ERRORS DEBUNKED BY JOHN IN 1 JOHN**  
**CHAPTER TWO**
- **You can sin as much as you like (1)--** The idea that you can sin as you like is also contradicted in chapter three of 1 JOHN.
- **You can know God and yet fail to keep his commandments (6).**
- **You can walk in light and yet hate your brother (9).** This is contradicted also by John 13:35).
- **You can love the world and the Father too (15-17).** This was also contradicted by Jesus in Matthew 6:24.)
- **False teachers say they have a special “anointing of the “Spirit” and special knowledge and revelations from God through the “ Spirit”.**
- John contradicts them in verses 20 and 27).

- **ERRORS DEBUNKED BY JOHN IN 1 JOHN CHAPTER TWO continued**
- **We have to pray for the anointing of, and the baptism of the Holy Spirit.**
- John in verses 20 and 27, answers the heresy of extra revelations from spurious spirits which the Pentecostals claim to have.
- He simultaneously counters this heresy by telling us that we **have** the Holy Spirit and reminds us in John 14 that Jesus had already prayed that he be sent to us.
- **You don't have to believe the right thing about Jesus or know the truth to live correctly.**
- This is contradicted by verses 21-28)

- That is why I outline chapters 1 and 2 thus
- **ASSURANCE** that we can **KNOW THAT JESUS CHRIST IS REAL! (1:1-3)**
- **ASSURANCE** that we can **KNOW** fellowship with the Father and the Son & fullness of joy (1:3&4&7)
- **ASSURANCE** that we can **KNOW** how to distinguish **LIGHT** and **TRUTH** from darkness and error (1:5-7)
- **ASSURANCE** that we can **KNOW** how to be cleansed from sin & if we are **POSSESSORS OR PROFESSORS (1:7-10)**
- **ASSURANCE** that we can **KNOW** that we need not sin but that there is provision for every act of sin (2:1-2 )



- **ASSURANCE** that we **KNOW HIM** if we keep **HIS** commandments (2:3-6)
- **ASSURANCE** that we **KNOW** that believers who love each other are keeping Christ's commandments and walking in **LIGHT** (it is impossible to truly obey and walk in light without loving the brethren) (2:7-11)
- **ASSURANCE** that our sins are forgiven, and **that we KNOW** both the Father and the **SON** and that we have overcome the wicked one (2:12-14)

- **ASSURANCE** that the world system (the cosmos diabolicos) is temporary, not permanent, but those who love the Father rather than the world will live for ever
- The world system or cosmos diabolicos is not of the Father; one cannot love both the Father and the world system or cosmos diabolicos simultaneously (2:15-17).
- **ASSURANCE** that antichrists are in between the true believers but that there are characteristics by which they can be identified (2:18-19 & 22-26).
- **ASSURANCE** that we have been anointed by the HOLY SPIRIT, who is truth and our indwelling teacher . Consequently we need no other teacher, and we KNOW the truth (2:20-21 & 27; also John 15:26).
- **ASSURANCE** that those who deny the Father and the Son are antichrists, liars, and hath not the Father. In contrast those who acknowledge the Son and continue to live in obedience to him are promised eternal life. (2:22-25)
- **ASSURANCE** that JESUS is coming again, and an injunction to live (abide in Him) in such away that His appearance will not occasion shame but confidence (2:28)

- **Note that 2 John 5-11 reiterates much of the theology and concepts we have reviewed in 1 John 1&2 , and debunks some of the same errors.**
- **The reason that John presented these errors was to put believers on guard against the error of false teaching already prevalent in the church of his day, because WRONG DOCTRINE LEADS TO WRONG LIVING.**
- **John is teaching us that THE LIFE OF FELLOWSHIP IS THE GUARDED LIFE (2:18-4:6).**
- **Contemporary church teachers must emulate John**
- **Let's note the errors in 3 John, in passing.**
- **Prosperity Gospel, though popular is most erroneous**
- **Preeminence of Christ in the church belongs to Christ alone and NOT to any Diotrophetian personalities (compare 3 John 9 with Colossians 1:18)**
- **The proper way to do missionary work is given (some go....others contribute that others may go)**

# **PURPOSE FOR WRITING**

- John gives several reasons for writing this book; introduced usually by the phrase “ these things write I unto you. ”
- All may be considered as the fruits of living in fellowship with God. Let us list them
- In I John 1:3 we read that John wrote *that ye (we) may have fellowship with us.* “
- In 1John 1:4 we read “and these things write we unto you, *that your joy may be full.*
- The Christian life is a life of the fullest fellowship and joy with the Father and Son
- In 1 John 2:1, John wrote “these things write I unto you *that ye sin not.*
- In 1 John 2:26 John informs us that “these things have I written unto *you concerning them that seduce you.*
- Finally in John 5:13, John writes “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,*” (1 Jn 5:13a) and “*that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God*” (1 Jn 5:13b).

- **Five times in the epistle (1:3, 4; 2:1, 26; 5:13) John specifically tells why he is writing this epistle.**
- But, it seems to me that there are other purposes for which John wrote this epistle that are not necessarily prefaced by the phrase “ these things write I unto you.” Consequently, many seem to overlook them.
- It appears that in addition, John wrote this letter for the following reasons:
  - To present the truth of Christ's incarnation.
  - To explain the relationship of sin to a believer.
  - To emphasize the necessity of love between believers.
  - To encourage believers to live pure lives.
  - To explain the evidences of personal salvation and give assurance of salvation.
  - To explain how to distinguish between truth and error.

- The main purposes for the writing of 1 John may well be summarized thus.
- John wrote this letter to Christians who were falling prey to the deceptive devices of Satan so common in our own day.
- Christians were fighting each other, and John was frank to declare that "he that hateth his brother is in darkness . . . and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes" (2:11).
- Christians were beginning to love the evil things of the world, and John wanted to warn them of the tragic consequences.
- And then there were the false teachers-John calls them antichrists-who were trying to seduce the believers by false doctrine to draw them away from Christ. John warned his readers about such false teachers, encouraging them to stand true to the message of the gospel, and to abide in Christ.
- And then there were those who were doubting their own salvation. So John wrote to instill confidence, that such doubters might *know* that they have eternal life (5:13).
- In his gospel his purpose was to arouse a saving faith (John 20:31); in 1 John his purpose was to establish certainty regarding that faith."

- Once we have faith
- we are to build a foundation on that faith,
- that results in fruitfulness within the fellowship of believers,
- and the ability to discern the foes of our fellowship
- and the facts which prove our fellowship.



**One of the main characteristics  
of the book is.....**

**JOHN'S WRITING STYLE**

- In Hebraistic style, John writes short, simple, straightforward, picturesque sentences. The extended opening sentence (1:1-3) is the one exception to the short sentence pattern.
- He speaks with a tone of authority and finality based on experience ("we have seen," 1:1).
- And yet there is a paternal tenderness about the epistle which makes the reader want to pause and meditate over the great truths being declared. The mellowness of the teaching . . . is not to be confused with vagueness of belief or with theological indecision.
- Under the semblance of extreme simplicity, charm and sweetness, I John hides unfathomable depths, even though it is to a great extent intelligible to the youngest child, to the humblest Christian; yet to enter into its full meaning exceeds the power of the deepest theologian

- John loved to teach by **COMPARISON**.
- It is noteworthy that he has presented **certain obvious parallelisms and contrasts between**
- **those who are genuine Christians** and those who are not;
- **between those who are truly children of God** and those who are not;
- **between the saints** and the “aints”.
- Concerning these contrasts, **His colours are black and white; there is no grey.**
- Such contrasts are presented in tabular form below for chapters 1-4.

- **CHAPTER ONE**
- **VERSE (S) PARAMETER OR CHARACTERISTIC**
- **5 LIGHT vs DARKNESS**
- **6 LIARS vs THE TRUTHFUL (do not the truth )**
- **6 & 7 WALKING IN LIGHT vs WALKING IN DARKNESS**
- **7 THOSE WHO HAVE FELLOWSHIP & CLEANSING vs THOSE ( who by implication ) DO NOT**
- **8 & 10 THOSE WHO HAVE THE TRUTH & THE WORD IN THEM vs THOSE ( who by implication ) DO NOT**
- **8 & 10 THE POSSESSORS vs THE PROFESSORS**
- **9 THOSE WHO CONFESS THEIR SINS vs THOSE ( who by implication ) DO NOT**

- **CHAPTER TWO**
- **VERSE (S) PARAMETER OR CHARACTERISTIC**
- **3-6 THOSE WHO SHOW THEY KNOW GOD vs THOSE WHO SAY THEY KNOW GOD**
  
- **9-11 THOSE WHO LOVE THE BRETHREN vs THOSE WHO HATE THE BRETHREN**
  
- **15-17 LOVE FOR THE FATHER vs LOVE FOR THE WORLD**
  
- **15-17 THE TEMPORAL OR TRANSIENT vs THE ETERNAL OR PERMANENT**
  
- **19 THOSE WHO ARE OF US vs THOSE WHO ARE NOT OF US**
  
- **20 & 27 THE TRUE ANOINTING vs (by implication ) A FALSE ANOINTING**
- 
- **20 THOSE WHO KNOW THE TRUTH vs THOSE WHO DON'T**

- **CHAPTER TWO continued**
- ***VERSE (S) PARAMETER OR CHARACTERISTIC***
- **22 & 23 THOSE WHO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT JESUS IS THE SON OF GOD AND THE CHRIST (PROMISED MESSIAH ) vs THOSE WHO DENY THE SON**
- **24-26 THOSE WHO BELIEVE & PRACTICE THE ORIGINAL TEACHINGS GIVEN BY JESUS & HANDED DOWN BY THE APOSTLES & WHO HAVE ETERNAL LIFE vs THOSE WHO INTRODUCE ( seduce YOU ) FALSE OR NEW ERRONEUS TEACHINGS**

- **Note that in the progression of his argument John gradually exposes the Gnostics of his day, and the antichristian teachers of our day as professors who are**
- **a) not of us; i.e not of the company of Christian believers** (verse 19);
- **b) not possessors of the Holy Spirit** (verse 20);
- **c) not cognizant of the truth** (verse 21);
- **d) deniers of both the Father and the Son** (verse 22);
- **e) apostate persons who had failed to continue in that which was the original teachings of Christ, and about Christ from the beginning** (verse 24); and
- **f) do not possess eternal life** (verse 25).

- **The only way that believers will be able to live the Christian life and not succumb to the prevailing contemporary false teaching is by**
- **having the Spirit,**
- **having the truth presented to them,**
- **knowing the truth,**
- **having the knowledge of the Father and the Son,**
- **abiding in that which they have heard from the beginning in Christ, and**
- **by living the eternal life through which they can enjoy fellowship with divine Persons as offered in 1 John 1:2 & 3**



- **CHAPTER THREE**
- **VERSE (S) PARAMETER OR CHARACTERISTIC**
- **1-3 THE SONS OF GOD vs THE WORLD (THE DEVIL'S SONS )**
- **1Jn 3:1: WHAT WE ARE**
- **1Jn 3:2: WHAT WE SHALL BE**
- **1Jn 3:3: WHAT WE SHOULD BE**
- **ASSURANCE** that God's love for the believer is quantitatively and qualitatively such (what manner) that he has adopted us as sons NOW (3:1&2).
- **ASSURANCE** that when Christ comes again we shall be like Him; this should motivate us to live lives that would reflect his purity.(3:2&3).
- **4-11 THOSE WHO ARE BORN OF GOD ARE RIGHTEOUS AS CHRIST IS RIGHTEOUS & DO NOT SIN HABITUALLY BECAUSE THEY POSSESS GOD'S SEED IN THEM vs THOSE WHO SIN JUST LIKE THEIR FATHER THE DEVIL(THE ORIGINATOR OF SIN ).THESE TRANSGRESS THE LAW,ARE DECIEVED & HAVE NEITHER SEEN OR KNOW GOD**
- **8 THE RIGHTEOUS WORKS OF THE SON OF GOD vs THE EVIL WORKS OF THE DEVIL**
- **12 ABEL'S RIGHTEOUS WORKS vs CAIN'S EVIL WORKS**
- **1 &13 THOSE WHO ARE NEITHER KNOWN OR LOVED BY THE WORLD vs ( by implication ) THOSE THAT ARE**
- **14-18 THOSE WHO LOVE THE BRETHREN ARE PASSED FROM DEATH TO LIFE vs THOSE WHO HATE THE BRETHREN AND ARE MURDERERS AND ARE ABIDING IN DEATH**
- **18 LOVING IN DEED & TRUTH vs LOVING IN WORD &TONGUE**

- **CHAPTER FOUR**
- *VERSE (S) PARAMETER OR CHARACTERISTIC*
- 1-3 **THE SPIRIT OF GOD** vs **THE SPIRIT OF ANTICHRIST**
- 4&5 **THE PEOPLE OF GOD** vs **THE PEOPLE OF THE WORLD**
- 6 **THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH** vs **THE SPIRIT OF ERROR**
- 7&8 **THOSE WHO ARE BORN OF GOD AND LOVETH AND KNOW GOD** vs **THOSE WHO DO NOT**

- **John also loved to teach by REPETITION**
- **He introduces an idea, and then, drops it, only to return to it later from a different angle, or on a higher plain or to expand on the discussion of the topic.**
- **As thought tumbles into thought John keeps coming back repetitiously to the same ideas, sometimes for emphasis, but usually he repeats himself in order to present an additional thought, or discuss the topic from a different point of view.**
- As you read this fascinating letter, you will discover that John frequently repeats himself by weaving three themes in and out of these chapters: **obedience, love, and truth.**

- In chapters 1 and 2, the apostle emphasizes *fellowship*, and he tells us that the conditions for fellowship are:
- obedience (1:5-2:6), love (2:7-17), and truth (2:18-29).
- In chapters 3-5 John deals primarily with *sonship* - *our* being "born of God," and he tells us that a person is revealed to really be a child of God by
- obedience (chapter 3), love (chapter 4), and truth (chapter 5).
- The concept of FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD (1:3,6) is not presented in a single progression of thought but is taught throughout the book.

- **John teaches that fellowship involves :-**
- Accepting the Gift of eternal life 1:2-3; 2:25
- Walking in the Light 1:6
- Maintaining fellowship with God by recognizing and confessing sin, and accepting Christ's advocacy 1:9- 2:1-2
- Keeping his word or commandments 2:3,5
- Walking as Christ walked 2:6
- Loving the brethren 2:9-11; 3:14,23; 4:11, 21
- Overcoming the wicked one and the world by faith 2:13,14; 5:4-5
- Hating the world system 2:15-17
- Doing God's will 2:17
- Recognizing and confessing and acknowledging the truth that Jesus is the Christ 2:21-23 and the Son of God 5:4-5

- -Continuing in the Father and the Son and the truths that the Holy Spirit presented which led to our salvation 2:19,20,24
- -Doing righteousness 3:7
- -Refraining from sin 2:1; 3:6,9; 5:18
- -Laying down our lives for the brethren if necessary 3:16
- -Loving in deed and in truth --genuine practical living 3:18
- -Doing those things that are pleasing in His sight 3:22
- -Believing on the name of the Son 3:23
- -Discerning truth from error 4:1-3
- -Believing the record that God has given of his Son 5:10
- -Praying in his will 5:14
- -Keeping one's self from idols 5:21.

- **GOD IS LIGHT (1:5-2:28)** hence **fellowship** with God depends on our walking in the light.
- Note that John makes this point, and then explains it by coming back and expanding on it.....thus
- We may walk in the light by
- i. perceiving and confessing in the faith of Jesus Christ 1:8-2:2
- ii. by keeping God's commandments 2:3 & 8
- iii. especially the commandment of love to the brethren 2:9, 11
- iv. This keeping of God's commandments is incompatible with the love of the world 2:15-17
- v. and is incompatible with fellowship with false teachers 18-28

- John asserts that a person who is a member of **the family of God** will bear the family likeness of righteousness and of love.
- Because God is light and righteousness, His offspring will walk in the light (1:7), and practice righteousness (3:9).
- Because God is love, His children will love one another (5:1).



**THE LEADING IDEAS IN 1  
JOHN 1:1-2:2.**

- **It is usual for us to study Bible books, paragraph by paragraph or verse by verse.**
- However, I have discovered that an interesting way to study a book is by following concepts that the author introduces early in the book, and then tracing this concept right through the book.
- **I have discovered too, that John's writings are particular very good for this type of study, because of the way that John returns time and again to the concepts or ideas which he has presented initially, and expands on them.**
- **Certainly such a study is suitable for an introduction to 1 John.**
- **The leading ideas of 1 John 1:1-2:2 are presented here in chronological order of their appearance.**
- **Each concept or idea has been noted, and could easily be the subject for a single lesson.**

# **THE LEADING IDEAS IN 1 JOHN 1:1-2:2.**

- **FROM THE BEGINNING.**
- **THE "WORD OF LIFE" (Jesus is the life giving WORD of God)**
- **WAS MANIFESTED – (THE INCARNATION)**  
**John 1, Philipians 2**
- **BEAR WITNESS-- DECLARE UNTO YOU—  
TESTIFY—GIVE TESTIMONY OR WITNESS**
- **ETERNAL LIFE**
- **FELLOWSHIP**
- **GOD IS LIGHT (Jesus is God- He is the  
Light of the World)**

# THE LEADING IDEAS IN 1 JOHN 1:1-2:2.

- WALKING IN THE LIGHT
- WALKING IN DARKNESS
- LIES & LIARS
- DOING THE TRUTH
- SIN (Jesus is the answer to the sin problem)
- CONFESSION
- FAITHFULL & JUST
- CLEANSING
- ADVOCATE
- PROPITIATION
- Many of these “ideas” are good topics for sermons and thoughts for Breaking of Bread.

- Here is a simple outline for a Breaking of bread meeting from 1John 1.
- **The Person of Christ** 1:1-2
- **The Testimony of the Apostles** 1:3-4
- **The Requirements of Fellowship** 1:5-10
- **Sin Mars Fellowship** 2:1-2
- **But Christ, the Righteous one, our Advocate, our Propitiation, restores Fellowship** 2:1-2

**CONCLUSION**

- **John is the family epistle in which God is seen as the Father and believers as brothers in the family.**
- **In viewing the Christian life as **fellowship with God**, in the first two chapters John has marked out two tests to ascertain the genuineness of fellowship.**
- **The first is the ethical test of walking in the light (1:5—2:11);**
- **the second is the doctrinal test of believing in the incarnation (2:18-28).**
- **Both of these issues are addressed in chapter one among the LEADING IDEAS OF CHAPTER ONE.**
- **John returns to these issues in chapter 2 and amplifies them.**

- **With respect to THE WALK IN FELLOWSHIP AND LIGHT (1:1 - 2:2)**
- **1. The Person with whom we walk in fellowship and light is Jesus Christ (1:1 – 2)**
- **2. The Purpose of the Epistle is to establish believers in the experience of fellowship with Him (1 :3 – 4)**
- **3. The Pursuit of the walk in fellowship and light involves the right attitude toward sin (1:5 - 2:2)**
- **Failure to measure up to John's three important standards of obedience, love, and truth reveals that a person is not one of God's children but meeting the requirements provides a solid basis for the assurance of one's salvation.**