



1 John

An 18 Week Inductive Bible Study

Scripture Paths Bible Studies
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By Lisa Hughes

— 1 John 3:1-24 (NASB)—

1 See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.

2 Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.

3 And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

4 Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness.

5 You know that He appeared in order to take away sins; and in Him there is no sin.

6 No one who abides in Him sins; no one who sins has seen Him or knows Him.

7 Little children, make sure no one deceives you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous;

8 the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil.

9 No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

10 By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother.

11 For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another;

12 not as Cain, who was of the evil one and slew his brother. And for what reason did he slay him? Because his deeds were evil, and his brother's were righteous.

13 Do not be surprised, brethren, if the world hates you.

14 We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death.

15 Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

16 We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

17 But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?

18 Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.

19 We will know by this that we are of the truth, and will assure our heart before Him

20 in whatever our heart condemns us; for God is greater than our heart and knows all things.

21 Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God;

22 and whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight.

23 This is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as He commanded us.

24 The one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. We know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.

— 1 John —
Lesson #1 Introduction

Read through the book of 1 John two times before you begin answering the questions below.

Using only the text of 1 John, try to answer the following questions. Be sure to note the Scripture references to show where you found your answer from the Bible. *At this point in the lesson, you may not be able to answer every question using only your Bible.* You will have an opportunity at the end of this lesson to come back and complete your answers using other Bible study sources.

1. Who wrote the book?
2. To whom is it written?
3. When was the book written?
4. Where was it written?
5. What is the general tone of the author in the book?
6. What is the author's purpose in writing this book?
7. What topics are included in this book?

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8. What are the key words of the book? Key words are words that are repeated or carry an important thought.

9. What are the main themes of the book? A theme is the main idea, the overall message.

10. What attributes of God do you see in this book?

11. What attributes of Christ do you find in this book?

12. List any attributes of the Holy Spirit you find in this book.

Now you can go back and add to your answers above using your study Bible, a Bible dictionary or Bible commentary.

13. What insights have you gained thus far in your study of 1 John?

14. Did you discover a verse or two in the book that caught your attention? How did it encourage or convict you, or make you want to study and think about it more?

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2. SUMMARIZE. After reviewing the chapter and what you wrote for your summaries, ask yourself: *What is the main point of this chapter?* How do all these details and events reveal the main idea of the chapter? Record your answer below.

3. TITLE. Now you're ready to title your chapter. Your 3-5 word title should reflect the contents of the chapter. Remember, a title's purpose is to help you remember what is in each chapter.

4. MARK and LIST. On the *1 John Bible Text* handout mark any key words you see in the chapter. *God, Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit* are always key words. It's easiest to start with these "God" words first. Next mark words or phrases that are repeated at least 3 times. Mark any other words that seem important to the chapter or are strongly emphasized.

You can mark words or phrases by creating a symbol or using a certain colored pencil every time it appears. This will enable you to see at a glance how often a word is used in the chapter or note a progression of thought.

- a. Next, *list the phrase containing the key words* on a separate sheet of paper. This step will allow you to pull together the information you noted from marking the key words. Be sure to cite the verse references when you list your key word information.

For example, with *God* as your key word you would begin to make a list of the information you discovered every time *God* is mentioned in 1 John Chapter 1. Your Chapter 1 list about *God* should begin by looking something like the one below.

Verse 2—proclaim the eternal life, which was with the *Father*

Verse 3—our fellowship is with the *Father*

Verse 5—*God* is light

Verse 5—in *Him* there is no darkness at all

Fun study tip to try: Mark any key/repeated words that you notice appear all the way through the book, even if their use in individual chapters may not fit the "3 times or more" rule. This will allow you to trace major themes and an author's thoughts throughout the book.

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5. MARK and LIST. Mark any *commands* that are listed in the chapter. Look for things the author is telling his readers to do or be. Now, list them on your separate sheet of paper in the same way you did for the key words.
6. MARK and LIST. Mark words or phrases that are being *compared or contrasted*. Words like *as, likewise, in the same manner, or like* will help you find words or phrases being compared. Contrasting words like “light/dark” or “love/hate” and the word “but” will help you find words or phrases that are being contrasted. Now list what you discovered about comparisons and contrasts on the extra paper you’ve been using.
7. MARK. Mark transition terms: *therefore, wherefore, finally*. Sometimes an author has his own kind of transition term that lets you know he is making a switch to a new topic, so be sure to look for those kinds of terms. (Generally, these are at the beginning of a paragraph.)
8. MARK and LIST. Mark any time *so that* is used. In putting together your list, look for what comes before the “so that” which will bring about or produce some kind of result. For example, in Philippians 1:10 “so that” appears, but in order to understand its significance you need to also look at verse 9. Your entry for Philippians 1:9-10 might say something like, “Paul prays that the Philippians’ love would abound in real knowledge and all discernment *so that* they would be able to approve the things that are excellent and live sincerely and blamelessly until the day of Christ.” I think you will be so blessed by this part of your observation time!
9. MARK. Mark expressions of time—words like *shortly, quickly, soon, for a little while*.
10. MARK. Mark words that are synonyms of each other. For example: *Paul and Timothy are bond-servants* from 1:1.
11. LIST. List any *attributes* of God, Christ, or the Holy Spirit that you notice in this chapter. You’ll start this list by going back up to your listed “God” words that you marked earlier in Question #4. An attribute is a characteristic or quality used to describe an object or person.

For example, you might read John 3:16, “*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.*” From this verse we see that God is *loving* [because He loved the world]; He is *giving* [because He gave His Son]; He is *eternal* [because only the eternal can offer eternal life].

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12. LIST. Look for lists of words, phrases, or related thoughts. Number the lists within the Bible text, then record your list out to the side in the margin or on a separate sheet of paper. This will help you see the thought progression of the author or the results of some action.

For example, in 1 John 1:1 we find a list about the *Word of Life*. We discover 1) the Word of Life was from the beginning; 2) John heard the Word of Life; 3) John saw the Word of Life with his own eyes; 4) John looked at the Word of Life; 5) John touched the Word of life with his hands.

13. NOTE. Be sure to mark or write down any “nuggets” you observed which you thought were interesting, spurred on some thought, or made you want to study further.

Remember, the purpose of this lesson is to observe and take note of what is in the chapter. You are not making any interpretations or applications to your life right now. Your task at this time is to simply look for the treasures that God has put in each chapter.

As you do this lesson, take time to worship and thank the Lord that He has preserved His Word for you to study. Admire and marvel at what He placed in this chapter for you to notice. There really isn't any other time in our studies where we simply look at, think on, and study God's Word for itself, so have fun with this lesson! And may the Lord be blessed by your labors!

1 John Chapter 1

1 What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life—

2 and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us—

3 what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.

4 These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete.

5 This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.

6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth;

7 but 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.

8 If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not 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.

10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.

— 1 John —
Lesson #3 Chapter 1:1-4

Before you begin this lesson, prepare your heart by going to the Lord for help in understanding His Word and wisdom in applying it. May you be blessed as you dig into this passage!

1. As you get started, list what you know about the author of this epistle. See how much you can come up with just off the top of your head.
2. Now let's piece together a portrait from the Scriptures of the writer of this epistle. See Mark 3:16-17; Acts 8:14-15; Galatians 2:9; Revelation 1:9. What do you learn about him?
3. How does the author often describe himself? See John 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20. How does that description give insight into what the author considers to be most valuable in life?
4. What things do you learn about the *Word of Life* from verse 1?
5. Let's take a moment to look at the list given in verse 1 about the Word of Life. First, John says the Word of Life was from the beginning. What does John want us to understand about the *Word of Life* from that opening description? See John 1:1-2; 8:58; 1 John 2:13-14; Micah 5:2.

6. *Why* would it be important that John's readers understand the Word of Life was from the beginning? See also Isaiah 43:10; Colossians 1:17; Titus 2:13; 2 Peter 1:1; 1 John 5:20.

7. We've just looked spent some time learning about the Word of Life who was from the beginning. Next, let's look at 4 more things about the Word of Life. What do you learn about the Word of Life from those four qualities listed in verse 1?

8. John wanted to strengthen and encourage the believers so they would enjoy fellowship with God to the fullest. He also wrote to refute false teaching that was infiltrating the church and undermining the believer's faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The Gnostic heresy taught that "matter is inherently evil, and a divine being therefore could not take on human flesh."¹

Because the false teachers taught that matter (anything created, anything of the flesh) was evil, they sought to diminish Jesus by claiming He could not have been fully God and fully man. This pernicious heresy goes straight to the heart of the gospel and seeks to unravel the redeeming work of Christ, who became a man, lived a perfect life, and died to make propitiation for sin (Philippians 2:7-8; Hebrews 2:11, 14-15, 17-18; 10:4, 10, 19-22).

What elements do you see in verses 1-3 that show how John was seeking to "prove" that Jesus was fully man?

"Such heretical views destroy not only the true humanity of Jesus, but also the atonement, for Jesus must not only have been truly God, but also the truly human (and physically real) man who actually suffered and died upon the cross in order to be the acceptable substitutionary sacrifice for sin (cf. Heb. 2:14-17). The biblical view of Jesus affirms His complete humanity as well as His full deity." ~John MacArthur²

¹ Bruce Wilkinson and Kenneth Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible* (Nashville: T. Nelson, 1983), 485.

² John MacArthur Jr., ed., *The MacArthur Study Bible*, electronic ed. (Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997), 1962.

“At the time John was writing, a false sect had arisen which became known as Gnosticism (Gk. *gnōsis* = knowledge). These Gnostics professed to be Christians but claimed to have *additional knowledge*, superior to what the apostles taught. They claimed that a person could not be completely fulfilled until he had been initiated into their deeper “truths.” Some taught that matter was evil, and that therefore the Man Jesus could not be God. They made a distinction between Jesus and the Christ. “The Christ” was a divine emanation which came upon Jesus at His baptism and left before His death, perhaps in the Garden of Gethsemane. According to them, Jesus *did* die, but the Christ did *not* die. They insisted, as Michael Green put it, that “the heavenly Christ was too holy and spiritual to be soiled by permanent contact with human flesh.” In short, they denied the Incarnation, that Jesus is the Christ, and that Jesus Christ is both God and Man. John realized that these people were not true Christians, and so he warned his readers against them by showing that the Gnostics did not have the marks of true children of God.” ~William MacDonald³

9. Why was it important to testify to *physically* seeing, hearing, and touching the Word of Life, especially after the resurrection? See John 1:14; 20:27-31; Acts 4:19-20; 1 Corinthians 15:1-5, 12-19; 2 Peter 1:16-18.

Because Jesus is God’s revelation of Himself, He has a very special name: “*The Word of Life*” (1 John 1:1). This same title opens John’s Gospel: “*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God*” (John 1:1). Why does Jesus Christ have this name? Because Christ is to us what our words are to others. Our words reveal to others just what we think and how we feel. Christ reveals to us the mind and heart of God. He is the living means of communication between God and men. To know Jesus Christ is to know God! ~Warren Wiersbe⁴

10. In verse 2 John says the Word of Life was *manifested*. Define *manifested* [Strong’s #5319 (NIV *appeared*)]. Now see some of the other places where the word is used: John 3:21; Romans 16:25-26; 1 Peter 1:20; 1 John 3:5, 8; 4:9, 14. From those references, what do you learn about some of the reasons the Word of Life was manifested?
11. After coming in contact with the manifested Word of Life, what did John and the other disciples do according to verse 2? What message did they communicate (verse 2)?

³ William MacDonald, [*Believer’s Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments*](#), ed. Arthur Farstad (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1995), 2308.

⁴ Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 474.

12. What do you learn about *the eternal life* according to verse 2?

13. Why would John and the other disciples take such pains to “testify and proclaim” that message about *the eternal life* from verse 2? See verse 3 for your answer.

14. Trace the word *life* in verses 1-3. What truths unfold about *the life* in those verses? See also John 11:25-26; 14:6; 2 Timothy 1:10; 1 John 5:11-12, 20.

15. Verse 3 picks up John’s thoughts from verse 1. Verse 2 is a little parenthetical aside that provides helpful details about the Word of Life. Now in verse 3, we read of John’s purpose in writing his letter. What is his purpose in writing according to verse 3?

16. Define *fellowship* [Strong’s #2842] from verse 3.

“This word ‘fellowship’ is one of the important words in this letter. . . .The idea in the word is that of one person having a joint-participation with another in something possessed in common by both. A very touching use of the verbal form of this word was found in a fourth century inscription; a doctor of medicine had put up an inscription to his wife who had also studied medicine, and who had died. It read, “as with you alone I shared my life.” How beautiful it is when a sinner saved by grace comes to the sunset of life and can say to the Lord Jesus, “as with you alone I have shared by life.” ~Kenneth Wuest⁵

⁵ Kenneth S. Wuest, [*Wuest’s Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader*](#), vol. 13 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 95–96.

17. Explain how John's comments about *fellowship* follow his train of thought from verses 1-2. In other words, how does the context help us understand John's point about fellowship in verse 3?

18. Why is it crucial that we understand the need for fellowship with the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ as we see in verse 3?

19. How do we gain that fellowship with God? See John 3:14-16, 36; Acts 4:12; 10:42-43; Ephesians 2:8-10; 1 John 5:11-12.

20. What reason does John give in verse 4 for telling them about the Word of Life in the previous verses?

21. How would his reader's understanding of those truths from verses 1-3 bring John joy?

22. How can those truths from verses 1-3 bring *you* joy today?

"There is something that every believer can do for his Lord. He must be able to tell of what he has tasted and handled of the Word of Life, and if he has not tasted and handled it, then he is not a child of God at all. The best teaching in the world is experimental. Nothing wins upon men like personal witnessing—not

merely teaching the doctrine as we find it in the Book, but as we have felt it in its living power upon our own hearts. When we begin to tell of its effect upon ourselves, it is wonderful what power there is upon others in that testimony.” ~Charles Spurgeon⁶

“We have now such supernatural conversation with God and the Lord Christ as is an earnest and foretaste of our everlasting abode with them, and enjoyment of them, in the heavenly glory. See to what the gospel revelation tends—to advance us far above sin and earth and to carry us to blessed communion with the Father and the Son. See for what end the eternal life was made flesh—that he might advance us to eternal life in communion with the Father and himself.” ~Matthew Henry⁷

⁶ Charles Spurgeon, [*Spurgeon Commentary: 1 John*](#), ed. Elliot Ritzema, Spurgeon Commentary Series (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2014), 1 Jn 1:1.

⁷ Matthew Henry, [*Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume*](#) (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 2443.

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Lesson #4 Chapter 1:5-10

Before you begin this lesson, prepare your heart by asking the Lord for help in understanding His Word and for wisdom in applying it. May you be blessed as you dig into this passage!

1. By way of review, what message was proclaimed in verses 1-3? One of the reasons for that preached message is given in verse 3. What is it?
2. What is it about the message from verses 1-3 that will bring joy to John? See verse 4.
3. In verse 5 John declares, “This is the message we have from Him and announce to you.” Define *announce* [Strong’s #312 (ESV *proclaim*; NKJV, NIV *declare*)]. See also John 4:25; Acts 20:20, 27; 1 Peter 1:12 to get a better sense of the word.
4. Where does the message originate according to verse 5?
5. John began his letter proclaiming things we need to know. Now what announcement does John want us to know and understand from verse 5?
6. What observations can you make about God, His character, and His ways from verse 5?

- a. Next, look up the following verses to discover what God wants us to understand about Himself as revealed in verse 5. See Psalm 104:1-2; Zephaniah 3:5; 1 Timothy 6:16; James 1:17; Revelation 21:22-24.
7. John has already introduced the idea that salvation ushers us into *fellowship with God* in verses 1-4. From there, John revealed more information about God in verse 5. What implications do those truths about God from verse 5 have upon our lives if we want to have fellowship with God? See Acts 26:18; Romans 13:12-14; Ephesians 5:7-14; 1 Peter 2:9-11.
8. What contrasts are presented in verse 6?
9. John is making a crucial point about the Christian life in verse 6. Explain what *fellowship with God, practice, light, and darkness* have to do with each other as revealed in verses 5-6.
- “All walking in darkness is a not doing of the truth.” ~Marvin Vincent¹
10. Describe what it means to “walk in the darkness.” See also Romans 2:8; 2 Timothy 3:8; James 5:19.

¹ Marvin Richardson Vincent, *Word Studies in the New Testament*, vol. 2 (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1887), 315.

11. Define *practice* [Strong's #4160 (NIV *live the truth*)] from verse 6. Also see John 3:21, the only other place John uses this phrase, *practice the truth*.

 12. In contrast to the scenario painted in verse 6, what clear progression will show in our lives according to verse 7?

 13. John continues to make his point about fellowship. What do you learn about where fellowship originates from verses 1-7? If you desire to deepen your relationships among believers, what do you need to understand about fellowship according to verses 1-7?

 14. John ends verse 7 with these words, "and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin." What does our being made righteous through the sacrifice of Jesus have to do with walking in the light and having fellowship with one another according to verses 5-7?
- "O the unspeakable effectiveness of Christ's sacrifice; it extends to all sins (1 John 1:7): past, present, without exception, and all sins to come!" ~John Flavel²
- "His blood has a double consideration: not only atonement and reconciliation, but also purging and sanctification. He offered Himself not just to make atonement, but also to sanctify us by the sprinkling of His blood." ~John Owen³
15. Lest his comments in verses 5-7 be misunderstood and misapplied, John provides more truth in verse 8 to counteract any wrong thinking about the Christian life. What do you learn in verse 8?

² John Flavel, editor, Richard Rushing, *Voices from the Past, Volume 1* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2009), page 21.

³ John Owen, editor Richard Rushing, *Voices from the Past, Volume 1* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2009), page 161.

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- a. What kinds of situations tempt us to deny that we have sinned? See also Ephesians 4:20-25; Colossians 3:8-10.

16. What point is John making between *what we say* and the way *we walk* that we must learn to apply in our lives from verses 5-8?

17. Once we recognize our sin and see how it has broken our previous fellowship with our dear Father, what is the solution according to verse 9?

18. What parts of verse 9 do you find take the most faith to believe and trust in when you sin?
 - a. What do the following Scriptures teach us about confessing and forsaking sin? See Psalm 32:5; 38:17-18; 66:16-20; Proverbs 28:13-14; Luke 18:13-14.

19. What do we learn about God's character in verse 9?
 - a. When we understand those truths about God, how can it give us courage to go to Him and confess our sin? See also Hebrews 4:14-16; 10:19-23; 11:6.

“The sinner deserves to die for his sins. Since God is a just and righteous God, sin cannot absolutely escape unpunished. God must deny Himself to be unjust, but this He can never do. . . .As God is just, He is also true, and must make good the threatenings that have gone out of His mouth: ‘In the day you eat of it you shall surely die (Genesis 2:17). God cannot break His word. O sirs, there is no standing before a God that is a consuming fire, a just judge, and a holy God, unless we have one that is mighty to undertake for us and satisfy divine justice; one mighty to pacify divine wrath, bear divine threatenings, and mighty to forgive sin! The Father is just in forgiving our sins in Christ (1 John 1:9).” ~Thomas Brooks⁴

20. If we are unwilling to repent of our sin and confess it to God, what is really going on? See verse 10.

21. What does John mean when he says at the end of verse 10, “His Word is not in us”? See also 1 John 1:8; 2:4; John 5:37-38; 8:37; 17:17; 2 John 1:1-2.

22. Think about how 1 John 1:5-10 applies to your life today.
 - a. *Today*, if, or better, when you sin, what is God’s assessment of what is going on in your heart and life according to these verses?

 - b. *Today*, if you sin, what do you need to do according to verses 5-10?

 - c. *Today*, if you do not put 1 John 1:9 into practice, what will be the result?

⁴ Thomas Brooks, editor Richard Rushing, *Voices from the Past, Volume 2* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2016), page 96.

- d. After you confess and forsake your sin, *when* do you experience the results of applying 1 John 1:9? Why do you sometimes delay in applying 1 John 1:9?
- e. What truths from verses 5-10 have impacted you the most this week? What are some ways you want to try to implement what you've learned?

*"Father, I have sinned."
—Luke 15:18*

It is quite certain that those whom Christ has washed in his precious blood need not make a confession of sin, as culprits or criminals, before God the Judge, for Christ has for ever taken away all their sins in a legal sense, so that they no longer stand where they can be condemned, but are once for all accepted in the Beloved; but having become children, and offending as children, ought they not every day to go before their heavenly Father and confess their sin, and acknowledge their iniquity in that character?

Nature teaches that it is the duty of erring children to make a confession to their earthly father, and the grace of God in the heart teaches us that we, as Christians, owe the same duty to our heavenly Father. We daily offend, and ought not to rest without daily pardon. For, supposing that my trespasses against my Father are not at once taken to him to be washed away by the cleansing power of the Lord Jesus, what will be the consequence? If I have not sought forgiveness and been washed from these offences against my Father, I shall feel at a distance from him; I shall doubt his love to me; I shall tremble at him; I shall be afraid to pray to him: I shall grow like the prodigal, who, although still a child, was yet far off from his father.

But if, with a child's sorrow at offending so gracious and loving a Parent, I go to him and tell him all, and rest not till I realize that I am forgiven, then I shall feel a holy love to my Father, and shall go through my Christian career, not only as saved, but as one enjoying present peace in God through Jesus Christ my Lord. There is a wide distinction between confessing sin *as a culprit*, and confessing sin *as a child*. The Father's bosom is the place for penitent confessions. We have been cleansed once for all, but our feet still need to be washed from the defilement of our daily walk as children of God. ~Charles Spurgeon⁵

⁵ C. H. Spurgeon, *Morning and Evening: Daily Readings* (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1896). February 18, Evening.

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Lesson #5 Chapter 2 Overview

The goal of this lesson is to teach you how to look at and begin to study a text of Scripture. Observation is a necessary part of Bible study, yet all too often it can be overlooked or rushed through. Simply put, observation is the practice of noticing what God has placed in His Word. *At this stage* in our Bible study, I only want you to notice and then record what you observe in the chapter. You're not making any interpretations about what the Scriptures mean or how they apply to your life—that will come later, I promise.

Don't rush through this lesson. Set aside time this week to peer into the living and abiding Word of God. Rich treasures are waiting for you!

I've included Chapter 2 (NASB) at the end of this lesson so you can print it out and mark it up if you'd like. I find it helps me see items more easily if I'm marking and noting things as I go.

1. SUMMARIZE. To begin, read through Chapter 2. Now, summarize the contents of Chapter 2. This is not the time to be super detailed; instead, think of trying to tell a 4th grader the contents of the chapter.¹
 - a. Summarize paragraph 1 (verses 1-2).

 - b. Summarize paragraph 2 (verses 3-6).

¹The method and process of observation in Bible study does God honor, as we stop, observe, and consider each and every one of His recorded Words, in their context. I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge the debt I owe to the Precept Inductive Bible Studies observation method, which I have adapted in my studies. As far as I know, the method is the brainchild of Kay Arthur, though I've encountered a number of others who have also come up with similar ways for observing the text. The point of observation is to slow down and really look at what God has preserved for us in His Word. What I've created here is simply another variation to help us peer more closely at the Scriptures—for our good and His glory.

- c. Summarize paragraph 3 (verses 7-11).

 - d. Summarize paragraph 4 (verses 12-14).

 - e. Summarize paragraph 5 (verses 15-17).

 - f. Summarize paragraph 6 (verses 18-25).

 - g. Summarize paragraph 7 (verses 26-27).

 - h. Summarize paragraph 8 (verses 28-29).
2. SUMMARIZE. After reviewing the chapter and what you wrote for your summaries, ask yourself: *What is the main point of this chapter?* How do all these details and events reveal the main idea of the chapter? Record your answer below.

3. TITLE. Now you're ready to title your chapter. Your 3-5 word title should reflect the contents of the chapter. Remember, a title's purpose is to help you remember what is in each chapter.

Let me encourage you...

I just want to give you a heads up that identifying the pronouns for God and Jesus Christ in Chapter 2 will tax your brain! Unlike most of the other biblical writers, where we can count on the rule of the "nearest antecedent" to help us identify the pronoun, John is a bit more cryptic. [The nearest antecedent rule is simply look for the closest noun that would identify who the pronouns are referring to.] John thinks more globally and collectively so that identifying who is the focus of his pronouns becomes more difficult.

So, if you've started Lesson #5 and are feeling confused, you are not alone! I have found that referring back to Chapter 1 and looking at what John stated in Chapter 1 has helped *some*, like when John talks about the Light (compare 1:5-7 with 2:8-10). *But I've also erased my markings a few times already as I've been working! And I might change them again soon!* Also know that in almost every instance, whether you mark a pronoun as referring to God the Father or Jesus Christ, it won't impact doctrine. This is super comforting, don't you think?!

Read how these commentators talk about identifying the pronouns. I think you'll find their thoughts helpful! *For John, Jesus is so closely linked with the Father that a precise distinction between the Persons of the Godhead sometimes seems irrelevant. Fellowship is with both the Father and the Son (1:3) and to know One of Them intimately is to know the Other.* [Walvoord, John F., and Roy B. Zuck, Dallas Theological Seminary. 1985. *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*. Vol. 2. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.]

The PRONOUNS are ambiguous as to whether they refer to God the Father or God the Son. In v. 6 the context demands "the Son" (as do 3:2, 5, 7, 16; 4:17). However, for John, there is a fluidity between the redemptive and sanctifying actions of the Triune God. [Utley, Robert James. 1999. *The Beloved Disciple's Memoirs and Letters: The Gospel of John, I, II, and III John*. Vol. Volume 4. Study Guide Commentary Series. Marshall, Texas: Bible Lessons International.]

As you go over your lesson, review how and why you chose to mark your pronouns a certain way based on the clues in the text. *But don't get too crazy about it all since even the commentary writers were having trouble identifying which member of the Trinity was John's focus.*

Have fun, ask the Lord for help, and thank Him for the gift of the Holy Spirit, who helps us understand and study God's Word! Remember, God is pleased when we wrestle with His Word, desiring to understand every jot and tittle of it!

Grace, peace, and perseverance to you!
Lisa

4. MARK and LIST. On the *1 John Bible Text* handout mark any key words you see in the chapter. *God, Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit* are always key words. It's easiest to start with these "God" words first. Next mark words or phrases that are repeated at least 3 times. Mark any other words that seem important to the chapter or are strongly emphasized.

You can mark words or phrases by creating a symbol or using a certain colored pencil every time it appears. This will enable you to see at a glance how often a word is used in the chapter or note a progression of thought.

- a. Next, *list the phrase containing the key words* on a separate sheet of paper. This step will allow you to pull together the information you noted from marking the key words. Be sure to cite the verse references when you list your key word information.

For example, with *God* as your key word you would begin to make a list of the information you discovered every time *God* is mentioned in 1 John Chapter 2. Your Chapter 2 list about *God* should begin by looking something like the one below.

Verse 5—*God* is love

Verse 13—*God* is Father. He is knowable.

Fun study tip to try: Mark any key/repeated words that you notice appear all the way through the book, even if their use in individual chapters may not fit the "3 times or more" rule. This will allow you to trace major themes and an author's thoughts throughout the book.

5. MARK and LIST. Mark any *commands* that are listed in the chapter. Look for things the author is telling his readers to do or be. Now, list them on your separate sheet of paper in the same way you did for the key words.
6. MARK and LIST. Mark words or phrases that are being *compared or contrasted*. Words like *as, likewise, in the same manner, or like* will help you find words or phrases being compared. Contrasting words like "light/dark" or "love/hate" and the word "but" will help you find words or phrases that are being contrasted. Now list what you discovered about comparisons and contrasts on the extra paper you've been using.
7. MARK. Mark transition terms: *therefore, wherefore, finally*. Sometimes an author has his own kind of transition term that lets you know he is making a switch to a new topic, so be sure to look for those kinds of terms. (Generally, these are at the beginning of a paragraph.)

8. MARK and LIST. Mark any time *so that* is used. In putting together your list, look for what comes before the “so that” which will bring about or produce some kind of result. For example, in Philippians 1:10 “so that” appears, but in order to understand its significance you need to also look at verse 9. Your entry for Philippians 1:9-10 might say something like, “Paul prays that the Philippians’ love would abound in real knowledge and all discernment *so that* they would be able to approve the things that are excellent and live sincerely and blamelessly until the day of Christ.” I think you will be so blessed by this part of your observation time!
9. MARK. Mark expressions of time—words like *shortly, quickly, soon, for a little while*.
10. MARK. Mark words that are synonyms of each other. For example: *Paul and Timothy are bond-servants* from 1:1.
11. LIST. List any *attributes* of God, Christ, or the Holy Spirit that you notice in this chapter. You’ll start this list by going back up to your listed “God” words that you marked earlier in Question #4. An attribute is a characteristic or quality used to describe an object or person.

For example, you might read John 3:16, “*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.*” From this verse we see that God is *loving* [because He loved the world]; He is *giving* [because He gave His Son]; He is *eternal* [because only the eternal can offer eternal life].

12. LIST. Look for lists of words, phrases, or related thoughts. Number the lists within the Bible text, then record your list out to the side in the margin or on a separate sheet of paper. This will help you see the thought progression of the author or the results of some action.

For example, in 1 John 1:1 we find a list about the *Word of Life*. We discover 1) the Word of Life was from the beginning; 2) John heard the Word of Life; 3) John saw the Word of Life with his own eyes; 4) John looked at the Word of Life; 5) John touched the Word of life with his hands.

13. NOTE. Be sure to mark or write down any “nuggets” you observed which you thought were interesting, spurred on some thought, or made you want to study further.

Remember, the purpose of this lesson is to observe and take note of what is in the chapter. You are not making any interpretations or applications to your life right now. Your task at this time is to simply look for the treasures that God has put in each chapter.

As you do this lesson, take time to worship and thank the Lord that He has preserved His Word for you to study. Admire and marvel at what He placed in this chapter for you to notice. There really isn't any other time in our studies where we simply look at, think on, and study God's Word for itself, so have fun with this lesson! And may the Lord be blessed by your labors!

1 John Chapter 2

1 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;

2 and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.

3 By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments.

4 The one who says, "I have come to know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him;

5 but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him:

6 the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.

7 Beloved, I am not writing a new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you have had from the beginning; the old commandment is the word which you have heard.

8 On the other hand, I am writing a new commandment to you, which is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true Light is already shining.

9 The one who says he is in the Light and yet hates his brother is in the darkness until now.

10 The one who loves his brother abides in the Light and there is no cause for stumbling in him.

11 But the one who hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

12 I am writing to you, little children, because your sins have been forgiven you for His name's sake.

13 I am writing to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. I have written to you, children, because you know the Father.

14 I have written to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one.

15 Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.

17 The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.

18 Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared; from this we know that it is the last hour.

19 They went out from us, but they were not really of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but they went out, so that it would be shown that they all are not of us.

20 But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know.

21 I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it, and because no lie is of the truth.

22 Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son.

23 Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also.

24 As for you, let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father.

25 This is the promise which He Himself made to us: eternal life.

26 These things I have written to you concerning those who are trying to deceive you.

27 As for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him.

28 Now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming.

29 If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone also who practices righteousness is born of Him.

— 1 John —
Lesson #6 Chapter 2:1-11

As you prepare to dive into this week's study, ask the Lord for His help in understanding and applying His Word. Our passage in this lesson ties in closely with the end of 1 John chapter 1. Please read 1 John 1:5-10 and 2:1-11 to get a running start at the text.

1. To whom is John writing according to 1 John 2:1? John uses this term of endearment for this first time in his letter, though he goes on to use it 7 more times. What does John convey by using this name for his readers in 1 John 2:1 and 2:12, 13, 28, 3:7, 18; 4:4; 5:21?

2. If you summed up John's message in 1 John 1:5-10, he's saying, "Y'all are sinners!" With that in mind, what is his purpose in writing according to 1 John 2:1?
 - a. What does his purpose statement in 1 John 2:1 teach us about sin, holiness, and the Christian life? See also Romans 6:1-2, 12-13; 1 Corinthians 15:34; Titus 2:11-13.

3. After stating his purpose in writing his letter in 1 John 2:1, what wonderful news does John give his readers in the rest of verse 1?
 - a. From verse 1 make as many observations as you can about our advocate.

- b. Define *advocate* [Strong's #3875 (NIV *one who speaks to the Father in our defense*)].
4. Why do we *need* an advocate? See John 3:36; John 16:8; 1 Thessalonians 1:10; Hebrews 2:16-18; 1 Peter 3:18; Revelation 12:10.
- “Our Advocate is always in fellowship with the Father in order that if the saint loses fellowship with Him through cherished and unconfessed sin, He might plead our cause on the basis of His precious blood, and bring us back into fellowship again. The word “facing” brings us to this solemn thought, that when we saints sin the Lord Jesus must face the Father with us and our sin. The saint has been saved in His precious blood so that he may be able to keep from sinning, and when he does sin, he wounds the tender heart of the Saviour, and forces Him to face God the Father with that saint whom He has saved in His precious blood. How that should deter us from committing acts of sin!” ~Kenneth Wuest¹
5. John further explains the blessing of having Jesus Christ, the righteous One, as our Advocate in verse 2. What more do you learn about Jesus from 1 John 2:2?
6. What do you learn about *propitiation* from the following texts? See Romans 3:21-26; 5:10; Hebrews 2:17; 1 John 4:10.
- a. Now add to your understanding by defining *propitiation* [Strong's #2434 (NIV *atoning sacrifice*)].

¹ Kenneth S. Wuest, *Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader*, vol. 13 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 109–110.

7. To maintain doctrinal precision and to understand our text accurately, read the following quotes about Jesus' propitiation for *the whole world* (1 John 2:2).
- a. "This text states that there is a sense in which Jesus is the propitiation for the sins of the elect and non-elect—"the whole world." It is not that Jesus satisfies the sin of the non-elect, for faith is the trigger that fires the gun of propitiation, but He is the satisfaction for sin offered, presented, and available to the whole world. Granted, only the elect believe, but the non-elect have a real gospel preached to them, a gospel that offers satisfaction for sins and reconciliation to God through faith in Jesus Christ. The fact that the non-elect do not believe does not nullify the legitimacy of the offer. The offer is not a mere farce, but is true, Jesus is the propitiation available to the entire world of men, elect and non-elect alike. The elect, through faith, receive propitiation and the non-elect, because of their refusal to believe, do not receive it. The elect are not propitiated before they believe. Satisfaction is available, but not applied until faith in Christ is enacted." ~Jack Hughes²
 - b. "The propitiation is as wide as the sin' (Bengel). If men do not experience its benefit, the fault is not in its efficacy. Düsterdieck (cited by Huther) says, 'The propitiation has its real efficacy for the whole world; to believers it brings life, to unbelievers death.'" ~Marvin Vincent³
 - c. "The pardon for sin is offered to the whole world, but received only by those who believe (cf. 4:9, 14; John 5:24). There is no other way to be reconciled to God." ~John MacArthur⁴
 - d. What do you learn from the following Scriptures about the salvation? See John 1:29; 3:16; 6:51; 1 Timothy 2:6; Hebrews 2:9; 1 John 4:14.
 - e. Now look up the following Scriptures to explain how you can appropriate or gain that offered salvation from Luke 24:46-47; John 1:12-13; 3:16, 36; 20:31; Romans 10:8-9.
 - f. In each of the quotes above in this question, what careful distinction do the authors make? Why is it important to understand that distinction?

² From Jack Hughes' own personal study notes on the passage. Used by permission.

³ Marvin Richardson Vincent, *Word Studies in the New Testament*, vol. 2 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1887), 325–326.

⁴ John MacArthur Jr., ed., *The MacArthur Study Bible*, electronic ed. (Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997), 1965.

8. How can we tell if Jesus has become our advocate and propitiation for our sins according to 1 John 2:3?

9. Twenty-three times in the rest of his letter, John uses the word *know* [*ginosko*, Strong's #1097] except for the 6 times he uses the synonym *oida* [Strong's #1492] in 1 John 3:2; 5:15, 18-20. Using your study Bible notes, a commentary, or online word study resources, explain the difference between the two words. What do you learn?

10. Try rewriting 1 John 2:3 using the *ginosko* definition to replace *know*.

11. John tells us if we have come to know Christ, we will keep His commandments. Define *keep* from verse 3.

12. What do “keeping” Christ’s commandments reveal about our “knowing” Him according to verses 3-5?

Depend on it that the lack of practical obedience to Christ is the root of nine hundred and ninety-nine out of every thousand of our doubts and fears. The roots of our fears are in our sins. Search there, and you shall find the cause of soul-trouble. I believe many a child of God walks in darkness because he does not obey the word of the Lord. Take for your motto the sentence that the mother of Jesus addressed to the servants at the marriage in Cana of Galilee—‘Whatever he says to you, do it!’ (John 2:5) Do you often hear the precept with never a thought of heeding it? Then beware lest you ‘suddenly . . . be broken, and there will not be healing’ (Prov 29:1). ~Charles Spurgeon⁵

⁵ Charles Spurgeon, *Spurgeon Commentary: 1 John*, ed. Elliot Ritzema, Spurgeon Commentary Series (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2014), 1 Jn 2:3.

13. In verse 5, John writes that *whoever keeps His Word, in him the love of God has been perfected (made complete NIV)*. How is God's love shown to be completed or perfected in us when we keep His commandments?

"The obedient child of God is characterized, not by any representative trait or quality of his own personality, but merely as the subject of the work of divine love: as the sphere in which that love accomplishes its perfect work." ~Kenneth Wuest⁶

14. Another test for whether we have come to know Christ as Savior and Lord is found in verse 6. What do you learn?

15. Define *abide* [Strong's #3306 (NIV *claims to live in Him*)].

16. How do verses 3-6 provide insight about those who "say" they know Christ and those who "keep" His commandments? What's the difference between the two groups based on these verses?

17. In verses 7-8 what do you learn about the new commandment John is writing to his dear friends? What do you learn about the old commandment from verses 7-8?

18. Anytime you might be confused about something John is saying, it's helpful to remember that he frequently repeats the things Jesus said. Our text is one place where it's helpful to review what Jesus taught about a "new command." How do the following verse

⁶ Wuest, Kenneth S. 1997. [*Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader*](#). Vol. 13. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

references provide insight into verses 7-8? See John 13:34-35; 15:12; 1 John 3:11, 23; 4:21; 2 John 5.

19. What is happening in the lives and hearts of true followers of Jesus Christ according to the end of verse 8? See also John 8:12; 12:46; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 5:8.

20. If the true Light is shining in your life and the darkness of sin is passing away (verse 8), then what are the results according to verses 9-11? What do you learn about those who still walk in darkness according to verses 9-11?

“Habitually conducting one’s self in the sphere of darkness is indicative of an unsaved state.” ~Kenneth Wuest⁷

21. Why does living in the light help us with our love problem? See 1 John 4:19-21; 5:1-2. How can that be encouraging when we are struggling to love someone as the Lord commands us?

“He who hates his brother, is both a stumbling-block to himself, and stumbles against himself and everything within and without; he who loves has an unimpeded path” [Bengel]. John has in mind Jesus’ words, John 11:9–10.” ~Robert Jamieson⁸

“Jesus answered, ‘Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him (John 11:9-10).’”

⁷ Kenneth S. Wuest, *Wuest’s Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader*, vol. 13 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 122.

⁸ Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown, *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*, vol. 2 (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997), 528.

“Christ stands as our advocate alone before God’s bar and pleads before the Father. Whatever can rightly be charged upon us, He accepts the whole charge upon Himself, acknowledging the crimes to be His own. And this, He must do. If He hides the sin, or lessens it, He is faulty; if He leaves it still upon us, we die. He must then take our iniquity to Himself, make it His own, and so deliver us.” ~John Bunyan⁹

⁹ John Bunyan, *Voices from the Past, Volume 1* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2009), 148.

— 1 John —
Lesson #7 Chapter 2:12-17

This week's passage contains much soul-encouragement and heart-piercing exhortation. May you be strengthened, humbled, and blessed in your study!

1. John seeks to encourage his readers after his piercing comments in the previous section. Verses 12-14 can best be seen as an aside or pause in the apostle's teaching. John wants his readers to know how dear they are to him. Leon Morris explains this section best when he writes, "Considerable ingenuity has been expended on the way we should understand these terms (referring to children, fathers, young men)." And "it is best to regard the division as a stylistic device, adding emphasis."¹

Rather than getting stuck trying to figure out the groupings for the different people mentioned in these verses or the reason for the tense changes, what do we know *for sure* about those to whom John writes his letter? List what you learn from verses 12-14.

Leon Morris notes, "Two sequences, each with a threefold address, to *children, fathers, and young men* now follow. Considerable ingenuity has been expended on the way we should understand these terms and on the change of tense from 'I write' to 'I wrote' (in the Gk. of vs 13c, 14). It may be argued that knowledge accords with fathers (those old in the faith), and strength with young men. But as all the qualities ought to be found in all believers it is best to regard the division as a stylistic device, adding emphasis. 'All Christians are (by grace, not nature) children in innocence and dependence on the heavenly Father, young men in strength, and fathers in experience' (C. H. Dodd, *The Johannine Epistles* [Hodder, 1946], pp. 38–39). *John's readers have the forgiveness of sins, the knowledge of God, the word of God abiding in them, and victory over the evil one* (italics added)."²

While Leon Morris says the tense changes in verses 12-14 can be attributed to writing style and emphasis, William Barclay provides a further plausible reason for John's change in tense in verses 12-14. He writes, "A more likely explanation is this. When John says *I am writing*, he is thinking of what he is at the moment writing and of what he still has to say; when he says *I have written*, he is thinking of what has already been written and his readers have already read. The sense would then be that the whole letter—the part already written, the part being written and the part still to come—is all designed to remind Christians of who and whose they are and of what has been done for them. *For John, it was of supreme importance that Christians*

¹ Leon L. Morris, "1 John," in *New Bible Commentary: 21st Century Edition*, ed. D. A. Carson et al., 4th ed. (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994), 1402.

² Ibid.

*should remember the status and the benefits they have in Jesus Christ, for these would be their defense against error and against sin (italics added)."*³

2. Why did John take the time to encourage his readers (as he does in verses 12-14)? See 1 John 1:6-8; 2:3-6, 9-11 to be reminded of the issues he was tackling in his letter. Now consider *why* John gives the assurances he does in verses 12-14.

3. Let's take some time to examine each group and consider what John desires to convey about them. In 1 John 2:12, John writes to his beloved children in the faith. He frequently addresses his readers as *children* in this letter (see 1 John 2:1, 12, 13, 18, 28; 3:1, 2, 7, 10, 18; 4:4; 5:2, 21). According to verse 12, what do we know about this group?

4. *Based on his description* of children in verse 12, how would you describe his readers? See John 1:12; Acts 10:43; Ephesians 1:7; 1 John 1:7 to form your answer.

5. John uses two different words for children in verses 12-14. In verse 12 the term indicates family relationship and is like calling them "wee bairns" as the Scottish used to do. In verse 13, John uses a word that indicates the "training of children." It carries with it the idea that children need discipline and instruction. In verse 13, what do we learn about the children who need guidance, teaching, and training? How would that information about them in verse 13 encourage John's readers, in light of the word's meaning?

6. How is the reminder that all believers are children (see again John's use of the term in this epistle: 1 John 2:1, 12, 13, 18, 28; 3:1, 2, 7, 10, 18; 4:4; 5:2, 21) an important one for us to grasp and seek to abide by? What are some general characteristics of children that are necessary when it comes to knowing the Lord?

³ William Barclay, *The Letters of John and Jude*, 3rd ed., The New Daily Study Bible (Louisville, KY; London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), 57.

7. After addressing his readers as children, John expands his encouragement to “fathers.” What do we learn about those who are *fathers* in verses 13-14? The word “know” here means to know the Lord in a relational, intimate, and experiential way. See also Luke 10:22; John 8:19, 54-55; 14:7, 9.

8. What do we learn about the God the fathers know? For a look at a few verses on this topic, see Deuteronomy 33:26-27; Psalm 33:6-12; 90:1-2; Isaiah 43:10-13; Jeremiah 9:23-24; John 17:3; 1 John 2:13-14.

9. What is it about being a *father* that is true, or should be true, for all believers? See also John 14:7; Ephesians 4:13; Philippians 3:10; Hebrews 5:13-14; 1 John 2:3, 4, 13; 5:20.

10. What do we learn about those who are *young men* according to verses 13-14?

11. Why would these characteristics be essential for all believers to possess? See Psalm 119:9-11; John 16:33; 1 Corinthians 16:13; Ephesians 6:10-12; 1 Peter 1:22-25; 1 John 4:4; 5:4-5.

“The source of their strength is not innate but has been imparted to them. ‘The Word of God’ refers not to Christ but rather to the message of God as brought by Him and now embodied in the inspired Scriptures. Strength is imparted as God’s Word ‘abides,’ is at home, in the mind and will and finds expression in daily conduct. King justly remarks, ‘All big Christians have been Bible Christians; all who have been greatly blessed to others have been themselves steeped in it.’” ~D. Edmond Hiebert⁴

⁴ D. Edmond Hiebert, “An Expository Study of 1 John Part 3 (of 10 Parts): An Exposition of 1 John 2:7–17,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 145 (1988): 432.

“To sum up all, I can imagine John, at the point at which he has arrived in the composing of this letter, — the point of enforcing the brotherhood of believers and its antagonism to the world, — *pausing to ask himself, will these counsels of mine be understood and obeyed? Will those to whom they are addressed receive them as they are given, in faithfulness and affection?* He is moved to make an earnest, and what may be a last appeal to them.” ~Robert S. Candlish (italics added)

Candlish further imagines John writing, “What I am writing to you, I write in the fulness of my heart. I know that you believe in Jesus; I give you all credit for being Christians indeed. I appeal to you, by all the motives and considerations that should weigh with you as such. I appeal to you in every view of your Christianity, as little children, fathers, young men. And by all that is implied in your being little children, fathers, young men, I beseech you to hear me. So ‘I write unto you.’ Take kindly what I write unto you, as little children, fathers, young, men. . . . Be persuaded to give heed to what I write or have written; to love the brotherhood; and not to love the world.” ~Robert S. Candlish⁵

12. John now continues to instruct his “little children” about temptations they may face. What command does he give in verse 15?
 - a. Why is it important to heed this command according to the end of verse 15?
 - b. What does the end of verse 15 teach us about our relationship with the Lord? See also Matthew 6:24; Mark 12:30; Luke 16:13; James 4:4.
13. Describe what it looks like to love the world based on this small sampling of verses: John 15:19; Galatians 1:10; 1 Timothy 6:9-10; 2 Timothy 4:10; 1 John 3:17; 4:5.
14. What are some ways we can turn away from the world and its enticements? See Romans 12:1-2; Galatians 6:14; Colossians 3:1-5; 1 John 5:4-5.

⁵ Robert S. Candlish, *First Epistle of John* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, reprinted 1979, originally 1877), 141-142.

15. What things are in the world according to verse 16? Where do these things come from?

16. Loving the world and the things of the world means prizing the things our flesh desires. What does God want us to understand about our flesh, its desires, and loving Him? See Mark 4:19; Romans 13:14; Galatians 5:16, 19-26; Titus 2:11-14; 1 Peter 2:11; 1 John 2:15-17.

17. When do the things we *see* become a danger to our hearts and our love for God? See Genesis 3:6; 6:2; Joshua 7:20-21; Job 31:1; Psalm 119:36-37; 2 Peter 2:13-15.

18. The boastful pride of life is a trap any of us can fall into. What do you learn about this particularly tricky temptation and how to escape it from Psalm 49:5-6; 10-13, 16-20; 52:1-9; 127:1-2; Proverbs 27:1-2; James 4:13-17?

19. James 4:1-10 contains similar admonishments. What do you learn about love for the world from James? What is James' answer for turning away from a love for the world?

20. What do we know about the world according to verse 17? What contrasting picture is provided in verse 17?

21. What do we know about those who do God's will? See Matthew 7:21; Mark 3:35; 1 Peter 4:2; 1 John 2:17.

22. How would understanding the truths contained in verse 17 help us live differently?

“Here is the true answer to the craving for permanence in the human heart. It is realized in ‘the one doing the will of God’. The present active participle characterizes him as actively engaged in doing God’s will rather than pursuing the fleeting lusts of the world.” ~D. Edmond Hiebert⁶

“Say then, brethren, whether this world is worthy of a Christian’s affections? I do not hesitate to say, it is not: for it affords nothing that is capable of satisfying an immortal soul; and the poor gratifications it does afford, are all perishing even whilst they are in our hands.” ~Charles Simeon⁷

“Stop considering the world precious with the result that you love it, and the things in the world. If anyone as a habit of life is considering the world precious and is therefore loving it, there does not exist the love possessed by the Father in him. Because everything which is in the world, the passionate desire of the flesh, and the passionate desire of the eyes, and the insolent and empty assurance which trusts in the things that serve the creature life, is not from the Father as a source but is from the world as a source. And the world is being caused to pass away, and its passionate desire. But the one who keeps on habitually doing the will of God abides forever.” ~Kenneth Wuest⁸

“The answer to the lusts of the flesh (1 John 2:16) is to cultivate the desire to see Christ.” ~Rick Goertzen

⁶ D. Edmond Hiebert, *The Epistles of John: An Expository Commentary* (Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1991), 104.

⁷ Charles Simeon, *Horae Homileticae: James to Jude*, vol. 20 (London: Holdsworth and Ball, 1833), 402.

⁸ Kenneth S. Wuest, *Wuest’s Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader*, vol. 13 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 128.

— 1 John —
Lesson #8 Chapter 2:18-29

“When you go to God in any duty, take your heart aside and say, 'O my soul, I am now engaged in the greatest work that a creature was ever employed about; I am going into the awful presence of God upon business of everlasting moment. O my soul, leave trifling now; be composed, be watchful, be serious; this is no common work, it is soul-work; it is work for eternity; it is work which will bring forth fruit to life or death in the world to come.' Pause awhile and consider your sins, your wants, your troubles; keep your thoughts awhile on these before you address yourself to duty.” ~John Flavel¹

1. Who does John address in verse 18? What had he been discussing with them in verses 15-17?
2. How does verse 17 provide a lead in for verse 18?
3. How does John view the times in which he lives according to verse 18? What do you learn from the other Bible writers about how they viewed the times in which they too were living? See Romans 13:11; 1 Timothy 4:1; James 5:3; 1 Peter 4:7; Jude 18.
4. What had John’s “children” heard according to verse 18? What do you learn about this person from Paul’s instructions to the Thessalonians in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12?
5. What else does John tell his children in 1 John 2:18? What is the connection between the antichrists and the last times? What do we learn about the many antichrists from 1 John 2:18-19, 22; 4:3; 2 John 7?

¹ John Flavel, *Keeping the Heart* (...Christian Heritage, 2012), 32 maybe.

6. What do we learn about the antichrists from verse 19? How does verse 19 help us evaluate the attitudes and actions of professed believers?

7. What contrast is presented between those described in verse 19 and those in verse 20?

8. What do you learn about the word *anointing* from 2 Corinthians 1:21-22; 1 John 2:20, 27; 4:13?
 - a. Based on what you learned from those passages (2 Corinthians 1:21-22; 1 John 2:20, 27; 4:13), what is John saying about his children in verse 20?

 - b. Based on what you learned from those passages (2 Corinthians 1:21-22; 1 John 2:20, 27; 4:13), what is John saying about you from verse 20?

9. In verse 20 John rather abruptly ends his sentence with “you all know.” What is it that believers *know* according to verse 21?

10. What truth do believers know and cling to or you could say, what lies do unbelievers spout? See verse 22.

11. What do we know for sure about anyone who denies Jesus according to verse 23?

12. In what way does denying Jesus lead to denying the Father? See John 5:23; 1 John 4:14.

13. What are we supposed to do according to verse 24?

14. In what way can we hinder the truths we learned from the beginning? What is the outcome when we are faithful to stand firm in the truths we learned from the beginning? See verse 24.

15. What promise is repeated in verse 25? Who made the promise?

16. What situation is described in verse 26? What is John's solution according to verse 26?

17. What deceptions does John seek to correct in his letter thus far? See 1 John 1:6, 8, 10; 2:3-4, 9, 15, 18-19, 22-23.

18. List what you learn about the anointing from verse 27.

19. What is the anointing that we have received? See 1 John 2:20-21; 3:24; John 14:26; 16:13; Acts 5:32; Romans 8:9, 14.

20. Based on what John has just said in verses 18-27, why would receiving the Holy Spirit at salvation be so important? What can you be assured about what the Holy Spirit will reveal according to verse 27?

21. What final command in this chapter is given in verse 28? What reason is given for obeying that command according to verse 28?

22. What do you learn about the one who abides from 1 John 2:6, 10, 14, 24, 27-28; John 15:5-6, 10?

23. Verse 29 reveals another reason why we won't shrink in shame from the Lord Jesus at His second coming. Explain what you learn.

24. John seeks to shore up the believers by dismantling deceptions and teaching the truth. What truths from this lesson have encouraged you and built up your faith?

“The whole body of the saints . . . whom he exhorts to abide in Christ, that is, in the exercise of faith on him, of hope in him, and love to him; and to hold to him the head, and to hold fast his word and Gospel, and abide by his truth and ordinances, and adhere to his cause and interest, and not to be moved away on any consideration.” ~John Gill²

“He (John) was so anxious for their spiritual lives that he said over and over, “Remain in him; don’t let anyone lead you away from him.” ~Cornerstone Biblical Commentary³

² John Gill, *An Exposition of the New Testament, vol. 3*, The Baptist Commentary Series (London: Mathews and Leigh, 1809), 633–634.

³ Grant Osborne, Philip W. Comfort, *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary, Vol 13: John and 1, 2, and 3 John* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2007), 347.

- c. Summarize paragraph 3 (verses 11-12).

 - d. Summarize paragraph 4 (verses 13-22).

 - e. Summarize paragraph 5 (verses 23-24).
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2. SUMMARIZE. After reviewing the chapter and what you wrote for your summaries, ask yourself: *What is the main point of this chapter?* How do all these details and events reveal the main idea of the chapter? Record your answer below.

 3. TITLE. Now you're ready to title your chapter. Your 3-5 word title should reflect the contents of the chapter. Remember, a title's purpose is to help you remember what is in each chapter.

 4. MARK and LIST. On the *1 John Bible Text* handout mark any key words you see in the chapter. *God, Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit* are always key words. It's easiest to start with these "God" words first. Next mark words or phrases that are repeated at least 3 times. Mark any other words that seem important to the chapter or are strongly emphasized.

You can mark words or phrases by creating a symbol or using a certain colored pencil every time it appears. This will enable you to see at a glance how often a word is used in the chapter or note a progression of thought.

- a. Next, *list the phrase containing the key words* on a separate sheet of paper. This step will allow you to pull together the information you noted from marking the key words. Be sure to cite the verse references when you list your key word information.

For example, with *God* as your key word you would begin to make a list of the information you discovered every time *God* is mentioned in 1 John Chapter 2. Your Chapter 2 list about *God* should begin by looking something like the one below.

Verse 5—*God* is love

Verse 13—*God* is Father. He is knowable.

Fun study tip to try: Mark any key/repeated words that you notice appear all the way through the book, even if their use in individual chapters may not fit the “3 times or more” rule. This will allow you to trace major themes and an author’s thoughts throughout the book.

5. MARK and LIST. Mark any *commands* that are listed in the chapter. Look for things the author is telling his readers to do or be. Now, list them on your separate sheet of paper in the same way you did for the key words.
6. MARK and LIST. Mark words or phrases that are being *compared or contrasted*. Words like *as, likewise, in the same manner, or like* will help you find words or phrases being compared. Contrasting words like “light/dark” or “love/hate” and the word “but” will help you find words or phrases that are being contrasted. Now list what you discovered about comparisons and contrasts on the extra paper you’ve been using.
7. MARK. Mark transition terms: *therefore, wherefore, finally*. Sometimes an author has his own kind of transition term that lets you know he is making a switch to a new topic, so be sure to look for those kinds of terms. (Generally, these are at the beginning of a paragraph.)
8. MARK and LIST. Mark any time *so that* is used. In putting together your list, look for what comes before the “so that” which will bring about or produce some kind of result. For example, in Philippians 1:10 “so that” appears, but in order to understand its significance you need to also look at verse 9. Your entry for Philippians 1:9-10 might say something like, “Paul prays that the Philippians’ love would abound in real knowledge and all discernment *so that* they would be able to approve the things that are excellent and live sincerely and blamelessly until the day of Christ.” I think you will be so blessed by this part of your observation time!

9. MARK. Mark expressions of time—words like *shortly, quickly, soon, for a little while*.
10. MARK. Mark words that are synonyms of each other. For example: *Paul and Timothy are bond-servants* from 1:1.
11. LIST. List any *attributes* of God, Christ, or the Holy Spirit that you notice in this chapter. You'll start this list by going back up to your listed "God" words that you marked earlier in Question #4. An attribute is a characteristic or quality used to describe an object or person.

For example, you might read John 3:16, "*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.*" From this verse we see that God is *loving* [because He loved the world]; He is *giving* [because He gave His Son]; He is *eternal* [because only the eternal can offer eternal life].

12. LIST. Look for lists of words, phrases, or related thoughts. Number the lists within the Bible text, then record your list out to the side in the margin or on a separate sheet of paper. This will help you see the thought progression of the author or the results of some action.

For example, in 1 John 1:1 we find a list about the *Word of Life*. We discover 1) the Word of Life was from the beginning; 2) John heard the Word of Life; 3) John saw the Word of Life with his own eyes; 4) John looked at the Word of Life; 5) John touched the Word of life with his hands.

13. NOTE. Be sure to mark or write down any "nuggets" you observed which you thought were interesting, spurred on some thought, or made you want to study further.

Remember, the purpose of this lesson is to observe and take note of what is in the chapter. You are not making any interpretations or applications to your life right now. Your task at this time is to simply look for the treasures that God has put in each chapter.

As you do this lesson, take time to worship and thank the Lord that He has preserved His Word for you to study. Admire and marvel at what He placed in this chapter for you to notice. There really isn't any other time in our studies where we simply look at, think on, and study God's Word for itself, so have fun with this lesson! And may the Lord be blessed by your labors!

1 John Chapter 3

1 See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.

2 Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.

3 And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

4 Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness.

5 You know that He appeared in order to take away sins; and in Him there is no sin.

6 No one who abides in Him sins; no one who sins has seen Him or knows Him.

7 Little children, make sure no one deceives you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous;

8 the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil.

9 No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

10 By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother.

11 For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another;

12 not as Cain, who was of the evil one and slew his brother. And for what reason did he slay him? Because his deeds were evil, and his brother's were righteous.

13 Do not be surprised, brethren, if the world hates you.

14 We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death.

15 Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

16 We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

17 But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?

18 Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.

19 We will know by this that we are of the truth, and will assure our heart before Him

20 in whatever our heart condemns us; for God is greater than our heart and knows all things.

21 Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God;

22 and whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight.

23 This is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as He commanded us.

24 The one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. We know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.

— 1 John —
Lesson #10 Chapter 3:1-10

Charles Spurgeon comments on this passage saying, “As dear Dr. Hawker said concerning this, here is a chapter in every word and a sermon in every letter. How it opens with a “Behold!” because it is such a striking portion of sacred Scripture, that the Holy Ghost would have us pay particular attention to it. “Behold!” says he, “read other Scriptures if you like, with a glance, but stop here. I have put up a way-mark to tell you there is something eminently worthy of attention buried beneath these words.”¹

Ask the Lord to prepare your heart for life-changing truths contained in this lesson! This section of John’s letter showcases important aspects of our lives as children of God. Its truths have power to encourage and strengthen us, whether we are new to the faith or mature in Christ.

1. What thought ties 1 John 2:29 with 1 John 3:1?
2. What command is given at the beginning of 1 John 3:1?
3. Define *bestowed* (Strong’s #1325 [ESV, HCSB *given*; NIV *lavished*]). See Colossians 1:25 and 1 Timothy 4:14 to gain a bit more insight into the word.
4. How is God’s love for us revealed according to 1 John 3:1? What do you learn about that immense privilege from John 1:12; 2 Corinthians 6:16-18; Galatians 3:26; Revelation 21:7?

¹ Spurgeon, C. H. 1856. “The Beatific Vision.” In *The New Park Street Pulpit Sermons*, 2:70. London: Passmore & Alabaster.

5. What is a unique result of our special relationship with God according to the second half of 1 John 3:1? What did Jesus have to say about this reality? See John 8:19; 15:18-21; 16:3.

6. In contrast to the world, who did not know God (1 John 3:1), what is true of us according to 1 John 3:2?

7. The word *now* indicates a change has taken place. What change is John referring to from verse 2? See also John 1:12; Romans 8:14-17; Galatians 3:26; 4:5-7; Ephesians 1:5.

8. What does John mean when he says in 1 John 3:2, *it has not appeared as yet what we shall be*? See 1 John 3:2 for some clues, then look at Romans 8:18-25; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Philippians 3:21; 2 Peter 1:4.

9. Where do we place our hope according to 1 John 3:3? See also 1 Peter 1:3 as an added encouragement. What is the result of our hope according in verse 3? See also 2 Corinthians 6:18-7:1; 1 Peter 1:13-16, 22.
 - a. As you review 1 John 3:1-3 what amazing truths move you to worship the Lord for His great work?

10. Define *practice* [Strong's #4160 (NKJV, HCSB *commits*; NIV *breaks*)]. Note how the same word is used by John in 1 John 1:6; 2:29; 3:4, 7, 8, 9, 10.
- a. After considering the point John is making in 1 John 3:4, why is *practice* a better translation choice (as used in the NASB and ESV) than *commits* or *breaks* as the NKJV, NIV, and HCSB use?
11. The same Greek word for *practice* is also used in Matthew 6:1; Romans 10:5; Galatians 3:12; 1 Thessalonians 4:10; 2 Peter 1:10. What do you learn about the word as you see how it's used in these verses?
12. What insight does that little word study (questions 10 and 11) give you into John's use of "practice" in 1 John 3:4?
- a. What does the *habitual practice* of sin teach us about the inner workings of someone's heart and their spiritual life? See also John 8:31, 34-36; Romans 6:8-13; 2 Corinthians 5:17, 21; 2 John 9.
- b. Verse 4 could also be translated, "Everyone who makes a practice of sinning, breaks the law, in fact, sin is the breaking of God's law and throwing off the law of God." How is the *habitual* breaking of God's law incompatible in the life of a believer? See Psalm 1:2; 119:97; Romans 7:12, 21-23.

13. John reminds his readers of two things they know. What are these truths according to 1 John 3:5?

14. How does the information in 1 John 3:5 support what John has been saying in 1 John 2:28-1 John 3:5?

15. By way of review, let's look again at what the word *abides* means when John uses it in 1 John 3:6. Please define *abides* [Strong's #3306 (NIV *lives*; HCSB *remains*)]. See also John 15:10; 1 John 2:6; 3:9, 24.

16. In 1 John 3:6 John gives us his own explanation of what abiding is like. What do you see in verse 6 that helps explain *abiding*?

(3:6) The words "abideth" and "sinneth" are used here to designate a certain class of individual. *Character is shown by one's habitual actions, not the extraordinary ones.* The tense of the verbs is present, the kind of action, continuous, habitual. Thus, "every one who habitually is abiding in Him," is a saved person, and, "every one who habitually is sinning," an unsaved person. A Christian as a habit of life is abiding in fellowship with the Lord Jesus. Sin may at times enter his life. But sin is the exception, not the rule. The unsaved person as a habit of life sins continually. "Sinneth" is present in tense, continuous action being indicated. The person who is abiding in Christ is not habitually sinning. The child of God as a habit of life, does righteousness, and sin is not a habit with him. John is not teaching sinless perfection here. Vincent says: "John does not teach that believers do not sin, but is speaking of a character, a habit. Throughout the Epistle, he deals with the ideal reality of life in God, in which the love of God and sin exclude each other as light and darkness." He does not deny that a Christian sins at times. Indeed he admits the possibility of sin in the Christian's life in 1:9, and forbids sin in 2:1. *What John denies here is that a Christian sins habitually. He denies that the life of a Christian is wholly turned towards sin as is that of the unsaved person.*²
~Kenneth Wuest

² Wuest, Kenneth S. 1997. *Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader*. Vol. 13. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

17. What is John concerned about for his *little children* in verse 7? What truths does he remind them about to help protect them in verses 7-8?

18. John states in verse 7 that “the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous.” What obvious connection does John want us all to understand about the life of a believer? See John 8:41, 44; 1 John 2:12-13, 29; 3:1-3.
 - a. Paul makes this same correlation in 2 Corinthians 6:16-7:1. What is the expectation for all God’s children?

19. Trace the word *appear* from 2:28 to 3:10. What do you learn about the Lord Jesus’ “appearing” on earth?

20. What are some examples of the works of the devil (verse 8)? See John 8:12, 44; Acts 10:38; 1 Corinthians 7:5; 2 Corinthians 4:4; James 3:14-16.

21. In this passage, we discover two reasons Jesus “appeared.” What are they from verses 5 and 8?

- a. See also John 8:31-32; Romans 13:14; 1 Corinthians 10:13; 2 Corinthians 5:17, 21; Galatians 5:1; 1 John 1:9; 2:29; 3:5, 8. Now consider what impact those two realities should have upon how you view your salvation. Next consider what impact those two realities should have upon how you live each day.

“Destroy” is in the Greek text *λυω* (λυω), “to loosen, dissolve.” Westcott comments: “The works of the devil are represented as having a certain consistency and coherence. They show a kind of solid front. But Christ, by His coming, has revealed them in their complete unsubstantiality. He has ‘undone’ the seeming bonds by which they were held together.” But He has done more than that. By the blood of His Cross He has paid for sin, made a way of escape from the arch enemy of men’s souls, defeated the purposes of the devil, and will finally bring about his complete downfall.”³ ~Kenneth Wuest

“Who but he could have ever redeemed us from sin and death? Who but he could have ever destroyed for us those works of the devil? Think what would have been the state of the world, if he had never become incarnate; what slaves we must have been if he had not liberated us; and what a death we must have undergone, if he had not died in our stead! Verily, if we felt our obligations as we ought, we should scarcely pass a moment without adverting to them, and magnifying him with songs of praise and thanksgiving. Let us dwell on the delightful thought, which, wherever it is entertained, creates a heaven upon earth: and in a little time our deliverance shall be complete; and we shall unite with all the hosts of heaven “in singing Hallelujah to God and to the Lamb for ever and ever.”⁴
~Charles Simeon

22. What iron clad promise and truth does John state in verse 9 that refutes false teaching about the life of a believer? How is that incredible promise an encouragement to your own heart when you find yourself discouraged in your battle against sin?
23. According to verse 10, what is *obvious* (ESV, HCSB *evident*; NKJV *manifest*; NIV *how we know*)? See also Matthew 7:15-20; Galatians 5:19-21; 1 Timothy 5:24-25; 2 Timothy 3:9.

³ Wuest, Kenneth S. 1997. *Wuest’s Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader*. Vol. 13. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

⁴ Simeon, Charles. 1833. *Horae Homileticae: James to Jude*. Vol. 20. London: Holdsworth and Ball.

24. John MacArthur has said the old Puritans used to teach the Christian life wasn't one of *perfection* but rather one of *direction* and *affection*, which showed the heart's transformation.⁵ How does that line up with what John is teaching in verse 10? See also 2 Timothy 2:13.

"In summarizing this section of the epistle, the child of God is reminded of his unique calling and heritage. The believer's life is one marked by righteousness. Sin does not characterize the child of God. Our pattern is the Righteous One, Jesus Christ, who came to destroy the works of the devil and the power of sin. Those who have been born of God live a life that resembles the righteous life of Christ. The child has the distinguishing marks of his parent. Therefore the child comes to imitate, and even embody, the distinguishing marks of his parent."⁶ ~Daniel Akin

"The gospel demands and also creates holiness of character; and wherever it works effectively upon the heart and conscience, it produces purity in the life."⁷ ~Charles Spurgeon

⁵ From John MacArthur's sermon on Ephesians 4:17-24, "What's Wrong with Everybody?"

⁶ Akin, Daniel L. 2001. *1, 2, 3 John*. Vol. 38. The New American Commentary. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

⁷ Spurgeon, C. H. 1897. "The Sinful Made Sinless." In *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Sermons*, 43:142-43. London: Passmore & Alabaster.

— 1 John —

Lesson #11 Chapter 3:11-24

Read 1 John chapter 3 in preparation for this lesson. Take particular note of how John *shifts* from one topic to the next. Ask the Lord for help in seeing and applying the rich and *convicting* treasures tucked into this section of John's letter!

1. By way of review, what two qualities “prove” we are children of God according to 1 John 3:10?
2. What thought at the end of verse 10 does John now begin to address in 1 John 3:11? How long has that message been taught? See 1 John 3:11, then refer to 1 John 1:1; 2:7, 24.
3. What negative example of love is given in 1 John 3:12? What things do you learn about that negative example in verse 12?
4. How does that negative example from verse 12 fit right in with what John stated in 1 John 3:10?
5. What command is given in verse 13?

6. First John 3:13 might seem to come out of nowhere, yet it is still in line with what John has been addressing in verses 10-12. How does verse 13 connect to John's previous statements in verses 10-12?

7. In verse 14, what does loving the brethren reveal?

8. When John talks about having "passed out of death into life," what is he describing? See also John 3:16; 5:24; Ephesians 2:1, 5.

9. We learn in our passage one of the hallmarks of a Christian's life is love for believers. *Why?* See Matthew 25:40; John 13:35; 15:12, 17. What is the result of that testimony of love for other believers? See Ephesians 1:15; Colossians 1:3-6.

10. In verse 14 John explains that love for the brethren is another confirmation of our salvation. Why would love for believers be a *means of assurance* that you are truly redeemed and rescued from sin and darkness? See John 8:44; Romans 1:28-32; Galatians 5:19-24; 2 Timothy 3:1-5; 1 Peter 1:22-23; 1 John 3:8-10.

11. John makes sure we take a good look at this quality in a believer's life. What truth does he drive home in verse 15? How does John remove any wiggle room we might want to take? See verse 15 again and Matthew 5:21-22, 27-28.

12. How do we even know what love is? See verse 16, then John 10:11; 15:13; 1 Thessalonians 2:8.
13. Most of the time, we're not called to literally give up our life for the sake of another, yet we are called to give of ourselves, nonetheless. What are some ways this sacrificial living might show up in our lives? See Romans 12:9-16; Ephesians 4:2-3; Philippians 2:3-4; 1 Peter 3:8-9; 1 John 3:17.
- a. What are some challenges we might face in dying to ourselves and showing love to the brethren?
14. How is 1 John 3:18 *another* example of loving the brethren? As you answer, pay special attention to what John has just said in verses 16-17.
15. What point is John making in verse 18, especially as it relates to his instruction about loving believers? See also Mark 7:9-13; 1 Corinthians 13:1; James 2:14-17.

May the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for one another, and for all people, just as we also do for you (1 Thessalonians 3:12).

16. By the time we finish reading 1 John 3:11-18, most, if not all of us, will be thoroughly convicted and aware of our failure to love in such an excellent and God-exalting way. How does John seek to reassure us in verses 19-20?

“The foregoing exhortation may have awakened a misgiving in our minds: ‘Am I loving as I ought?’ Our failures in duty and service rise up before us, and ‘our heart condemns us.’”¹ ~David Smith

17. Why is it better to assure our hearts *in the truth* than by what our hearts feel? You might think this is a no-brainer to answer, yet in reality, we often try to elicit “feelings” of assurance rather than living upon the truth we find in God’s Word. List what you learn about the *truth* we need to apply to our hearts all the time, *and even more* when we feel like failures. See Proverbs 21:2; 1 Corinthians 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Philippians 1:6; 1 John 2:28; 3:20; 5:14.

18. *What picture of God* does John paint for us in 1 John 3:19-20 to help us when we are deeply aware of our own unfaithfulness in the things of God?
 - a. Now add to your answer what you learn from Psalm 139:1-4; John 21:17; 2 Timothy 2:13; Hebrews 6:10-11; 10:22-23.

“Our hearts condemn us—that is inevitable. But God is greater than our hearts; he knows all things. Not only does he know our sins; he also knows our love, our longings, the nobility that never fully works itself out, our penitence; and the greatness of his knowledge gives him the sympathy which can understand and forgive. It is this very knowledge of God which gives us our hope. ‘Man’, as the thirteenth-century scholar Thomas Aquinas said, ‘sees the deed, but God knows the intention.’ Other people can judge us only by our actions, but God can judge us by the longings which never became deeds and the dreams which never came true.”² ~William Barclay

19. With such a view of God comforting our troubled hearts, what is the result? See 1 John 3:21-22.

¹Smith, David. n.d. “The Epistles of John.” In *The Expositor’s Greek Testament: Commentary*, 5:187. New York: George H. Doran Company.

²Barclay, William. 2002. *The Letters of John and Jude*. 3rd ed. The New Daily Study Bible. Louisville, KY; London: Westminster John Knox Press.

Kenneth Wuest's Translation of 1 John 3:21-22. "Divinely-loved ones, if our heart is not condemning us, a fearless confidence we constantly have facing God (the Father), and whatever we are habitually asking, we keep on receiving from Him, because His commandments we are habitually keeping with solicitous care, and the things which are pleasing in His penetrating gaze we are habitually doing."³

20. As always, we want to consider the *context* of our passage. We've often seen and heard 1 John 3:21-22 in relation to prayer, yet it's so helpful to remember John's point about praying is still very much tied to the context of the passage. How does this encouragement about God hearing our prayers (in verses 21-22) fit in with the overall flow from our passage (1 John 3:11-24) about loving the brethren?

"Once a condemning heart has been silenced by resting on God's knowledge of all things, there comes a new **confidence before God**. "Confidence" here translates *parrēsia*, which John had not used since his thematic statement in 2:28 (cf. 4:17; 5:14). The halfway point in his argument had now been reached. As a result of active participation in the truth by real deeds of love, Christians can calm their disapproving **hearts** and achieve boldness in prayer, and their prayers will be answered because they, as believers, are consciously subject to God's will (they **obey His commands** [cf. 2:3] **and do what pleases Him**). This presumes, of course, that the requests themselves are made in subjection to God's will (5:14–15)." ~The Bible Knowledge Commentary⁴

21. What "conditions" for answered prayer does John cite in verse 22?
- a. How are those "conditions" meant to reassure the hearts of believers? See also Psalm 119:57-61; Matthew 7:21; John 9:31; Colossians 1:10; Hebrews 13:21; 1 John 2:3.
22. What is God's commandment for us according to 1 John 3:23? See also John 6:29; 13:34; 14:12-15.

³ Wuest, Kenneth S. 1997. *Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader*. Vol. 13. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

⁴ Walvoord, John F., and Roy B. Zuck, Dallas Theological Seminary. 1985. *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*. Vol. 2. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

- a. What assurance is given for the one who keeps God's commandments according to verse 24? See also John 14:17; Romans 8:9, 14, 16; 1 Thessalonians 4:8; 1 John 4:13.
23. As always, God wants us to consider our Christian life *today*. We're never called to account for our salvation or our obedience *tomorrow*. We can rejoice in how we obeyed *yesterday* or repent of how we didn't obey *yesterday*, but the Christian life is about living upon God's Word *today*. So, *today*, dear friend, what comforts, assurances, convictions, and proddings have you received through the Spirit of God working through the Word?

(3:19, 20) "Smith is helpful here "The foregoing exhortation may have awakened a misgiving in our minds: 'Am I as loving as I ought?' Our failures in duty and service rise up before us, and 'our heart condemns us.' So the apostle furnishes a grand reassurance: 'Herein shall we get to know that we are of the truth, and in His presence shall assure our heart, whereinsoever our heart condemn us, because, etc.' The reassurance is two-fold: (1) The worst that is in us is known to God, and still He cares for us and desires us. Our discovery has been an open secret to Him all along. (2) He 'readeth everything'—sees the deepest things, and these are the real things. This is the true test of a man: Is the deepest that is in him the best? Is he better than he seems? His failures lie on the surface: is there a desire for goodness deep down in his soul? Is he glad to escape from superficial judgments and be judged by God who 'readeth everything?' who sees 'with larger eyes than ours,' to make allowance for us all?" David was a man after God's own heart because the general tenor of his life was habitually Godward. The Psalms give the real David." ~Kenneth Wuest⁵

⁵Wuest, Kenneth S. 1997. *Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader*. Vol. 13. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

— 1 John —
Lesson #12 Chapter 4 Overview

The goal of this lesson is to teach you how to look at and begin to study a text of Scripture. Observation is a necessary part of Bible study, yet all too often it can be overlooked or rushed through. Simply put, observation is the practice of noticing what God has placed in His Word. *At this stage* in our Bible study, I only want you to notice and then record what you observe in the chapter. You're not making any interpretations about what the Scriptures mean or how they apply to your life—that will come later, I promise.

Don't rush through this lesson. Set aside time this week to peer into the living and abiding Word of God. Rich treasures are waiting for you!

I've included Chapter 4 (NASB) at the end of this lesson so you can print it out and mark it up if you'd like. I find it helps me see items more easily if I'm marking and noting things as I go.

1. SUMMARIZE. To begin, read through Chapter 4. Now, summarize the contents of Chapter 4. This is not the time to be super detailed; instead, think of trying to tell a 4th grader the contents of the chapter.¹
 - a. Summarize paragraph 1 (verses 1-6).
 - b. Summarize paragraph 2 (verses 7-14).
 - c. Summarize paragraph 3 (verses 15-21).

¹The method and process of observation in Bible study does God honor, as we stop, observe, and consider each and every one of His recorded Words, in their context. I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge the debt I owe to the Precept Inductive Bible Studies observation method, which I have adapted in my studies. As far as I know, the method is the brainchild of Kay Arthur, though I've encountered a number of others who have also come up with similar ways for observing the text. The point of observation is to slow down and really look at what God has preserved for us in His Word. What I've created here is simply another variation to help us peer more closely at the Scriptures—for our good and His glory.

Scripture Paths Bible Studies

2. SUMMARIZE. After reviewing the chapter and what you wrote for your summaries, ask yourself: *What is the main point of this chapter?* How do all these details and events reveal the main idea of the chapter? Record your answer below.

3. TITLE. Now you're ready to title your chapter. Your 3-5 word title should reflect the contents of the chapter. Remember, a title's purpose is to help you remember what is in each chapter.

4. MARK and LIST. On the *1 John Bible Text* handout mark any key words you see in the chapter. *God, Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit* are always key words. It's easiest to start with these "God" words first. Next mark words or phrases that are repeated at least 3 times. Mark any other words that seem important to the chapter or are strongly emphasized.

You can mark words or phrases by creating a symbol or using a certain colored pencil every time it appears. This will enable you to see at a glance how often a word is used in the chapter or note a progression of thought.

- a. Next, *list the phrase containing the key words* on a separate sheet of paper. This step will allow you to pull together the information you noted from marking the key words. Be sure to cite the verse references when you list your key word information.

For example, with *God* as your key word you would begin to make a list of the information you discovered every time *God* is mentioned in 1 John Chapter 2. Your Chapter 2 list about *God* should begin by looking something like the one below.

Verse 5—*God* is love

Verse 13—*God* is Father. He is knowable.

Fun study tip to try: Mark any key/repeated words that you notice appear all the way through the book, even if their use in individual chapters may not fit the "3 times or more" rule. This will allow you to trace major themes and an author's thoughts throughout the book.

5. MARK and LIST. Mark any *commands* that are listed in the chapter. Look for things the author is telling his readers to do or be. Now, list them on your separate sheet of paper in the same way you did for the key words.
6. MARK and LIST. Mark words or phrases that are being *compared or contrasted*. Words like *as, likewise, in the same manner, or like* will help you find words or phrases being compared. Contrasting words like “light/dark” or “love/hate” and the word “but” will help you find words or phrases that are being contrasted. Now list what you discovered about comparisons and contrasts on the extra paper you’ve been using.
7. MARK. Mark transition terms: *therefore, wherefore, finally*. Sometimes an author has his own kind of transition term that lets you know he is making a switch to a new topic, so be sure to look for those kinds of terms. (Generally, these are at the beginning of a paragraph.)
8. MARK and LIST. Mark any time *so that* is used. In putting together your list, look for what comes before the “so that” which will bring about or produce some kind of result. For example, in Philippians 1:10 “so that” appears, but in order to understand its significance you need to also look at verse 9. Your entry for Philippians 1:9-10 might say something like, “Paul prays that the Philippians’ love would abound in real knowledge and all discernment *so that* they would be able to approve the things that are excellent and live sincerely and blamelessly until the day of Christ.” I think you will be so blessed by this part of your observation time!
9. MARK. Mark expressions of time—words like *shortly, quickly, soon, for a little while*.
10. MARK. Mark words that are synonyms of each other. For example: *Paul and Timothy are bond-servants* from 1:1.
11. LIST. List any *attributes* of God, Christ, or the Holy Spirit that you notice in this chapter. You’ll start this list by going back up to your listed “God” words that you marked earlier in #4 and #5. An attribute is a characteristic or quality used to describe an object or person.

For example, you might read John 3:16, “*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.*” From this verse we see that God is *loving* [because He loved the world]; He is *giving* [because He gave His Son]; He is *eternal* [because only the eternal can offer eternal life].

12. LIST. Look for lists of words, phrases, or related thoughts. Number the lists within the Bible text, then record your list out to the side in the margin or on a separate sheet of paper. This will help you see the thought progression of the author or the results of some action.

For example, in 1 John 1:1 we find a list about the *Word of Life*. We discover 1) the Word of Life was from the beginning; 2) John heard the Word of Life; 3) John saw the Word of Life with his own eyes; 4) John looked at the Word of Life; 5) John touched the Word of life with his hands.

13. NOTE. Be sure to mark or write down any “nuggets” you observed which you thought were interesting, spurred on some thought, or made you want to study further.

Remember, the purpose of this lesson is to observe and take note of what is in the chapter. You are not making any interpretations or applications to your life right now. Your task at this time is to simply look for the treasures that God has put in each chapter.

As you do this lesson, take time to worship and thank the Lord that He has preserved His Word for you to study. Admire and marvel at what He placed in this chapter for you to notice. There really isn't any other time in our studies where we simply look at, think on, and study God's Word for itself, so have fun with this lesson! And may the Lord be blessed by your labors!

1 John Chapter 4

1 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

2 By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God;

3 and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world.

4 You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world.

5 They are from the world; therefore they speak as from the world, and the world listens to them.

6 We are from God; he who knows God listens to us; he who is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.

8 The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

9 By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him.

10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

12 No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us.

13 By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.

14 We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.

15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.

16 We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

17 By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world.

18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love.

19 We love, because He first loved us.

20 If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen.

21 And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also.

— 1 John —
Lesson #13 Chapter 4:1-6

Read 1 John chapter 4 to discover practical help in discerning truth from error. Ask the Lord to open your eyes to ways you can apply the truths from this section to your life.

1. First John 3:24 ends with John explaining how we can know the Lord Jesus abides in us. What helpful information is given in 1 John 3:24?
2. What is the *connecting thought or word* between John's encouragement in 1 John 3:24 and his shift in focus in 1 John 4:1?
3. What command is given in 1 John 4:1 and to whom?
4. What *reason* is given for this wise counsel according to verse 1? How does the reason for the command make *obeying* this command of utmost importance? See also Jeremiah 29:8-9; Matthew 7:15; 24:4-5, 11, 24; Ephesians 6:11-17; 2 Peter 2:1.
5. As you consider how to implement 1 John 4:1, what *quality or qualities* must every believer possess and/or employ? See Proverbs 14:15; John 5:39; Acts 17:11-12; 1 Thessalonians 5:21; 1 Timothy 6:20; 2 Timothy 3:14; Titus 1:9; Jude 3-4.

6. It might seem a bit daunting to obey the command given in 1 John 4:1, yet John doesn't leave us hanging. How do verses 2-3 help you "test" what a teacher's message?
7. What's the big deal about not recognizing that Jesus came in the flesh or acknowledging Him as God (verses 2-3)? See John 1:14; 1 John 1:2; 2:22, 23; 2 John 7.
- a. Now look at Hebrews 2:14-15; 9:11-12; 10:4, 10, 19-22 to gain further insight into why it's essential to recognize Jesus' full humanity and deity.
- b. What kind of fallout in our faith can happen as a result of denying Jesus' life on earth "in the flesh"?

"To deny the reality of the incarnation has certain definite consequences.

- (1) It is to deny that Jesus can ever be our example. If he was not in any real sense a man, living under the same conditions as other men and women, he cannot show them how to live.
- (2) It is to deny that Jesus can be the high priest who opens the way to God. The true high priest, as the writer to the Hebrews saw, must be like us in all things, knowing our weaknesses and our temptations (Hebrews 4:14–15). To lead people to God, the high priest must be human, or else he will be pointing them to a road which it is impossible for them to take.
- (3) It is to deny that Jesus can in any real sense be Saviour. To save men and women, he had to identify himself with those he came to save.
- (4) It is to deny the salvation of the body. Christian teaching is quite clear that salvation is the salvation of the whole person. The body as well as the soul is saved. To deny the incarnation is to deny the possibility that the body can ever become the temple of the Holy Spirit.

(5) By far the most serious and terrible thing is that to deny the incarnation is to deny that there can ever be any real union between God and human beings. If spirit is altogether good and the body is altogether evil, God and humanity can never meet, as long as we are human. They might meet when we have cast off the body and become *disembodied* spirits. But the great truth of the incarnation is that here and now there can be real communion between God and humanity.

Nothing in Christianity is more central than the reality of the humanity of Jesus Christ." ~William Barclay¹

8. What do you learn about the *spirit of the antichrist* from verse 3?
 - a. What else do you learn from 1 John 2:18-24 and 2 John 7-9 about that spirit?

9. How does John affirm his little children in verse 4? Why would John's readers need his encouragement after what he's just said in verses 1-3?

10. In 1 John 4:4, John says we have overcome *them*. Who is he talking about according to verses 1-4?

11. What spiritual reality is John referring to when he says, "greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world" (1 John 4:4)? See John 14:16-17; Romans 8:9-11; 1 John 3:24; 4:13, 16.

¹ Barclay, William. 2002. *The Letters of John and Jude*. 3rd ed. The New Daily Study Bible. Louisville, KY; London: Westminster John Knox Press.

12. Explain how the truths of 1 John 4:4 should have an impact upon how you live, think, and respond to what's going on around you.

13. What else do you learn about *them* according to verse 5?

14. In contrast to “them,” what do you learn about *us* according to verse 6?

15. Compile a list of how you can *test* the messages you may hear or read from the following passages in Deuteronomy 13:1-5; Romans 16:17-18; 2 Corinthians 11:12-15; Ephesians 4:11-16; Hebrews 13:7-8.
 - a. How would the principles gained from the above passages help you grow in discernment, wisdom, and steadfastness in your faith and the building up of the body of Christ?

16. What are some steps you have taken—or possibly, need to take—to skillfully obey this command to test and assess any reading or teaching you receive?
 - a. What attitudes should also be present as we test and assess the messages being taught? See Galatians 6:1; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 5:12-14; 1 Timothy 1:3-5; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:6-8.

17. As believers, we are responsible to make use of the resources God gives us and to seek to strengthen ourselves spiritually and doctrinally. What do you learn from Hebrews 5:11-14 and Hebrews 6:1-2 about how, when, and why we should do that?
18. You may go brain dead and feel woefully deficient at countering a false teacher's claims, yet what encouragement is given in our text (1 John 4:1-6) even if we lack maturity in the faith or skill in the Scriptures?
19. What do you learn about those who *hear/listen* to God's Word and those who teach it from 1 John 4:1-6?
- a. Now consider what you learn about those who hear/listen to God's Word and those who teach it from John 3:29; 5:24-25; 8:43, 47; 10:27-28. What do you see?
 - b. How can the truths you have uncovered in this question give you wisdom in counseling others or even your own heart? Is there any one truth or principle that stands out to you right now?

"The Spirit teaches us "of *all things*" (1 John 2:27). False teachers have a way of "riding a hobby"—prophecy or sanctification or even diet—and neglecting the *whole* message of the Bible. Jesus implies that we are to live by "*every* word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4). Paul was careful to preach "*all* the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). "*All* Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable" (2 Tim. 3:16)."

"If you ignore or neglect *any* part of the Bible, you invite trouble. You must read and study the *whole* Book, and be able to "rightly divide" it (2 Tim. 2:15); that is, you must "handle it accurately" (cf. NASB).

You should discern in the Bible what God says to different people at different times; there are passages that apply specifically to the Jews, or to the Gentiles, or to the church (1 Cor. 10:32). You must be careful to distinguish between them. Though all of the Bible was written *for* you, not all of it was written *to* you. False teachers, however, pick (out of context) only what they want, and often apply to believers today passages that were given only for ancient Israel.” ~Warren Wiersbe²

“There are many today who are saying more than the Scriptures say so that we need to be very careful. Just because a man comes along saying, “Lord, Lord,” does not mean that we should love him. That may be the man who is more dangerous than a rattlesnake because he may be teaching a false doctrine. He may not really be teaching the Word of God, although he carries a big Bible under his arm. ~J. Vernon McGee³

² Wiersbe, Warren W. 1996. *The Bible Exposition Commentary*. Vol. 2. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

³ McGee, J. Vernon. 1997. *Thru the Bible Commentary*. Electronic ed. Vol. 5. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

— 1 John —
Lesson #14 Chapter 4:7-14

Read all of 1 John chapter 4 to get a running start for this week's text! John Flavel said, "When you go to God in any duty, take your heart aside and say, 'O my soul, I am now engaged in the greatest work that a creature was ever employed about; I am going into the awful presence of God upon business of everlasting moment. O my soul, leave trifling now; be composed, be watchful, be serious; this is no common work, it is soul-work; it is work for eternity; it is work which will bring forth fruit to life or death in the world to come.' Pause awhile and consider your sins, your wants, your troubles; keep your thoughts awhile on these before you address yourself to duty."

1. John closed chapter 3 with the reminder that Jesus Himself commanded us to believe in Him and love one another. Briefly summarize John's train of thought from 1 John 3:23-24 into 1 John 4:1-6.
2. In 1 John 4:7 John resumes the topic of love for one another. What things do you learn about love from verse 7?
3. What straightforward truth do you learn about those who don't have a love for the brethren according to verse 8?
4. First John 4:7-8 is meant to be another of John's assurances of salvation for the believer. Review 1 John 3:10, 14, 23-24 and 1 John 4:7-8 to see how love for the brethren reveals a redeemed and transformed life.

- a. What further ways does John help you see if your testimony of faith in Jesus Christ is genuine? See 1 John 1:5-10; 2:3-6, 9, 15, 19, 23; 3:6-10, 14; 4:20.

5. How is God's love revealed toward us according to verse 9? What reason is given in verse 9 for God doing this marvelous thing?

6. John says God sent His Son into the world so we might live through Him. What does John mean by that statement? First, see 1 John 5:11, then see John 11:25-26; 14:6; Colossians 3:3-4 as you put together your answer.

7. Now take a moment to consider what John is telling us about God in verse 9. How can the truths contained in verse 9 provide the hope and foundation we need when we struggle to believe that God really loves us? See also John 3:16; Romans 5:8-10; 8:31-32.

8. What is the perfect definition of love according to 1 John 4:10? Why is this the gold standard for assessing love, rather than relying on how we love Him (as stated in verse 10)?

"These passages abundantly prove, that, as the gift of Christ to us was the fruit of the Father's love, so it was an instance of His love, that infinitely outweighs all else that He ever has done, or ever can do, for sinful man." ~Charles Simeon¹

¹ Simeon, Charles. 1833. *Horae Homileticae: James to Jude*. Vol. 20. London: Holdsworth and Ball.

9. Propitiation isn't one of those words we commonly use, yet for the believer it is a precious truth! Define *propitiation* as used in verse 10 [Strong's #2434 (NIV *atoning sacrifice*)].
10. List what you learn about propitiation by looking up the following verses: Romans 3:25; Hebrews 2:17; 1 John 2:2; then look at Leviticus 4:34-35 and Hebrews 9:6-14.

"The English word "propitiate" means "to appease and render favorable." That was the pagan meaning of the Greek word. The pagan worshipper brought gifts to his god to appease the god's wrath and make him favorable in his attitude towards him. But the God of Christianity needs no gifts to appease His wrath and make Him favorable towards the human race. Divine love springs spontaneously from His heart. His wrath against sin cannot be placated by good works. Only the infliction of the penalty of sin, death, will satisfy the just demands of His holy law which the human race violated, maintain His government, and provide the proper basis for His bestowal of mercy, namely, divine justice satisfied. This is the *hilasmos* (ἱλασμος), that sacrifice which fully satisfies the demands of the broken law. It was our Lord's death on Calvary's Cross." ~Kenneth Wuest²

11. Have you ever felt alienated from God? Estranged from Him? Have you felt unloved or think you must be a terrible disappointment to Him? John's words of hope in verse 10 are the answer to all your fears and struggles! The answer is not in your efforts to love the Lord but instead lies in *His love for you*. How can God's initiating, immovable, intentional love toward you help you think rightly when those feelings of inadequacy, guilt, or fear put a stranglehold on your joy in the Lord?

How Thou canst think so well of us,
And be the God Thou art,
Is darkness to my intellect,
But sunshine to my heart.
~F. W. Faber³

² Wuest, Kenneth S. 1997. *Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader*. Vol. 13. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

³ Barclay, William. 2002. *The Letters of John and Jude*. 3rd ed. The New Daily Study Bible. Louisville, KY; London: Westminster John Knox Press.

12. What should God's great love prompt in us according to verse 11? Why do we need this admonition to love?

13. Why is it important that we obey this command to love one another according to verses 7-11?

14. Within John's discussion on God's love for us and our love for others, what do you learn about God in the beginning of verse 12? What is the *connection* between our obeying the command to love the brethren and John's statement about God's nature from verses 11-12? See also John 13:35; 1 John 4:20-21 to help you form your answer.

"He can be seen, however, in the lives of those who demonstrate His love to others. There are no exceptions to who has seen God ("no one"), and there are no exceptions to the time frame ("has ever")."
~Daniel Akin⁴

15. One of the big takeaways from this section in John's letter is seen again in verse 12. John states, "If we love one another, God abides in us." What big truth does John want us to understand? See verses 7 and 12.

16. When we obey the command to love the brethren, what dual realities are at work in us according to the beginning of verse 13?

⁴ Akin, Daniel L. 2001. *1, 2, 3 John*. Vol. 38. The New American Commentary. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

17. Define *perfected* [Strong's #5048 (NIV *made complete*)]. Also see 1 John 2:5 and 4:17-18.

"If you want to know what God is like, you can look at what He has done for us and what we should do for one another. This invisible God actually lives in us. The love He has for us is made visible and complete as we love one another. This is the way the world sees God's love, as it is expressed by Him through our lives. Only as God's love completes its purpose of reaching out to those He loves—the world (John 3:16)—is His love complete or fulfilled." ~Holman New Testament Commentary⁵

18. John again seeks to give assurance about real faith. How do we know we abide in the Lord according to verse 13? When John uses the word *abide* here in verse 13, he's talking about what kind of person? See 1 John 2:6, 10; 3:6, 9, 14.

19. What special gift has God given us according to 1 John 4:13? See John 14:16-17; 1 John 3:24.

- a. What else do you learn about the Holy Spirit's role and works from John 3:3-5; 7:39; Acts 5:32; Romans 8:14; 1 Corinthians 6:19; 2 Corinthians 1:22; 5:5; Ephesians 1:13-14; 1 John 2:27?

"It is encouraging to remember that the "Helper" was sent to replace the physical presence of Christ. In fact, Jesus promised that He would not leave them as orphans because of the Helper's coming (Jn. 14:17), the Helper would enable the disciples to do greater things (Jn. 14:12) and the abiding presence of the Helper would also mean the abiding presence of Christ and the Father through the Holy Spirit (Jn. 14:16-24). All believers have that same Holy Spirit!" ~Jack Hughes

⁵ Walls, David, and Max Anders. 1999. *I & II Peter, I, II & III John, Jude*. Vol. 11. Holman New Testament Commentary. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

“Where the Holy Spirit is, there will always be *deep conviction of sin, and true repentance for it*. It is His special office to convince of sin (John 16:8). He shows the exceeding holiness of God. He teaches the exceeding corruption and infirmity of our nature. He strips us of our blind self-righteousness. He opens our eyes to our awful guilt, folly and danger. He fills the heart with sorrow, contrition, and abhorrence for sin, as the abominable thing which God hates. He that knows nothing of all this, and saunters carelessly through life, thoughtless about sin, and indifferent and unconcerned about his soul, is a dead man before God. He has not the Spirit of Christ.” ~J.C. Ryle⁶

20. What testimony does John again repeat for his readers in verse 14? Why does he want believers to understand this crucial point? See verses 9-10; John 3:16; Romans 5:18; 1 John 2:1-2.
21. Believers have not yet seen Him, yet they love the Lord Jesus (1 Peter 1:8) and testify about Him. Briefly, what is your “testimony” about Jesus and His saving work?

“What was that message? “The Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.” There is salvation; there is a Christ ready to save. Look to Him, blind eyes; look to Him, dead souls; look to Him.” ~J.C. Ryle⁷

“In the love of Christ to us is both the *reason* and the *model*, for our love to each other. Was His love to us unmerited? We also should freely exercise love even to the evil and unthankful. Did His love lead Him to forego the glory and felicity of heaven, and to submit to the accursed death of the cross for us? Such should be our love to our fellow-creatures: there should be no measure of labour or self-denial which we should not willingly exercise for the good of others; yea, even to the laying down of our life for them. Here then we see *the proper duty of this season*: search out the poor, the sick, and the afflicted, that you may administer to them the consolations they stand in need of: and especially exert yourselves to see what you can do for *the souls of men*—This is the work that will most assimilate you to Christ, and will best prove the sincerity of your love to Him.” ~Charles Simeon⁸

⁶ J. C. Ryle, *Old Paths: Being Plain Statements of Some of the Weightier Matters of Christianity* (London: Charles J. Thynne, 1898), 282–283.

⁷ Spurgeon, Charles. 2014. *Spurgeon Commentary: 1 John*. Edited by Elliot Ritzema. Spurgeon Commentary Series. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

⁸ Simeon, Charles. 1833. *Horae Homileticae: James to Jude*. Vol. 20. London: Holdsworth and Ball.

— 1 John —
Lesson #15 Chapter 4:15-21

In this last section in chapter 4, John again seeks to encourage the believers. As you prepare to do your lesson, ask the Lord to help you believe and trust in the assurances He has placed in His Word.

1. In the book of 1 John, John seeks to assure and strengthen his beloved friends by reminding them of the truth. Summarize what he told them in 1 John 4:1-6.
 - a. From there, please summarize John's teaching in 1 John 4:7-14.

2. Verse 14 ended by mentioning what we have seen and testified. What is that testimony (verse 14)?

3. What do true believers confess or acknowledge according to the first part of 1 John 4:15? Now add to your answer from John 17:8; 1 John 2:23; 4:2; 5:5, 10; 2 John 7.

4. When someone makes the confession found in verse 15, what is true of that person (verse 15)?

“Testimony about Jesus tells more than what Jesus did—save from sin. It also tells who He is—the Son of God. Again, all this goes against false teachers. They apparently claimed Jesus could not be human, thus could not die on the cross. On the other hand, Scripture claims that anyone who acknowledges this Savior they have seen is a true Christian, living in union with God.” ~The Holman New Testament Commentary¹

5. The verb tense for both *know* and *believe* from verse 16 indicates that at a point in time in the past an action took place, the results of which continue into the present. What is true of all believers according to the first part of verse 16?

6. The second half of verse 16 explains how experiencing and trusting in God’s love is possible. What do you learn?

7. We’ve looked at *abides* before, but let’s take time to refresh our memory about the word’s meaning. Define *abides* [Strong’s #3306 (NIV *lives in*; HCSB *remains in*)]. Add to your understanding of the word by looking at John 14:17; 1 John 3:9; 4:12-13, 15-16.

8. Since you have defined *abide* in the question above, rewrite verses 15-16 using synonyms of *abide*. How did this little exercise help bring home some of the truths John wants us to understand about our relationship with the Lord?

9. John begins verse 17 with the words *by this* (NIV *in this way*; HCSB *in this*), providing a bridge between the point he made in verses 15-16 to verse 17. What do you learn about love in verse 17 that is directly tied to verses 15-16?

¹Walls, David, and Max Anders. 1999. *I & II Peter, I, II & III John, Jude*. Vol. 11. Holman New Testament Commentary. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

10. Define *perfected* [Strong's #5048 (NIV *made complete*)]. See also John 17:23; Hebrews 10:14; 1 John 2:5; 4:12 where the same word is used.

11. What is the result of that completed love according to verse 17? What reason is given for that result in verse 17?

12. Okay, let's take a step back a minute and consider what John is telling us here in this section of his letter. Who confesses that Jesus is God according to verse 15 and 1 John 3:23; 4:2; 5:1, 5? What is true of those people (verse 15)?

13. As a result of verse 15, what is true for believers according to the beginning of verse 16? Why is that possible? See the second half of verse 16.

14. Because of this close relationship with God, what is the result for all God's children? See verse 17.

15. In verse 18, John begins with the statement, "There is no fear in love." What did John just discuss in verse 17 that might be a cause for fear? See also Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 3:10-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10, 18-19; 1 John 2:28.

16. What is the answer for our hearts when we fear God's judgment? See verse 18. Why is that the perfect answer for counseling believers to think rightly about the Lord, condemnation, and judgment? See 1 John 4:18; Psalm 34:22; Romans 5:18-19, 21; 8:1-4, 15, 31-34.

"It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. 9:27). But a Christian does not fear future judgment, because Christ has suffered his judgment for him on the cross. "Truly, truly I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life" (John 5:24, NASB). "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:1, NASB). For a Christian, judgment is not future; *it is past*. His sins have been judged already at the cross, and they will never be brought against him again." ~Warren Wiersbe²

17. In the bigger picture of 1 John 4:7-21, John is discussing *love for the brethren*. Why would John's subject matter about loving believers be a source of fear for us on the day of judgment? See 1 John 4:20-21.

18. What assurance does John again give the believers to help them overcome their fear of failing to obey this command to love the brethren and then experience God's judgment? See 1 John 4:19, also see 1 John 4:10 and Matthew 25:31-46.

19. Let's simplify this section even more. True believers will do what according to 1 John 4:19?

- a. If someone does not love the brethren, what does this say about them according to 1 John 4:7-8, 20.

²Wiersbe, Warren W. 1996. *The Bible Exposition Commentary*. Vol. 2. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

- b. According to 1 John 4:17, what will believers have or possess on the day of judgment when God judges men according to their faith in Christ or by their deeds (because of the absence of their faith in Christ)?

 - c. What comfort does a believer have on the day of judgment according to the end of 1 John 4:17?
20. What assurances have you gleaned from verses 15-21 that bring you hope and give you joy?

“Mr. Fleming, in his “Fulfilling of the Scriptures,” relates the case of a most hardened sinner who was put to death in the town of Ayr. It pleased the Lord to bring him to repentance when in prison, and so full was his assurance of pardoning mercy that, when he came to the place of execution, he could not help crying out to the people, under the sense of pardon, “Oh, He is a great Forgiver! He is a great Forgiver!” and he added, “Now hath perfect love cast out fear. I know God hath nothing to say against me, for Jesus Christ hath paid all; and those are free whom the Son makes free.” ~G. S. Bowes.³

“Between the fear of a slave and the fear of a child, we can all perceive a great distinction. Between the fear of God’s great power and justice which the devils have, and that fear which a child of God has when he walks in the light with his God, there is as much difference, surely, as between hell and heaven.” ~Charles Spurgeon⁴

³Spurgeon, C. H. 2009. *My Sermon Notes & 2: Genesis to Malachi*. Vol. 1. Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

⁴Spurgeon, C. H. 1902. “A Fear to Be Desired.” In *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Sermons*, 48:494. London: Passmore & Alabaster.

— 1 John —
Lesson #16 Chapter 5 Overview

The goal of this lesson is to teach you how to look at and begin to study a text of Scripture. Observation is a necessary part of Bible study, yet all too often it can be overlooked or rushed through. Simply put, observation is the practice of noticing what God has placed in His Word. *At this stage* in our Bible study, I only want you to notice and then record what you observe in the chapter. You're not making any interpretations about what the Scriptures mean or how they apply to your life—that will come later, I promise.

Don't rush through this lesson. Set aside time this week to peer into the living and abiding Word of God. Rich treasures are waiting for you!

I've included Chapter 5 (NASB) at the end of this lesson so you can print it out and mark it up if you'd like. I find it helps me see items more easily if I'm marking and noting things as I go.

1. SUMMARIZE. To begin, read through Chapter 5. Now, summarize the contents of Chapter 5. This is not the time to be super detailed; instead, think of trying to tell a 4th grader the contents of the chapter.¹
 - a. Summarize paragraph 1 (verses 1-4).

 - b. Summarize paragraph 2 (verses 5-12).

¹The method and process of observation in Bible study does God honor, as we stop, observe, and consider each and every one of His recorded Words, in their context. I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge the debt I owe to the Precept Inductive Bible Studies observation method, which I have adapted in my studies. As far as I know, the method is the brainchild of Kay Arthur, though I've encountered a number of others who have also come up with similar ways for observing the text. The point of observation is to slow down and really look at what God has preserved for us in His Word. What I've created here is simply another variation to help us peer more closely at the Scriptures—for our good and His glory.

- c. Summarize paragraph 3 (verses 13-15).

 - d. Summarize paragraph 4 (verses 16-17).

 - e. Summarize paragraph 5 (verses 18-21).
2. SUMMARIZE. After reviewing the chapter and what you wrote for your summaries, ask yourself: *What is the main point of this chapter?* How do all these details and events reveal the main idea of the chapter? Record your answer below.
3. TITLE. Now you're ready to title your chapter. Your 3-5 word title should reflect the contents of the chapter. Remember, a title's purpose is to help you remember what is in each chapter.
4. MARK and LIST. On the *1 John Bible Text* handout mark any key words you see in the chapter. *God, Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit* are always key words. It's easiest to start with these "God" words first. Next mark words or phrases that are repeated at least 3 times. Mark any other words that seem important to the chapter or are strongly emphasized.

You can mark words or phrases by creating a symbol or using a certain colored pencil every time it appears. This will enable you to see at a glance how often a word is used in the chapter or note a progression of thought.

- a. Next, *list the phrase containing the key words* on a separate sheet of paper. This step will allow you to pull together the information you noted from marking the key words. Be sure to cite the verse references when you list your key word information.

For example, with *God* as your key word you would begin to make a list of the information you discovered every time God is mentioned in 1 John Chapter 2. Your Chapter 2 list about *God* should begin by looking something like the one below.

Verse 5—*God* is love

Verse 13—*God* is Father. He is knowable.

Fun study tip to try: Mark any key/repeated words that you notice appear all the way through the book, even if their use in individual chapters may not fit the “3 times or more” rule. This will allow you to trace major themes and an author’s thoughts throughout the book.

5. MARK and LIST. Mark any *commands* that are listed in the chapter. Look for things the author is telling his readers to do or be. Now, list them on your separate sheet of paper in the same way you did for the key words.
6. MARK and LIST. Mark words or phrases that are being *compared or contrasted*. Words like *as, likewise, in the same manner, or like* will help you find words or phrases being compared. Contrasting words like “light/dark” or “love/hate” and the word “but” will help you find words or phrases that are being contrasted. Now list what you discovered about comparisons and contrasts on the extra paper you’ve been using.
7. MARK. Mark transition terms: *therefore, wherefore, finally*. Sometimes an author has his own kind of transition term that lets you know he is making a switch to a new topic, so be sure to look for those kinds of terms. (Generally, these are at the beginning of a paragraph.)
8. MARK and LIST. Mark any time *so that* is used. In putting together your list, look for what comes before the “so that” which will bring about or produce some kind of result. For example, in Philippians 1:10 “so that” appears, but in order to understand its significance you need to also look at verse 9. Your entry for Philippians 1:9-10 might say something like, “Paul prays that the Philippians’ love would abound in real knowledge and all discernment *so that* they would be able to approve the things that are excellent and live sincerely and blamelessly until the day of Christ.” I think you will be so blessed by this part of your observation time!

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9. MARK. Mark expressions of time—words like *shortly, quickly, soon, for a little while*.
10. MARK. Mark words that are synonyms of each other. For example: *Paul and Timothy are bond-servants* from 1:1.
11. LIST. List any *attributes* of God, Christ, or the Holy Spirit that you notice in this chapter. You'll start this list by going back up to your listed "God" words that you marked earlier in Question #4. An attribute is a characteristic or quality used to describe an object or person.

For example, you might read John 3:16, "*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.*" From this verse we see that God is *loving* [because He loved the world]; He is *giving* [because He gave His Son]; He is *eternal* [because only the eternal can offer eternal life].

12. LIST. Look for lists of words, phrases, or related thoughts. Number the lists within the Bible text, then record your list out to the side in the margin or on a separate sheet of paper. This will help you see the thought progression of the author or the results of some action.

For example, in 1 John 1:1 we find a list about the *Word of Life*. We discover 1) the Word of Life was from the beginning; 2) John heard the Word of Life; 3) John saw the Word of Life with his own eyes; 4) John looked at the Word of Life; 5) John touched the Word of life with his hands.

13. NOTE. Be sure to mark or write down any "nuggets" you observed which you thought were interesting, spurred on some thought, or made you want to study further.

Remember, the purpose of this lesson is to observe and take note of what is in the chapter. You are not making any interpretations or applications to your life right now. Your task at this time is to simply look for the treasures that God has put in each chapter.

As you do this lesson, take time to worship and thank the Lord that He has preserved His Word for you to study. Admire and marvel at what He placed in this chapter for you to notice. There really isn't any other time in our studies where we simply look at, think on, and study God's Word for itself, so have fun with this lesson! And may the Lord be blessed by your labors!

1 John Chapter 5

1 Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him.

2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments.

3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.

4 For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

5 Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

6 This is the One who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ; not with the water only, but with the water and with the blood. It is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth.

7 For there are three that testify:

8 the Spirit and the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement.

9 If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater; for the testimony of God is this, that He has testified concerning His Son.

10 The one who believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself; the one who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has given concerning His Son.

11 And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.

12 He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.

13 These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.

14 This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.

15 And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him.

16 If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, he shall ask and God will for him give life to those who commit sin not leading to death. There is a sin leading to death; I do not say that he should make request for this.

17 All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not leading to death.

18 We know that no one who is born of God sins; but He who was born of God keeps him, and the evil one does not touch him.

19 We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.

20 And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding so that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

21 Little children, guard yourselves from idols.

— 1 John —
Lesson #17 Chapter 5:1-12

John's final words to his beloved friends are ones of continued encouragement and assurance in the faith. Ask the Lord to help you take to heart the confidence and joy He wants you to have in your relationship with Him!

1. What do you learn about those John refers to as *whoever* or *everyone* from 1 John 5:1?

2. Why is verse 1 so encouraging considering John's admonition in 1 John 4:21?

3. What other assurance does John remind his beloved children in 1 John 5:2?

4. John teaches us that *whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ* "is born again." He also reminds us that *whoever loves the Father* will, of course, "love the child born of Him." John also reminds us that *when we love God and observe His commandments* we can be comforted and confident that we will also "love the children of God." Why are these truths important for *you* to know and believe today? How are these truths a litmus test of salvation?
 - a. John seems to belabor the point (in verses 1-2) that if we are the Lord's children then we will most assuredly love the brethren. How does that tie in with his previous teaching from 1 John 3:9-16?

5. *For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments* (NASB). If you stop and consider the beginning of verse 3, you might wonder if John means *our* love *for* God or *His* love *for* us. Kenneth Wuest sheds some light on the phrase by deciphering the Greek for us. He writes, “In the expression “the love of God,” we have the objective genitive, in which the noun in the genitive case (God), receives the action of the noun of action (love). Thus, we are to understand that John means “the love for God.”¹ The NIV translated it, “This is love for God: to obey his commands.” Similarly, the HCSB translated the phrase, “For this is what love for God is: to keep His commands.” Based on this helpful information, how does the beginning of verse 3 simplify life for us?
- a. How is the beginning of verse 3 tied to what John had just said in verse 2?
6. What do you learn about God’s commands according to the end of verse 3?
- a. Why is it important for us to remember this crucial aspect of obedience?
- b. Now compare Matthew 11:28-30 with Matthew 23:4; and Acts 15:10 with Galatians 2:4 to see further why and how this statement in 1 John 5:3 is true.

¹Wuest, Kenneth S. 1997. *Wuest’s Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader*. Vol. 13. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

7. Look up the verses that follow to discover God's provision and purpose toward us, so our obedience is not a burden to our souls: Galatians 5:1; Ephesians 2:10; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 8:10; 2 Peter 1:3-4; 1 John 4:13, 18; 5:14-15, 20.

"His commandments are not a burden but a privilege and an opportunity to show our love. The commandments of Christ are indeed difficult; but burdensome they are not, for Christ never laid a commandment on anyone without giving strength to carry it; and every commandment laid upon us provides another chance to show our love. ~William Barclay²

"Anything that makes us think that God's will is burdensome is of the spirit of the world against which we have to fight. If, for instance, we are tempted to think that the restrictions of God's law—His commandments and precepts—are too stringent, it is the spirit of the world that tempts us to think so, for "His commandments are not burdensome" to those who truly love Him. It is only to the rebellious world that the restrictions of God appear to be too stringent, or that the commands of Christ become burdensome." ~Charles Spurgeon³

8. What does it tell you about your own heart, if you do find yourself complaining and chafing against God's commands? See 1 John 1:6; 2:4-5, 15-17; 3:10; 4:18; 5:3a; Revelation 2:4. What is the solution? See 1 John 1:9; Revelation 2:5.

"Love-prompted obedience finds that God's commandments are not a crushing burden which exhausts one's strength and destroys the sense of freedom in Christ. The believer finds that the new life in Christ implants in him a desire to do the will of God and finds that love makes obedience to His commands rewarding, for he realizes that God has given His laws for his own protection and true well-being. He finds in them guidance concerning "what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect" (Rom. 12:2 NASB). For him 'the statutes again become songs, and the commandments prove to be the stepping-stones to freedom.'" ~D. Edmond Hiebert⁴

²Barclay, William. 2002. *The Letters of John and Jude*. 3rd ed. The New Daily Study Bible. Louisville, KY; London: Westminster John Knox Press.

³Spurgeon, Charles. 2014. *Spurgeon Commentary: 1 John*. Edited by Elliot Ritzema. Spurgeon Commentary Series. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

⁴Hiebert, D. Edmond. 1991. *The Epistles of John: An Expository Commentary*. Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press.

9. What amazing truth is proclaimed in 1 John 5:4? How can that be true? See John 16:33; Romans 8:37; 2 Corinthians 2:14; 1 John 4:4.

10. What is the *ultimate* way in which our faith is victorious over the world? See John 17:24; Romans 2:7.

11. As if 1 John 5:1-4 wasn't enough to encourage us, John reiterates what he's just said in verse 5. What further encouragement do you learn from verse 5?

12. Most assuredly, 1 John 5:6-8 has caused confusion as to what John is getting at in this section. Let's take it slow to discover just what John means. What do you learn about Jesus according to 1 John 5:6?

13. Now, let's identify what John means by *water* and *blood*. As you look at the following verses to understand what John is saying about the *water* and *blood*, consider *when* these events took place in Jesus' ministry and why they were important. See Matthew 3:13-15; John 1:31-34; Hebrews 9:22; Revelation 1:5; 5:9.

14. Who testifies about Jesus according to 1 John 5:6? See also Matthew 3:16; John 15:26; 16:13-15; 1 Timothy 3:16.

- a. What is the purpose of someone testifying to something or about someone? See Deuteronomy 17:6; 19:15; Matthew 18:16; Hebrews 10:28.
15. What point is being made about the Spirit, water, and blood according to verse 8? See John 8:17.

16. What does John want to impress upon us by making the argument he does in verse 9? How does this make the evidence all the greater that Jesus being God and Savior, came in the flesh to suffer and die in the place of sinful men?

17. There is a lot of testifying going on in these verses! Who else testifies that these things are true according to the beginning of verse 10?

18. What do you learn about anyone who rejects the truths they have been told about Jesus? See 1 John 5:10.

19. How does John summarize his testimony in 1 John 5:11-12?
 - a. Summarize what you learn about this incredible gift from John 3:14-16; 5:39-40; 10:27-28; Romans 6:22-23; 1 John 2:25; 5:13, 20.

20. Why does John spend so much time building the argument about those who testify about Jesus? See 1 John 5:5, 11-12.

21. How does John 8:12-18 add insight into John's point in 1 John 5:6-12?
22. What truths from our lesson stand out to you? Why are they significant to you?

"The instrument with which this new nature fights against the world is faith. Faith conquers, first, *by regarding the unseen reward that awaits us*. The world comes and offers pleasure as the reward of sin, but faith says, "There are greater pleasures to be had by abstaining from sin." The world says, "Take this gain today," but faith says, "No, I will put what I have out at interest. There is something infinitely better to be had after this." In its beginning, faith generally works in that way; it despises all the treasures of Egypt and values far more the eternal rewards that Christ has laid up for it in heaven.

But as faith grows, it attains to something better than that, for *it recognizes the unseen Presence that is with us*. The world says, "Come with us, and go our way. We will pat you on the back and say that you are a good fellow, and you will have a fine time if you come with us." But faith says, "I do not care how I appear to your eye, for there is another eye that I can see, but you cannot see. God is looking at me, and I am most of all concerned to be right in His sight." Faith realizes that the newborn nature is in the divine presence, and thus makes God's presence to be just as real and just as vivid as the presence of men. That presence of God altogether outweighs the presence of men. That is a higher position than the one I first mentioned, for faith not only regards the unseen reward that awaits the believer, but faith recognizes the unseen presence of God and is moved by an all-constraining desire to please Him." ~Charles Spurgeon⁵

⁵Spurgeon, Charles. 2014. *Spurgeon Commentary: 1 John*. Edited by Elliot Ritzema. Spurgeon Commentary Series. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

— 1 John —

Lesson #18 Chapter 5:13-21

In this lesson we'll look at John's final words in his letter to his beloved friends. Just like anyone's last words, John's closing admonitions and encouragements come packed with extra emphasis that call us to take notice. Ask the Lord to help you heed these important truths as you study His Word!

1. Who has John been addressing in his letter? See 1 John 5:13. What was his reason for writing according to verse 13?
 - a. What else do you notice from the following verses that goes along with John's purpose in verse 13? See John 20:31; 1 John 1:2; 2:19, 25; 4:9; 5:11, 20?
2. What comfort do you gain from John's encouragement in 1 John 5:13 when life is hard, when you are tempted and beleaguered by sin, when you feel you are failing the Lord in every area of your life, when you are accused by others, or when you are threatened by false teaching? You don't have to answer all those scenarios specifically, though you're more than welcome to do so if you want! What I would like is for you to consider how John's reassurance sustains and helps you in times of difficulty.
3. In verses 14-15 John continues ministering to the hearts of his readers, which includes us. In verse 14, what *confidence* do we have? What are the parameters of that carte blanche statement?
4. Define *confidence* [Strong's #3954]. John enjoys using this word! What do you learn from how he uses it in 1 John 2:28; 3:21; 4:17; 5:14?

5. How can we be so sure of ourselves when it comes to prayer? See 1 John 3:1-2, 10.

6. If we meet the “criteria” of verses 13-14, what do we *know* according to verse 15?

7. How should these truths from verses 13-15 impact how you pray? What insights do you gain into God Himself as you think of these verses? If these truths haven’t already prompted you to stop and pray for some of the situations in your life, then please stop right now and take your cares to the Lord for His help and provision.

8. What’s the connection between the assurance of answered prayer and salvation (1 John 5:13-15)?

9. First John 5:16-17 is admittedly a bit challenging to understand properly. The first rule of Bible study is to consider the *context*, so we’ll start there. In verses 14-15, John has been discussing God’s faithfulness to answer prayer. Now in verses 16-17, he teaches on a real-life example that his dear children have faced. From 1 John 5:16-17 describe the situation John brings up *as it relates to the context of God answering prayer*.
 - a. Next, describe what’s happening with the “brother committing a sin” from verses 16-17. Now describe the struggle that the praying brother (the one who *asks*) finds himself in according to verses 16-17.

- b. Now consider what you know about sin. Explain what happens *when anyone* sins. See Romans 2:5; 5:12; 6:23; James 1:15.
- c. *When anyone* turns to Christ in faith, repenting of their sin, what is the result? See Acts 26:18; Colossians 1:13-14; 1 John 1:9.
- d. Look up the following verses and describe the situation where someone's hard-hearted rejection of the Lord's grace and mercy results in judgment, wrath, and eternal damnation. From these verse references, specifically note *what the person knows* about the Lord, *what the person does* with that knowledge, and what happens *as a result of their rejection* and why: Hebrews 6:4-6; 10:23-29; 2 Peter 2:20-22; 1 John 2:19.
- e. Phew! You are close to unraveling this little Scripture quandary! Your persistence brings such joy to the Lord when you puzzle over His Word and study it so you might know and understand it better! To pull everything together, now try to summarize or restate verses 13-17, adding in what you've discovered from question #9a-d.
- f. Next, you can read Dr. Jack Hughes' short article about these verses, which is attached to this lesson. I think you'll find it helpful, especially after you worked so hard to figure out what John wants you to know and understand when it comes to being sure of your salvation and the rights and privileges that stem from it.
10. In verse 18, what do you learn about the one who is "born of God"? Now look at 1 John 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4.

11. When you read in verse 18 that no one who is born of God sins, what *other* truths must you keep in mind? See 1 John 1:8-10; 3:7-10.
- a. Why would John make such broad statements, like he does in verse 18 and throughout the book, when he's writing to *encourage* his beloved children? As you answer, remember the believers have been struggling with false teachers (1 John 4:1) and "professed" believers who defect from the faith (1 John 2:19).
12. From verse 18, who is the one who *keeps* (ESV *protects*; NIV *keeps him safe*) believers? What else do you learn about our keeping from the following verses? See John 17:12, 15-16; 1 Peter 1:5; Jude 24; Revelation 3:10.
- Just a note: The NKJV misses when it translates this phrase as "he who has been born of God keeps himself." The better reading for the phrase can be found in the NASB, ESV, HCSB, or NIV. In his commentary, D. Edmond Hiebert writes, "In support of the view that the expression refers to Christ is the fact that the keeping or protection of the believer is a task that the Fourth Gospel assigns to Christ."
13. What absolute truth is presented at the end of verse 18 that should encourage every believer? This holds true even though we experience what reality according to verse 19?
14. How can we counter any fears we might have about the power Satan or his demons have to harm us? See Romans 16:20; Ephesians 6:11-17; James 4:7; 1 Peter 5:8-9; 1 John 2:13-14.

“The Christian has an active enemy, but he has also a watchful guardian.” ~B. F. Westcott¹

15. How does John sum up what he wants his dear children to know and understand in 1 John 5:20?

16. What further insights do you gain about Him who is *true* from John 1:9; 7:17-18; 17:3; Revelation 15:3; 19:11.

17. John lovingly gives one last admonition to his little children. What is it (1 John 5:21)? How does this command naturally follow what John just said about the *true* God?

18. What things hang in the balance and are affected when we don't know or abide in the true God or worship Him who is true?

“It is best to take ‘idols’ as ‘anything which occupies the place due to God’ (cf. 1 Thess 1:9). This wider understanding of idolatry fits well with other texts of the New Testament (cf. Eph 5:5; Col 3:5).” ~Daniel Akin²

“John was probably not talking about actual idols but about those things that rob Jesus of the worship due him as true God (5:20)” ~Grant Osborne.³

¹ Barclay, William. 2002. *The Letters of John and Jude*. 3rd ed. The New Daily Study Bible. Louisville, KY; London: Westminster John Knox Press.

² Akin, Daniel L. 2001. *1, 2, 3 John*. Vol. 38. The New American Commentary. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

³ Osborne, Grant, Philip W. Comfort. 2007. *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary, Vol 13: John and 1, 2, and 3 John*. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.

“Christians must never be lost in the illusions of idolatrous religion; they must never set up in their hearts an idol which will take the place of God; they must keep themselves from the infections of all false faiths; and they can do that only when they walk with Christ.” ~William Barclay⁴

19. What truths from 1 John have impacted you? In what way has your walk with the Lord been fine-tuned by your time in this book?

⁴ Barclay, William. 2002. *The Letters of John and Jude*. 3rd ed. The New Daily Study Bible. Louisville, KY; London: Westminster John Knox Press.

What is the Sin Not Leading to Death in I Jn. 5:16-17?
by Dr. Jack Hughes

In 1 John 5:16-17, John, in the preceding context, has just finished saying that if we ask anything according to God's will, God will hear us. Then he gives an example of the kind of prayer that God answers in verses 16-17, "16 *If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, he shall ask and God will for him give life to those who commit sin not leading to death. There is a sin leading to death; I do not say that he should make request for this. 17 All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not leading to death.*"

This is a much-debated text, and it contains some interesting statements that have puzzled even the best of scholars. It raises many questions, so let's ask some of them, then I will give you the two best answers and why. We don't have time to cover all the views, so to make things clearer, I will only share the two best views.

Questions that arise when you read this text:

1. *What is the sin leading to death?*
2. *How can you avoid committing the sin leading to death?*
3. *What sins are not the sin leading to death?*
4. *What can you do to help a person if they commit a sin not leading to death?*
5. *How can you tell by looking if a person is committing a sin leading to death or not to death?*
6. *Why shouldn't we make request for the person who commits sin leading to death?*
7. *If the wages of any sin is death, then why does he say "there is a sin not leading to death?"*
8. *What does John mean by death, is he talking about spiritual death or physical death, or both?*
9. *What does the text mean when it says, "God will for him give life to those who commit sin not leading to death?"*
10. *Who is John talking about when he speaks of sin leading to death and sin not leading to death? Are both of these groups believers, or unbelievers, or one of each?*

Those are just some of the questions that the text raises. Those questions don't even include all the grammatical and syntactical questions that have been asked of various portions of the text. I will answer those questions for the two best views.

Here is what I believe is the second-best view:

1. The second-best view would understand the sin leading to death as basically any sin that is continued in and not repented of. Do you remember the people in I Corinthians 11 who were taking the Lord's supper in an unworthy manner? Some were struck with sickness, while others were killed by God because they would not repent of their sin (I Corinthians 5).

2. You would avoid the sin leading to death by *not* continuing in any sin with an unrepentant heart.
3. The sin not leading to death would be any sin that a person might be struggling with, but which was repentant about and trying to overcome.
4. You can help a person committing a sin not leading to death by praying for them and asking that God would help them overcome their sin, knowing that as you prayed that is the will of God.
5. You could see if a person was committing a sin not leading to death if you saw genuine repentance in their life.
6. If you did see a person committing a sin leading to death, a sin that they were unwilling to repent of, a sin that caused them to be excommunicated from the church, then you would cease to pray for them knowing that they would be out of the body of Christ and under the judgment of God. (This is a weakness of this view, because when someone continues in sin, even if they are disciplined, we should still pray for their repentance and restoration.)
7. When the text says “there is a sin not leading to death” it is talking about any sin that is confessed to God and repented of, so it does not lead to death.
8. When John mentions death, he is talking about physical death, as the consequences of sin and God’s judgment.
9. When the text says “God will for him give life to those who commit sin not leading to death” it means that God will not punish a believer with physical death if they are faithful to confess and repent of their sin.
10. John is talking about believers in both the sin leading to death and the sin not leading to death.

That is one, legitimate view and a doctrine taught in other places of Scripture that I think holds merit, yet the best view for these verses is the one that follows.

The best view for the passage, which I think answers the questions we raised about the text, explains what John is communicating about prayer and so fits the context best.

1. The sin leading to death *is the sin of apostasy*. A person professes to be a Christian, hangs around the saints, hears the gospel completely and thoroughly, then rejects Christianity and gets involved in some sort of aberrant religion. This fits the context of John better. John has already talked about apostates in the near context of I John 2:19, “They went out from us, but they were not really of us; for if they had been of us, they would have

remained with us; but they went out, so that it would be shown that they all are not of us.”

2. Again, an apostate is a person who has received full revelation about the gospel and has hung around the church and has received as much revelation and experienced the presence of the saints and seen and heard testimonies about the truth, then rejected Christianity and turned away from the faith.
 - a. Let me show you two texts concerning apostates which I believe will help you see why I think this view is the best, and then we will answer the rest of our questions.
 - i. Hebrews 6:4-6 says, “4 For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, 5 and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, 6 and then have fallen away, *it is impossible to renew them again to repentance*, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame.”
 - ii. Hebrews 10:23-29, “Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; 24 and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, 25 not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near. 26 For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, *there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but a terrifying expectation of judgment and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries. 28* Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. 29 How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?”
 - b. Second Peter 2:20-22 tells us the last state of an apostate is worse than the first, meaning that in the first state, they are unsaved and yet we can have hope that they might become saved. But the last state—that of an apostate—is someone who is unsaved and has no hope because they have rejected Christ after having seen and heard the truth. For the apostate, the last state has become worse for them than the first.
3. You would avoid committing a sin leading to death by repenting of your sins and being saved.
4. The *only* sin leading to death is the sin of unbelief, and specifically, the sin of apostasy.
5. If a person does commit a sin not leading to death, *which is any sin*, you pray for them.

6. You can see a person committing a sin leading to death if you see them reject Christ and depart from the faith.
7. The reason John says, “I do not request you pray for an apostate” is that there is no hope for them. I don’t think John is saying you can’t pray for them, but remember, that in the verse immediately preceding this text, John talks about praying according to God’s will and God answering your prayer. God says there is no hope for an apostate, so by praying for someone caught in the sin of apostasy you would not be praying according to the will of God.
8. The reason John says “there is a sin not leading to death” is that anyone who has not gone apostate, is either saved or might be saved and therefore it is legitimate to pray for them when they sin.
9. When John talks about death, he is talking about spiritual death leading to the second death, the lake of fire. The apostate, though dead in sin, seals his doom by rejecting the truth he has been thoroughly exposed to, which leads to certain spiritual death and eventually the second death, which is the lake of fire.
10. The text says that by praying for the person committing a sin not leading to death, “God will for him give life.” God both forgives Christians and saves unbelievers who have not gone apostate, giving them life.
11. When John talks about sin leading to death, he is talking about unbelievers who are apostates.