

A workbook aid for studying

THE EPISTLES OF FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD

JOHN

AND THE EPISTLE OF

JUDE

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PREFACE

This study book is intended to aid a Bible class in the study of the epistles of 1, 2 & 3 John. The material herein will not take the student on a verse-by-verse analysis of the text, but is intended to bring attention to significant portions of the text. Rather than providing textual insight from the writer, the booklet has been designed with questions to provoke thought and further study on the student's part, so that principles and lessons applicable for the Christian's life can be learned.

The usefulness of the material, and the success of the Bible class is primarily dependent upon the preparation which is given by each participant. Verse references from 1, 2 & 3 John are provided with each question. These are given as a starting point for answering the questions. Seldom will a question be fully answered and all the relevant points of a discussion exhausted by the given verses. Students are encouraged to look beyond the designated texts for related passages which will help to answer questions and reveal the lessons to be learned from the inspired record. Some questions given may require diligent investigation on the student's part to completely answer.

It is my hope that the questions provided will touch on all the important lessons which can be gleaned by the child of God today from these books. However, the class should not be limited to these questions. Perhaps segments of text which the given questions do not directly deal with, or detailed points which are found in the text will provoke questions on the student's part. Such questions are welcomed and encouraged. Though the intent of this class material is to benefit us for Christian living today, the class should also be conducted in such a manner that we also come to a better appreciation of the events and customs which are found in the times of old.

May this workbook be used to the glory of God and the strengthening of saints.

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Truly Our Fellowship Is With The Father

1 John 1:1-7

“...the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us...” (1:2)

1. What is “*That which was from the beginning...*”? (1:1)
2. Discuss John’s personal experiences with the Christ. Why is he so emphatic in mentioning it? (1:1-3)
3. What is “*fellowship*”? What is the basis of our fellowship? (1:3)
4. John identifies one of his purposes in writing this letter as “...*that your joy may be full.*” What does this phrase mean? (1:4)
5. John begins the thought that “*God is light*” here in chapter 1, and will continue with this theme throughout the epistle. Comment on this characterization of the Lord. (1:5)
6. What does it mean to “*walk in darkness*”? (1:6)
7. How does one “*walk in the light*”? What is the result of walking in the light? (1:7)

He Is Faithful And Just To Forgive

1 John 1:8-2:6

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1:9)

1. John says, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves..." Is the Christian always in sin? What does this text mean? (1:8)

"...if we say that we HAVE no sin..."

Gr. echo

"...to hold (used in very various applications, literally or figuratively, direct or remote; such as possession; ability, continuity, relation, or condition): – be (able, hold, possessed with), accompany..."

2. Discuss the who, what, where, when, why and how of the confession of sins. What do we know about the Lord's forgiveness? (1:9)

3. **Verse 7** addressed if we say "...we have no sin...", now the writer says, "If we say that we have not sinned..." What is the difference? Where could such an idea come from? (1:10)

4. The fulfilment of joy was identified as a purpose for John's writing (1:4). Now, John identifies a second reason, "...so that you may not sin." Is it possible for the child of God to "not sin"? (2:1)

5. Define the words "Advocate" and "propitiation". What qualifies Jesus to fulfill both the role of Advocate and propitiation? (2:1-2)

6. How important does John say obedience to the will of God is? What is the "love of God" perfected in the believer? (2:3-5)

Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. (1 John 2:3)

But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. (1 John 2:5)

7. The apostle indicates that we should walk just as Jesus walked. How can we walk as the Son of God walked? (2:6)

The True Light Is Already Shining

1 John 2:7-17

"Again, a new commandment I write to you, which thing is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away, and the true light is already shining." (2:8)

1. John says he gives "*no new commandment*", but then immediately says "*a new commandment I write to you*". Is it a new commandment or not? What commandment does John speak of? **(2:7-8)**
2. What is the darkness that is passing away? What is the true light which shines? **(2:8)**
3. How can we know if one is in the light or in darkness? **(2:9-11)**
4. John speaks of three separate groupings of Christians, the little children, the fathers, and the young men. Who are these three groups? **(2:12-14)**
5. Discuss the reasons why John writes to the little children. **(2:12-13)**
6. Discuss the reasons why John writes to the fathers. **(2:13-14)**

7. Discuss the reasons why John writes to the young men. (2:13-14)
8. Why should a Christian not love the world? (2:15-17)
9. John identifies three things that are available in the world. Discuss each. (2:16)
- “...*the lust of the flesh...*”

 - “...*the lust of the eyes...*”

 - “...*the pride of life...*”

Even Now Many Antichrists Have Come

1 John 2:18-29

"Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour." (2:18)

1. John indicates that "*it is the last hour*". What does this mean? (2:18)
- Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour.*
(1 John 2:3)
2. Who is the antichrist? (2:18, 22-23)
 3. How does John help us to understand who the antichrists he has in mind are? (2:19)
 4. What is the anointing that John's readers have received? How is it that they "*know all things*"? (2:20-21)
 5. Discuss the Bible concept of abiding, both that which abides in us, and us abiding in the Son and the Father. (2:24)
 6. God has promised eternal life. How, according to the context can we be recipients of His promise? (2:25)
 7. John says the disciples "*...do not need that anyone teach you...*", for "*...the same anointing teaches you concerning all things...*" What is the point of John's statements? (2:27)
 8. How can we have confidence at the coming of Christ? (2:28-29)

Children Of God

1 John 3:1-10

“Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.” (3:1)

1. Discuss the great privilege it is to be called “*children of God*”. (3:1)
2. When will we “*be like Him*”? Do we know anything about “*what we shall be*” in eternity? (3:2)

Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. (1 John 2:3)
3. Comment on the purity of Christ, and the subsequent purity in His people. (3:3)
4. How does John define “*sin*”? (3:4)
5. Having defined sin, John proceeds to discuss the conduct of the children of God. What will be seen among those who are in Christ? Why? (3:5-7, 8b, 9)
6. Who are the “*children of the devil*”? What distinguishes them from the “*children of God*”? (2:8, 10)

Love One Another

1 John 3:11-24

"My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth." (3:18)

1. What was the beginning of this message of love that John proclaims? Consider the example of Cain and Abel in light of John's words about the children of God and the children of the devil. (3:11-13)
2. How important is the love of the brethren? Discuss John's characterization of the one who hates his brother. (3:14-15)

We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death. (1 John 3:14)
3. What has Jesus taught us about love? How ought we to apply this in our lives? What will the result be? (3:16-19)

By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. (1 John 3:16)

And by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him. (1 John 3:19)
4. When will our heart condemn us? What must we be aware of then? (3:20)
5. Under what circumstances will our heart not condemn us? What assurance comes along with this sure heart? (3:21-22)
6. Believe in Jesus and love the brethren, is that all that is necessary for us to have the hope of heaven? Discuss what God desires of us, and the surety that comes with it. (3:23-24)

Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us. (1 John 3:24)

Test The Spirits

1 John 4:1-8

“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.” (4:1)

1. To what does John refer to here as “*spirits*”? Why must we “*test the spirits*”? (4:1)
2. Discuss the two tests which John provides in the text.
— “*Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God...*” (4:2-3)

— “*He who hears God hears us...*” (4:6)

We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. (1 John 4:6)

3. How else might we “*test the spirits*”? (4:1)
4. John indicates that the little children “*...have overcome them.*” Who is “*them*”? How have the little children “*overcome them*”? (4:4-5)
5. Consider the statement, “*God is love*”, and how this affects our lives. (4:7-8)

The Love Of God Was Manifested

1 John 4:9-21

"Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world." (4:1)

1. What two reasons does John identify for God having sent His Son? **(4:9-10)**
2. What lesson does John expect the children of God to learn from the love of God? **(4:11, 19)**
3. How can we know that the Father abides in us and we in Him? **(4:12-16)**

By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. (1 John 4:13)
4. John speaks about love "*perfected among us*". What is this perfected love, and what will it do for the child of God? **(4:17-18)**
5. The need for love has been emphasized in chapters 3 and 4. Discuss the relationship between our love for our fellow man and for our Creator. **(4:20-21)**

Who Is He Who Has Overcome The World?

1 John 5:1-13

"Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?" (5:5)

1. Discuss what believing "*that Jesus is the Christ*" entails. (5:1)
2. What is the proof of our love for God and the brethren? Discuss the relationship between these. (5:1-2)

By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. (1 John 5:2)
3. What is meant by "*...the love of God...*"? Is it our love for God, or God's love for us? (5:3)

Burdensome (Gr. barus) weighty, burdensome, grave, grievous, heavy, weightier.
4. How is it that God's people are victorious over the world? (5:4-5)
5. What is significant about the "*water and blood*"? (5:6)
6. Much discussion has surrounded the three who bear witness. Investigate the wording and meaning of John's instruction. (5:7-8)
7. What is the witness of God? How does John characterize the witness of God? (5:9-11)
8. John identifies one of the purposes for which he wrote. What is it? (5:12-13)

The Confidence That We Have In Him

1 John 5:14-21

"And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, 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." (5:20)

1. What is the confidence that the children of God can have in Christ? (5:14-15)

And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him. (1 John 5:15)

2. John identifies "a sin which does not lead to death" and "sin leading to death". What is the difference? How should we react to these differently? (5:16-17)

3. Contrast the child of God with those who are of the world. (5:18-19)

We know that whoever is born of God does not sin; but he who has been born of God keeps himself, and the wicked one does not touch him. We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one. (1 John 5:18-19)

4. "...The Son of God has come, and has given us an understanding..." of what? (5:20)

And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, 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. (1 John 5:20)

5. Who is "...the true God..."? (5:20)

6. What is an idol? What are some modern day idols? (5:21)

To The Elect Lady And Her Children

2 John 1:1-13

"I rejoice greatly that I have found some of your children walking in truth, as we have received commandment from the Father." (1:4)

1. This short letter is addressed to "...*the elect lady and her children...*" Do we have any idea who this "*elect lady*" is? (1:1, 5, 13)
2. Identify four ways "*the truth*" intersects the Christian's life. (1:1-4)
3. What does it mean to be "...*walking in truth...*"? (1:4)
4. What is the "*commandment*" that John speaks of? What was the "*beginning*" of this commandment? (1:5-6)
5. What relation has the admonition about love with the fact that many deceivers have gone out into the world? (1:6-7)

deceiver – Gr. planos
of uncertain affinity; roving (as a tramp), ie.
(by implication) an imposter or misleader;
– deceiver, seducing.
antichrist – Gr. antichristos
an opponent of the Messiah: – antichrist.

6. How might one lose those things which have been worked for? What is the “*full reward*”? (1:8)

7. Define the words “*transgress*” and “*abide*”. What does it mean to “*abide in the doctrine of Christ*”? (1:9)

8. Discuss the implications of John’s statement, “...*do not receive him into your house nor greet him...*” (1:10-11)

9. Why did John limit himself to such a small letter to the elect lady? (1:12)

To The Beloved Gaius

3 John 1:1-14

"Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers." (1:2)

1. Who is Gaius? Do we know anything about this man? (1:1)
2. Verse 2 has been used by some to preach a "*health and wealth*" gospel. What is John saying in this text? (1:2)
3. How did John know that Gaius walked in the truth? What was the evidence? (1:3-6)
4. Who are those whom John says we ought to "*receive*"? Why "*receive*" them? (1:5-8)
5. Who is Diotrophes? What is known of them man's character? (1:9-10)
6. Why should a man of outstanding character like Gaius require a warning such as appears in 1:11?
7. What threefold testimony did Demetrius have? (1:12)