

Great Commission



Baptist Church

Dr. Douglas E. Brown, Pastor/Teacher



**THE SON OF GOD HAS COME TO
EARTH**

I JOHN

**Life Group Curriculum
October – November 2021**

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Lesson I

Date: October 3, 2021

Lesson Scriptures: 1 John 1:1-4

The Word of Life

Lesson Aim: The student will learn about the person of Christ Jesus and His relationship to God the Father.

Open It

1. What do you associate with the term "fellowship"?

Explore It

1. What was from the beginning?

2. How did God reveal Himself to us?

3. Where had the eternal life been, and to whom had it appeared?

4. With whom did this community of believers have fellowship?

5. Why was this letter written?

Get It

1. Why do you think John stressed his and this community of believers' personal, physical, historical encounter with Jesus?

2. What fellowship do you have with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ?

3. What fellowship do you have with other believers?

4. What blocks our fellowship with God and others?
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Apply It

1. What specific steps will you take this week in order to deepen your fellowship with other believers?
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Summary: The Apostle John writes in verse 1, “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life...” The divine revelation of the only Begotten Son of God the Father is our first point of reflection. In the opening verse, John used a demonstrative pronoun (That) to point to someone very specific. John is pointing to someone that he and others had a personal relationship with because of faith. The KJV translated the English words ‘the beginning’ from the Greek word arché (Greek Strong’s #746) which means absolutely, of the beginning of all things. Believers must have their own personal testimony of Christ Jesus. John and other believers testified that they have properly heard, spiritually discerned, observed intently, and have physically handled with their own hands the Son of God the Father. Christ is said to be eternal, and He is the word of the life. The KJV reads “He is the word of life”, but the Greek text reads “...He is the word of the life.” Believers in Christ Jesus give evidence that the Son is from God the Father. This is our second point of reflection. Christ Jesus is fully God and fully Man. In verse 2, John and the other believers bear witness that the Son was manifested to us from God the Father. He writes, “(For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us...)” The KJV translated the English words ‘bear witness’ from the Greek word martureó (Greek Strong #3140) which means in this context to give evidence. John and the other believers give us evidence that Christ Jesus is from God the Father.

John writes in verse 3, “That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.” He and the other believers are proclaiming the blessings through the Son that gives us access to God the Father. This is the third point of reflection. The KJV translated the English word ‘fellowship’ from the Greek word koinonia (Greek Strong #2842) which according to John's teaching, consists in the fact that Christians are partakers of the same mind as God and Christ and of the blessings arising therefrom. John writes in verse 4, “And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.” A person’s joy is only complete if they are in Christ Jesus. This joy is because of the grace we have been granted (Ephesian 2:8). The world cannot give us this joy, and the world cannot take it from us.

Lesson II

Date: October 10, 2021

Lesson Scriptures: 1 John 1:5-10

God is Light

Lesson Aim: The student will learn what it means to be a Disciple of Christ Jesus and about their obligation to constantly confess their sins.

Open It

1. Why might it be hard for someone to admit that he or she was wrong about something?

Explore It

1. What message did the writer hear and declare?

2. What inconsistency did John address?

3. What results from "walking in the light"?

4. How were some believers apparently deceiving themselves?

5. In what way can a person make God out to be a liar?

Get It

1. What do you think the terms "light" and "darkness" represent?

2. In what way is God similar to light?

3. In what way do we "walk in darkness"?

4. How can we "walk in the light"?

Apply It

1. What steps will you take this week to walk in the light?
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Summary: In this week's lesson, the Apostle John relays to us a personal message from Christ Jesus. He writes in verse 5, "This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." The Believer must declare the truth about Christ and God the Father and God the Holy Spirit, and nothing less. This is our first point of reflection. The KJV translated the English word 'declare' from the Greek word *anaggelló* (Greek Strong #312) which means to announce in detail. John and the other believers are declaring that God is light. The Triune God (God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) holiness is described as light and is contrasted to darkness. All of the Persons within the Godhead share the same attributes.

John gives us additional revelation from Christ Jesus in the next three verses. The Believer must be a Disciple of Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. John writes in verses 6-8, "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." The believer is called to walk by the Spirit and not by the flesh. Walking in the light is the same as living by the Spirit (Galatians 5:16-25). The believer receives the benefits of fellowship with one another and the cleansing of sin by the blood of Christ Jesus. John gives a warning to those who say they have no sin. Those people are deceiving themselves.

John writes in verse 9, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." The Believer must decide to live for Christ. This is our third point of reflection. Believers are obligated to confess their sins. This is not to be saved, but to continue in fellowship with Christ Jesus. The KJV translated the English word 'confess' from the Greek word *homologeó* (Greek Strong #3670) which means to voice the same conclusion because of being in full agreement. The verbal action is continuous which implies we should constantly confess our sins. John writes in verse 10, "If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." A person who fails to acknowledge that they sin is not in fellowship with Christ Jesus. This is a gross error because it is contrary to the word of God (Romans 3:23). John reveals to us that we make Christ Jesus a liar when we say we have no sin.

Lesson III

Date: October 17, 2021

Lesson Scriptures: 1 John 2:1-11

Christ Our Advocate

Lesson Aim: The student will understand and have confidence in knowing we have Jesus as our Advocate.

Open It

1. When and why might someone need an attorney?

Explore It

1. Why did John write this letter?

2. For whom is Jesus an atoning sacrifice?

3. What did John say he was giving to his readers?

4. How are claiming to be a Christian and loving one's fellow Christians related?

Get It

1. How does the promise of being purified from all sin make you feel?

2. Why would someone claim that he or she was without sin?

3. How important is fellowship with other believers to you?

4. In what way is Jesus like our attorney?

Apply It

1. What will you do to incorporate the confession of sins into your daily routine?

Summary:

John took the fatherly approach to address his concern. His establishment of a loving tone reinforces everyone's confidence in knowing that Jesus Christ is our Advocate to the Father. Romans 3:23 tells us we all fall short, and Romans 3:24-25 lets us know we are justified, and Christ is the propitiation for our sin. In this epistle, verses 1 and 2 reinforce that fact.

John is by no means giving us a license to sin, nor is he giving us an excuse to sin. He is in fact doing just the opposite. He is letting us know that if we know Christ and love Him, we will abide in Him. We are to keep his commandment, which was here all along, John 15:12 "That you love one another as I have loved you." If we are not abiding in Christ, we are walking away from Him and walking in darkness. Light will always defeat darkness. We cannot take dark into a room, but we can take light into the darkest room and the light will always radiate that room. For us, that light is Jesus Christ. He is that light that has always shined and will continue to shine and that we should abide in. Our abiding in Christ is our way of recognizing God's holiness and the importance of walking in truth. Christ is at the right hand of the Father as our Advocate, and our recognition of His redemptive work on the cross should create a desire to know Him and keep His commandments.

Lesson IV

Date: October 24, 2021

Lesson Scriptures: 1 John 2:12-17

Do Not Love The World

Lesson Aim: The student will learn that we should not love the materials of the world, but Love God who is forever and eternal.

Open It

1. What makes TV commercials and advertisements so appealing?

2. What sort of promises do TV commercials and advertisements make?

Explore It

1. Why did John write to "the dear children"?

2. What should believers not love? Why?

3. What is the result of loving the world?

4. From where do the things in the world not come?

5. What passes away?

Get It

1. How do we love the world and the things in it?

2. What things in the world are you tempted to love?

3. What would you categorize as "the cravings of sinful man"?

4. Why are the things and values of the world so enticing to us?

5. What worldly things or values do we substitute for God?

Apply It

1. What specific steps will you take in order to find satisfaction in your relationship with God rather than in the things of the world?

Summary: After warning us to recognize God's holiness and not to walk in the dark, John is writing because of the spiritual asset's we possess. In the descriptions of these asset's, John addresses us as children, fathers and young men possibly referring to our spiritual maturity. In each case however, he is referring to us all. John is addressing the family and making sure that he is including everyone at all levels and walks. He is addressing us being forgiven by our sins, overcoming the wicked one, and abiding in Him. These are assurances that we are overcomers and that we can overcome wickedness by the strength we receive from abiding in the word of God.

We have experienced the forgiveness of our Heavenly Father and have known Him since the beginning. He abides in us and knowing this we should also know that the world does not offer us what He can offer us. Even though we must live in the world, we should not have the desire to love what is of this world. We should strive to turn off a lustful heart and wanton desire of what is in it, what is perishing away and what is not conducive to our works to strive for kingdom building. In doing this, we are separating ourselves from this world and abiding in Christ. Abiding is Him and being Strong in the word of God is our best defense and our only defense to overcome the wickedness of this world as it perishes. (1 Peter 1:23-24 - ²³ having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, ²⁴ Because "All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man" as the flower of the grass withers, and its flower falls away, but the word of the Lord endures forever). The best defense for fending off the desires of a world that is perishing is a word that last forever, God's word.

Lesson V

Date: October 31, 2021

Lesson Scriptures: 1 John 2:18-29

Beware of Seducers

Lesson Aim: Members will be fully aware that they do not need any teaching other than what is in the Word of God. They will be aware that any teaching that is “additional” to the teaching found in God’s Word is false teaching. They will stand firm on what they know is the truth of God,

Open It

1. Who are the enemies of the Church today?

2. What do you think is the best defense against cults and other false spiritual teaching?

Explore It

1. Who was coming and who had come at the time John wrote this?

2. How is the antichrist identified?

3. In what way is denying (or acknowledging) the Son related to having the Father?

4. What did John encourage his readers to do?

Get It

1. What antichrists are among us today?

2. What truths do we know about Christ?

3. How can we remain in or have fellowship with Jesus Christ?

4. What groups of people are trying to lead believers astray today?

Apply It

1. What steps do you need to take to better prepare yourself against antichrists and their false doctrines?

Summary: In these verses John encourages the believers to stand firm in following the Lord more closely and to stand firm against those who mean to show discord among believers. He wanted to warn the believers about dangers that always exist, no matter how far one has advanced in his/her spiritual walk. John states that they were living in the “last hour” which means the final days before the second coming of Christ. He reminds the believers that the evidence of “last hour” was the Antichrist which was false teachers who taught false doctrine. He goes on to remind them in v 20 that they could have assurance because they have been taught the truth. The truth is that Jesus the Christ is the Son of God. Many religions and cults can be singled out today as carrying the spirit of the Antichrist and being wrong in their belief system simply by checking their doctrine about the character of Jesus. To buy into the belief that Jesus is not the Christ is to reject a saving relationship with the Father and His Son. 2 Timothy 4:3 says “For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.”

In verses 24-27, John exhorted believers to protect themselves from falling prey to false teaching. They could do so by remaining true to the apostolic teaching that they have received from the beginning and keep it a part of their daily lives. They must remain in the Word (study) and Spirit-guided illumination of the Word.

It is the Word of God and the Holy Spirit’s illumination of that word that will keep a person true to the heavenly Father. The proper understanding and application of scriptures is the key to a person’s security in the Lord.

Lesson VI

Date: November 7, 2021

Lesson Scriptures: 1 John 3:1-10

The Children of God

Lesson Aim: To focus on God’s love and how His love results in believers becoming His children. Also as children of God, how our love for Him helps us to practice a lifestyle of holiness instead of sin.

Open It

1. In what way(s) are you like your mother or father?

2. What was one of the benefits of being the child of your parents as you were growing up?

Explore It

1. Why doesn’t the world know Christians?

2. How What will happen to the children of God when they see Christ?

3. What is sin?

4. How Why did Christ appear?

5. What did John say about the person who does what is sinful?

Get It

1. What does it mean to continue in Christ?

2. What How are you preparing yourself for Christ’s return?

3. What is so great about being a child of God?

4. When have you felt that your non-Christian friends did not really know or understand you?

Apply It

1. What step will you take today to purify yourself?

2. What area of weakness will you ask God to strengthen this week?

Summary:

John highlights the amazing, magnificent, glorious, selfless, unconditional love that God has for us, so much so, that He (Elohim = God the creator/ Father God; El Shaddai = God Almighty; Yahweh = The Self Existing God; El Elyon = The Most High God) calls us His children. God has made us a permanent part of His family the moment we placed our faith in His son, Jesus Christ.

God is now working on our transformation, so that when His Son returns, we shall receive our glorified bodies like His, which will be sinless. Because we have this hope of complete transformation, it ought to motivate us to holy living. Sin is rebellion against God's will. So, a lifestyle of sin is abnormal for a Christian and normal for an unbeliever. You may ask why? Because a child takes on the very nature of their Father. The believer takes on the nature of God, which is love, righteousness and holiness, which causes us to sin – less and the unbelievers takes on the nature of their father the devil, which is sinning, sinning and more sinning.

As children of God, we are not sinless because of our old nature, but we ought to sin – less and less because of His love for us and our love for Him. Warren Wiersbe says: “An unbeliever who sins is a creature sinning against his creator. A Christian who sins is a child, sinning against his father. The unbeliever sins against the law, the believer sins against love. “Wow!!!

There is an ole saying: “Actions speak louder than words.” Well, it's true, our conduct speaks volumes of who our father is and who we are. Make sure you're living up to your name, “Child of God”.

Aim and Summary by Annette Brown, Dip. TH.

Lesson VII

Date: November 14, 2021

Lesson Scriptures: 1 John 3: 11-24

Love One Another

Lesson Aim: True Believers will know that they are commanded to love and to demonstrate that love through actions and not just words.

Open It

1. Who is someone (in history or alive today) whose life is an example of what it means to love? To hate?

Explore It

1. What message had the readers of 1 John heard from the beginning?

2. Why did Cain murder his brother?

3. How do we know what love is?

4. How should Christians love?

5. What is God's command?

Get It

1. How does the world hate believers today?

2. When do you struggle with loving other Christians?

3. How do you demonstrate your love for fellow believers?

4. Why is it easier to love with words rather than actions?
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Apply It

1. For what fellow Christian whom you have difficulty loving will you do something kind this week.
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Summary: Love has many broad meanings in the English language (I love Pizza, I love sports, I love music, I love you etc.) , but these meanings are not close to the love we see in scripture. So, what is love? John gives us a second look at the test of love that was introduced in 2:7-11. The easiest way to detect God’s children is by their love for one another. In 3:12-13, he distinguished between the hatred of the world exemplified in Cain and the love of believers exemplified in Christ Jesus (3:14-18). John tells the believers what love is not. In the conflict between Cain and Abel, we see the awful consequence of anger, hate, jealous , resentment and making wrong choices. Cain murderous act revealed that he did not belong to the body of Christ. Cain’s murderous deeds revealed his identity which was the opposite of love. Sometime love is lost between brothers, and this is more than a tragedy. It is the work of the “evil one.” At the root of hostility is a hatred of righteousness. The truth of God is offensive to those who want to practice sin (John 3:12).

Jesus showed us a prime example of what love is. . He laid down His life for us (3:16). His death on the cross demonstrates His love toward us, in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us. By this we know what love is . We are expected to lay down our lives for our brothers. Love is a daily act of laying down our time, money, and ambitions to do what is spiritually best for others. John wants us to see how practical this love must be. Love must go beyond “word and talk” into practical “deeds” (3:18). We must open our eyes to see the needs of others. The needs must then move our hearts to use all the varied resources God gives us to help them. Expressing genuine, practical love for God’s family is what identifies you as a child of God. This is how we know “God’s love abides in us”(3:17) . John speaks of the reality of love and how it should show in our lives. In the Greek language there are many forms of love. But Agape love is the kind of love that Christians should have for one another. Agape is described as a love that loves without changing. It is self-giving love that gives without demanding or expecting re-payment. It is love so great that it can be given to the unloving or unappealing. It is love that loves even when rejected and loves because it wants to.

John made it clear as to what Christ- like love looks like. Do you really love your spiritual family in this manner? Do your actions demonstrate that you love God’s family?

Lesson VIII

Date: November 21, 2021

Lesson Scriptures: 1 John 4:1-6

Test Teachings of False Teachers

Lesson Aim: Christians will know the difference in “Truth versus Error” because many false prophets have already gone out into the world. There are spirits that Christians need to test “to see whether they are of God.”

Open It

1. What standard would you use for testing a person’s credentials to do your job?

2. What makes something either "worldly" or "Christian"?

Explore It

1. What did John instruct his readers to do?

2. What Who did John say had gone into the world?

3. How is the Spirit of God recognized?

4. What spirit does not acknowledge that Jesus is from God?

5. What Who does and does not listen to those who are from God?

Get It

1. What false prophets are in the world today?

2. What segments of our society would you say are influenced or controlled by the spirit of the antichrist?

3. In what way have you overcome the world?

4. How does the truth that Christ is greater than the devil make you feel?

Apply It

1. What influences in your life (for example, books, movies, music, ideas, etc.) will you "put to the test" this week to see whether they are from God?

Summary:

John writes about discerning false prophets and loving one another. The Apostle John commands us to "constantly prove the spirits" to expose false teaching. False prophets (teachers) for they do not allow their "revelations" to be tested or questioned. Indeed, they operate "smoothly" by taking Scripture out of context, to assert their personal claims (teachings, revelations), which (in effect) take precedence over the Word of God.

*The antichrists are from the world and... speak from the viewpoint of the world. For this reason they get a good hearing from the world. It is always true that satanically inspired thought has a special appeal to worldly minds. But people who are from God (ek tou theou, "of God"; cf. 1 John 4:4, "from God"; v. 5, "from the world"; and 3:12, "belonged to the evil one") listen to the apostles. The pronouns which begin verses 4-6 (You... They, and We) are emphatic in the original and evidently mark off three groups: the readers, the antichrists, and the apostles. Each one who can be described as "from God" (i.e., actuated and influenced by God) and thus knows God listens to the apostolic voice. In the history of the church, apostolic doctrine has always been the means by which the Holy Spirit of truth and the spirit of falsehood can be effectively distinguished. True Christianity is apostolic Christianity.

[In sum], Scripture commands us to constantly "test the spirits" by the measure of Scripture itself. To do this, we ourselves must have a solid grasp of the Bible. In I John 4:6 says: We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.

Aim and Summary by Bobby J. Williams Sr., Diploma(SBI)

Lesson IX

Date: November 28, 2021

Lesson Scriptures: 1 John 4:7-13

God Is Love Part 1

Lesson Aim: The believer will understand what true love means and how to demonstrate love to other people.

Open It

1. Which do you think is a more powerful motivator—love, fear, or hate? Why?

Explore It

1. What were the readers of 1 John encouraged to do?

2. How did God show His love?

3. What is love?

4. What is the result of loving one another?

5. How can believers know that they live in God and God lives in them?

Get It

1. How can we demonstrate our love for God?

2. What example has Jesus set for us to follow?

3. How should God's love motivate you to love others?

4. What does it mean to live in God?

Apply It

1. Who is someone that you have a difficult time getting along with that you need to ask God to help you love this week?

Summary:

The Christians are to recognize the old proverb expression “The Proof is in the Pudding” generally, the expressions are used to say that the worth, success, or effectiveness of something can only be determined by putting it to the test. The Apostle John simply says love for the brethren has been shown as proof of fellowship with God. Which he simply says—Locate (test) the Spirits and Love the Saints.

If you've studied the “Psalms, Nehemiah and Esther,” you will appreciate I John 4 because those books are an example of Love, Life and Liberty . There's another Proverbs saying, “The Old Testament is for our Learning and the New Testament is for our Living.” [Romans 15:4; Hebrews 10:7; Luke 24:44] The connection with the paragraph on the testing of the spirits is very obvious: every one that loveth is born of God so that the quality and quantity of our affection will be the best gauge whether we have the spirit of truth or of error. The example is seen in God's love by sending His Son Jesus Christ who sacrifice his life for us. He loved us without any love on our part. Our relation to God reminds us that we must have the same love to each other. The Key words that John gives us “by this, in this, by this we know” is all over this Book. Lastly, I recall a song title “What's Love Got to Do with It” sang by the recording artist “Tina Turner” well, I don't know all about what she's saying, but John says in I John 4:7-13 that Love is the Key to authentication. Our love for God is proven by our love for one another. Jesus said in John 13:35 By this shall all [men] know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love gk.(agape) one to another.

Lesson Aims, Summaries by Annette Brown, Dip. TH., Rev. Joseph Ellzey Jr. B.S., Earline Franklin, Rev. Terrence Howard *TH.M.*, Victor Kirkpatrick, Dip. TH., and Bobby J. Williams Sr., Diploma (SBI) 2021

* The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary Faculty.

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