

# **THE FIRST LETTER OF JOHN**

**A Catechesis Program  
for Catholics**

**Featuring the**

**Douay-Rheims Version  
and  
Paraphrase**

## 1 JOHN

**General Information:** The very person who wrote John 3:16, “whosoever believeth in him should not perish” is the very same person who reveals in this epistle what believing really involves. “Most magazine articles and newspaper columns proceed from point A to point B to point C to conclusion D. Our way of thinking, of reasoning from premises to conclusions, has come down to us from the ancient Greeks. It is typically Western in approach. As we read the Holy Scriptures, most of us tend to assume the writer will take this approach. Most of the holy writers came out of an Eastern, specifically Jewish, culture. Their reasoning was often different than what we are used to. In 1 John, the apostle weaves doctrine and practice together. As a result, we see the intricate connections between

“believing right” and “doing right.” Despite what false teachers have done, John is not creating new doctrine. Everything he writes to them in this letter is, or should be, familiar. It is the same truth they have always heard from the apostles.

**NOTICE** : If you read only the **bold face type** you will be reading the ***Douay-Rheims Version*** of the Catholic Bible. If you read the “light face type” you will be reading a paraphrase based on the text.

**READ AND DISCUSS EACH VERSE ALONG WITH THE “ADDITIONAL INFORMATION” AND “QUESTIONS.”** (Additional Catholic translations may be consulted also).

## **1 JOHN CHAPTER 1**

**1JN 1:[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:** (Let me tell you about the One who has existed from the very beginning. He is the Word who gives Life! And we have heard those marvelous words of Life from His very own lips. We have seen Him with our eyes, and have gazed upon Him in amazement! We have even touched Him with our hands.)

**Additional Information: (Verse 1)** – First John was written by John, one of Jesus' original 12 disciples. He was probably "the disciple whom Jesus loved" (John 21:20) and, along with Peter and James, he had a special relationship with Jesus. This letter was written between A.D. 90-95 from Ephesus, before John's exile

to the island of Patmos. Jerusalem had been destroyed in A.D. 70, and Christians were scattered throughout the empire. By the time John wrote this letter, Christianity had been around for more than a generation. It had faced and survived severe persecution. The main problem confronting the church at this time was declining commitment. Many believers were conforming to the world's standards, failing to stand up for Christ, and compromising their faith. False teachers were plentiful, and they were accelerating the downward slide away from the Christian faith.

**Which was from the beginning.**" Meaning is determined by context. In this instance the phrase means a beginning prior to creation, and the meaning is determined by "**which was with the Father**" in verse 2.

**"The Word of Life."** The Greek word for "**Word**" is *logos*, meaning any kind of communication. Here, it means Christ, who was the way God told people about himself.

**1. Read 1 John 1:1.** The Word of Life was in existence:  
a. only at the virgin birth of Jesus. b. after Jesus rose from the dead. c. from the beginning (Jn. 1:1).

**1JN 1: [2] For the life was manifested; and we have seen and do bear witness, and declare unto you the life eternal, which was with the Father, and hath appeared to us:**

(The very One who gives life actually appeared to us! We saw Him! And because of what we have seen, we now bear witness and report to you concerning this Eternal Life, who was with the Father and who was so clearly revealed to us.)

**2. Read 1 John 1:2.** The One who is Life and gives Life was: a. discussed among our group. b. thought about. c. appeared to us.

**3. Read 1 John 1:2.** Jesus is Eternal Life. True or False.

**1JN 1: [3] That which we have seen and have heard, we declare unto you, that you also may have fellowship with us, and our**

**fellowship may be with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.** (So we are here telling you about the One whom we have actually seen and heard so that you may join us in our warm fellowship. And the wonderful truth is that our warm fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ.)

**4. Read 1 John 1:3.** John wanted others to have fellowship (communion, close relationship, participation and sharing) with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ. True or False.

**1JN 1: [4] And these things we write to you, that you may rejoice, and your joy may be full.** (We are writing these things so that your joy may be full and overflowing.)

**Additional Information: (Verse 4)** – The apostles so shared the heart of Christ for His people that their own joy was bound up in the spiritual well-being of those to whom they ministered.

**5. Read 1 John 1:4.** The apostles so shared the heart of Christ for his people that their own joy was bound up in the spiritual well-being of those to whom they ministered. True or False.

**1JN 1: [5] And this is the declaration which we have heard from him, and declare unto you: That God is light, and in him there is no darkness.** (This, then, is the message that we have heard from Him, and now share with you: God is light! There is no darkness at all in Him).

**6. Read 1 John 1:5.** The message the apostles heard from Christ was: a. God is crafty and crude. b. you never know what God is like. c. God is light, and in him there is no darkness.

**1JN 1: [6] If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth.** (So if we should say we are

enjoying warm fellowship with God, but we're living in the darkness of sin, we're lying! We're not telling the truth!)

**Additional Information: (Verse 6) – “If we say.”** In Greek this is a third class condition that includes the writer and his readers. **“Walk in darkness .. in the light** (v. 7). Two lifestyles – one characterized by wickedness and error, the other by holiness and truth. **“Darkness”** is the Greek word *scotia* and describes spiritual darkness, everything earthly or demonic that is at enmity with God. Ten times John used **“darkness”** to refer to sin (John 1:5; 3:19; 12:35 [twice]; 1 John 1:5-6; 2:8-9, 11 [twice]. **“Do not the truth.”** Truth is not only what one says but what he does.

**7. Read 1 John 1:6-10.** The word **“we”** includes the writer and his readers. How many times does John use the word **“we”** in these verses? a. only once. b. twice. c. eleven times.

**8. Read 1 John 1:6.** “**Darkness**” is the Greek word *scotia* and describes spiritual darkness characterized by sin, wickedness and error. True or False.

**9. Read 1 John 1:6.** We are lying if we say we have fellowship with God but go on living in spiritual darkness. True or False.

**1JN 1: [7] But if we walk in the light, as he also is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.** (But if we're living in the light, as God does, and living as we sincerely believe He would live if He were in our place, we are having continuous, warm fellowship with Him, as well as with other true followers of the Lord. And when we are in that joyful relationship with God, the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, continues to cleanse us from every sin.)

**Additional Information: (Verses 6-7)** - The word “walk” used in verses 6 & 7 is in the **present tense** meaning “a continuous, uninterrupted, habitual action.” It is the Greek verb *peripateo* and means “to regulate one’s life, to conduct one’s self.” We might sum up John’s teaching this way; if the direction of your life is toward the Source of light, you will find forgiveness for your failures and inadequacies. But if the direction of your life is toward the darkness, then you may be sure you have nothing in common with God. Again, it is direction, not perfection as the apostle Paul so amply shows in Romans 2:7-11. (see Rom. 2:7-11).

John is probably dealing with a real situation where there are those who claim that you can have fellowship with God and live any way you please. This situation had existed earlier, and occasioned the writing of 2 Peter and Jude. These false teachers showed signs of having the warped logic which would permit practicing known and willful sin. In verse six, John tells his readers who does not have fellowship with God. In verse seven he tells them who does have fellowship with God.

**(Verse 7) – “Cleanseth us.”** Walking in the light shows up our sins and frailties; thus we need constant cleansing, and this is available on the basis of the death

of Christ. The verb is in the present tense and it refers to the cleansing in sanctification. “**From all sin.**” “**Sin**” is singular, indicating the principle of sin, but the addition of “**all**” (or every) shows that it has many forms.

**10. Read 1 John 1:6-7.** The word “**walk**” used in verses 6 and 7 is in the present tense in Greek. This means continuous, uninterrupted and habitual action. True or False.

**11. Read 1 John 1:7.** If we live and move within the light, we have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus cleanses us from every sin. True or False.

**12. Read 1 John 1:6-7.** In verse 6, John tells his readers who does not have fellowship with God. In verse 7 he tells them who does have fellowship with God. True or False.

**1JN 1: [8] If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.** (If we say we never sin, we’re only fooling

ourselves, and there's no truth whatever in our claim.)

**Additional Information: (Verse 8, 9, 10)** – John uses the word “**we**” five times in these three verses, identifying himself and his readers with this information. The words “**ourselves**” and “**our**” is also used which is the possessive form of the pronoun *we*.

**(Verse 8) – “If we say that we have no sin.”**

John uses the noun “**sin**” rather than a verb to emphasize sin as a principle of our fallen inclinations (concupiscence). John is probably arguing against those who affirm that sin does not exist as a principle of our fallen inclinations, or those who say the evil actions they commit are not really sin. This heresy is with us today in those who deny the fact of sin and interpret evil in terms of psychological or social *causes*. Believers must be aware that sin is a constant threat in their lives and that they must ever be putting to death its evil deeds through the Holy Spirit who dwells within (Rom. 8:13; Gal. 5:16-25).

**“If we say that we have no sin.”** The phrase to **have sin** is peculiar to John in the New Testament (cf.

Jn. 9:41; 15:22, 24; 19:11). It refers to our fallen inclinations also called concupiscence (the inclination to sin arising from the disobedience of Adam and Eve). The consequences of not confessing that we have sin are:  
(1) we deceive ourselves, literally, lead ourselves astray.  
(2) the truth is not in us; we shut out the light.

**13. Read 1 John 1:8.** If we say “**we have no sin,**” (Rom. 7:23), we deceive ourselves. True or False.

**1JN 1: [9] If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all iniquity.** (But, if we humbly and sincerely make a practice of confessing our sins to God when we have failed Him, He will be faithful and true to His promise to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all the selfish and immoral things we have done.)

**Additional Information: (Verse 9) – “If we confess our sins.”** In countering his opponents’ claim

to be sinless John urges his readers to confess their specific sinful deeds, that is, the evil they have actually done. The pronoun “**our**” refers to the persons who commit the sins. Accordingly the phrase “our sins” may be rendered ‘**the sinful deeds we have done**’. (For an example of this see Acts 8:13, 18-22).

The “**we**” includes John here, and he is speaking of believers. The word “confess” is *homologeō*, from *homos*, “the same,” and *legō*, “to say,” thus, “to say the same thing as another,” or, “to agree with another.” Confession of sin is to say the same thing that God does about that sin. The English word “confess” means “to admit the truth of an accusation, to own up to the fact that one is guilty of having committed the sin.” But the Greek word means far more than that. The verb is present subjunctive, speaking of continuous action. This teaches that the constant attitude of the saint toward sin should be one of a contrite heart, ever eager to have any sin in the life discovered for him by the Holy Spirit, and ever eager to confess it and put it out of the life by the power of that same Holy Spirit. Contrary to the teaching of some, the need for repentance, confession, and forgiveness is ongoing throughout the Christian life. The Church encourages the private confession of sins to

God. Ordinarily, however, this should lead us to the Sacrament of Reconciliation (see also Lev. 5:5-6; Numbers 5:5-7; Jn. 20::23).

**“To forgive our sins.”** “To forgive” is *hina aphei*. *Aphei* is second aorist subjunctive, speaking, not of a process but of a single act here. In 1 John 1:7 we have action, “keeps on continually cleansing,” referring to the constant cleansing of the Christian from the defilement of sins. But sins we confess, as in 1 John 1:9 are isolated instances. Therefore, the aorist tense is used here, speaking of a single act of forgiveness. Not only does God forgive the believer, but He cleanses him from the defilement which he incurred in committing that act of sin. Here the verb “to cleanse” is aorist subjunctive, speaking of a single act of cleansing, for known sin in the life of a Christian.

In modern times some have denied that a Christian needs to confess his sins and ask forgiveness. It is claimed that a believer already has forgiveness in Christ (Eph. 1:7). But this point of view confuses the position which a Christian has in God’s Son (by his faith and baptism) with his needs as a failing individual. It is perfectly understandable how a son may need to ask his father to forgive him for his faults while at the same time

having a position within the family. A Christian who never asks his heavenly Father for forgiveness for his sins can hardly have much sensitivity to the ways in which he grieves his Father. Furthermore, the Lord Jesus Himself taught His followers to seek forgiveness of their sins in a prayer that was obviously intended for daily use (Matt. 6:11-12). When a believer loses personal touch with the God of light, he begins to live in darkness. But confession of sin is the way back into the light.

**14. Read 1 John 1:9.** *If “we” (which includes John and his readers) confess “our” sins.* The pronoun “our” refers to: a. believers. b. unbelievers. c. the Gnostics. d. false teachers. e. persons who commit the sins.

**15. Read 1 John 1:9.** The word “**confess**” means “to admit the truth of an accusation, to own up to the fact that one is guilty of having committed the sin and to say the same thing that God does about that sin.” True or False.

**16. Read 1 John 1:9.** In Greek the word “**confess**” is in the present tense meaning a continuous action, that is,

an eager attitude to confess and put out of one's life and act of sin. True or False.

**17. Read 1 John 1:9.** The verb “**to cleanse**” is aorist subjunctive, speaking of a single act of cleansing (between a child and his father). True or False.

**18. Read 1 John 1:9.** When a Christian begins to lose personal touch with the God of Light, he begins to live in darkness. Repentance and confession of sin is the way back into the light. True or False. (see Acts 8:22).

**1JN 1: [10] If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.** (If we claim we never sin, we're calling God a liar, and have refused to accept what He has so plainly told us about ourselves.)

**Additional Information: (Verse 10)** – In this verse we have the denial of specific acts of sin. After a believer sins, he should not deny that sin. 1 John 1:10 should be

read in direct connection with verse 9. When a Christian is confronted about his sins, he should admit them rather than deny them. To deny one's personal sin in the face of God's testimony to the contrary, is to "make" God "out to be a liar."

**19. Read 1 John 1:10.** To deny one's personal sin in the light of God's truth is to make God out to be a liar. True or False.

## ***1 JOHN CHAPTER 2***

**1JN 2:[1] My little children, these things I write to you, that you may not sin. But if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the just:** (My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you won't sin. But if any of us should sin, we have One who will act as our Lawyer and speak to the Father in our defense. He is

Jesus Christ, the One who always does what is just, right and pleasing to God.)

**Additional Information: (chapter 2 verse 1)** John begins a new sentence in order to enlarge on the subject of sin in the Christian. He does this first negatively (***that you may not sin***) and then positively (***But if any man sin***). It is important to hold these two statements in balance. Too great a lenience would seem almost to encourage sin. An exaggerated severity would almost refuse forgiveness and restoration if one falls. Both extreme positions should be avoided. **“These things I write to you, that you may not sin.”** The gospel, when rightly understood and received, sets the heart against all sin, and stops the allowed practice of it; at the same time it gives blessed relief to the wounded consciences of those who have sinned. **“If any man sin,”** that is, if any believer who has already acknowledged that he was a sinner, and has already been cleansed from his sin by faith and baptism in the atoning sacrifice of Christ, if this person should sin ... Here we have an aorist subjunctive, speaking, not of habitual action, but of a single act. It could better be translated, “if any man

commit an act of sin.” John regards sin in the believer’s life, not as a habitual ongoing lifestyle (that is, a life that shows no repentance or remorse for sin). If we fall into sin as a believer we have an Advocate with the Father. Our Advocate does not plead that we are innocent. He acknowledges our guilt and presents His vicarious work as the ground of our acquittal for those who repent. **“We have an advocate.”** John includes himself in this phrase. **“Advocate with the Father.”** The verb is in the present tense to indicate that the reference is to what is a fact now and will continue to be so. “Advocate” means “one who is called to one’s side” and is rendered by such expressions as “one who speaks on behalf of,” “one going between,” namely, in order to establish or restore friendly relations, “one who defends.”

**20. Read 1 John 2:1.** John was writing this letter to encourage the believers to: a. have fun. b. quit praying. c. not sin. d. take it easy.

**21. Read 1 John 2:1.** If we do sin as a believer (and repent) we have: a. an advocate with the Father. b. a Priest-Friend in the presence of the Father. c. one to

plead our cause with the Father. d. a lawyer to speak to the Father in our defense. e. all of the above.

**1JN 2: [2] And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.** (He's the One who suffered and died on the cross to make amends to God for our sins. And He didn't die for only our sins, but for the sins of everyone in the whole world!)

**Additional Information: (Verse 2) – “He is the propitiation for our sins.”** The basic Greek word for “propitiation” is *hilaskomai* and was used amongst the Greeks with the significance to make the gods propitious, to appease, propitiate, inasmuch as their good will was not conceived as their natural attitude, but something to be earned first. This use of the word is foreign to the Greek Bible, with respect to God, whether in the Septuagint or in the New Testament. It is not used of an act whereby man brings God into a favorable attitude or gracious disposition. It is God who is

propitiated by the sacrifice of Christ. He has so dealt with sin that He can show mercy to the believing sinner in the removal of his guilt and the remission of his sins. Through the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ, he who believes upon Him is by God's own act delivered from justly deserved wrath, and comes under grace. In 1 John 2:2 the Greek word used is *hilasmos* and signifies the means whereby sin is covered and remitted, that is, Christ Himself as "the propitiation. **"For the sins of the whole world."** "For those of the whole world" does not mean that the application of the atonement is automatic for all the individuals in the world, but simply that if anyone in the world will believe in Christ and confess his sin, he too will find the atonement sufficient.

**22. Read 1 John 2:2.** Jesus is: a. the way our sins are taken away. b. the sacrifice for our sins. c. the personal atonement for our sins. c. all of the above.

**1JN 2: [3] And by this we know that we have known him, if we keep his commandments.**  
(Now here's how we can know if we are truly converted to Jesus – if we continue to do what

He has told us to do, and if we refrain from doing what He has told us not to do.)

**Additional Information: (Verse 3)** - The proposition stated in verse 3 starts from the conviction that a man's visible behavior and his invisible relation to God are so closely parallel that one can draw conclusions from the one concerning the other. Accordingly, from the fact that a man keeps God's commandments one can infer that he knows God; the former is the proof of the latter. **"We know that we have known him."** A characteristic phrase of the Letter (1 Jn. 2:3, 5, 29; 3:19, 24; 4:2, 6, 13: 5:2) marking the intention of offering a series of tests by which the reader may discover whether or not he has eternal life (1 Jn. 5:13). **"We have known him, if we keep his commandments."** The verb in this passage implies fellowship and communion with God.

How can we tell if we "know" Him? Part of our problem is that we can be confused by different meanings of the word "know." For instance: "I know that" means I have information. "I know all about bass" may be a claim that I can catch them. "I know Henry"

may express friendship, acquaintance, or simply ability to identify a person in a crowd. “I know Plato” probably is a claim to understand his philosophy. “I know what you mean,” can even be an expression of sympathy. What then does it mean to “know” God? *The Dictionary of NT Theology* points out that the Greek word used here, *ginosko*, means basically “grasping the full reality and nature of an object. It is thus distinguished from mere opinion, which may grasp the object half-correctly, inadequately, or even falsely.” John wrote to people who knew about Jesus, but who were not sure that they knew Him. John launched into an explanation of how we can be sure, *respond to His commands* (1 Jn. 2:3-6). Jesus said, “My sheep hear My voice ... and they follow Me” (Jn. 10:27). John suggest that relationship with God is *demonstrated* by obedience. When the verb in the main clause is in the present tense (**we keep**), or has the force of a present tense, this indicates that the reference is to repeated action. “In this way we know that we *really* know Him,” or “By this we may be sure that we know Him. If we keep (present tense) his commandments.” **His commandments.**” The word “commandments” is *entole*, another word meaning “an order, command, charge, precept.” The precepts

(commandments) are those given by our Lord either personally while on earth or through His apostles.

**23. Read 1 John 2:3.** We can be sure that we know God if: a. we don't watch television. b. we obey His commands.

**1JN 2: [4] He who saith that he knoweth him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.** (The person who says, "I'm a Christian," but doesn't do what Christ has told us to do, and not do, is a liar, and there's no truth in his claim.)

**Additional Information: (verse 4) "He who saith that he knoweth him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar."** Someone may profess a fellowship with God which his life shows he does not possess. John was not afraid to call this kind of claim what it really is: a lie. The phrase "saith" and "keepeth not" are in the present tense in Greek. This means, no matter what a person says and keeps on saying, if they

do not obey Christ, that is, keep and continue to keep his commands or word they lie for the truth is not in them.

John was contending against a misunderstanding of the doctrine of grace and salvation. He opposed antinomian teachers who taught that forsaking a sinful life was optional for the believer. They declared that one can legitimately claim to “know” God in a saving relationship and at the same time be indifferent to the commandments and will of God and disobey them. Those who make such a claim, John states, are liars and do not have the truth of God in them.

**24. Read 1 John 2:4.** If someone says, “I belong to God,” but doesn’t obey God’s commandments, that person is: a. a unhappy Christian. b. a hypocrite. c. a liar.

**1JN 2: [5] But he that keepeth his word, in him in very deed the charity of God is perfected; and by this we know that we are in him.** (But a love for God has truly been perfected in anyone who makes a practice of

obeying what Christ has commanded us. This is how we can have continued, definite assurance that we are united to Him.)

**Additional Information: (verse 5) “He that keepeth his word.” “Keepeth”** is present subjunctive, speaking of habitual, continuous action.

**25. Read 1 John 2:5.** Those who obey God’s word really do: a. love Him. b. put themselves down.

**1JN 2: [6] He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also to walk, even as he walked.** (And whoever claims that he is living in union with Christ, is under a special, personal obligation to consistently live and act as He did.)

**Additional Information: “To walk, even as he walked.” “To walk”** is a present infinitive in the Greek text emphasizing habitual, continuous action. **“Walk”** is *peripateo*, “to conduct one’s self, to order one’s

behavior.” It came to have the idea of the manner of life of the person. The practical realization of love for God is in obedience, in walking as Jesus did.

**26. Read 1 John 2:6.** Whoever claims that he is living in union with Christ, is under a special, personal obligation to consistently: a. live and act however he pleases. b. live and act as Christ did.

**1JN 2: [7] Dearly beloved, I write not a new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which you have heard.** (My dear brothers and sisters, what I’m writing you here is not a new teaching, but an old command that you’ve heard from the very beginning. I’m only emphasizing an old command that you’ve had preached to you continually since the time you first heard the Great News.)

**Additional Information: (verse 7)** “These things I write to you, that you may not sin” (1 Jn. 2:1) is now advanced to its positive aspect of *obeying his commands*. In this section, the view of *his commands* is narrowed to the supreme command which includes all others, that of love (Matt. 22:36-40; Rom. 13:8). The old command which you had from the beginning is undoubtedly love (Lev. 19:18).

**27.** Love is shown in how Jesus lived and acted. True or False (See 1 Jn. 3:16)

**1JN 2: [8] Again a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true both in him and in you; because the darkness is passed, and the true light now shineth.** (And yet, I am also now writing you about a new command. It’s also about what is true concerning Jesus, and what must now also be true about you, because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining.)

**Additional Information: (verse 8)** John is referring to Christ's new command concerning love in John 13:34-35. This is verified in the next three verses.

**28. Read 1 John 2:8.** The new commandment (love) is shown: a. in how Jesus lived. b. in how unbelievers live.

**1JN 2: [9] He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now.** (Anyone who says he is living in the light, and yet has hatred for someone, is still living in darkness).

**Additional Information: (verse 9)** “**He that saith.**” This is the fifth time John points out a possible inconsistency between profession and conduct (1 John 1:6, 8, 10; 2:4; 4:20). “**Hateth his brother,**” is in the present tense in Greek and means that which is continuous, habitual and ongoing. Although this is a true sign of an unbeliever, this warning is clearly intended for Christians as the words “his brother” plainly show. If John thought that no Christian could hate another Christian, there was no

need to personalize the relationship with the word “his.” John was warning his readers against a spiritual danger that is all too real (1 Jn. 1:8, 10). **“Is in darkness.”** This false profession involves existence in the exactly opposite state from that which is claimed.

**29. Read 1 John 2:9.** If we claim to be in the light and hate someone, we are: a. a bad example. b. a bad witness. c. still in the dark.

**1JN 2: [10] He that loveth his brother, abideth in the light, and there is no scandal in him.** (But anyone who truly loves others is one who makes a practice of living in the light. He makes sure there is nothing in his life that will cause others to stumble and sin.)

**Additional Information: (verse 10) “He that loveth his brother.”** This term always implies activity, doing deeds of love. **“There is no scandal in him.”** In Greek the word for “scandal” meant a “trap” or “snare.” It is used metaphorically for what causes a person to err or to sin.

**30. Read 1 John 2:10.** Anyone who loves his brother is living in the light. True or False.

**1JN 2: [11] But he that hateth his brother, is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth; because the darkness hath blinded his eyes.** (But whoever has hatred for someone is in darkness and walks about in darkness. He doesn't even realize where he's headed, because the darkness has blinded him.)

**Additional Information: (verse 11) “knoweth not whither he goeth.”** “He does not know where he is going,” or “he is not aware in what direction he is going or which road he is taking.”

**31. Read Matthew 7:13-14.** Which road are you taking?

**1JN 2: [12] I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his**

**name's sake.** (I am writing to you, my dear children, because your sins have been forgiven because of the effectiveness of what Jesus did when He suffered and died for you.)

**Additional Information: (verse 12) “I write unto you.”** In verses 12-13 John uses the present tense of “to write” (that is, to write and continue to write) and in verses 13-14 the aorist tense. The latter may be rendered “I have written.” **“Your sins are forgiven.”** The perfect tense indicates a situation in the present that is the result of an event or act in the past. “Are forgiven” is *aphiemi*, “to send from one’s self, to send away, to bid go away or depart.” God’s forgiveness includes the putting away of our sins and guilt at the Cross. The verb is in the perfect tense, which tense speaks of a past completed action having present results.

**32. Read 1 John 2:12-14.** John is addressing this letter to: a. the believers. b. the unbelievers.

**1JN 2: [13] I write unto you, fathers,  
because you have known him, who is from**

**the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because you have overcome the wicked one.** (I am writing to you, fathers, because you have truly come to know the One who has been in existence from the very beginning. I am writing to you, young people, because you have conquered the evil one.)

**Additional Information: (verse 13) “You have known”** is *egnokate*, the verb *ginosko* referring to experiential knowledge, knowledge gained by experience, and it is in the perfect tense. These fathers were the older men, mature in the Christian life, having lived in fellowship with the Lord Jesus for many years, and thus having gained much personal knowledge of Him by experience. The perfect tense shows that this knowledge was a well-rounded matured knowledge, the results of which were a permanent possession of these men grown old in the Christian life. **“You have overcome the wicked one”** is in the perfect tense, referring to something that has happened in the past and is a fact in the present.

**33. Read 1 John 2:12-14.** Forgiveness of sins open the way to the knowledge of God. True or False

**1JN 2: [14] I write unto you, babes, because you have known the Father. I write unto you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and you have overcome the wicked one.** (I am also writing to you, dear children, because you have truly come to know the Father. I wrote to you young people in the past, because you are strong, and the word of God lives in you, and you have conquered the evil one.)

**Additional Information: (verse 14) “You know Him.”** Taking verses 12-14 together show that forgiveness of sins because of Christ opens the way to the knowledge of God. **“The word of God abideth in you,”** that is, you put, guard, keep, observe in your heart the word of God or what God has said. “Abide” is *meno*, “to dwell in as a home.” The word of God, residing in their hearts in an unhindered, welcome state, was that which, together

with the power of the Holy Spirit, gave these young men victory over Satan.

**34. Read 1 John 2:14.** The word of God, residing in their hearts in an unhindered, welcome state, was that which, together with the power of the Holy Spirit, gave these young men victory over Satan. True or False

**1JN 2: [15] Love not the world, nor the things which are in the world. If any man love the world, the charity of the Father is not in him.** (But stop your love affair with worldly ambitions and the things of this world! If you persist in loving the world, you show that you have no love for God, your real Father.)

**Additional Information: (verse 15) “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.”** This prohibition (present tense in the original, and thus progressive action) would literally be translated, “Don’t continue your love for the world...” (meaning after you have become a Christian). It follows then, that one who

continues his love for the world while he claims to know and love the Father (v. 15) is a phony. Loving the world (lust, greed, pride, etc.) is the opposite of doing the will of the God. “If any man love the world.” **Love not the world.**” Although John often repeats the importance of love and that God is love (1 Jn. 4:7-8), he also reveals that God hates a certain type of love: love of the world (John 15:18-20). “Love not the world” is a command addressed to all, not to one particular class of people. The word used for “**love**” here is *agapao* and is used in its classical meaning of a love called out of one’s heart by the preciousness of the object loved. The word as used here refers to a fondness, an affection, non-ethical in its content, for an object because of its value. Demas is said to have loved this present age (see 2 Timothy 4:10). He found it precious and thus came to love it. The person who loves the world as a habit of life to the exclusion of love for God, in this person, the love of the Father does not exist (v.15).

**35. Read 1 John 2:15.** Never give your hearts to this world or to any of the things in it. A man cannot love the Father and love the world at the same time. True or False.

**1JN 2: [16] For all that is in the world, is the concupiscence of the flesh, and the concupiscence of the eyes, and the pride of life, which is not of the Father, but is of the world.** (Because all the desires of those who live mainly for this very brief life – the desire to pamper and satisfy the various appetites of the flesh, the desire to buy and have everything that appeals to them, and all the arrogant pride in what they have, do, or have done – doesn't come from the Father but from their love for the world.)

**Additional Information: (verse 16)** The word “**world**” here is *kosmos* and refers to an ordered system. Here it is the ordered system of which Satan is the head, his fallen angels and demons are his emissaries, and the unbelievers of the human race are his subjects, together with those purposes, pursuits, pleasures, practices, and places where God is not wanted.

**“The concupiscence.”** John uses this term negatively here for a strong desire for evil things. **“of the flesh.”** The term refers to the rebellious self dominated by sin and in opposition to God (Gal. 5:19-21). **“the eyes.”** Satan can use the eyes as a strategic avenue to incite wrong desires (Matt. 5:28). **“the pride of life.”** The phrase has the idea of arrogance, haughtiness or exaggeration, parading what one possesses to impress others (Jam. 4:16).

**36. Read 1 John 2:16.** The concupiscence of the flesh, the concupiscence of the eyes and the pride of life is: a. of the Father. b. not of the Father.

**1JN 2: [17] And the world passeth away, and the concupiscence thereof: but he that doth the will of God, abideth for ever.** (Your life in this world, and all the demanding desires of your body and mind, are swiftly passing away, but the one who makes a practice of obeying God will live on in total fulfillment forever!)

**Additional Information: (verse 17)** The word “**concupiscence**” (verse 17) is *epithumia*, meaning “a craving, a passionate desire.” Here it refers to evil cravings. For the phrase “**he that doeth the will of God**” see Matthew 7:21-23, Luke 6:46, James 1:22, Romans 2:7-11. Scripture is clear that human works can never merit forgiveness of sin (Isa. 64:6; Rom. 6:23; Titus 3:5), but grace will produce works through faith as manifestations of God’s saving work in every believer’s life.

**37. Read 1 John 2:17.** The person that does the will of God: a. will perish. b. abideth forever.

**1JN 2: [18] Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that Antichrist cometh, even now there are become many Antichrists: whereby we know that it is the last hour.** (My little children, the end is near! You have heard that the great enemy of Christ is coming, but many enemies of Christ have

already come. So by that we know that the end is near.)

**Additional Information: (verse 18) “Little children, it is the last hour.”** It is to be expected that false prophets will arise since “**it is the last hour,**” that is, the moment just before the end or before the new time or age. The time of this present age which will grow more troublesome immediately preceding the second advent of Christ. A time of trouble and persecution. Since the false teachers were present in John’s day and have been present throughout Church history, the “last hour (time)” must be the entire period between the first and second advents of Christ. The word “last” in “last days,” “last times” and “last hour” also expresses a sense of urgency and imminence. The Christian is to be alert, waiting for the return of Christ (Mt. 25:1-13). The (first) coming of Christ marked the beginning of the “last hour” (see 1 Cor. 10:11; 1 Peter 4:7; Hebrews 9:26); God’s promises of blessings were fulfilled, but there were also prophecies of apostasy (the renunciation or abandonment of a former loyalty to Christ) and the Antichrist yet to come (see 2 Thess. 2:3; 1 Tim. 4:1; 2

Tim. 3:1-4; 4:3; 2 Pet. 2:1; 3:3; Jude 1:4; 1 Jn. 4:1).  
“**Antichrist cometh, even now there are become many Antichrists.**” The Greek word for “**Antichrist(s)**” is *antichristos* and can mean either against Christ or instead of Christ, or perhaps, combining the two, “one who, assuming the guise of Christ, opposes Christ.” One is a pretender to the Messianic office, whereas the other is not pretending to be Christ, but proposing to do the work of Christ. The Greek prefix *anti-* can mean “against” as well as “instead of.” Accordingly, “antichrist” may be taken as describing one who, assuming the guise of Christ, opposes Christ. *Anti* means “opposed” to Christ. Thus, an antichrist is one who opposes Christ under the guise of Christ. They may pose to be part of the Christian assembly outwardly; but they teach false doctrine (1 Jn. 2:19; 2 Jn. 7). Certainly the antichrist’s teaching is here recognized as being fundamentally against Christ and a denial of Christ (1 Jn. 2:22). John says, that “many antichrists” have already entered into the world. These people love the world and its sinful pleasures and distort the good news of Christ, thus placing themselves against Christ. The first characteristic mentioned of antichrists, that is, false teachers and deceivers, is that they depart from the

faithful. Some are manifest in their true colors by their defection and some are manifest in their immoral behavior (Jude 4). They arise and depart from true fellowship and lead people out with them. Apostasy is possible for those who do not walk in the Lordship of Christ. The spirit of antichrist (1 Jn. 4:3) refers to demonic influences which cause and promote anti-Christian or false doctrines and conduct. This plurality of antichrists is characteristic of the “last hour.” Jude and Peter as well have stressed that the false teacher will distort the truth.

**38. Read 1 John 2:18.** The antichrist will oppose Christ, sometimes in the guise of Christ. True or False.

**1JN 2: [19] They went out from us, but they were not of us. For if they had been of us, they would no doubt have remained with us; but that they may be manifest, that they are not all of us.** (These people were once a part of our group, but they didn't really belong to us. Because if they had been a genuine part

of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out from us so that it might be very clear that none of them really belonged to us.)

**Additional Information: (verse 19)** “**They went out from us, but they were not of us.**” “**They went out from us,**” is meant to draw attention to the fact that the antichrists had been members of the congregation, as well as to the fact that they left it. The verb “they went out from us” is in the aorist, indicating that the reference is to a definite event in the past. “**They were not of us.**” The clause serves to say that the antichrists (that is, the false teachers) have been members only in the outward appearance of things, not in the full sense of the word; hence, “these people really did not belong to our group,” “they were not our real companions,” “their hearts were not fully the same as ours.” The false teachers could not abide in the apostles’ teaching (see Acts 2:42), the doctrine of Christ (see Hebrews 6:1-2), so they left the Church (see 2 John 7-11). Not everyone who claims to be a Christian really is a Christian. When disagreement over doctrine arises and there is a division, those who cling to Christ’s and the apostles teaching prove

themselves to be genuine. Those who dispute Christ's teaching and attempt to alter it prove themselves to be false. The apostle would rebuke them and put them out of the Christian fellowship, if they had not left of their own accord. The fact that they were willing to leave rather than confess the true teaching of Christ shows the antichrist spirit. Paul too warns against false teachers who will arise from among the believers (see Acts 20:29-31). Visible membership in the church does not guarantee truth. The writer's point was that these men did not really share the spirit and perspective of the apostolic circle. Heresy, whether on the part of Church members or people of the world, always unmasks a fundamental disharmony with the spirit and doctrine of the apostles (see Acts 2:42; 2 John 9). A man in touch with God will submit to apostolic instruction (see 1 John 4:6).

**39. Read 1 John 2:19.** These enemies of Christ: a. was in our fellowship (our Church). b. went out from our number. c. went out from our company. d. all of the above.

**1JN 2: [20] But you have the unction from the Holy One, and know all things.** (But all of you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all about these things.)

**Additional Information: (verse 20) “But you have the unction...and know all things.”** The word “unction” is *chrisma*. Here it refers to the Holy One (probably Jesus or the Holy Spirit) with whom the believer is anointed. The two words meaning “to anoint” in the New Testament, *aleipho* and *chrio*, refer to the act of applying something to something else for a certain purpose. One of the ministries of the Spirit consequent upon His indwelling presence is that of enlightening him regarding the meaning of truth. He is the Great Teacher in the Church. As a result of this, John says, “Ye know all things.” That is, as a result of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the Church is given the ability to know God’s truth.

**40. Read 1 John 2:20.** The Holy One has come upon you, and you: a. know the truth. b. don’t know the truth.

**1JN 2: [21] I have not written to you as to them that know not the truth, but as to them that know it: and that no lie is of the truth. (I have not written you because you don't know the truth; I've written because you do know the truth. And you know that no false teaching has truth as its foundation.)**

**Additional Information: (verse 21)** Many false teachings develop when truth is twisted and perverted.

**41. Read 1 John 2:21.** No false teaching has truth as its foundation. True or False

**1JN 2: [22] Who is a liar, but he who denieth that Jesus is the Christ? This is Antichrist, who denieth the Father, and the Son. (Who, then, is the monstrous liar? It's anyone who says that Jesus is not the Messiah! He is an enemy of Christ. He's denying both the Father and the Son.)**

**Additional Information: (verse 22) “He who denieth that Jesus is the Christ. This is antichrist.”** “Christ” (Greek *Christos*, Hebrew translated as “Messiah”). The literal meaning of the word (both Greek and Hebrew) is “the Anointed One.” In early times priests and kings were anointed with oil as a sign that God had chosen them. In the New Testament the word refers especially to the One who was expected to bring in God’s Kingdom. To deny Jesus is the Christ (anointed king) would be to deny his Kingship and Lordship (see Acts 17:7; 1 Cor. 12:3). The truth which makes it possible to tell Christians from antichrists is the truth that Jesus is the Christ. **“Antichrist.”** (Greek *antichristos*): 1 John 2:18, 22; 4:3; 2 John 7; 2 Th. 2:3. In certain passages of the New Testament there are clear warnings that before Christ returns there would be persecution and bitter opposition to the people of Christ. These ideas of opposition and persecution had long been present in Jewish minds as they contemplated the end of the age and the coming of the Messianic Kingdom. The opposition to Christ would be led by the Antichrist, a superhuman figure, Satanic in power, attributes and character. This Antichrist would be a real person who would play his part in history. Both the appearance of

this person and the historical events accompanying a time of apostasy and persecution would be signs of the approaching end of all things.

**42. Read 1 John 2:22.** The person who says that Jesus is not the Christ (Messiah) is antichrist. True or False

**1JN 2: [23] Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father. He that confesseth the Son, hath the Father also.** (Whoever denies the Son His rightful place, doesn't have the Father either. But whoever confesseth the Son, has the Father also.)

**Additional Information: (verse 23) “He that confesseth the Son.”** “The one who confesses (acknowledgeth) the Son, also has the Father.” The word “confesseth” is *homologeō*, “to speak the same thing that another does,” hence, “**to agree with that person.**” The construction of this verb with *en*, in, followed by the dative case of the personal pronoun, had a special significance, namely, to confess in a person's name, the suggestion being to make a public confession

(see Matt. 10:32; Luke 12:8). This conveys the thought of confessing allegiance to Christ as one's Master and Lord (Rom. 10:9), and, on the other hand, of acknowledgment, on His part, of the faithful one as being His worshipper and servant, His loyal follower; this is appropriate to the original idea in *homologeō* of being identified in thought or language.

**43. Read 1 John 2:23.** Whoever denies the Son his rightful place doesn't have the Father. True or False.

**1JN 2: [24] As for you, let that which you have heard from the beginning, abide in you. If that abide in you, which you have heard from the beginning, you also shall abide in the Son, and in the Father.** (So make sure that what you heard from the beginning continues to be a dominating force in your life. If you do, you will remain in union with the Son and with the Father.)

**Additional Information: (verse 24) “Let that which you have heard from the beginning, abide in you.”**

The point is, they (the false teachers) did not. They at one time subscribed to the true doctrine concerning the Person of the Lord Jesus, but they departed from it (1 Jn. 2:19). “Abide” is *meno* “to remain.” The exhortation is that the believer should allow the teaching into which they were brought when they were converted to remain in them. They are to continue to hold it fast. It is the responsibility of the believer to nurture, cling and remain true to the apostles doctrine (Acts 2:42). All this is included in the content of meaning of the word *meno* (abide). The Church from this point of view (verse 24), simply reminds the faithful of what they already know (at least in principle), and clarifies their thinking by directing it into practical channels. **“If that abide in you, which you have heard from the beginning, you also shall abide in the Son, and in the Father.”** A believer will abide in Christ if he abides in the teaching of Christ and the apostles (Acts 2:42). The words, “abide, remain and continue” in this verse are the same word in the Greek (*meno*). *Meno* means “to be kept, to dwell, to remain, not to depart, not to leave, to continue, to endure.” This suggests to abandon the doctrine of the apostles is

spiritually fatal. Christians must remain true in their theology always adhering to the apostolic faith. For this reason, it is important to hold fast to the truth (Jn. 14:6); our very souls depend on it (see 1 Timothy 4:16).

**44. Read 1 John 2:24.** A believer will abide in Christ if he abides in the teaching of Christ and the apostles.  
True or False.

**1JN 2: [25] And this is the promise which he hath promised us, life everlasting.** (And this is what Christ Himself has promised to give us – everlasting life!)

**Additional Information: (verse 25) “And this is the promise ...life everlasting.”** John’s point was that if the readers would resist the lies of the antichrists and let the truth they had heard from the beginning “abide” in them, they would continue in the Son, and in the Father (v. 24). They could also continue to rest on the divine promise of eternal life.

45. Read 1 John 2:25. God's promise to us is life everlasting. True or False.

**1JN 2: [26] These things have I written to you, concerning them that seduce you.** (I have written these things to warn you about those who are doing their best to lead you astray.)

**Additional Information: (verse 26) "Concerning them that seduce you."** The word "**seduce**" used here is *planao* and means "to cause to stray, to lead astray, lead aside from the right way, to lead away from the truth, to lead into error, to deceive, and to be led aside from the path of virtue." The word "**error**" is *plane* and means "a wandering, a forsaking of the right path," (see James 5:20), whether in doctrine, or in morals. In Scripture, doctrine and morals are never divided by any sharp line. "Errors" in doctrine are not infrequently the effect of relaxed morality, and vice versa. "**Concerning them that seduce you**" is in the Greek a participle of the present tense. This tense serves here to indicate the continuing attempt of the deceivers.

**46. Read 1 John 2:26.** We need to be aware of those who would lead us astray. True or False.

**1JN 2: [27] And as for you, let the unction, which you have received from him, abide in you. And you have no need that any man teach you; but as his unction teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie. And as it hath taught you, abide in him.** (But as for you, the anointing of the Holy Spirit which you received from the Lord remains upon you, and you don't need anyone else to teach you. But under His anointing, the Spirit continues to teach you about everything. And what He teaches is the truth, not a lie. So believe and obey what the Spirit has taught you, and you will remain in Christ.)

**Additional Information: (verse 27) “You have no need that any man teach you.” “Teach” is in the present subjunctive, emphasizing continuous action. The**

translation reads, “and no need are you constantly having that anyone be constantly teaching you.” This does not set aside the usefulness and necessity of God-appointed and equipped teachers in the Church (Eph. 4:11; Acts 13:1), but merely means that Christians are not at the mercy of these false teachers. Believers have four safeguards against error – the Church (1 Tim. 3:15), Tradition (2 Thess. 2:15), the Bible (2 Tim. 3:16), and the Holy Spirit (Jn. 14:17). Christ promised to send the Holy Spirit to teach his followers and to remind them of all that Christ had taught (see John 14:26). It is by these possessions, not by new teachings or teachers that we shall abide in the truth.

**47. Read 1 John 2:27.** The unction or anointing within the Church safe guards the believers. True or False.

**1JN 2: [28] And now, little children, abide in him, that when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be confounded by him at his coming.** (And now, my little children, remain in Christ so that when He is revealed in the heavens at His second coming

to earth, we may approach Him with confident boldness, and not shrink away from Him in shame when He comes.)

**Additional Information: (verse 28) “Little children, abide (remain) in him.”** John warned against false christ’s or messiahs and against those who deny Jesus is the messianic Son of God. He looked to Christ’s appearance (*phanerro*) and His coming (*parousia*), both technical terms referring to the final coming. Like Paul (see 1 Th. 3:13), James (see Jam. 5:7-8), and Peter (see 2 Pet. 3:11-12), John connected the final coming with his call to continued faithfulness. Faith that Christ will come again calls us to “abide or remain in Him.” Men will react to His coming in one of two ways. Some will *have confidence*; others will be confounded or shrink from Him in shame.

**48.** Men will react to Jesus’ coming in one of two ways, confidence or shame. True or False

**1JN 2: [29] If you know, that he is just, know ye, that every one also, who doth justice, is**

**born of him.** (If you know that God always does what is just and right, you know that everyone who makes a practice of doing what is just and right has been given spiritual birth by Him.)

**Additional Information: (verse 28-29)** The visible proof of being a Christian is right behavior. Many people do good deeds but don't have faith in Jesus Christ. Others claim to have faith but rarely produce good deeds. A deficit in either faith or right behavior will be a cause for shame when Christ returns. Because true faith always results in works of faith, those who claim to have faith and who consistently do what is right are true believers (Ephesians 2:8-10). There is necessary proof that true faith is actually present (James 2:14-17). **(verse 29)** **“Know ye, that every one also, who doth justice, is born of him.”** **“Doeth”** is from the present tense participle of *poieo*. The habitual doing of God's will is in view here. The habitual actions of a person are an index of his true nature. The habitual actions of righteousness, God's justice here as produced by the Holy Spirit is an indication of spiritual birth (see Romans 2:7-9).

**49. Read 1 John 2:29.** In this we see the mark of a believer, the one who practices what is just and right is God's true child. True or False.

### **1 JOHN CHAPTER 3**

**1JN 3:[1] Behold what manner of charity the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called, and should be the sons of God. Therefore the world knoweth not us, because it knew not him.** (Just think how enormously God loves us, when you consider that He calls us His children – which, indeed, we are! And the reason the people of the world refuse to recognize us for who we really are, is for the same reason they refuse to recognize Jesus for who He is.)

**Additional Information: (verse 1) “Behold, what manner of charity.”** The Greek word “**behold**” is *eido* and means “to turn the eyes, the mind, the attention to

anything, to pay attention.” In this verse it means to pay special attention to how much the Father really loves us. **“The Father hath bestowed upon us.”** **“Hath bestowed”** is from *dedoken*, the perfect tense form of *didomi*, “to give something to someone.” The perfect tense is used here to indicate that the gift becomes a permanent possession of the recipient. God has placed His love upon the believer in the sense that they have become the object of His love. One of the results of this love in action is that we are called sons of God.

**50. Read 1 John 3:1.** God shows how very much He loves us by allowing us to be called: a. the sons of thunder. b. the children of the world. c. the sons of God.

**1JN 3: [2] Dearly beloved, we are now the sons of God; and it hath not yet appeared what we shall be. We know, that, when he shall appear, we shall be like to him: because we shall see him as he is.** (My dear friends, we are now already God’s children, but it hasn’t yet been revealed what God’s ultimate

plans are for us as His children. But we do know that when Christ is revealed in His glory in the heavens, we will be like Him, because we will see Him as He really is.)

**Additional Information: (verse 2)** As children of God, we belong in the same family. God has not yet revealed what we will become. We do know when Christ appears we shall be with Him, know Him in His true nature, and become like Him, thus revealing the true image of God.

**51. Read 1 John 3:2.** All that we are going to be has not yet been made clear to us. But we know that when Christ appears again: a. we shall run and hide. b. we will be like Him! c. we shall see Christ as He really is.

**1JN 3: [3] And every one that hath this hope in him, sanctifieth himself, as he also is holy.** (And everyone who has this glorious hope in what God has promised, purifies himself – with the intent and desire to be just as pure as Christ is.)

**Additional Information: (verse 3)** Every person who has the hope of seeing Jesus sanctifieth, purifieth and continues to purify himself (the Greek uses the present tense meaning habitual action). The Christian life is a process of becoming more and more like Christ (see Rom. 8:29; 2 Cor. 3:18). Knowing that Christ likeness is our ultimate destiny should motivate us to sanctification and purity with dependence upon the Holy Spirit.

**52. Read 1 John 3:3.** All that have the glorious hope in what God has promised at Christ's return will: a. be careful to attend Mass at Easter. b. keep themselves pure, just as Christ is pure. c. live as if it doesn't matter what you do.

**1JN 3: [4] Whosoever committeth sin committeth also iniquity; and sin is iniquity.** (Everyone who makes a practice of sinning is actually living in rebellion against God and breaking His laws, because all sinning is a breaking of God's laws.)

**Additional Information: (verse 4) “Whosoever committeth sin.”** Now John shows the incompatibility of being a child of God and yet continuing in sin. “Committeth” is in the present tense in Greek which conveys continuous or habitual action. John is saying that whosoever continues in a lifestyle of sin also continues to transgress God’s law (which is iniquity). In its broadest use this consist of breaking the law of one’s conscience (Romans 2:14), the moral principles contained in the law of Moses (EX. 20:2-17), and the law of Christ (Galatians 6:2; 1 Corinthians 9:21). **“Sin is iniquity.”** Literally, *sin is lawlessness*. The terms are interchangeable. Sin is lawlessness (iniquity) and lawlessness (iniquity) is sin. The Gnostic idea that matter was evil and only spirit was good led to the idea that either the body should be treated harshly, a form of asceticism, or sin committed in the body had no connection or effect on one’s spirit (see 2 Cor. 7:1; Prov. 18:14; 1 Th. 5:23). This led some, especially John’s opponents, to conclude that sin committed in the physical body did not matter; absolute indulgence in immorality was permissible; one could deny sin even existed (1 John 1:8-10) and disregard God’s law (1 John 3:4). John emphasized the need for obedience to God’s

laws, for he defined the true love of God as obedience to His commandments (1 John 5:3).

**53. Read 1 John 3:4.** Everyone who practices sin also practices: a. lawlessness and iniquity. b. on the piano. c. magic.

**54. Read 1 John 3:4.** Sin is: a. bad. b. lawlessness.

**1JN 3: [5] And you know that he appeared to take away our sins, and in him there is no sin.** (You all know that the Lord Jesus appeared among us to take away our sins. And not even once did He disobey God and sin.)

**Additional Information: (verse 5) “He appeared to take away our sins.”** Under the Old Testament sacrifice system, a lamb without blemish was offered as a sacrifice for sin. Jesus is “the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world” (Jn. 1:29). Because Jesus lived a perfect life and sacrificed himself for our sins, we

can be completely forgiven (1 Jn. 2:2). We can look to Him and know that we need never suffer eternal death (1 Peter 1:18-20).

**55. Read 1 John 3:5.** Jesus appeared in visible form and became a man: a. to take away our sins. b. to start another religion.

**1JN 3: [6] Whosoever abideth in him, sinneth not; and whosoever sinneth, hath not seen him, nor known him.** (No one who lives in union with Him, in heart and mind, will keep on sinning. Anyone who does continue to live in sin hasn't yet come to understand Him or know Him.)

**Additional Information: (verse 6) “Whosoever sinneth (present tense) hath not seen him, nor known Him.”** In verses 4-10 John shows the basic contrast between light and darkness, between the children of God and of the world. It is explained as a contrast between those who practice sin and those who do not. Jesus was

sinless, and what is more He came to take away sin (1 Jn. 3:5). Conversion sets a person irrevocably against sin because the seed of new life “abideth” in that person (1 Jn. 3:9). “**Whosoever sinneth**” is in the present tense in Greek and suggests behavior that is characteristic, usual, habitual and a lifestyle. John acknowledged, but does not excuse, the possibility of the believer sinning (1 Jn. 1:8), but it is not his true nature to do so (1 Jn. 3:9). A believer who commits a sin repents, confesses and receives cleansing (1 Jn. 1:9; Acts 8:22; 2 Cor. 7:8-9; 2 Cor. 12:21; Rev. 2:5; Rev. 2:16; Rev. 3:3; Rev. 3:19). A person who continues to sin, by contrast, is not sorry for what he or she is doing. Thus this person never repents nor turns to God. Such a person is in opposition to God, no matter what religious claims he or she makes (Rom. 2:8-9; 1 Jn. 3:6).

**56. Read 1 John 3:6.** People who stay one in their hearts with Christ: a. obey their parents. b. attend Mass at Christmas. c. won't go on sinning, that is, practice sin.

**57. Read 1 John 3:6.** Those who habitually practice sin don't know Him (Jesus) or understand who He is. True or False.

**1JN 3: [7] Little children, let no man deceive you. He that doth justice is just, even as he is just.** (My little children, don't let anyone ever fool you into believing that a person can be right with God even if he doesn't live right. It's the person who lives a good, just, upright life in obedience to God, even as Christ did, who is right with God.)

**Additional Information: (verse 7) "Let no man deceive you,"** expresses a warning against the false teachers, that is, do not be deceived by any one. **"He that doeth justice (righteousness) is just (righteous)."** If a person does what is right he actually is right, he has repented, one is what one does. Probably this sentence is also aimed at a doctrine of the false teachers, who held that their acts did not matter once they had reached the state of righteousness. The

heretics appear to have indulged in the subtly perverse reasoning that somehow you could *be* righteous without necessarily bothering to *practice* righteousness. John roundly denies the possibility. Doing is the test of *being*. It is obvious that there were teachers around with a sophisticated theory of salvation which left plenty of room for illicit behavior. John was neither the first to encounter this, nor the first to declare that such people try to lead you astray (1 Cor. 6:9; Eph. 5:6).

**58. Read 1 John 3:7.** Don't let anyone fool you into believing that a person can be right with God even if he doesn't live right. It is the person who lives right, who is right with God. True or False.

**1JN 3: [8] He that committeth sin is of the devil: for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose, the Son of God appeared, that he might destroy the works of the devil.** (Anyone who continues to live in sin is acting just like the devil, and he belongs to him, because the devil has continued to sin

ever since he first introduced sin into the universe. The reason the Son of God came to earth in human form was for the very purpose of destroying the devil's work in our lives.)

**Additional Information: (verse 8) “He that committeth sin is of the devil.”** Whereas the man who does right lives according to the norms of God, sinners live according to the norms of the devil, God's adversary. “**Committeth**” is *poieo*, in a present tense participle, “He who is continually doing sin,” that is, “He that makes sin his business or practice.” “**Of**” is *ek*, “out of.” He who continually does sin is out of the devil as a source. “Those who do what is sinful belong to the devil. They are just like him.” “**The devil sinneth from the beginning.**” The Greek verb is in the present tense, indicating habitual action: the devil was sinning when the world began and has continued to do so ever since. “**For this purpose, the Son of God appeared, that He might destroy the works of the devil.**” Just as the devil cannot be conquered except by Christ's help, so we cannot free ourselves from this slavery by our own strength.

**(verses 7-8)** These verses suggest strongly that the doctrine of the antichrists involved a confusion between sin and righteousness. Perhaps the antichrists felt free to sin while at the same time denying their guilt. John warned against such ideas: All sin is satanic in nature. To take part in sin at all is to take part in his activity. It is also opposing the work of the Son of God who came to put an end to that activity (1 Jn. 3:8). Even the smallest sin runs counter to the work of Christ. Believers are to *overcome* “the evil one” (1 Jn. 2:13-14), not to *participate* in what he is. He that abides in Christ, continues not in the practice of sin. Renouncing sin is the great proof of spiritual union with, continuance in, and saving knowledge of the Lord Christ. Let us not serve or indulge what the Son of God came to destroy. Renewing grace is an abiding principle. Religion is not an art, a matter of dexterity and skill, but a new nature. And the regenerate person cannot sin as he did before he was born anew, and as others do who are not converted. There is a spiritual principle that opposes sinful acts. And there is repentance for sin, if committed.

We all have areas where temptation is strong and habits are hard to conquer. These weaknesses give the devil a foothold, so we must deal with our areas of

vulnerability. If we are struggling with a particular sin, however, these verses are not directed at us, even if for the time we seem to keep on sinning. John is not talking about people whose victories are still incomplete; he is talking about people who make a practice of sinning and look for ways to justify it. Steps are necessary to find victory over prevailing sin: (1) The power of the Holy Spirit. (2) the Sacraments. (3) God's Word. (4) Staying away from tempting situations. (5) Seeking the help of the Church, by prayer and the willingness to hold yourself accountable through Confession, etc.

**59. Read 1 John 3:8.** The one who practices sin: a. is a bad example. b. will get in trouble. c. is of the devil.

**60. Read 1 John 3:8.** The reason the Son of God came to earth was: a. to destroy the devil's work. b. to preach good sermons.

**1JN 3: [9] Whosoever is born of God, committeth not sin: for his seed abideth in him, and he can not sin, because he is born of God.** (When God makes someone His child,

that person no longer continues to live in sin, because the new principle for living, which he has received from God, now operates in him. So he cannot continue living in sin, because he is now born of God.)

**Additional Information: (verse 9) “Whosoever is born of God, committeth not sin.”** Some teach that the “seed” of God that dwells in the believer is that part that does not commit sin. As true as that may seem the Greek present tense is used. This means that no one who is born of God “continues to sin,” “practices sin,” or “keeps on sinning.” “Sin” (Gk. *hamartano*) is a present active infinitive, implying continued action. John emphasizes that one truly born of God cannot make sin his way of life because the life of God cannot exist in one who practices sin (1 Jn. 1:5-7; 2:3-11, 15-17, 24-29; 3:6-24; 4:7-8, 20).

(1) To be born anew produces spiritual life resulting in an ever-present relationship with God. In this epistle, every time John speaks of a new birth, he uses the Greek perfect tense to emphasize the

continued and sustained relationship which the new birth began (1 Jn. 2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18).

(2) For one to have God's life in him and to go on practicing a lifestyle of sin is a spiritual impossibility. A believer may lapse from God's high standard, but he will not continue a lifestyle of sin (1 Jn. 3:6, 10).

(3) That which keeps the faithful from sinning is God's "seed" in him. The picture is of human reproduction, in which the sperm (the Greek for "seed" is *sperma*) bears the life principle and transfers the paternal characteristics. The "seed" is God's very life, Spirit, and nature dwelling within the believer (1 Jn. 5:11-12; John 1:1; 15:4; 2 Pet. 1:4). "He cannot sin" means "cannot go on sinning." Not a complete cessation of sin, but a life that is not characterized by sin.

(4) All believers can live moment by moment free from offense and sin, by the faith of the Son of God (Gal. 2:20), the indwelling Christ (Rom. 8:9), the power of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:13), the Word of God (Jn. 15:3; Eph. 6:17), use of the Sacraments of the Church, etc. The apostle Paul called both the Church and God Himself as witnesses that the sufficient grace of God through Christ had enabled him, to cleanse himself "from all defilement of the flesh and of the spirit, perfecting

sanctification in the fear of God” (2 Cor. 7:1; 2 Cor. 1:12; 6:3-10; 1 Thess. 1:5).

**61. Read 1 John 3:9.** No one who is born of God practices sin, because: a. they can get into trouble. b. the police can arrest them. c. God’s seed abides in them, that is, God’s life and nature lives in them.

**1JN 3: [10] In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil. Whosoever is not just, is not of God, nor he that loveth not his brother.** (Here’s how you can tell the children of God from the devil’s children: Anyone who doesn’t make a practice of doing what’s right is not a child of God. The same is true of anyone who doesn’t treat others with love.)

**Additional Information: (verse 10) “In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil.”** This is the heart and conclusion of John’s teaching in 1 John 2:28-3:10. He has warned the reader

not to be deceived about the nature of salvation (1 Jn. 3:7). Consequently, the believer must reject any theology or teaching which alleges that one can be out of fellowship with God (1 Jn. 1:3), continue in sin, do the works of the devil (1 Jn. 3:8), love the world (1 Jn. 2:15), do harm to others (1 Jn. 3:14-18), and yet be assured that he is a child of God.

Contrary to some teaching, John clearly believed that anyone who continues in sin (1 Jn. 3:9) “is of the devil” (1 Jn. 3:8) and “is not of God” (1 Jn. 3:10). If the one who habitually practices sin claims to possess eternal life and be God’s child, he is deceived and “is a liar” (1 Jn. 2:4). Furthermore, what characterizes a true child of God is a love for God manifested in keeping His commandments (1 Jn. 5:2) and showing genuine concern for the spiritual and physical needs of other Christians (1 Jn. 3:16-17).

**(verses 9-10)** John does not teach perfectionism; otherwise, he would contradict himself (1 Jn. 1:8-9). By using the Greek present tense, John does not declare that Christians are unable to commit an act of sin (1 Jn. 1:8-10; 2:1), but that they are not characterized by the spirit of lawlessness (1 Jn. 3:4). Sin is natural to children of the Devil, who has sinned

from the beginning, but unnatural to children of God, who cannot sin without the Spirit's conviction. A constant indulgence in sin contradicts the claim to have a personal knowledge of Christ.

**62. Read 1 John 3:10.** You can tell God's children from the devil's children, because those who belong to the devil refuse to do right or to love each other. True or False.

**1JN 3: [11] For this is the declaration, which you have heard from the beginning, that you should love one another.** (Because this is the message you heard from the very beginning, that we are to always love each other.)

**Additional Information: (verse 11) "For this is the declaration, which you have heard from the beginning, that you should love one another."** The same expression, almost verbatim, appears in 1 Jn. 1:5, "And this is the declaration which we have heard from

him ...” It appears again at 1 Jn. 2:7 and 1 Jn. 2:25. The formula stresses that what is expressed was an important part of the Word of God. John had also expressed in his Gospel (Jn. 13:34-35) that love for one another should be an identifying characteristic of Christians. **“That you should love one another.”** The command that “You should love one another” goes back to Christ Himself (Jn. 13:34) to “the beginning” of the gospel. The verb is in the present tense, expressing duration.

**63. Read 1 John 3:11.** The original command is: a. do the best you can. b. pray often. c. you should love one another.

**1JN 3: [12] Not as Cain, who was of the wicked one, and killed his brother. And wherefore did he kill him? Because his own works were wicked: and his brother's just.**  
(Don't be like Cain, who belonged to Satan and killed his own brother. And why did he kill him? Because he thought only of himself, and lived

to please himself, while his brother lived to please and obey God.)

**Additional Information: (verse 12) “Not as Cain, who was of the wicked one.”** Cain “was of the wicked one.” The words “wicked one” are the translation of *poneros*, “evil in active opposition to good.” A *poneros* person, seeks to drag everyone else down with himself into the corruption and destruction that awaits him. That is Satan. **“And killed his brother.”** The word “killed” is *sphazo*, “to slay, slaughter, butcher, by cutting the throat.” It is used in the LXX (Greek translation of the Old Testament), of the slaying of the Levitical sacrifices (Lev. 1:5). The inspired writer goes out of his way to use a specialized word to describe the murder of Abel by Cain. The latter cut his brother’s throat. The method Cain used to kill his brother was one in which much blood would be shed. The cutting of the jugular vein would fit that description. **“His own works were wicked.”** Cain’s works are described as wicked. The same word (*poneros*) is used when the devil is spoken of as “that wicked one.” His works were pernicious, actively opposed to that which is good. Scripture

presents Cain outwardly as a God-worshiper who even offered sacrifice (Gen. 4:3-5). Cain's murderous actions, however, revealed that inwardly he was a child of the devil (Jn. 8:44).

**64. Read 1 John 3:12.** Cain killed his brother Abel because: a. he was better looking. b. he wanted his money. c. he thought only of himself, and lived to please himself, while his brother lived to please and obey God.

**1JN 3: [13] Wonder not, brethren, if the world hate you.** (So don't be surprised, my brothers and sisters, if the people who live to please themselves instead of God during their brief time in this world, hate you.)

**Additional Information: (verse 13) "Wonder not, brethren, if the world hate you."** It is only to be expected that the wicked should continue to regard and treat the righteous as Cain regarded and treated his righteous brother Abel. Jesus warned us that it would be so (see Jn. 15:18-19, 25; 16:1-3; 17:14), and by its

hatred the world is simply giving evidence of its true spiritual condition, which is “death” (1 Jn. 3:14).

**65. Read 1 John 3:13.** Do not be surprised, my fellow Christians, if: a. the world likes you. b. others think you are great. c. the world hates you.

**1JN 3: [14] We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not, abideth in death.** (We know we have escaped the second death [the state of spiritual death and damnation; Rev. 20:14] and now have the promise of eternal life, because we love all who faithfully love, serve, and obey the Lord. In fact, anyone who doesn't truly love all others who are true followers of Christ is still under the condemnation of the second death.)

**Additional Information: (verse 14) “We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren.”** The fact that *we love the brethren* gives us a

good ground for certainty that we possess eternal life. John associates himself with his readers in this glorious affirmation. Love is the surest test of having life. Love for fellow Christians is just as much a characteristic of the new nature of believers as righteous living (see John 13:35).

**66. Read 1 John 3:14.** We know we have escaped the second death [the state of spiritual death and damnation; Rev. 20:14] and now have the promise of eternal life, because we love all who faithfully love, serve and obey the Lord. True or False.

**1JN 3: [15] Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer. And you know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in himself.**

(Whoever hates his brother or sister is a murderer. And you know that no murderer has eternal life in him.)

**Additional Information: (verse 15) “Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer. And you know that**

**no murderer hath eternal life abiding in himself.”**

The lack of love is evidence of spiritual death. He is not necessarily denying the possibility of repentance and of forgiveness to a murderer. He is rather stating a general principle.

**67. Read 1 John 3:15.** Anyone who hates another is really a murderer at heart. True or False.

**1JN 3: [16] In this we have known the charity of God, because he hath laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.** (We know what true love is, because we saw it when Jesus Christ laid down His life for us. And we should be just as willing to give our lives for each other, whenever necessary.)

**Additional Information: (verse 16) “In this we have known the charity of God, because he hath laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.”** The sacrificial death of Christ

defines what love is. Love can be defined only in action. The supreme expression of love is the death of Christ on our behalf. True love acts to help the one in need.

**68. Read 1 John 3:16.** We understand the nature of love from the fact that Christ laid down His life for us. True or False.

**1JN 3: [17] He that hath the substance of this world, and shall see his brother in need, and shall shut up his bowels from him: how doth the charity of God abide in him?** (So if we have the means to support life, and we see one of our own people in need, but we take no action to help that person, how can we dare say we love God?)

**Additional Information: (verse 17) “He that hath the substance of this world, and shall see his brother in need, and shall shut up his bowels from him: how doth the charity of God abide in him?”** This verse gives an example of how to lay down our lives for others –

to help those in need. John is quick to note that love is not a feeling or an intention. Love is a choice, a course of action. To refuse to give of our food, clothing, or money to help others in real need is to close our hearts to them (see Deut. 15:7-11). The Bible repeatedly places great value on gifts to the poor. Jesus emphasized giving as He spoke of the Good Samaritan (Lk. 10:30-37) and of giving a cup of water in His Name (Mt. 10:42), etc., in so doing the believer is actually giving unto Him (Mt. 25:40).

**“He that hath the substance of this world.”**

**“Hath”** is present subjunctive, speaking of habitual possession. The verb speaks of a person who regularly has the necessities of life. **“And shall see his brother in need.”** **“See”** is *theoreo*, the verb speaks of continuous action. This person deliberately contemplates over a protracted space of time. This is not a hasty glance. It is seeing a Christian in need of the necessities of life over a long period. **“And shall shut up his bowels from him.”** **“Shut up”** is *kleio*. The word could be used of the slamming of a door. It speaks here of this person who snaps shut the door of his heart against any compassionate feelings toward his needy brother and against any merciful actions. **“Bowels”** is

*splagchna*, the oriental metaphor for what we speak of as the heart. This term is used figuratively for the seat of emotions, especially the seat and source of love, sympathy, and pity.

**69. Read 1 John 3:17.** If we have all we need and see one of our own people in need, we must have pity on that person, or else we cannot say we love God. True or False.

**1JN 3: [18] My little children, let us not love in word, nor in tongue, but in deed, and in truth.** (My dear children, we should always love with sincerity and in truth by what we do, and not merely talk about the situation.)

**Additional Information: (verse 18)** “Let us not love in word, nor in tongue; but in deed, and in truth.” John does not say: “Let us love those who are saintly, agreeable, and rich.” No, he says: “Let us love the brethren,” in such a way that then nothing but brotherhood is loved and regarded; for a brother is loved out of a sense of duty, not because of usefulness and

not because of praise. All the gifts we have should serve those who do not have them. For example, he who is learned should serve him who is not learned; he who is rich should serve him who is poor; he who is sensible should serve him who is foolish, etc.

**70. Read 1 John 3:18.** You show love for others by truly helping them, and not merely by talking about it. True or False.

**1JN 3: [19] In this we know that we are of the truth: and in his sight shall persuade our hearts. [20] For if our heart reprehend us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. [21] Dearly beloved, if our heart do not reprehend us, we have confidence towards God:** (When our love is of the kind that results in sincere action, we can know that we are indeed true followers of the Lord. This will assure our own hearts and minds that we are truly pleasing to God. Because if our conscience condemns us, just

remember that God is far greater than our conscience. He knows every single thing about us. And so, my dear friends, if our conscience does not condemn us, then we can approach God with bold confidence.)

**Additional Information: (verse 20) “For if our heart reprehend us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.”** Many are afraid that they don't love others as they should. They feel guilty because they think they are not doing enough to show proper love to Christ. Their consciences bother them. John has these people in mind in this letter. How do we escape the gnawing accusations of our consciences? Not by ignoring them or rationalizing our behavior, but by setting our hearts on God's love. When we feel guilty, we should remind ourselves that God knows our motives as well as our actions. His voice of assurance is stronger than the accusing voice of our conscience. If we are in Christ, he will not condemn us (Rom. 8:1; Heb. 9:14-15). So if you are living for the Lord but feeling that you are not good enough, remind yourself that God is greater than your conscience.

**(verse 21) “If our heart do not reprehend us, we have confidence towards God.”** The words, “If our heart do not reprehend us,” do not claim sinless perfection, but represent the heart attitude of a child of God that so far as he knows has no unconfessed sin in his life, has nothing between himself and the Lord Jesus, a believer who is yielded habitually to the Holy Spirit and living in close fellowship with his Lord. **“Confidence”** is *parresia*, and is rendered “boldness.” **“Heart”** in Greek is *kardia*. The heart of man is his very person: his psychological core. The conscious awareness each of us has that makes us persons and the spiritual dimension of responsiveness or unresponsiveness to God are both expressed by the word “heart.”

**71. Read 1 John 3:19.** When our love is of the kind that results in sincere action, we can know that we are indeed true followers of the Lord. True or False.

**72. Read 1 John 3:20-21.** It is important to keep our conscience clear. True or False.

**1JN 3: [22] And whatsoever we shall ask, we shall receive of him: because we keep his commandments, and do those things which are pleasing in his sight.** (When we obey His commands and make a practice of doing the things that please Him, it's then that we can expect to receive whatever we ask from Him.)

**Additional Information: (verse 22) “And whatsoever we shall ask, we shall receive of him: because we keep his commandments, and do those things which are pleasing in his sight.”** The blessing of an uncondemning heart is now stated. We have confidence not only to have access to Him in prayer, but to receive answers from Him. The same combination of confidence and granted petitions is found in 1 John 5:14-15. **“Whatsoever we shall ask.”** Jesus expressed such confidence in the Father (Jn. 11:41-42) and encouraged His disciples to have similar confidence (Jn. 14:13-14). This confidence depends on the awareness that our desires are attuned to God's (1 Jn. 5:14-15).

You will receive if you obey and do what pleases him because you will then be asking in line with God's will. When we "**keep his commandments**" we give evidence that we are in harmony with God's will (Jn. 15:7) and thus pray accordingly.

**73. Read 1 John 3:22.** We are able to stretch our hands out and receive what we asked for because we're doing what He (God) said, doing what pleases Him.  
True or False.

**1JN 3: [23] And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ: and love one another, as he hath given commandment unto us.** (And this is what God commands: that we believe in all that the name of His Son, Jesus Christ, implies – and that we love one another, as Jesus commanded us.)

**Additional Information: (verse 23) "And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name**

**of his Son Jesus Christ: and love one another.”** The writer had declared that a confident and effective prayer life is founded on obedience to God’s “commands” (1 Jn. 3:22). Now those commands are summed up in a single command consisting of faith and love. The phrase “**believe in the name of His Son**” contains the epistle’s first direct reference to faith. In the ancient world, “**name**” was more than a means of identification. It represented the character and authority of the person and all he stood for, sometimes even the person himself. In the Gospels, to be persecuted “because of the name of Jesus” is translated “because of loyalty to Jesus.”

**74. Read 1 John 3:23.** This is God’s command: to give our allegiance to his Son Jesus Christ and love one another. True or False.

**1JN 3: [24] And he that keepeth his commandments, abideth in him, and he in him. And in this we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.** (Now those who obey His commands are living in Him, and He is living in them. And it is by

means of the Spirit within us, whom He has given us, that we know He is living in us.)

**Additional Information: (verse 24) “He that keepeth his commandments, abideth in him, and he in him. And in this we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.”** The concept of mutual abiding, mentioned here in this Epistle for the first time, we in Him and He in us, is derived ultimately from our Lord’s allegory of the vine and the branches (John 15:1). Both here and in John 15 (v. 10) the condition of continuous abiding is obedience. With 1 John 3:24, John unites the various strands which he has been unfolding separately in these first three chapters of his Epistle. No-one may dare claim that he abides in Christ and Christ in him unless he is obedient to the three fundamental commandments which John has been expounding, which are belief in Christ, love for the brethren and moral righteousness. The Spirit whose presence is the test of Christ’s abiding in us, manifests Himself objectively in our life and conduct. It is He who inspires us to confess Jesus as the Christ and it is also He who empowers us to live righteously and to love the

brethren (Gal. 5:16, 22). The way a Christian can verify that God lives (*menei*, “abides”) in him is by the operation of God’s Spirit in his life.

**75. Read 1 John 3:24.** Those who obey God’s commandments live in fellowship with Him, and He with them. True or False

**76. Read 1 John 3:24.** We know that God lives in us because of the Spirit God gave us. True or False.

## **1 JOHN CHAPTER 4**

**1JN 4:[1] Dearly beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits if they be of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.** (My dear friends, many false prophets have gone out into the world. So don’t believe everyone who claims to be speaking for God. But test the spirits to see whether these preachers really do have the Spirit of God.)

**Additional Information: (verse 1) “Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits.”** “Believe not” is in a construction in the Greek text which forbids the continuation of an action already going on. It is, “**Stop believing every spirit.**” The fact is that some were being carried away with errors. God has given us His Spirit (1 Jn. 3:24), but there are other spirits active in the world. It is important to observe that the command to believe on the Name of God’s Son Jesus Christ (1 Jn. 3:23) is followed by a prohibition, “believe not every spirit.” So John tells his readers to “try,” that is, “test,” “the spirits whether they are of God.” He is urging them to apply a test to all human teachers who claim to speak under spiritual inspiration. Properly understood, a prophet is the mouthpiece of some spirit. True prophets are the mouthpiece of “the Spirit of God,” “false prophets” are the mouthpiece of “the spirit of error.” So behind every prophet is a spirit, and behind each spirit either God or the devil. Before we can trust any spirits, we must test them, *whether they are of God*. We may note the similar command given by Paul in 1 Thessalonians 5:21. Jesus warned His disciples of false prophets (Matt. 7:15; Mk. 13:22-23), as did Paul (Acts 20:29-30) and Peter (2 Pet. 2:1).

All teaching must be tested against the revelation of God's truth (Gal. 1:9). It is the "spirit" of the teaching that must be tested. Does the teaching bear the same kind of spirit and emphasis as New Testament apostolic teaching? (Acts 2:42). The teacher's life must be tested as to his relation to the world (1 Jn. 3:5), and to the Lordship of Christ (Rom. 10:9). If a message is truly from God, it will be consistent with Christ's teachings (see 1 Timothy 6:3-4).

**77. Read 1 John 4:1.** Do not believe everyone who claims to speak for God. For there are many: a. deceivers around. b. false prophets in the world.

**78. Read 1 John 4:1.** All things need to be tested. True or False.

**1JN 4: [2] By this is the spirit of God known. Every spirit which confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God:**  
(Here's how you can recognize those who have God's Spirit: Every spirit that

acknowledges that Jesus is the Christ who came to earth in human form, is God's Spirit.)

**Additional Information: (verse 2) "Every spirit which confesseth that Jesus (lit., "Jehovah is salvation") Christ (the "Anointed One" [king] see Luke 23:2) is come in the flesh, is of God."** The word "confess" is *homologeō*, from *homos*, "the same," and *legō*, "to speak," thus, "to speak the same thing as another," thus "to agree with another" on some particular thing. It is probable that the phrase should read, "confesseth that Jesus is the Christ come in the flesh." The confession is that the man Jesus of Nazareth is Himself none other than the incarnate Christ. Many translations take "Jesus Christ" as a combined name here, but the point of John's argument is that the human Jesus who lived on this earth was really the Christ; God's anointed one.

**79. Read 1 John 4:2.** Every spirit that confesses openly Jesus as the Christ – the Son of God, who came in human form, comes from God. True or False.

**1JN 4: [3] And every spirit that dissolveth Jesus, is not of God: and this is Antichrist, of whom you have heard that he cometh, and he is now already in the world.** (But any spirit that refuses to acknowledge that Jesus is God's Son in human form, is not from God. Instead, it is the spirit of the great enemy of Christ. You have been warned that Antichrist is coming, and his spirit is even now already in the world.)

**Additional Information: (verse 3)** The word *antichrist* means *one who opposes Christ and works against Him*. All such opposers and false teachers are inspired by Satan and his spirits. At the end of this age, a powerful world leader (empowered by Satan) will organize all opposition against Christ.

**80. Read 1 John 4:3.** Any spirit that refuses to acknowledge that Jesus is God's Son in human form, is not from God. This is the spirit of: a. Buddha. b. Elijah. c. antichrist.

**1JN 4: [4] You are of God, little children, and have overcome him. Because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.** (But you belong to God, my dear children, and you have won your fight against him, because the One who is living in you is far greater than the one living in the people of the world.)

**Additional Information: (verse 4-6)** In the Greek text, each of these three verses (4-6) begins with an emphatic personal pronoun – *you* (v. 4, *hemeis*), referring to his Christian readers in general, *they* (v. 5, *autoi*), referring to the false teachers, and *we* (v. 6, *hemeis*), referring to himself as representative of the authoritative apostles.

**(Verse 4) – “You are of God, little children, and have overcome him. Because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.”** Protection against error or victory over it is ascribed both to an objective standard of doctrine and to the indwelling Spirit who illumines our minds to grasp and apply it. The readers had successfully resisted the false prophets by

means of the One who is in them. Reliance on God is the secret of all victory whether over heresy or any other snare.

**81. Read 1 John 4:4.** You have already won your fight with those who are against Christ because there is someone in your hearts who is stronger than any false teacher in this wicked world. True or False.

**1JN 4: [5] They are of the world: therefore of the world they speak, and the world heareth them.** (Those false preachers belong to the world. And what they say is influenced by their love affair with the world. So the people who love the world gladly listen to them.)

**Additional Information: (verse 5) “They are of the world: therefore of the world they speak, and the world heareth them.”** Verses 5-6 are complementary. In them John contrasts in striking fashion not only false prophets and the true apostles (*they* and *we*), but the

different audiences who listen to them, namely ***the world*** and ***he that knoweth God***. The world recognizes and listens to a message which originates in its own circle. This explains their popularity. False teachers 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 listen to the apostles (Acts 2:42). The source of false doctrines is the world.

**82. Read 1 John 4:5.** What false teachers say is from the world, and the people who love the world gladly listen to them. True or False.

**1JN 4: [6] We are of God. He that knoweth God, heareth us. He that is not of God, heareth us not. By this we know the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.** (But we belong to God. And those who know and love God pay attention to what we say. But those who don't belong to God have no desire to listen to

our message. That's how we can recognize those who have the Spirit of Truth and those who are controlled by the spirit of error.)

**Additional Information: (verse 6) “We are of God. He that knoweth God, heareth us (the apostles). He that is not of God, heareth not us (the apostles). By this we know the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.”** “**He that knoweth God**” is present tense, progressive action, speaking, not of a complete knowledge, but a progressive, experiential knowledge. The knowledge is regarded as progressive and not complete. “**He that knoweth God, heareth us (the apostles); he that is not of God, heareth not us.**” No private believer could presume to say: “whoever knows God agrees with me; only those who are not of God disagree with me.” But this is what John says. The fact is that he is not speaking in his own name, but as one of the apostles, who were conscious of the special authority bestowed upon them by Jesus Christ. Jesus had taught that His sheep hear His voice (Jn. 10:4-5, 8, 16, 26-27), that everyone who is of the truth listens to His witness to the truth (Jn. 18:37), and that “He that is of God, heareth the

words of God” (Jn. 8:47). Those who do not listen to apostolic teaching, but prefer to absorb the teaching of the world, pass judgment on themselves by not giving heed to the apostles messages (Acts 2:42). “**Knoweth**” and “**heareth.**” Both verbs are present, indicating progressiveness. He that is increasing in the knowledge of God continues to hear us. Beliefs and utterances which are disloyal to the person of Jesus as recorded and interpreted in the apostolic testimony are inspired, not by the Spirit of truth but by the spirit of falsehood. Right belief as to the person of Jesus is based upon the apostolic testimony, and John holds the high ground of being one of the primary witnesses appointed by God. “**We (apostles) are of God.**” He is not here contrasting the apostles with other Christians, but with the new teachers (they of verse 5). “**He that knoweth God, heareth us**” (that is, listens and obeys: Luke 6:47-48). Prophets and teachers are therefore to be judged by their doctrine; and doctrine is to be judged, not by its emotional quality and strength, but by its agreement with the apostolic testimony to Jesus. 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 (Acts 2:42). False teachers are popular with the world because like the false prophets of the Old Testament, they tell people what they want to hear. John warns that those who faithfully teach the truth will not win any popularity contest in the world. People don't want to hear the true foundations of Christianity – Repentance, faith, baptisms, laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment (Heb. 6:1-3), etc. A false teacher will be well received by non-Christians.

**83. Read 1 John 4:6.** Those who know and love God pay attention to what the apostles say. But those who don't belong to God have no desire to listen to the apostle's teaching, that is, the doctrine of Christ. True or False.

**1JN 4: [7] Dearly beloved, let us love one another, for charity is of God. And every one that loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God. [8] He that loveth not, knoweth not God: for God is charity.** (My dear friends, let us practice loving one another,

because true love originates with God. And everyone who is truly loving and kind has been born of God and knows Him. Anyone who doesn't show kindness and love doesn't know God, because God's innermost and most compelling nature is to sincerely love.)

**Additional Information: (verse 7-8)** The love with which children of God should love one another is the (*agape* Gk.) love which God is in His nature, the love which is produced by the Holy Spirit in the heart of the yielded believer, the love which was seen in action at the Cross, and the love whose constituent elements are defined for us in 1 Corinthians 13. The exhortation is in the present subjunctive which speaks of continuous action. The translation reads, “**Let us be habitually loving one another.**” Everyone who habitually loves “**is born of God.**” “**Is born**” is perfect tense in the Greek text, literally “**has been begotten with the present result that that person is a child**” of God.

The one who is not habitually loving (v. 8) “**knoweth not God**” for “**God is charity**” (1 Cor. 13).

God as to His nature is charity, that is, God is a loving God. It is His nature to be loving.

It is because God is love in Himself (1 Jn. 4:8, 16), has loved us in Christ (1 Jn. 4:10-11), and continues to love in and through us (1 Jn. 4:12-13), that we must love each other. The world thinks that love is what makes a person feel good and that it is all right to sacrifice moral principles and others' rights in order to obtain such "love." But that isn't real love; it is the exact opposite – selfishness.

**84. Read 1 John 4:7.** True love comes from, that is originates with: a. man. b. Satan. c. God.

**85. Read 1 John 4:8.** Anyone who doesn't love doesn't know God, because God's innermost and most compelling nature is to sincerely love. True or False.

**1JN 4: [9] By this hath the charity of God appeared towards us, because God hath sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we may live by him. (And the way God revealed His immeasurably deep love for us**

was to send His incomparable Son into the world, so that we might live because of all that His Son would suffer for us.)

**Additional Information: (verse 9) “God hath sent his only begotten Son into the world.”** Over half of the New Testament’s uses of this term (begotten) are by John (John 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18). John always uses it of Christ to picture His unique relationship to the Father, His pre-existence, and His distinctness from creation. The term emphasizes the uniqueness of Christ, as the only one of His kind. “**Only begotten**” is the Greek word *monogenes* and means “single of its kind, only.” It was used for the only child and generally meant “unique” or “incomparable.” John does not lift the veil of mystery that lies over the eternal begetting, for he aims to awaken faith rather than give systematic knowledge. Yet eternal begetting is an implication of *monogenes* in its distinctive application to Jesus. What was begotten of God was God (see Hebrews 1:5-8).

“**Sent**” is *apostello*, “to send on a commission as an envoy, with credentials (the miracles), to perform certain duties,” here, to die for sinners, providing

salvation. The verb is in the perfect tense speaking of a past complete action having present results. The prefixed preposition is *apo*, “off.” He has sent off the Son with the result that a salvation has been provided for sinful man.

**86. Read 1 John 4:9.** God showed how much he loved us by sending his only begotten Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through Him. True or False.

**1JN 4: [10] In this is charity: not as though we had loved God, but because he hath first loved us, and sent his Son to be a propitiation for our sins.** (Here is the very highest expression of love – not that we loved God, because we didn’t – but that God’s love for us was so overflowing and immeasurable, that He sent His Son to sacrifice Himself for us, so that He could be compassionate toward us and offer us forgiveness for our sins.)

**Additional Information: (verses 9-10)** The sending of God's Son was both the revelation of His *charity* (*By this hath the charity of God appeared, 1 Jn. 4:9*), and, indeed, the very essence of charity itself (*In this is charity, 1 Jn. 4:10*). It is not our love that is primary, but God's (*1 Jn. 4:10*), free, uncaused and spontaneous love. Our love is but a reflection of His and a response to it. The coming of Christ is, therefore, a concrete, historical revelation of God's love, for love (*agape*) is self-sacrificing and the seeking of another's positive good at one's own cost. A greater self-giving sacrifice than God's gift of His Son has never been, nor could be.

**(Verse 10)** – In the expression, “**In this is charity,**” the definite article appears before the word “**charity,**” not any kind of charity, but the particular love that inheres in God's nature, divine love (*agape*).

The Greek word for “**propitiation**” is *hilasmos* and means “to appease and render favorable,” in this case it was the sacrifice which fully satisfies the demands of the broken law (see Col. 2:13-14). It was our Lord's death on Calvary's Cross.

**87. Read 1 John 4:10.** This is the very highest expression of love: a. a warm feeling I get around

certain persons. b. a gift given to a friend at Christmas.  
c. God sending his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

**1JN 4: [11] My dearest, if God hath so loved us; we also ought to love one another.** (My dear friends, if God loved us with such self-denying sacrifice and such genuine concern, we most certainly should love one another in the same way!)

**Additional Information: (verse 11) “If God hath so loved us; we also ought to love one another.”** “So” is the Greek word *houtos*. It refers back to the act of God sending off His Son to become the expiatory sacrifice for our sins. It was an act of infinite love and infinite sacrifice, not only on the part of the Son on the Cross, but on the part of the Father who sent the Son, for the heart of the Father was pierced when sin was laid on the son at the Cross and His holiness demanded that He abandon the Son (Zech. 12:10). In the same manner, to the same extent, John says that the Christians have a moral obligation to be constantly loving one another.

The infinitive “**to love**” is present tense in Greek, speaking of continuous action.

**88. Read 1 John 4:11.** If God loved us with such self-denying sacrifice and such genuine concern, we most certainly should: a. behave ourselves. b. attend Mass regularly. c. love one another in the same way!

**1JN 4: [12] No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abideth in us, and his charity is perfected in us.** (No man has ever seen God. But if we practice sacrificial love and concern for one another, God is abiding in us, and His genuine, perfect love has been brought to perfection in us.)

**Additional Information: (verse 12) “No man hath seen God at any time.”** The word “**God**” is without the article, indicating that character, essence, or nature is stressed. “Deity in its essence” no one has ever yet seen. The particular word for “**seen**” here is *theaomai*, “to behold, look upon, view attentively, contemplate.” The verb is in

the perfect tense. An expanded translation could read, “Deity in its essence no one has ever yet beheld, with the present result that no one has the capacity of beholding Him.” The Old Testament theophanies were revelations of God in human disguise; they were not visions of God as He is in Himself. The vision of God lies still in the future when Christ appears (see 1 Jn. 3:2). The connection between this thought and the context seems to be this: Since no one has seen God ever, the only way he who is love can be seen is by his children’s loving one another and thus showing the family likeness. Although God is invisible (1 Tim. 1:17; 6:16), we manifest His nature through life-styles that reflect His love. Since our love has its source in God’s love, his love reaches full expression (is made complete) when we love fellow Christians. Thus the God whom no one has ever seen, is seen in those who love, because God abides in them. God who is love still loves, and today his love is seen in our love. That is, the unseen God who was revealed in His Son, is now also revealed in His people if and when they love one another.

**89. Read 1 John 4:12.** No one has ever seen God. But if we practice sacrificial love and concern for others, God is abiding in us and can be seen in us. True or False.

**1JN 4: [13] In this we know that we abide in him, and he in us: because he hath given us of his spirit.** (Here's how we know that we are abiding in Him and that He is abiding in us – because He has given us a portion of His Spirit.)

**Additional Information: (verse 13) “We abide in him, and he in us.”** The Greek word for “**abide**” is *meno*, which is used often in the Gospel narratives of one person dwelling in the home of another. The word speaks of fellowship between two or more individuals.

**90. Read 1 John 4:13.** The guarantee of our abiding in Him and He abiding in us is the sharing of his very own Spirit. True or False

**1JN 4: [14] And we have seen, and do testify, that the Father hath sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world.** (And we ourselves have even seen the Son of God. And we testify to the fact that the Father has indeed sent the Son to be the Savior of the world!)

**Additional Information: (verse 14) “We have seen, and do testify.”** The first verb (seen) is in the perfect tense, showing that the seeing was an abiding experience; the second verb (do testify) is in the present tense expressing continuation. **“To see”** serves to bring out that, though man cannot see God directly, face-to-face, he can see him indirectly, in the face of Jesus who is the historic revelation of God’s character. **“The Father hath sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world”** means “to save the world.” **“Saviour,”** or “one who saves,” often form an indicating professional or habitual activity. In the ancient world the corresponding Greek word was a title of gods, and of deserving and important men, who thus were given divine honour. In the Greek

version of the Old Testament (LXX) it is used of God, and in some cases of a human savior or deliverer (see Judges 3:9, 15). The noun has the basic meaning “one who preserves (or delivers) from harm,” such as danger, illness, death. Figuratively used it can indicate one who preserves or delivers from eternal death and its causes.

**91. Read 1 John 4:14.** We tell all the world that God sent his Son to be: a. their Savior. b. their example. c. their rabbi.

**1JN 4: [15] Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in him, and he in God.** (God very definitely abides within anyone who sincerely confesses to others that Jesus is the Son of God. And that person continues to abide in God.)

**Additional Information: (verse 15) “Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in him, and he in God.”** “Confess” is the Greek word *homologeō*, and means “to speak the same thing that another speaks,” thus, “to agree with someone as to a

certain proposition.” The word therefore implies a statement with which one is in agreement, that statement formulated by someone else, here, the doctrine concerning our Lord. The verb is in the aorist tense, making the act of confession a definite one, and the classification, constative aorist, speaking of the fact that that confession is a life-time confession, and represents the sustained attitude of the heart. The confession is that Jesus is the Son of God. In this title (Son of God) the word Son is used sometimes of relationship (to his Father), and sometime of the expression of his character, that is, a manifestation of God in human form. He is and ever has been the expression of what the Father is (see John 14:9; Heb. 1:3). In the Son one sees the Father, so that faith in him is faith in the Father.

**92. Read 1 John 4:15.** God very definitely continues to abide within anyone who sincerely confesses to others that Jesus is the Son of God. True or False.

**1JN 4: [16] And we have known, and have believed the charity, which God hath to us.**

**God is charity: and he that abideth in charity, abideth in God, and God in him. [17] In this is the charity of God perfected with us, that we may have confidence in the day of judgment: because as he is, we also are in this world.** (We have actually known by experience, and have believed, that God does indeed love us dearly. Because the very character and essence of God is love! And whoever continues to love continues to abide in God, and God abides in him. If God's love has been brought to a state of perfection in us, we will be able to approach Him with confident assurance on Judgment Day, because we will have lived our life on earth as Jesus would, if He were in our place.)

**Additional Information: (verse 16-17)** The author has already written of the unshrinking confidence which we shall have at Christ's coming if we abide in Him now (1 Jn. 2:28), and of our present confidence before God in

prayer (1 Jn. 3:21-22), which, as he says later, is an assurance not only of access but of being heard and answered (1 Jn. 5:14-15). Here, however, he reverts to the future, to *the day of judgment*. That day will be one of shame and terror for the wicked, but not for the faithful in Christ (see Matthew 25:31-46; Matthew 13:36-43, 47-51). The reason being is that “**we have known, and have believed the charity, which God hath to us**” (v. 16).

**93. Read 1 John 4:16.** As Christians we know the love which God has for us, and have put our trust in Him. True or False.

**94. Read 1 John 4:17.** As we live with Christ, our love grows more perfect and complete; so we will not be ashamed and embarrassed at the day of judgment, but can face Him with confidence and joy because He loves us and we love Him too. True or False.

**1JN 4: [18] Fear is not in charity: but perfect charity casteth out fear, because fear hath pain. And he that feareth, is not perfected in**

**charity.** (There is no fear of Judgment Day in the heart of one who in all sincerity loves God and his fellowmen. Love that has been brought to a state of perfection drives our fear.

Because the greatest fear that man has is fear of the torment of judgment in Hell. And anyone who has this legitimate fear is one who has not allowed God to make him perfect in love.)

**Additional Information: (verse 18)** “Fear” refers here to man’s fear of the judgment, or of God as judge. Faith in Christ that works by charity (Gal. 5:6) expels anxiety about our fate at the day of Judgment.

**95. Read 1 John 4:18.** There is no fear of someone who loves us (God). On the contrary, perfect love banishes fear. True or False.

**1JN 4: [19] Let us therefore love God, because God first hath loved us. (But**

because God first loved us in such marvelous ways, let us now in all sincerity truly love Him.)

**Additional Information: (verse 19) “Let us therefore love God, because God first hath loved us.”** The thought is that the amazing love of God in Christ is the inspiration of all the love that stirs in our hearts. It awakens within us an answering love – a grateful love for Him, manifesting itself in love for our brethren (1 Jn. 4:11). Our great characteristic if we are Christians, is not that we fear, but that we love. God’s love was primary; all true love is a response to His initiative. God loved us first; that is why we love Him and the brothers.

**96. Read 1 John 4:19.** Our love for God comes as a result of His loving us first. True or False.

**1JN 4: [20] If any man say, I love God, and hateth his brother; he is a liar. For he that loveth not his brother, whom he seeth, how can he love God, whom he seeth not?**

**[21] And this commandment we have from God, that he, who loveth God, love also his brother.** (If someone says, “I love God,” but at the same time he has hatred in his heart for someone, he’s a liar. Because how can anyone who doesn’t love those he can see, love God, whom he has never seen? And Christ has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brothers and sisters.)

**Additional Information: (verse 20-21)** Anyone who claims to love God, yet hates his brother makes a false claim: **he is a liar**. John often pointed up false claims by using the word “**liar**”: (see 1 John 1:6, 10; 2:4, 22; 4:20; 5:10). However loudly we may affirm ourselves to be Christian, our habitual sin, denial of Christ and selfish hatred expose us as the liars we are. Only holiness, faith and love can prove the truth of our claim to know, possess and love God. It is easier to love a person one sees than a person one does not see. John argues that one who does not do the easier thing, namely, loving

one's visible brother, will surely not be able to do the more difficult thing, loving the invisible God. Jesus Himself taught the twofold commandment (Love for God and love for man – see Matt. 22:37-40). It was He who united Deuteronomy 6:4 and Leviticus 19:18. Man may not separate what Jesus has joined. If we love God we shall keep His commandments (1 Jn. 2:5; 5:3), and His commandment is to love our God and our neighbor. It is easy to say we love God when that love doesn't cost us anything more than weekly attendance at Church. But the real test of our love for God is how we treat the people right in front of us – our family members and fellow Christians.

**97. Read 1 John 4:20.** If anyone boasts, "I love God," and goes right on hating his brother or sister, thinking nothing of it, he is: a. behaving badly. b. a liar. c. acting out his frustration.

**98. Read 1 John 4:21.** The command we have from Christ is blunt: Loving God includes: a. enjoying life. b. making more money. c. loving people.

## **1 JOHN CHAPTER 5**

**1JN 5:[1] Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God. And every one that loveth him who begot, loveth him also who is born of him. [2] In this we know that we love the children of God: when we love God, and keep his commandments.**

(Whoever in all sincerity believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and whoever loves the Father also love the other children born to Him. When we truly love God and obey His commands, we know that the natural result will be genuine love for His other children as well.)

**Additional Information: (verse 1-2) “Whosoever believeth.”** The term “**believeth**” conveys the idea of continuing faith, making the point that the mark of genuine believers is that they continue in faith throughout their life. Saving belief is not simply intellectual acceptance, but whole-hearted dedication to

Jesus the Christ that is permanent. “**Jesus is the Christ.**” False teachers denied that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ. John makes faith in Him an essential test of being begotten of God. The Church is a community of people who believe in Jesus the Christ as God’s promised Messiah (anointed King) and our Savior. The Church gives evidence of this belief by obeying God’s commands (1 Jn. 5:2-3). The core meaning of “**faith**” (*pistis* in Greek) is a personal relationship established by trust and trustworthiness. For a Christian to say, “I believe in Jesus,” is not so much a statement affirming certain beliefs *about* Jesus as it is an affirmation of trust. It is a confession that the Person, Jesus the Christ, about whom I learn, has become more than a historical figure to me. I have recognized Him as a real and living Person, and I have not drawn back in fear. Instead, I have confidently placed all I am and all I hope to be in His hands. Faith is abandoning ourselves and resting in Jesus’ promise of forgiveness and transformation. Acts 16:31 defines “**belief**” in the following way: “Believe in the Lord Jesus *Christ* [give yourself up to Him, take yourself out of your own keeping and entrust yourself into His keeping] and you will be saved...”

When a disciple named Philip went down to the city of Samaria, he preached Christ to them (the word “Christ” means “anointed” to rule, the anointed King. See Acts 17:3, 7). When people believed Philip’s preaching concerning the kingdom of God (accepting God’s rule and reign in their lives), and the person of Jesus the Christ, they were baptized, both men and women (Acts 8:5, 12). It was in this way that they were acknowledging their repentance from sin and allegiance to Jesus as “King” of their lives. The word “Lord” has a similar meaning as “King” (Rom. 10:9).

**99. Read 1 John 5:1.** “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God.” True or False

**100. Read 1 John 5:1.** All who love God the Father love His children too. True or False

**101. Read 1 John 5:2.** The reality test on whether or not we love God’s children is this: a. we smile when we see them. b. we pray for them at Christmas. c. we love God and prove it by keeping His commands.

**1JN 5: [3] For this is the charity of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not heavy.** (In fact, the only way we can prove that we truly love God is to obey what He tells us to do and not do. And it's not a burden to obey Him.)

**Additional Information: (verse 3) “For this is the charity of God, that we keep his commandments.”** In the expression “the charity of God,” we have the objective genitive, in which the noun in the genitive case (God), receives the action of the noun (charity). Thus, we are to understand that John means “charity for God.” That is, the Christians love for God is shown by his keeping His commandments. This should be the motivating factor in keeping God’s commands, our love for Him. This love is *agape* in Greek, that divine love produced by the Holy Spirit. Love for God makes the keeping of His commandments a delight. A person who obeys God’s commands is doing what is right, both toward God and toward his fellow believers and is thus loving both God and them. We can obey only as we place faith in Christ.

**102. Read 1 John 5:3.** It is by obeying God's commands that we show: a. we are not under grace. b. we are legalist. c. our love for God.

**1JN 5: [4] For whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world: and this is the victory which overcometh the world, our faith.** (Because every true child of God makes a practice of conquering the attractions and temptations of the world. And that which has given us the victory in conquering the world is our faith.)

**Additional Information: (verse 4) “Whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world.” “Whatsoever”** is the Greek word *pas* and means “every, all.” It is neuter in gender, the comprehensive, categorical neuter, expressing the universality of the principle, and refers to persons, those persons “born of God.” **“Born”** is again perfect in tense, referring to a past completed act of regeneration (a rebirth, restoration or renewal) with the present result that that regenerated individual has been

made a partaker of the divine nature and as such is a child of God (2 Peter 1:4; John 1:12). “**Overcometh**” is *nikao*, “to carry off the victory, come off victorious.” The verb implies a battle. Here the forces of the world-system of evil, the flesh (concupiscence – the inclination to sin arising from the disobedience of Adam and Eve.), the devil, and the pernicious age-system with which the Christian is surrounded, are all engaged in a battle against the Christian, carrying on an incessant warfare, the purpose of which is to ruin his Christian life and testimony. The verb is in the present tense, “is constantly overcoming the world.” It is a habit of life with the Christian to gain victory over the world. To go down in defeat is the exception, not the rule. “**The victory which overcometh the world, [is] our faith.**” “**Our faith**” conquers the world by clinging to Christ, and “who is he who is constantly conquering the world, the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.” A heart relationship and trust in the Son of God (Jesus the Christ) gains the victory over the world.

**103. Read 1 John 5:4.** Every child of God defeats this evil world by trusting Christ to give the victory. True or False

**1JN 5: [5] Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?** (So who is it that continues to conquer the temptations of the world? Only the one who is believing that Jesus is indeed the Son of God.)

**Additional Information: (verse 5) “Who is he that overcometh the world, ...he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God.”** The title “**Son of God**” is freely used in the gospels to describe Jesus the Christ. We find it on the lips of His followers (Matthew 14:33). In Matthew and Luke this position is associated with the Virgin Birth (see Matt. 1:23; Luke 1:35). Mark and John assert heavenly origin without entering into the question of the manner (Mark 1:1; John 1:14). This title seems to be closely associated with the categories of king, son of David, and Christ. It is a favorite expression in Paul's epistles (Rom. 1:3-4) and this corresponds to the theme of his preaching in Acts 9:20. “Son of God” asserts deity, but no more surely than the title “Lord.” “Son of God” was a favorite creedal affirmation of the early Church, which rapidly became part of an early baptismal confession of faith (see Acts 8:37). “Son of God,” is a

positive fulfillment and expression of all that God has promised and revealed Himself to be. From the “Johannine” idea in Luke 10:22, knowledge of the Son is also knowledge of the Father. The task of the Son is to show the Father’s glory (John 1:14) and to make the Father known (John 1:18); the essence of sonship is the revelation of the Father. John 19:7 is confirmation by the Jews that Jesus “made himself the Son of God”; they regarded it as a blasphemy worthy of death, so that they understood sonship in terms of deity. This occurs in a section of John rich in “King theology” (John 18:33-19:22). It is likely therefore that John has in mind the Messianic King of Psalm 2, who is hailed as the Son of God. The whole purpose of John’s gospel as stated in John 20:31, is to create faith, “that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God” (the primitive baptismal confession). From first to last, John associates sonship with messiahship. Sonship thus has a soteriological (salvation) goal (John 3:16; 5:25).

**104. Read 1 John 5:5.** The one who wins the battle against the world is the one who believes: a. what will be will be. b. that Jesus is the Son of God.

**1JN 5: [6] This is he that came by water and blood, Jesus Christ: not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit which testifieth, that Christ is the truth.**

(Jesus Christ is the One who was endorsed by the Father at His water baptism, and again just shortly before He shed His blood for us on the cross. He came not only with the endorsement of His Father at His water baptism, but with both the water and the blood endorsements. And it is the Holy Spirit who now continues to bear witness about Him – because the Holy Spirit is the very embodiment of truth.)

**Additional Information: (verse 6) “This is he that came by water and blood, Jesus Christ: not by water only, but by water and blood.”** Jesus both began and ended His ministry on earth by confirmations from God that He was indeed the Son of God. This happened at His baptism by *water* (Matthew 3:16-17) and just before He shed His *blood* for our sins (Luke 9:28-35; John

12:27-33). This entire section, through verse 11, deals with the testimony of God concerning Jesus Christ. These two incidents in the Incarnation are singled out because at baptism Jesus was formally set apart to His Messianic work by the coming of the Holy Spirit upon Him and by the Father's audible witness, and because at the Cross His work reached its culmination ("It is finished," Jesus said. – Jn. 19:30).

**105. Read 1 John 5:6.** We know that Jesus is the Son of God because God said so with a voice from heaven when Jesus was baptized, and again as He was facing death. True or False

**1JN 5: [7] And there are three who give testimony in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost. And these three are one. [8] And there are three that give testimony on earth: the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three are one.** (For there are three that testify in heaven: the Father, the Word and the Holy Spirit, and

these three are one. And there are three that testify on earth the Spirit, the water and the blood; and they all say the same thing.)

**Additional Information: (verses 7-8) “For there are three who give testimony in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost. And these three are one.”**

These verses are known as the “Johannine Comma” or the “heavenly witnesses” text. They are a clear expression of Trinitarian doctrine although they are omitted in many old Greek manuscripts but found in most of the Latin manuscripts.

**“There are three who give testimony.”** The Old Testament required “the testimony of two or three witnesses” to establish the truth of a particular matter (Deut. 17:6; 19:15; cf. John 8:17-18; 1 Tim. 5:19).

**(Verse 8) “And there are three that give testimony on earth: the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three are one.”** The expression “**these three are one**” is literally in the Greek text, “are to the one thing”; they converge upon the one truth, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, come in the flesh.

**106. Read 1 John 5:7-8.** We have three witnesses: the voice of the Holy Spirit in our hearts, the voice from heaven at Christ's baptism, and the voice before he died. And they all say the same thing: that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, come in the flesh. True or False

**1JN 5: [9] If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater. For this is the testimony of God, which is greater, because he hath testified of his Son. [10] He that believeth in the Son of God, hath the testimony of God in himself. He that believeth not the Son, maketh him a liar: because he believeth not in the testimony which God hath testified of his Son.** (Ordinarily, we believe what people tell us, but we should realize that what God tells us is of far greater importance and far more certain than anything anyone else can tell us. And God has clearly told us that Jesus is His Son! Anyone who believes that Jesus is the

Son of God, has the witness of the Spirit within himself that it is true. But anyone who refuses to believe what God has said about His Son is actually calling God a liar, by refusing to believe the testimony He has given about His Son.)

**Additional Information: (verses 9-10) “9 If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater. For this is the testimony of God, which is greater, because he hath testified of his Son. 10 He that believeth in the Son of God, hath the testimony of God in himself. He that believeth not the Son, maketh him a liar: because he believeth not in the testimony which God hath testified of his Son.”** The purpose of testimony to Christ is to evoke faith in Christ (Jn. 1:7; 20:31). The results of belief and disbelief are starkly contrasted. The believer “**hath the testimony of God in himself**,” (v.10) or “in his own heart.” The unbeliever, on the other hand, who “**believeth not**” (v. 10), forfeits the possibility of receiving life.

**107. Read 1 John 5:9.** We believe men who witness in our courts, and so surely we can believe whatever God declares. God declares that Jesus is His Son. True or False

**108. Read 1 John 5:10.** If we have faith in God's Son, we have believed what God has said. But if we don't believe what God has said about His Son, it is the same as calling God a liar. True or False

**1JN 5: [11] And this is the testimony, that God hath given to us eternal life. And this life is in his Son. [12] He that hath the Son, hath life. He that hath not the Son, hath not life.** (This is what God has said about His Son: that through Him He has given us the means of obtaining everlasting life, and that this life can only be obtained through His Son. Whoever has God's Son has life; whoever does not have his Son does not have life.)

**Additional Information: (verses 11-12) "11 And this is the testimony, that God hath given to us eternal life.**

**And this life is in his Son. 12 He that hath the Son, hath life. He that hath not the Son, hath not life.”**

Eternal life is a gift which God gives to those who believe (and continue to believe) in His Son (see Jn. 3:16). It is impossible to have life without having Christ. This gift of life in Christ is a present possession. True, it is further described as “**eternal**,” (Gk. *aiionios*), which means literally “belonging to the age”, that is, the age to come. But since the age to come has broken into this present age, the life of the age to come, namely “**eternal life**”, can be received and enjoyed here and now. The alternative is clear and uncompromising. We cannot escape its logic, “**He that believeth not the Son**” (1 Jn. 5:10), that is, by refusing to believe the testimonies given by the three divine persons (1 Jn. 5:7-8), that Jesus was the Messiah, and the true Son of God come in the flesh, by whom eternal life is promised and obtained, to refuse to receive the forgiveness He offers (Acts 3:19), is to remain in a fallen man’s state of death (1 Jn. 3:14). Eternal life is in His Son and may be found nowhere else.

**109. Read 1 John 5:11-12.** God has given us eternal life. Whoever has the Son has life. Whoever rejects the Son, rejects eternal life. True or False

**1JN 5: [13] These things I write to you, that you may know that you have eternal life, you who believe in the name of the Son of God. [14] And this is the confidence which we have towards him: That, whatsoever we shall ask according to his will, he heareth us. [15] And we know that he heareth us whatsoever we ask: we know that we have the petitions which we request of him.** (I have written these things to you who are living out the true meaning of the name of the Son of God, so that you may know for certain that you have eternal life; and so that you may make certain that you continue to give full allegiance to the name of the Son of God. Then you can approach Him in prayer with confident boldness, knowing that He keeps listening to

you when you ask Him for what you are certain He wants to give you. And if we know He is listening to us, we know that whatever we may continue asking for, we are definitely in the process of receiving from Him.)

**Additional Information: (verses 13)** “**These things I write to you, that you may know that you have eternal life, you who believe in the name of the Son of God.**” John’s purpose in writing this letter is that we may believe and continue to believe in the Person of God’s Son. The present tense used shows that the believing is to be a continuous action. Also John wants believers to know and be assured that they possess Christ (i.e. eternal life).

**(Verses 13-15)** – In our prayers we must submit to God and pray that His will may be done in our lives (Jn. 14:13). We know God’s will in many instances. At other times it becomes clear only as we earnestly seek His will. Once we know His will about any given issue, then we can ask in confidence and faith. When we do this, we know that He hears us and that His purposes for us will be accomplished.

**110. Read 1 John 5:13.** John wrote the letter of 1 John to assure the believers they now have the possession of Christ (eternal life) – and that they may continue to believe in the Son of God. True or False

**111. Read 1 John 5:14-15.** If we make requests in accordance with His will, we know that things we ask are ours. True or False

**1JN 5: [16] He that knoweth his brother to sin a sin which is not to death, let him ask, and life shall be given to him, who sinneth not to death. There is a sin unto death: for that I say not that any man ask. [17] All iniquity is sin. And there is a sin unto death.**  
(If any of you sees a fellow Christian committing a sin that does not lead to death, you should earnestly pray for him, and God will give him life. I'm speaking of those whose sin does not lead to death. There is a sin that leads to certain death. I'm not saying you

should pray about that. All wrongdoing is sin, but there is sin that does not lead to certain death.)

**Additional Information: (verses 16)** “**He that knoweth his brother to sin.**” “**Brother**” is the Greek word *adelphos*. This word is often used in the ordinary sense of blood-relationship. It is also frequently used in the New Testament (as is *sister* also) to denote a fellow-Christian, a member of the *family* or brotherhood of believers.

**(Verses 16-17)** – This is a difficult matter of a **sin that leads- or that does not lead to death**. Under the Old Covenant, sin which was deliberate and presumptuous, knowing the Lord’s will and of set purpose flouting that will and reviling the Lord, was *mortal*: no sacrifice would avail (Numbers 15:27-31 – These verses show a sin unto death and a sin not unto death). Similarly, in the New Testament, willful rejection of the witness of God (that He is the Son of God – 1 Jn. 5:9), and open-eyed apostasy from Christ (Heb. 6:4-6; see Heb.10:26-29) if persisted in, will carry the offender over the line beyond which repentance and therefore

forgiveness is impossible (Matt. 12:31; Heb. 6:4-6). Many differ widely in their thoughts about what this sin that leads to death is, and whether the death it causes is physical or spiritual. Paul wrote that some Christians had died because they took the Eucharist in an unworthy manner (1 Cor. 11:27-30), and Ananias and Sapphira were struck dead when they lied to God (Acts 5:1-11). Believers will be saved from death by turning back to the Lord after erring from the truth (see James 5:19-20). Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit results in spiritual death (not being forgiven in this world or the age to come – Matthew 12:32), and the book of Hebrews describes the spiritual death of the person who turns against Christ (Heb. 6:4-6). John was probably referring to the people who had left the Christian fellowship and joined the false teacher's antichrist doctrine. By rejecting the only way of salvation, these people were putting themselves out of reach of prayer (1 Jn. 5:16).

It appears that the Apostle John is talking about spiritual death in 1 John 5:16 because he had just been talking about eternal life (1 Jn. 5:13). Catholic theology adopts the distinction between mortal and non-mortal (venial) sins.

**112. Read 1 John 5:16-17.** There is sin that leads to death (mortal), and sin that does not lead to death (venial). True or False

**1JN 5: [18] We know that whosoever is born of God, sinneth not: but the generation of God preserveth him, and the wicked one toucheth him not.** (We know that no one who is born of God makes a practice of sinning. But a person who is truly born of God continues to be watchful in order to keep himself from sinning. As long as he does that, the evil one isn't able to touch him.)

**Additional Information: (verse 18) “We know that whosoever is born of God, sinneth not.”** The idea of this verse is that a genuine believer does not practice sin. The reason being is that he has been begotten of God and shares the nature of his Father. He continually turns from sin and the wicked one cannot touch him.

113. Read 1 John 5:18. No one born of God makes a practice of sinning. True or False

**1JN 5: [19] We know that we are of God, and the whole world is seated in wickedness. [20] And we know that the Son of God is come: and he hath given us understanding that we may know the true God, and may be in his true Son. This is the true God and life eternal. [21] Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.**

(We know we are children of God, even though all the rest of the whole world is under the control of Satan. We also know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding of all that we need to know about the One who is the only true God. And we are now in Him who is the true God, and in His Son Jesus Christ. He is indeed the true God, and our eternal life is in Him. My little

children, keep yourselves from worshipping anything that might take God's place in your minds and hearts. So be it! Sincerely in Christ, John)

**Additional Information: (Verses 19-21)** – Only two types of people exist in the world according to John: children of God and children of Satan. One belongs either to God or to the evil world system that is Satan's domain. The Son of God has come to give us understanding of the true God. So keep yourselves from idols. False beliefs and practices are idols from which the readers must protect themselves as well as anything that would take God's rightful place of worship.

**114. Read 1 John 5:19.** We belong to God but the world is under the rule of the Evil One. True or False

**115. Read 1 John 5:20.** The Son of God has come, and He has given us understanding so that we can know the true God. True or False

**116. Read 1 John 5:21.** The Apostle John tells us to keep ourselves from idols (false gods), or anything that would occupy first place in our hearts above God. True or False

Scriptures quoted from the *Douay-Rheims* Catholic Bible. Translated from the Latin Vulgate and diligently compared with the Hebrew, Greek, and other editions in diverse languages. The Old Testament first published in English at Douay, A.D. 1609. The New Testament first published in English at Rheims, A.D. 1582. *Imprimatur*. James Cardinal Gibbons, Archbishop of Baltimore, September 1, 1899. Paraphrase Copyright © 1999, LM Seattle, WA.

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