

PETE BUMGARNER MINISTRIES

**A NON-PROFIT CORPORATION
FOUNDED OCTOBER, 1984**

I JOHN

STUDY GUIDE



I JOHN

SCRIPTURE READING:

I John

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. The author of this letter is John, the beloved apostle of Jesus. To whom he is writing is uncertain.
 - 1. Some believe that he was writing to believers in the area of Ephesus, but the content of his letter does not confirm this belief.
 - 2. In his letter, he refers to “little children,” “youth,” and “fathers,” which suggests that he is writing to believers at different maturity levels.
- B. In this short letter, John speaks of the life, light, and love of God that are available only through Jesus.
- C. In John 5:24, the apostle records that those who hear the words of Jesus and believe in Him Who sent Jesus have passed from death to life. In I John 3:14, he tells us that those who have passed from death to life will love their fellow-believers.
- D. The believers are warned to test the spirits to determine which spirits are associated with God.
- E. This letter makes it clear that love is the motivating factor that causes God to reach out to humanity, and fellow-believers to reach out to one another.
- F. God’s love requires demonstration. Those within whom the love of God resides will be doers of the Word and not hearers only.

II. CHAPTER ONE

- A. John calls Jesus “The Word of Life.” He declares that the Word of Life was from the beginning. Various people (including John) had heard Him with their own ears, and they had seen Him with their own eyes. Not only had they looked upon Him, but they had also touched Him (I John 1:1)

- B. John declares that the “Life” was manifested and that they had seen Him and bore witness to those to whom he was writing of this “Eternal Life” that had come from the Father and had been revealed to those of his company. (I John 1:2)
- C. John was proclaiming what he had seen and heard so that those who heard his message could enter into fellowship with them, whose fellowship was with God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ. (I John 1:3)
- D. John’s purpose for writing about the Word of Life was so that those who read his letter would be full of optimism. (I John 1:4)
- E. John declared the message that he had heard from Jesus--God is light, and in Him dwells absolutely no darkness. (I John 1:5)
- F. Anyone who says that he is in fellowship with Jesus and continues to live in darkness is lying; he is not telling the truth. (I John 1:6)
- G. If we live in the light as He lives in the light, then we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin. (I John 1:7)
- H. If we say that we do not have any sin, we lead ourselves astray, and the truth is not in us. (I John 1:8)
- I. If we acknowledge our sin, He is faithful and just to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (I John 1:9)
- J. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us. (I John 1:10)

III. CHAPTER TWO

- A. Addressing the recipients of his letter as dearly beloved ones, John states that his reason for writing to them is so they will not sin, but if they do sin, he wants them to know that they have an advocate (intercessor) with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous. (I John 2:1)
- B. Jesus is the expiator (the One who makes amends for) of our sins, as well as the sins of the whole world. (I John 2:2)

- C. If we obey His commandments, we absolutely know that we definitely know Him. (I John 2:3)
- D. Anyone who says that he definitely knows Jesus and does not obey His commandments is a liar; the truth is not in him. (I John 2:4)
- E. The love of God is brought to fruition in the one who obeys God's word. The maturity of God's love that produces obedience in one's life gives him the assurance that he belongs to the Lord. (I John 2:5)
- F. Anyone who says that he resides in Jesus should live as Jesus lived. (I John 2:6)
- G. John declares that he is not writing a new commandment. He is reiterating the old commandment which they had from the beginning. (I John 2:7; Deuteronomy 6:5; Matthew 22:36-40)
- H. From another point of view, John says he is writing a new or fresh commandment, and that the truth of this commandment is apparent in both Jesus and the believers because the darkness has gone away and the true light now shines. (I John 2:8)
- I. One who says that he is in the light and detests his brother (a fellow-believer) is still in darkness. (I John 2:9)
- J. One who loves his brother (a fellow-believer) dwells in light, and there is nothing within to ensnare him. (I John 2:10)
- K. One who detests his brother (fellow-believer) is not only in darkness, but he also resides there and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes. (I John 2:11)
- L. John says that he is writing to the infants (babes in Christ) because their sins are forgiven for the name of Jesus. (I John 2:12)
- M. He says he is writing to the fathers who have definitely known Jesus, Who is from the beginning. (I John 2:13)
- N. He says he is writing to the youth because they have subdued evil. (I John 2:13)
- O. He says he is writing to the infants (babes in Christ) because they definitely know the Father. (I John 2:13)

- P. John reiterates that his reason for writing to the fathers is that they definitely know Him Who is from the beginning. (I John 2:14)
- Q. Once more he addresses the youth, stating that his reason for writing to them is that they are strong, the word of God remains in them, and they have subdued evil. (I John 2:14)
- R. John exhorts the reader not to love the world or the things in the world, declaring that if anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. (I John 2:15)
- S. All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, do not come from the Father; they originate in the world. (I John 2:16)
- T. The world will pass away, along with its lusts, but those who do the will of God will abide forever. (I John 2:17)
- U. John tells his beloved ones that it is the final hour. They had heard that Antichrist would come, but John warns them, stating that many antichrists have already come. The coming of these antichrists confirms that it is the final hour. (I John 2:18)
- V. John reveals that these opponents of Christ went out from their company, but they were not a part of them. If they had been true associates, they would have remained with John and the other believers. (I John 2:19)
- W. These opponents of Christ left so that it would be apparent to all that they were not associated with those who believed in Him. (I John 2:19)
- X. John tells his readers that they have a special endowment of the Holy Spirit, Who enables them to know all things. (I John 2:20)
- Y. John says that he has not written to these believers because they do not know the truth, but he has written unto them because they do know the truth. No lie originates from truth. (I John 2:21)
- Z. Anyone who denies that Jesus is the Christ (Messiah) is a liar. (I John 2:22)

- AA. Anyone who rejects the validity of the Father and the Son is antichrist. (I John 2:22)
- BB. Anyone who rejects the Son is not in relationship with the Father. (I John 2:23)
- CC. Anyone who acknowledges the Son is in relationship with the Father. (I John 2:23)
- DD. John exhorts the reader to retain that which he has heard from the beginning. Those who hold fast to that which they were taught (heard) from the beginning will remain in the Father and the Son. (I John 2:24)
- EE. The promise that God has given to the believer is eternal life. (I John 2:25)
- FF. John says that the things he has written concern those who would try to lead the believers astray. (I John 2:26)
- GG. The special endowment of the Holy Spirit that has been received by the believer remains in him; therefore, it is not necessary for people to teach what the Holy Spirit reveals to the believer. The Holy Spirit teaches the truth of all things; He does not lie. (I John 2:27)
- HH. We must do as the Holy Spirit teaches and remain in Him Who is the Spirit of Truth. (I John 2:27)
- II. John exhorts his beloved ones to abide in Jesus so that when He appears, they will be confident and not ashamed in His presence when He arrives. (I John 2:28)
- JJ. By knowing that He is righteous, we definitely know that those who do right are born of Him. (I John 2:29)

IV. CHAPTER THREE

- A. John exhorts the believers to look at the type love given unto them by the Father. Believers are called children of God! The world does not really know the believer because it did not really know Jesus. (I John 3:1)
- B. John calls the believers “beloved.” Believers do not have to wait until they die to become part of God’s family. We are God’s children right now, in this life. (I John 3:2)

- C. It has not yet been revealed what any of us will be, but we know that when He appears, we will be similar to Him because we will see Him just as He is. (I John 3:2)
- D. Everyone who has this expectation in Him cleanses himself, just as Jesus is clean. (I John 3:3)
- E. Anyone who commits sin violates the law because committing sin is violating the law. (I John 3:4)
- F. Jesus was manifested in earth to take away our sins, and there is no sin in Him. (I John 3:5)
- G. Anyone who stays in Jesus does not sin. Anyone who sins has not clearly discerned Him, nor absolutely known Him. (I John 3:6)
- H. John exhorts the “dearly beloved ones,” saying, “Do not let anyone lead you astray.” The righteous do righteously because Jesus is righteous. (I John 3:7)
- I. Committing sin is from the devil, who sinned from the beginning. Because of the devil’s sinful influence upon humanity, the Son of God was manifested so that He could loosen (undo) the works of the devil. (I John 3:8)
- J. No one born of God produces sin because the seed of God remains in him; therefore, he is not able to sin because he is born of God. (I John 3:9)
- K. It is in this manner that the children of God and the children of the devil are revealed. Anyone who does not produce righteousness is not of God, and anyone who does not love his brother (fellow-believer) is not of God. (I John 3:10)
- L. The message that the believer has heard from the beginning of his salvation is that we must love one another. (I John 3:11)
- M. The believer should not follow the pattern of Cain, who through the influence of the devil murdered his brother Abel. The reason Cain murdered Abel was because Abel’s works were righteous and his works were evil. (I John 3:12; Genesis 4:1-15)
- N. Believers should not be surprised that the world detests them. (I John 3:13)

- O. The believer can know that he has passed from death to life because of his love for the brethren. One who does not love the brethren remains in death. (I John 3:14; John 5:24)
- P. Anyone who detests his brother is a murderer, and no murderer has eternal life remaining in him. (I John 3:15)
- Q. We absolutely know that God loves us because He sent His Son to earth to die for us; therefore, believers are under obligation to lay down their self-life for the brethren. (I John 3:16)
- R. How can the love of God reside in anyone who has the means to help a brother in need, but refuses to be compassionate toward him? (I John 3:17; James 2:14-18; Galatians 5:6)
- S. Love must go beyond words and language; it must be manifested in action and truth. (I John 3:18)
- T. It is through deeds of love that we know that we are of the truth, and our hearts are in agreement with this fact in His presence. (I John 3:19)
- U. If our hearts convict us, God is greater than our hearts, and He definitely knows everything. (I John 3:20)
- V. If our hearts do not convict us, we have confidence in God's presence. (I John 3:21; I John 5:14-15)
- W. Whatever we ask we receive from Him because we obey His commands and do what pleases Him. (I John 3:22)
- X. The command that He has given us to obey is to believe on the name of His Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another. (I John 3:23)
- Y. Those who obey His commands reside in Him. The way we definitely know that He resides in us is by the Spirit that He has given to us. (I John 3:24)

V. CHAPTER FOUR

- A. We must not believe every spirit; we are exhorted to test (prove) the spirits to see if they are from God. Many false prophets have gone forth into the world. (I John 4:1; Jeremiah 23:21)

- B. We can definitely know the Spirit God by following this principle: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is from God. (I John 4:2)
- C. Every spirit that does not acknowledge that Jesus has come in the flesh is not from God. A spirit that does not acknowledge that Jesus has come in the flesh is an antichrist spirit. Although the Antichrist has not yet been manifested, the spirit of Antichrist is already operating in the world. (I John 4:3)
- D. The believers are from God; they have already overcome these antichrist spirits because the Spirit in them is greater than the antichrist spirits of the world. (I John 4:4)
- E. These antichrist spirits are of the world; therefore, the world listens to them. The believers are of God; therefore, those who definitely know God do not listen to these spirits. (I John 4:5)
- F. One who is not of God does not listen to the messengers of God. We can recognize the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error by observing what they are teaching and where they are leading their followers. (I John 4:6)
- G. As believers, we are to love one another because love originates with God. Everyone who loves is born of God and definitely knows God. (I John 4:7)
- H. One who does not love does not really know God because God is love. (I John 4:8)
- I. God revealed His love to us by sending His only begotten Son into the world so that we could live through Him. (I John 4:9)
- J. What God did is love. It is not that we have loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as the Expiator (one who makes restitution for) of our sins. (I John 4:10)
- K. If God loved us to this extent, we are under obligation to love one another. (I John 4:11)
- L. No one has ever seen God, but if we love one another, God resides in us, and His love is realized through us. (I John 4:12)
- M. We can definitely know that we reside in Him and that He dwells in us because of the Spirit Whom He has given unto us. (I John 4:13)

- N. John declares that he has seen and is a witness of the Son Whom the Father sent into the world to be its Savior. (I John 4:14)
- O. God resides in everyone who confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, and everyone who makes this confession lives in Him. (I John 4:15)
- P. The believer definitely knows and believes the love that God has given unto him. God is love; therefore, anyone who remains in love lives in God, and God resides in him. (I John 4:16)
- Q. Our love is brought to fruition so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment because as He is, so are we in this world. (I John 4:17)
- R. There is no fear in love. Perfect love casts out fear because fear proposes the infliction of punishment. One who is frightened is not perfected in love. (I John 4:18)
- S. We love God because He first loved us. (I John 4:19)
- T. One who says he loves God and detests his brother is a liar. If one cannot love a brother whom he has seen, how can he love God Whom he has not seen? (I John 4:20)
- U. God has given this command: Those who love God must also love the brethren. (I John 4:21)

VI. CHAPTER FIVE

- A. Anyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. Everyone who loves the Father will also love the Son. (I John 5:1)
- B. We definitely know that we love the children of God when we love God and obey His commands. (I John 5:2)
- C. One who loves God will obey His commands, and His commands are not burdensome. (I John 5:3)
- D. Anyone who is born of God subdues the world; our faith in Jesus Christ is our victory over the world. (I John 5:4)
- E. Those who believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God subdue the world. (I John 5:5)

- F. Jesus came by water and blood, not just by water, but by water and blood. The Spirit bears witness because the Spirit is the truth. (I John 5:6)
1. John the Baptist came with identification (water baptism).
 2. John taught people to repent of their sins, but he could not remit their sins. Through water baptism, he caused people to identify with the One Who could remit their sins.
 3. Jesus came with identification (water) and reconciliation (blood). He remitted the sins of those who chose to identify with Him. (Romans 5:10; Colossians 1:21-22; Hebrews 9:14)
 4. The remission of sin produced reconciliation between God and repentant people.
- G. There are three witnesses in heaven: the Father; the Word; and the Holy Spirit. These three exist as one. (I John 5:7; John 8:18; John 15:26)
- H. There are three witnesses in earth: the spirit; the water; and the blood. These three are one. (I John 5:8; John 15:26; John 1:33; Romans 8:16; Colossians 2:12; I Peter 3:21; Mark 14:24; Acts 20:28; Hebrews 12:24)
1. The blood of Jesus reconciles us to God.
 2. Water baptism is a testimony of our reconciliation.
 3. The Spirit bears witness to what the blood did and the water testifies.
- I. Evidence is received from people as a witness. God's evidence is greater than that of people. God Himself has given evidence through His Son. (I John 5:9)
- J. Anyone who believes on the Son has the evidence in himself. Anyone who does not believe on the Son makes God a liar because he does believe the evidence given by God through His Son. (I John 5:10)
- K. The evidence given unto us by God is eternal life, and this eternal life is in His Son. (I John 5:11)

- L. Anyone who possesses the Son has life. Anyone who does not possess the Son does not have life. (I John 5:12)
- M. The things written by John are directed toward those who believe on the name of the Son of God, so that these believers may know they have eternal life because they believe on the name of the Son of God. (I John 5:13)
- N. This is the confidence believers have regarding Jesus: If we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. (I John 5:14)
- O. If we know that He hears us, then we know that we have the whatever we asked of Him. (I John 5:15)
- P. If anyone sees his brother sin a sin that is not unto death, if he will ask God, God will give him life for those who have not sinned unto death. There is a sin unto death; for that sin, you should not pray. (I John 5:16; Matthew 12:31; Hebrews 6:4-6; Hebrews 10:26-29)
- Q. All unrighteousness is sin, but there is a sin that does not consummate with death. (I John 5:17)
- R. Anyone born of God should not sin; those born of God must guard themselves so that the devil does not attach himself to them. (I John 5:18)
- S. Believers are from God, but the whole world dwells in evil. (I John 5:19)
- T. Believers know that the Son of God has come and given unto us understanding so that we can definitely know Him Who is true. We are in truth through His Son Jesus Christ, Who is the true God and eternal life. (I John 5:20)
- U. Protect yourselves from the worship of heathen gods. (I John 5:21)

VII. SUMMARY

- A. In this short letter, John speaks of the life, light, and love of God that are available only through Jesus.
- B. The believers are warned to test the spirits to determine which spirits are associated with God.

- C. John calls Jesus “The Word of Life.”
- D. John’s purpose for writing about the Word of Life was so that those who read his letter would be full of optimism.
- E. Anyone who says that he resides in Jesus should live as Jesus lived.
- F. The world will pass away, along with its lusts, but those who do the will of God will abide forever.
- G. Anyone who rejects the validity of the Father and the Son is antichrist.
- H. The believer can know that he has passed from death to life because of his love for the brethren.
- I. There is no fear in love.
- J. Our faith in Jesus Christ is our victory over the world.
- K. Anyone who possesses the Son has life. Anyone who does not possess the Son does not have life.

VIII. CONCLUSION

- A. The life of a true believer is motivated by the love of God.
- B. One who loves God will also love the children of God.
- C. One within whom love is developed will imitate Jesus in word and deed.
- D. This letter provides the reader with enough material to examine himself in the light of God’s love.
- E. Developing in love is not an option; it is mandatory for all believers.
- F. Those who truly love God will love His Son Jesus.
- G. Those who truly love God will recognize the spirits that are in opposition to God.

- H. When God's love is developed within us, our desires will not be for the things the world offers; our desire will be to please Him and to fulfill the ministry for which we have been called.