

PRECEPT
UPON
PRECEPT

1 John

1 JOHN

PRECEPT UPON PRECEPT

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9th edition
Printed in the United States of America

OF 1-02

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HELPFUL STUDY TOOLS

ARTHUR, KAY

How to Study Your Bible Precept Upon Precept

Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 1994.

Greek Word Study Tools

Commentaries on I John

(See commentary list below.)

RECOMMENDED COMMENTARIES

BAXTER, J. SIDLOW

Explore the Book

Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1960.

BLUM, EDWIN A.; BARKER, GLENN W.

The Expositor's Bible Commentary: 1, 2 Peter; 1,2,3 John; Jude

Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996

BURDICK, DONALD W.

Everyman's Bible Commentary: The Epistles of John

Chicago, Illinois: Moody Press, 1970

STOTT, JOHN R. W.

Tyndale New Testament Commentaries: The Letters of John

Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1996

LESSON ONE

Overview

THIS LESSON
INCORPORATES

Observation Worksheets on 1 John, located in the Appendix

Oh, how those who bear the title Christian need the message of this soul-searching book of 1 John.

Look at the average churchgoer in our land who thinks he is in good standing with God by virtue of his church membership.

Does he walk in darkness or in light?

Is this genuine Christianity? You'll find the answer in 1 John.

DAY
ONE
AND
DAY
TWO

Man cannot comprehend God's truth merely by natural means. God's truth is revealed by His Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:9-14). Therefore, a study of God's Word should always begin with prayer. As you begin, ask God, by His Spirit, to reveal His truth to you.

Precept's approach to the Word of God is inductive. We dig into the Bible itself rather than books about the Bible. This allows us to find out what the Bible says about itself. Because our study is inductive, don't consult commentaries until you are told to do so. If you'll abide by this instruction, you'll find your Bible study taking on a whole new depth and dimension.

1. In this week's lesson you will be doing an **overview** of 1 John. The purpose of the overview is to help you see the context of the book and, thus, how the author achieves his purpose for writing. This lesson will lay the foundation for all the other lessons.

The process for discovering the context begins by looking at the obvious things that are mentioned in a particular book of the Bible. If you will begin by observing the obvious, then the things within a book that are not easy to see or understand will eventually become clearer. There are two things that are always obvious, always easy to see: people and events.

2. If you have never done a Precept course before, we suggest that you take the time to read the chapters entitled “The Rule of Context — Context Rules!” and “Getting the Big Picture” in *How to Study Your Bible Precept Upon Precept*. This will give you the big picture and familiarize you with some of the terms we will use in this study.
3. Using the Observation Worksheets, located in the Appendix, read 1 John and identify the type of literature it is. Mark each use of “write,” “written,” and “writing.” Note below what you observe the author says about “writing” this. Why? What? To whom?
 - a. Why do you think the author of 1 John wrote what he did?
 - b. What did he say he wrote about?
 - c. To whom did he write?
 - d. Record your observations on the “1 John at a Glance” chart, located at the end of this lesson.

4. Using the Observation Worksheets, located in the Appendix, read through 1 John and mark in a specific color or colored symbol each mention of the pronouns the author uses to refer to himself.

You can learn a great deal about the author by constantly asking the **5 Ws and an H** questions (who, what, when, where, why, and how). For example, Who was the author? What does the text reveal about him? Record your insights in the space below. Also include the chapter and verse numbers where you found the information.

5. Now, read through 1 John again. Using a different color or symbol from the one you used for the author, mark each mention of the recipients. Notice the pronouns “you” and “your.” Again, ask the 5 Ws and an H. For example, To whom is he writing? What did you learn about them? Whom is he addressing (believers, unbelievers, or both)? Once again note only the obvious facts at this point. Record your insights below.

6. As you observed what and why the author wrote, recorded the facts about the author and the recipients, did you notice any words that the author repeated?

*Well, Beloved, you've begun! Do you feel a little overwhelmed? Are you wondering, What have I gotten myself into? You're not alone. Others have asked the same question when they first began Precept Upon Precept, but there are tens of thousands (conservatively speaking) who would tell you that Precept Upon Precept is the best and most comprehensive study they've ever done. They would tell you that their lives have never been the same and to hang in there. Eventually these skills will become second nature! So, my friend, press on. If you'll do a thorough overview of 1John, then you'll be more accurate in your interpretation! The more familiar you become with the book **as a whole**, the better you'll understand it.*

DAY THREE

Today we're going to look for key words used throughout the book of 1 John.

1. Discovering key words is vital to your understanding of the meaning of the text. A **key word** might be a noun, a descriptive word, or an action word. Observing key words is important because they help identify the author's repeated emphasis and how he accomplishes his purpose for writing.
2. Read through the Observation Worksheets of 1 John watching for the more obvious key words. As you come across key words, mark them for easy identification. Key words can be marked in one of two ways:
 - a. by coloring each use of the same word and its synonyms and pronouns in one color,
 - b. by drawing a diagram around that particular word to distinguish it from others if no colored pencils are available.

On the "1 John at a Glance" chart, record the key words you've marked.

3. Now, how are you doing? Don't get frustrated; at first it's sometimes hard to spot key words. It will get easier as you become more familiar with the book.

DAY
FOUR

1. Today you will read through 1 John again. If you haven't marked the following words as key words, do so now: "fellowship," "abide," "sin," "know," "love," "born of God," "write," "light," and their synonyms. Mark them in a distinctive way as you did yesterday.

When you finish marking each of these words, record on the chart "Key Words in 1 John," located on page 6, the number of times each word is used or repeated in each chapter. Also, note the total number of times each word is used in the book.

2. Read 1 John 5:13 again. If you have not already done so, record what John wrote about in the space provided for the Book Theme on the "1 John at a Glance" chart.

DAY
FIVE

An At a Glance chart is a tool that helps you see the overview of a book. It will enable you to see the structure of the book and how each chapter of the book relates to the whole.

1. Begin with prayer. Ask God to give you understanding. Remember, God delights to answer prayers like that!
2. You have already identified the major theme of the book. Now we want to go back and see how each chapter relates to that theme.
 - a. Read chapter 1 and note the chapter theme on the "1 John at a Glance" chart. Record it in the area labeled "1" under "Chapter Themes."
 - b. Following the same procedure, read through chapters 2-5 and identify themes for each chapter. Then record each in the appropriate location on the "1 John at a Glance" chart.
 - c. Fill in any other information necessary to complete the At a Glance chart.
3. Well, my friend, you're on your way to understanding 1 John. It may have been tedious, but you'll be glad you've done it, for now you have an understanding of the basic message and structure of 1 John which will help you keep all of its truths in their proper context.

As you have studied this week, has God spoken to you in any particular way? If so, how?

KEY WORDS IN 1 JOHN

Chapter	Fellowship	Abide	Sin	Know	Love	Born of God	Write	Light
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
Total								

1 JOHN AT A GLANCE

Book Theme

Author:

Key Words:

Purpose:

Theme:

Historical Setting:

Chapter Themes

1

2

3

4

5

1 JOHN 1

Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

WHAT was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we beheld and our hands handled, concerning the Word of Life —

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

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

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

¶ 5 And this is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.

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

7 but if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.

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

9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

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

1 JOHN 2

Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

MY little children, I am writing these things to you that you may not sin.

And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- 11 But the one who hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes.
- ¶ 12 I am writing to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake.
- 13 I am writing to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. I have written to you, children, because you know the Father.
- 14 I have written to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one.
- 15 Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.
- 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.
- 17 And the world is passing away, and *also* its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever.
- ¶ 18 Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have arisen; from this we know that it is the last hour.
- 19 They went out from us, but they were not *really* of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but *they went out*, in order that it might be shown that they all are not of us.
- 20 But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know.
- 21 I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it, and because no lie is of the truth.
- 22 Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son.

- 23 Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also.
- 24 As for you, let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father.
- 25 And this is the promise which He Himself made to us: eternal life.
- 26 These things I have written to you concerning those who are trying to deceive you.
- 27 And as for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him.
- 28 And now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming.
- 29 If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone also who practices righteousness is born of Him.

1 JOHN 3

Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

- SEE** how great a love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God; and *such* we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.
- 2 Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is.
 - 3 And everyone who has this hope *fixed* on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.
 - 4 Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness.
 - 5 And you know that He appeared in order to take away sins; and in Him there is no sin.
 - 6 No one who abides in Him sins; no one who sins has seen Him or knows Him.
 - 7 Little children, let no one deceive you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous;
 - 8 the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, that He might destroy the works of the devil.
 - 9 No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.
 - 10 By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother.
 - 11 For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another;

- 12 not as Cain, *who* was of the evil one, and slew his brother. And for what reason did he slay him? Because his deeds were evil, and his brother's were righteous.
- ¶ 13 Do not marvel, brethren, if the world hates you.
- 14 We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death.
- 15 Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.
- 16 We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.
- 17 But whoever has the world's goods, and beholds his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?
- 18 Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.
- 19 We shall know by this that we are of the truth, and shall assure our heart before Him,
- 20 in whatever our heart condemns us; for God is greater than our heart, and knows all things.
- 21 Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God;
- 22 and whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight.
- 23 And this is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as He commanded us.
- 24 And the one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And we know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.

1 JOHN 4

Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- 12 No one has beheld God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us.
- 13 By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.
- 14 And we have beheld and bear witness that the Father has sent the Son *to be* the Savior of the world.
- 15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.
- 16 And we have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.
- 17 By this, love is perfected with us, that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world.
- 18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love.
- 19 We love, because He first loved us.
- 20 If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen.
- 21 And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also.

1 JOHN 5

Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

WHOEVER believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God; and whoever loves the Father loves the *child* born of Him.

- 2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments.
- 3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.
- 4 For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world — our faith.
- 5 And who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?
- 6 This is the one who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ; not with the water only, but with the water and with the blood.
- 7 And it is the Spirit who bears witness, because the Spirit is the truth.
- 8 For there are three that bear witness, the Spirit and the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement.
- 9 If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for the witness of God is this, that He has borne witness concerning His Son.
- 10 The one who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; the one who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed in the witness that God has borne concerning His Son.
- 11 And the witness is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.
- 12 He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.

- ¶ 13 These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, in order that you may know that you have eternal life.
- 14 And this is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.
- 15 And if we know that He hears us *in* whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him.
- 16 If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not *leading* to death, he shall ask and God will for him give life to those who commit sin not *leading* to death. There is a sin *leading* to death; I do not say that he should make request for this.
- 17 All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not *leading* to death.
- ¶ 18 We know that no one who is born of God sins; but He who was born of God keeps him and the evil one does not touch him.
- 19 We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies in *the power of* the evil one.
- 20 And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding, in order that we might know Him who is true, and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.
- 21 Little children, guard yourselves from idols.