

Bible Thoughts

with
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1 John 2 John 3 John Letters

The thoughts and note material given on these pages are only a possible suggestion of the meaning, they must not be taken as inspired, however they are prayerfully prepared and compared with other similar material. There are many ways in which God's Word can be analyzed and none must be taken in place of the Word of God itself.

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Introduction

Letter of 1 John

WRITER. Believed to be the Apostle John because the writer uses the Old Testament, the writer was an eyewitness and finally the information on various people meant they had to be close associates of the writer.

John is best known as "the apostle of love," but he also had an intolerance of any heresy, both show in the first letter.

John's home during his later life was the City of Ephesus. This was a centre of trade in John's time, with trading routes passing through the area.

Christianity came to the city about 55 A.D. through the ministry of Paul. The city of Ephesus had very low morality(sinful), the magnificent temple of Diana was in this city and made it very attractive to the people and any visitors because it was also an house of prostitution in the name of religion. The people were delighted to call themselves "temple-keepers" of the great Diana, [Acts 19:35](#).

The First Letter was probably written from Ephesus about A.D. 90.

The letter is broken up as follows:

Introduction 1 John 1:1-4

Conditions of believer in Fellowship 1 John 1:5-10

Behaviour and conduct of the believer in Fellowship 1 John 2:1-29

The characteristics of Fellowship 1 John 3:1-24

Fellowship warnings 1 John 4:1-21

The reason for Fellowship 1 John 5:1-21

Chapter 1

v1-4 Introduction.

v1 The Word of Life "was in existence from the beginning," did not come into existence, always was from before the creation of the universe. John said that they have heard, listened to, seen and touched "this Word of Life," a person, Jesus the Son of God. This is not a story, it is real!!

v2 "Eternal Life" is reveal or "manifested," nothing has been hidden. God has revealed Himself.

[Rom 1:20](#) tells us that creation itself shows us God, but this can never tell us about His love for the creation, we can only see this by His presence with us. God has finally revealed Himself through His Son, Jesus, [John 14:9](#).

Giving Jesus the name "the Word" is a strange title, why? The way we speak shows how we think, our mind, Jesus is showing us the mind and heart of God the Father.

v3 John has no question in his mind on who Jesus was. John will give a number of warnings in his letters on false teachers who do not give the truth about Jesus, [1 John 2:22](#); [1 John 4:2,3](#); [John 3:3,6,7](#); [1 John 5:1](#).

Ask yourself if you are a true child of God or am I a fake Christian? Consider [Matt 7:22,23](#); [Rom 10:13](#).

v3 "Declare we unto you," John had met Jesus before and after the crucifixion and wanted to tell others of the fellowship available with God through Jesus. "Fellowship" has the meaning of *being the same, having the same interests and aims in life*. As a sinner we have nothing in common with God, but through His grace we are able to approach a pure and holy God through the blood of His Son Jesus. [1 Peter 2:24,25](#). A Fellowship which will be forever, [Matt 28:20](#).

v4 Because of all these wonderful things we should be full of joy. This thought runs through this letters, [John 15:11](#); [John 16:22](#), a joy which will never leave us.

v5-10 Fellowship conditions.

This part of the letter is concerned with how the believer lives their life, the "walk and talk" of the believer.

In this passage we find our life is full of dangers and contrasts.

"God is light," sin is darkness, if we say we are in the light of God yet live a life which is full of sinful behaviour then we must be lying as God cannot have fellowship with the darkness of sin. If we are "walking" in what we believe, the light of God, then our lives will reflect this belief. [1 Peter 2:9](#); [1 Thess 5:4-6](#).

We can see that one of the contrasts John is using concerns 'saying' and 'doing', John uses "if we say" or "He that said" a number of times showing that "talk" also involves "walk."

This 'walk' of the believer starts with the step of faith when Jesus becomes our Saviour. A believer must then learn to walk in fellowship with God by "walking in His light," living a life of truth. Unfortunately, the believer still has that sinful nature and though we may say we are not sinful this in practice cannot be true.

Sin may not be a direct disobedience to the commands of God, more often it is an attitude of the believers minds, their pride of life, their desires. [1 John 2:15-17](#); [1 John](#)

[3:6](#).

Only the Holy Spirit can provide the power for a believer to "put to death" the old nature, [Rom 8:12,13](#); this will produce the fruit of the spirit, [Gal 5:22,23](#).

v8-10 Sin can very easily spread, "If we say we have no sin," we deceive ourselves, yes but the next stage is "if we say we have not sinned" we "call God a liar" because His Word is not in us, there is no truth in us. What a situation to be in, no fellowship with God, no fellowship with His people, as a result prayer life will become empty, worship will not be attractive. v6,v7.

What to do? v9 Confess our sins, and God will forgive us and make us right with Him.

Chapter 2

In this chapter John develops two ministries of Jesus, "the Advocate" and "Propitiations for sins."

"Propitiation," the basic meaning of this word is "to appease, to win, or regain the favour or approval of someone who is angry." This may give the idea of an angry God who wants to punish the world, whose Son wants to, in love, satisfy this anger. A pure and holy God is angry with the sin of Man, but we are told in [John 3:16](#) of a loving God who does not want Man to be destroyed.

Jesus died in our place on the cross, satisfied the holy Law of God. Now there is a free pardon to any who ask for forgiveness.

When Jesus died on the cross the sacrifice was for all the people in the world, but the ministry of Jesus being an "Advocate" only applies for the Believer. The word Advocate was normally used with the lawyers, when a person goes to a court for trial they take a lawyer or Advocate, who will stand by them and help with advice and plead for the person during the court case, a person who stands by the person. Jesus used a similar idea with the coming of the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, [John 14:16,26](#) and [John 15:26](#).

The work of Jesus was completed on earth at the cross and resurrection, but to day He is in heaven, standing before the throne of God as our representative, our Advocate. When we fail and sin then Jesus is our Advocate, pleading before God as long as we have confessed the sins and asked for forgiveness. Because the price has been paid, God will forgive any confessed sins, v9.

"Confession" is not just making a list of sins, admitting sins, but also judging what we have done. This facility does not allow us to go out whenever we want to and sin because we will be forgiven. Remember what it cost God to open the door to forgiveness for you, [1 John 1:9](#).

v3-5 John tells us that obedience is a sign that we know Him, proof of our love for Him is if we willingly obey Him, not as a slave who has to, but because we want to, [John 14:15](#).

v4,5 As we obey His Word then we will become closer, if we do not obey and claim that we 'know' God, then we are liars, there is no truth in our life. A person who wants to obey the Words of God shows the relationship with God, only a person who loves the things of God will seek to please Him, we obey because we want to please Him in love, not because we have to, [John 8:29](#); [1 Thess 4:1](#).

As His Word is taken in then God is able to make the believer more like His own beloved Son.

v6 As a sign of a believer being in Christ they should become more Christ like, to walk as He walked, lived and behaved. It is not possible to become saved by living like Christ, many have tried, we have to acknowledge that we are sinners and Christ died for those sins. He is our Propitiation(sacrifice) for our sins, v2, our Advocate before God, v1, He is our Light, [1 John 1:7](#); [Gal 5:16-26](#).

v7-14 New and Old.

The word translated "Brethren," would be better translated "beloved."

v7 John talks about a command which is new, yet we have had from the beginning:- Love one another.

In English the word "Love" can "Love my wife or children" or we can "love a special same word but having a very obvious level of 'love.' John goes on to a further level and said that Christian love can involve life and death, v9, if we hate a brother yet say we love God then there is a serious problem, the light of God, who has a love which does not expect love in return cannot be in control of the believers life, to live in hatred is to live a spiritual death, v11.

The original Greek has a number of words for "love" showing specific(clear-cut) meaning.

"Agape:- " is used to show God's love for Man. A believers love for another believer and the love of God for His Church.

"Philia:- " a love of friendship.

"Eros:- " Erotic love, this word is not ever used in the New Testament.

Love is not new, neither is the command to love God but Jesus, when He responded to the question, "What is the most important Law, said, " Loving God, loving your neighbour," [Mark 12:28-34](#); [Matt 22:34-40](#); [Luke 10:25-37](#).

If this is the case what is new about this command? John has used two different Greek words which mean "new in time" or "new in status or value." The love John is talking about is the second idea, a believer loves to obey God and serve others, not with fear but because they want to, to fulfil the Law of God but done in love. Read again [Gal 5:16-26](#).

v8-11 Initially shown as the truth in Christ, "love one another" is now the truth in a believers life, which comes with the new life and new nature. Because of this new nature light will replace the blinding darkness, hatred will be replaced with love. It is wrong for a believer to claim to have fellowship with God but hate the believers in their church fellowship.

Each believer in a local church is different, our natural natures and backgrounds, our education, age, understanding of spiritual matters and many other differences. Each of these can cause problems in a church, but God wants each "to love one another."

v11 Note that a believer lacking love for another will also suffer lack of spiritual growth, "darkness hath blinded his eyes."

Let the Holy Spirit fill your life with love so that you are able to love others as God loves you. [Rom 5:5](#).

v12-15 Who is the commandment for?

v12 "Little children," All of the readers of John's letter are included but especially those who have their sins forgiven and so have a family relationship with each other,

children in Christ believing in Him and in His Name.

v13 John now addresses "the fathers," those who are more spiritually mature, older in Christ. They have known through living believing and trusting in Him.

To the "young men," the younger of the readers, "have overcome," indicating that past action is still active. The "wicked one," Satan or the persons evil nature.

"Little children," the Greek word used indicates subordination, subjection, of lower position instead of a relationship, parent to child instead of child to child as before.

All three groups have known the Father.

v14 The young have been able to win over the evil one, personal and Satan, because they know and understand the Word of God, they lived their life in a way which pleased God and was according to His Will and His Word.

v15-17 Believers relationship with the world.

Previously John has been reminding the readers that, as believers, they had special rights and advantages, their sins were forgiven, they knew the source of truth, they had been able to experience spiritual victory.

John now encourages the readers to walk worthy of this calling, avoiding a love of things in the world as anyone who has a love of the things of the world will be against God.

v15,16 "Love not the world," all people are being address with this command. The "world," which can be the physical earth, or the world of mankind. John is referring to anything which is any part of the system which is against God, [1 Cor 2:14](#).

God loves the world of Men, [John 3:16](#) because He was willing to send His Son to die for it, but He hates anything in the world which has rejected Him, so should the believer, there should be no desire, lust of the eyes, pride of life.

See [James 1:27](#); [James 4:4](#); [Matt 6:19-24](#); [John 15:18,19](#); [Phil 3:17-20](#); [2 Peter 1:4](#).

v17 A final reason for not having a love for the world is that it is not permanent, not designed to last very long, it is passing away, note the words indicated it is going on right now. How silly it would be to put trust and love in the world which is already being destroyed, [John 12:31](#). Far better to seek to please God who has the power of eternal life, [Col 1:9,10](#).

v18 John has just warned his readers about 'light' and 'darkness,' 'love' and 'hate,' now he turns to true doctrine and false doctrine.

John warns the "children" the importance with "the last time," and "AntiChrist shall come," both indicating the world is approaching the end. The end times started when Jesus returned to heaven, why has he not returned yet? God is above time, [2 Peter 3:8](#). There were false teachers in John's time, to day they are more apparent. Believers have always been living in the "Last Times."

John is the only writer who refers to the "Antichrist," a spirit which will come into the world which denies who Jesus Christ is, the name is used to describe false teachers who will teach about this spirit, and finally a physical person who will lead and control the final world system at the end.

The spirit of antichrist has been in the world since Satan's disobedience to God, it controls or is the source of all false teaching or religious replacement for the truth of Christ.

The world is occupied by the two forces, the Holy Spirit is the source of the Truth and

uses the Church as messenger, Satan is the source and energy of evil. The presence of the Holy Spirit living in the Christian's is controlling and holding back the Satanic power. At the Rapture, [1 Thess 4:13-18](#), the Church will be removed from the earth, evil will have no direct resistance and will be free to take over the world, though God will still be in overall control throughout.

v19-25 John warns of the marks of these false people, "they went out from us," indicating that they were originally part of the fellowship but that does not mean that they were true believers.

A true believer accepts the Bible as the Word of God, that Jesus is the Son of God, [1 John 4:2](#); [John 10:30](#); [John 5:23](#). They confess that they are sinners and need the saving grace of God through the substitute death of Christ on the cross. They believe Jesus rose again, and that the Holy Spirit now lives in the true believer, [Rom 8:9](#). All true believers are looking for the return of Jesus for them.

v24,25 We must let the Word of God fill us, searching out the truth so that we can grow more like Jesus each day preparing to claim a wonderful promise, eternal life. This will help us know when we meet false teaching.

v26-29 The faithful can be deceived.

Many of those who have a false faith and want to teach their doctrine will tend to concentrate on the church fellowship, Satan, who controls these people is not interested in the unsaved as they are already his followers, he wants to destroy the fellowship with Christ of a believer. The words v26 John used "who seduce you," which has the idea of 'being led away.' "I have warned you of these before," he then said. Compare [1 Tim 4:1-4](#); [2 Cor 11:13-15](#).

Satan will always try to counterfeit (produce a false copy) the work of God. He can produce ministers who teach his false doctrines, [Gal 1:6-12](#); [John 8:42-45](#). Also look at the parables Jesus gave in [Matt 13:24-43](#).

v27 Every true believer has been anointed by the Holy Spirit, He who knows what is counterfeit and a believer just needs to open themselves to His teaching and leading to identify these false teachers, [1 John 5:6](#).

v28 Abiding(live in, fellowship, accept) the Father and His Word then we will be ready for the return of Jesus, having not failed Him.

v29 It is possible to be part of a family, one of the children, yet not be in fellowship with the father, or other family members. John is saying that behaviour shows the closeness of each family member, the pure and righteousness of God is a sign of being a member of His family, those who live right with God are part of His family.

Chapter 3

v1-10 The real and the fake.

The real characteristics of the Believer, - purity.

John tells us that a true child of God will always try to live a life right with God and love other Christians even if they have differences in doctrine. There are two reasons for this, the past work of God and the future work of God.

A believer is "born of God," sons and daughters of God because of His love for each of us and as such we should practice righteousness and love.

v6 No one who abides in God will practice sin, no one who practices sin has seen Him or knows Him. It is clear that no Christian is sinless [1 John 1:8-10](#), we still have our old natures, but God expects a life which is as sin free as possible, not sinning at every opportunity.

v1-3 God Loves us.

A love which is one-off, unique. Verse 1 could be translated "Behold, what unique kind of love is given to us by the Father." We were totally against all that God is, we, mankind were evil throughout, we were His enemies, yet He loved us so much that He sent His Son to die for us!!! From the beginning of time it was all part of the plan of God, the way of salvation.

The world just cannot understand this relationship a believer has, until you have become part of this love you cannot understand what it means.

v2 This verse now tells us what is the result of verse 1, as son's of God we are part of His family, and will be made like Him when He comes for us, [Phil 3:20,21](#).

v3 John reminds us that because of verses 1 & 2 we should be keeping our lives clean, living a purifying life with daily cleaning and confession on failure, [Eph 2:8-10](#); [Titus 2:11-14](#).

v4-8 Our Saviour.

v4 John calls sin the "breaking of the law." What is sin? Disobedience of God, His Law, perfection, against God, not being right with God, un pure, evil, [Gal 5:19-21](#); [James 4:17](#).

John now looks back at this wonderful Saviour. He came to earth as a God Man for one purpose only, v5,6 "to take away our sins" and as a result, v8, "destroyed the works of the devil."

Though God is love it does not mean He has no rules and regulations for those of His family, [1 Cor 9:21](#). Sin is disobedience to God, rebellion against Him, no matter what is shown on a persons outside a sinner's attitude is always against God. A believer still has this inner nature and so will still have a rebellious nature against God, only letting Christ's control take over will prevent this attitude. "Whosoever abideth (communion) in Him sinneth not." A sinful life shows Christ is not in the person and cannot have any communion or abide in Christ.

v7,8 If a person knows God he will obey God, if he is under the power of Satan then he will obey Satan. Christ came into the world to destroy the power and works of Satan.

The word John used "Destroy" does not mean totally wipe out as we know Satan is still active today, "Destroy" has much reduce power, defeated and lost the war with God for mankind, today it is only a matter of time before God fully judges Satan and his followers.

Counterfeit Christians were trying to teach that a believer could be "saved" and continue to practice sin.

v9,10 Power of the Holy Spirit.

A believer has a new nature in them, a nature which cannot sin, "God's seed" John calls it. A believer, through Jesus, has a new relationship with God, righteousness in

God's sight, justification, which can never be changed or lost, [1 John 5:1](#). Spiritual life will produce a spiritual life, physical life only physical life, [John 3:6](#); [1 Peter 1:23](#); [Rom 13:14](#); [Gal 5:16](#); [Rom 12:1](#).

Giving into sin is a mark of those who are "children of the devil," v10.

A true believer also loves other Christians. See v11-24.

v11-24 Believers relationship to each other.

In [1 John 2:7-11](#) we learned of the "fellowship" between believers, now John examines the relationship between believers.

v11,12 John first looks at a relationship at the lowest level between people - murder. Cain had a life of hatred, [Genesis 4:1-16](#). Cain and Abel were brothers, both offered sacrifices to God, but only Abel's was offered in a way acceptable to God, with faith. God must have given specific instruction on acceptable worship but Cain ignored the word of God. In jealousy Cain murdered his brother.

v13 The attitude to God's Word by the world is the same as Cain, accepting or rejecting any who follow the Word of God.

v14,15 The reader may be saying "I've never murdered anyone," then consider [Matt 5:20-24](#). The inward desire may still be the same.

A believer is in the practice of loving the brethren, it is still possible for a believer to become angry with another believer, [Matt 5:22-24](#).

It does not mean that a murderer cannot be saved, forgiven by God, Apostle Paul is an example of this grace, [Acts 26:9-11](#).

v16,17 External behaviour.

Love involves doing good as well as avoiding evil. Christ gave His life for each of us, so each believer should be willing to give up all, including life, for other believers, just as Jesus willingly gave His life for us. Most believers will not be asked by God to die for another, but He does expect us to help others or individuals when in need.

v18-24 "To love in tongue" means to be without sincerity, not honest, not truthful, opposite to truth. To love from the heart and not just say the words.

Because of the presence of God in a believers life then they will know if their behaviour is right or wrong, a believer does all to please God, not self.

v19,20 This behaviour will "assure our hearts before Him," God knows each of our hearts.

v21,22 This behaviour will give "answer for prayer."

v23,24 Fellowship, abide with God. Seek to obey His commands. Believe in Jesus, love one another. Consider [Matt 22:35-40](#); [John 14:23,24](#). This fellowship is through the presence of the Holy Spirit, Consider [John 14:26](#); [Rom 8:14-16](#); [Rom 5:1-10](#).

Chapter 4

Following on the information in 1 John 2:20ff John comes back to identifying the false teachers.

v1-6 "Who is Jesus?" is the question John is asking in these verses. The readers of this letter were saved and so knew who Jesus was, [Rom 8:9](#). The false teachers were claiming that they had a special knowledge of God and were therefore "special," John points out that all true Christians know God and have been given His Spirit.

v2,3 A very important statement of faith is given by John "Jesus is God come in a human form." Any one who is preaching or teaching and does not believe this statement is not of God and must be of the Antichrist.

Please note that this statement involves just an identifying of Jesus, the demons also are able to do this, but this did not save them, [Mark 1:23,24](#); [Luke 4:33-34](#); [Matt 8:28-34](#). True faith involves a personal faith in Christ, who He is and what He has done for us, [1 John 2:22-27](#). Consider also [Matt 12:22-30](#); [Matt 16:13-16](#); [Mark 8:27-30](#); [Luke 9:18-21](#); [John 6:68,69](#).

v4-6 If you announce that you worship God but leave out Jesus then you are not worshipping as a true Christian, for God and Jesus are one, [John 5:23](#).

v7-16 Love is of God.

John returns to the thoughts on love, but now he asks "why is love so important?" His answer is that "God is love." His is a spirit by nature, and as such has no time or space restrictions (limits) as you and I are. He is holy and pure, but His nature is love, even His actions are controlled by His love.

v7,8 As a result of this anyone who cannot love others cannot also have a love for God.

v9,10 Because He love His creation mankind, even though the creation rejected Him, He was prepared, because of His love, to make away for restoring Man back to Him. He did this by sending His Son into the world, paying the price required for this sin of rejection on the cross. Consider [2 Cor 5:13-15](#); [1 Thess 5:9,10](#); [Eph 2:1-6](#).

v10 True love must also have an action, not just words. The love of God is given without expecting a response or love in return. Our own nature is against God, we have a sinful nature which rejects God, yet He still sent His Son to die on the cross, to restore the relationship (propitiation), [Rom 5:8-11](#).

v11 A command - love others because He loves us. Love does not save, belief does this, [John 3:16](#), but because of what it cost Jesus then we will want to love Him and the Father.

v12-16 The plan of God.

Note how many times 'abide' or 'dwell,' are involved in this passage, all made possible by the Holy Spirit.

God wants to be part of His creation, not just walk with them but live in them, in perfection for eternity and for man to become part of God, How? "Confess that Jesus is the Son of God." [John 14:23](#).

The more we love God, the more we know Him, the more we will love Him.

v17-21 Love and Obey.

John now introduces the words 'fear' and 'torment' in his messages to believers on love. How can these go together? Unfortunately any believer who is not growing in the love of God may suffer fear and torment in doubts.

v17,18 Love made perfect looking forward to the coming Judgement Day because of our fellowship with God, we are growing like Him. A believer has a reverent fear of God, they recognize who He is and give Him reverence, tormenting fear does not exist in this situation.

People normally have a fear due to something which has happened in the past or is still happening today, it may even be a fear of the future or a mixture of all three. [Heb 9:27](#).

For a believer this fear should not happen, they have experienced the love of God and so have no fear of past, present and future events, it is all covered by the death of Jesus, judgement has already happened, "perfect love casteth out fear," [John 5:24](#).
v19 We do not have to be afraid of the past because it all happened because He loved us first. Consider [Rom 8:28-39](#).

v20,21 **Truth.**

Once again John uses the phrase "If a man say," a warning against false, fake words. A believer who tries to show their spirituality by saying false words, "I love this brother," when in fact there is only hatred is a liar, not only with those words but in their relationship with God. John points out that if you cannot love someone you have seen how can you love an invisible God. To love God means that you must love others as God loves. [Matt 5:43-48](#).

Chapter 5

v1-3 **Love.**

John continues his thoughts on Love in this chapter. We are told to keep His commandments, but we do them in love. v3 "His commandments are not grievous, (not a burden, do not cause pain or unhappiness). We are obeying because we want too, we do it with joy.

This love is a family love, we are children of God, His family, starting with the Father it includes our brothers and sisters in Christ. Be careful not to break this family love with wrong action, sins, if you do then John has already told us how to restore the fellowship, [1 John 1:9](#). A religious man who tries to please God with 'a man controlled love,' will find it a great problem without this fellowship, Jesus warned the religious leaders of this problem, [Matt 23:1-7](#).

v4,5 **Victory over the world.**

It is not easy in today's world to obey God, it is far easier to follow the desires of the world and our old nature does its best to make the world appealing. But, "whosoever is born of God overcomes the world," through faith. This new nature allows us to have victory over the world. Again John reminds us that this new nature is through believing and faith in God's Son. Consider [John 16:33](#); [Gal 2:20](#); [Rom 6:1-16](#); [Eph 2:1-9](#); [Col 3:1-5](#); [Eph 1:18-23](#).

v6-21 **We know.**

By our nature we are always full of doubts, John makes five statements which remove any doubts for a Christian.

v6-10 Witnesses.

How do we know that Jesus was the Son of God? Some false teachers said that Jesus was a man who God came on at His Baptism and left Jesus when He was on the cross, this means that only a man died, not God.

1) God spoke at His baptism and the Holy Spirit came upon Him, the witness of the Water. [Matt 3:13-17](#).

2) God again spoke again following the triumphal entry by Jesus just before the crucifixion, [John 12:23-30](#). 3) The Spirit witnesses, [Rom 8:15-17](#). The Spirit is Truth, we can accept what He tells us.

4) The Bible tells us we need at least two witnesses, if we accept the witness of man then compared with man the witness of God is far greater.

5) The witness in our own life, the changes, because of our faith.

v11-13 We have eternal life.

Eternal life came from God, it came as a gift, we cannot work for it, [Eph 2:8,9](#); [John 10:25-29](#). It came as a result of the action of Jesus, He took our punishment, [Rom 8:1-4](#).

Without the forgiveness through Jesus then eternal life is not ours.

John has written this letter to make sure people know and believe they have eternal life.

v14,15 God answers prayer.

A Believer can take all and any needs and problems to God, we are free to speak to God at any time. If our requests are according to His will then He will respond.

There are conditions, we must not have any un-confessed sin, [1 John 3:21,22](#); [John 15:7](#).

Our prayer request must be in the will of God, He has promised to supply all our needs [Phil 4:19](#), not our desires. If we need it to serve Him, He will supply, when He knows we need it.

Our prayer must be from the heart, wanting to talk to, to glorify, worship the greatest one in the universe, Jesus Christ, [1 Thess 5:17](#).

Even Jesus, though He was God in the flesh, still needed to pray with His Father, [Mark 1:35](#); [Luke 6:12](#); [John 17:1ff](#); [Matt 26:36-46](#); [Luke 23:34](#); [Matt 27:46,47](#); [Luke 23:46](#).

v16-19 A Believer does not practice sin.

v18 "If you are born of God you do not sin." This is not the continual sin of an unbeliever, we all still have our old nature and can still sin.

A Believer will be attacked by Satan, anytime he thinks he can make you sin, [1 Peter 5:8,9](#).

The world can also be very attractive to our old nature, pride, desires will make it hard to keep our hearts on God.

How can we avoid sinning? v18, Whoever is born of God is kept by Jesus, the wicked one cannot touch him. We cannot do it ourselves, [Eph 6:12-18](#). God will always protect us, [1 Cor 10:13](#).

If we do fail we can confess our sin and receive forgiveness, [1 John 1:9](#).

v16 We should pray for brothers who are sinning, asking that God will help him return and confess.

Please note "There is a sin unto death," Consider [The unpardonable sin](#). John is speaking about a believer who does not confess and turn away from sin, God may punish, [Heb 12:1-13](#), and this may involve a physical death.

v20,21 Real life is ours.

Jesus has given us understanding, we know what He has said and done are the truth and because of our faith we now have eternal life, today!!!!

Finally John tells us to avoid idols, not just images but anything which we allow to take the place of God in our life, relationships, family, job, interests and so on.

Introduction

Letter of 2 John

WRITER. John, who introduces himself as the "Elder" rather than "Apostle," this suggests that the letter was addressed to an individual, "elect lady," rather than a group or church.

The letter contains no information as to where it was written or when. The tone of the letter is also seems to confirm that it is a personal letter. The lady seems to live near Ephesus

The letter is broken up as follows:

Introduction verses 1-3

Warnings about false doctrine verses 4-11

Final thoughts verses 12,13

This letter was written to a mother and her children as a warning of false teachers and doctrine which were appearing in the churches, John wants to prevent this doctrine entering the home of this lady v10. There is some suggestion that the letter was addressed to a group connected with the lady, John occasionally uses the plural in the text, verses 6,8,10,12, though it may have just been her family.

v1-3 Knowing the truth. The word "truth" appears four times in these verses. What is the truth? See examples:- [John 14:6](#); [John 15:6](#); [John 16:6-8](#); [John 16:13-15](#); [John 17:17](#).

The truth is not just the revelations which have come from the Father but the believer has to be involved, just knowing the truth is not sufficient we must also be controlled by these truths, in love.

Because of the spread of false teachings John puts great importance on Knowing the Truth. John calls these "deceivers" and "antichrist," v7.

v3 "Grace, mercy and peace," When we receive grace and mercy from the Father through Jesus we also receive the peace of God. [Rom 5:1-11](#) v3 A further statement of truth is when John links God the Father and Jesus Christ together, so confirming the deity of Jesus and to confirm the equality John makes a special reference to "Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father." See [1 John 2:22-24](#).

Many false teaching has taken this idea and added to it the idea that all believers are son's of God, therefore Jesus was just a man and not claiming to be God. However, Jesus did claim "I and the Father are one," [John 10:27-38](#). This claim is very important because if Jesus is just a man then His death on the cross has no meaning, only a pure and sinless God, coming as a human, can pay the price for the sin of Man.

v4-6 Living a life in the Truth.

"Walk in the TRUTH." It is very easy to know the truth and understand it but to live the Truth is much harder. John said that living the truth was a command from the Father, it starts with loving one another. John tells the lady that he is very pleased that she and her children are obeying this command.

In the first letter of John, he had told the reader just how important were these commandments of God, [1 John 5:3](#), it shows our love of God by our obedience. The false teachers were taking these commandments to show that God appears difficult and was offering their own 'freedom' [2 Peter 2:19-21](#).

v5,6 John now repeats the instruction for the lady and her family, "that we love one another," [John 13:34,35](#). Though not a new command but now has much more importance due to act of Jesus in love for us. "The fruit of the Spirit is love," [Gal 5:22](#), also consider [Rom 5:5](#).

How do we walk with love? This may mean having love for those you do not like, simply we should treat all the same way God has treated you in love. We can only do this if we commit and submit all as obedience to the Father into the hand of the Holy Spirit.

Consider the following:- Truth in Love, [Eph 4:15](#). Knowing the Truth, [John 7:17](#).

v7-11 John warns that there are many with false teaching, they are saying that Jesus Christ is not God in the flesh. Some actually taught that Jesus was a normal human who God came into sometime after the birth.

v8 Examine yourself that you know what is the truth because many of the false teachers were coming out of the church, they were learning of the truth then turning away from it, [1 John 2:19](#); [Acts 20:30](#); [2 Peter 2:1ff](#). These false teachers will do all they can to take you away from the truth.

v9 The word *transgress* indicates 'to pass the limits,' going beyond the Word of God, turning away from the message brought by Jesus. These people, John tells us do not have God, it is impossible to give honour to the Father and ignore His Son.

v10,11 Do not encourage anyone who comes to you with these false teachings, have no fellowship with them. Anyone who offers help and assistance to these false teachers is actually helping in their evil work. John considered that even saying "God bless" would be encouraging them.

v12,13 John obviously planned to visit the lady and family to deal personally with many other things. He was looking forward to their meeting with joy.

We must not forget the main message of this letter - LOOKOUT False teachers are around.

Introduction

Letter of 3 John

WRITER. John the Apostle.

This letter by John allows us to see the activities of the early New Testament Church.

We meet Gaius, Diotrephes and Demetrius. Gaius is the church leader and the other two are members of this church, Diotrephes is causing problems. John used Demetrius as an example to the church.

Reason. This short letter was written to sort out a personality problem in the church.

The letter is broken up as follows:

Personal greetings. verses 1-4

Hospitality duties of the church. verses 5-8

Dangers of Pride. verses 9-12

John uses keywords meaning "witness" or "testimony," so reflecting that our behaviour as a believer is just as important as the words we use. Each believer is a witness, good or bad to the truth, salvation and love of God.

v1-4 Personal greetings and thanks for work.

John has addressed the letter to Gaius, one of the assembly leaders. It was obvious that John has a close relationship with this person, "well-beloved Gaius," in v1 and "beloved" in v5. In verse 4 that Gaius may have been a convert of John.

v2 The text "prosper and be in health," could suggest that Gaius may have had health problems. However, John was obviously very pleased with the spiritual health of Gaius, he wants him to be as healthy as his spiritual life, "even as thou walkest in the truth."

Consider [2 Cor 4:16](#); [2 Cor 7:1](#)

v3,4 Gaius "walked in the truth," his witness and testimony were obeying the Word of God in all respects, [1 Thess 2:12,13](#).

v4 "Walk in truth." Consider Jesus is truth, [John 14:6](#); The Word of God is true, [John 17:17](#); Holy Spirit is truth, [1 John 5:6,7](#).

v4-8 Gaius was also taking this message of truth to all the brethren and strangers, v5. His witness was not just to the church but he was willing to minister to visitors. It is obvious that Gaius lived "the truth."

It appears that Gaius had received strong disapproval of his attitude to visitors. In John's second letter he had sent a warning to the lady and her family of the danger of false teachers entering the church and home, but John in this letter to Gaius has congratulated him for his dealings and hospitality for strangers, John considers this action was still a Christian duty. Also consider [Heb 13:2](#).

Today the entertainment of strangers still has a danger, not just because of doctrine but physical dangers, it is always recommended that you know something about any visitors or strangers you offer accommodation too. In the early church, where communication was not easy, the travellers had letters of recommendation from their church. For example [Rom 16:1](#) Gaius was not only giving accommodation to these visitors but giving financial help, "you send them forward on their journey in a godly manner."

Consider [1 Cor 16:6,7](#); [James 2:14-18](#); [Luke 10:3-8](#).

v9-10 Diotrephes wants to be the boss.

The disciples often argued about who would be the greatest, [Matt 18:1ff](#), in this passage Jesus reminded them that the attitude of the servant is more important. [Phil 2:1ff](#). Diotrephes was full of pride, he claimed preeminence for himself rather than Jesus. It appears that he insisted that he had the final decision in the local assembly, the Greek words use to describe Diotrephes attitude indicated he was constantly making himself out to be important.

A person like Diotrephes in any church will always cause problems, even a pastor who forgets the 'servant' mind can do it. This also can hinder or prevent the Holy Spirit working properly.

v9,10 What was Diotrephes doing? He was spreading untruths about the apostle, "prating against us with malicious words." He was not allowing the church to have fellowship with John, one of the apostles of Jesus, even throwing any one out of the church who wanted to meet John. Evidently Diotrephes had the authority in the church to do this.

Why did Diotrephes not want to meet John? Because John had the authority of the apostle and was a threat to Diotrephes position. Diotrephes was operating with pride and self-glorification, the tools often used by Satan.

v11 **Who was the master of Diotrephes? God or Satan?**

Believers must always be careful of believing all that is said about a person or ministry, make sure everything you read or hear is the truth, consider [Phil 4:8](#) as the way to treat all information. Note [Rom 16:17-19](#).

In any church there may often be various ways of interpretation of scripture, as long as it does not disagree with other scripture this is OK, but just because you do not agree with this interpretation you should not use it as an excuse for having no fellowship with the person.

v11,12 Demetrius an example.

John has just warned the believers not to be like Diotrephes, now he encourages them to use Demetrius as an example to follow. Demetrius was living a life pleasing to Christ, he had a "good report," he walked in the truth. [Phil 3:13-19](#).

v13,14 **Final conclusions.**

John's letter to Gaius was a warning of danger from inside the church, John was obviously planning a visit to the church very soon when he would discuss many other things with the church members.

John also included greetings from the church where he was at the time of writing, what a blessing for fellowship between churches.