

## **Book of 1 John**

### **1. 1 John 1:1-10**

1) Observation: What problem existed within the church? (2:18, 26) How does John express his personal experience of encountering Jesus? (2:27)

2) Interpretation: John emphasizes his personal experience of being with Jesus (1:1-3). Why do you think he emphasizes this personal experience?

3) Application:

3.1(God Loving Us): God proclaimed the gospel to the church in the 1st century through itinerant preachers mentioned as "strangers" (1:5), "they" (1:6), "those who have gone out for the sake of the Name of Christ" (1:7), and "the brothers" (1:10). Through what means did you encounter God and experience His grace?

3.2(God Meeting Us): John praises and encourages Gaius, who faithfully serves and does good work in spreading the gospel (1:5, 6). How do you treat and support those who labor and dedicate themselves to sharing the gospel?

3.3(God Refinding Us): John explains how the church should treat people around them, especially those who are dedicated to spreading the gospel (1:7-8). How does your church and community practice "Christian hospitality" in concrete ways?

3.4(God Inspiring US): John talks about Diotrephes as an example of someone who holds a leadership position but fails to practice "Christian hospitality." Diotrephes exhibits unhealthy leadership traits such as loving to be first, refusing to welcome others, speaking evil against others, hindering the work, and expelling people (1:9-10). When there is unhealthy leadership in the church leading to conflict, how should this problem be resolved?

4) Real Life Today: Verse 2 should be understood as an expression of John's desire to praise and bless Gaius, not as a statement that implies "if you live a good spiritual life, you will receive blessings, be healthy, wealthy, and happy through the church." Is there someone in your life like Gaius to whom you want to give such praise and blessing? Is there someone in your church or community whom you want to emulate as a model of faith and life?

### **2. 1 John 2:1-17**

1) Observation: What concept from Levitical sacrifices does John use to describe Jesus Christ? (2:1-2)

2) Interpretation: While describing the "atonement sacrifice, Jesus Christ," John uses the expression "whoever commits a sin," "for our sins," and "for the whole world." What are the

characteristics of the gospel and God's heart contained in this expression? (Reference: Romans 8:32, 37; 10:9-10; Galatians 5:16-26; 2 Timothy 4:6-8)

3) Application:

3.1(God Loving Us): The concept of "atonement sacrifice" in describing the identity of Jesus Christ reveals what God has done for me. How did you come to believe that God made Jesus Christ an atonement sacrifice for your sins on the cross?

3.2(God Meeting Us): John emphasizes that a characteristic of a "true Christian" is confessing sins (1:9) and emphasizes that when one acknowledges being a sinner, God will "forgive sins and cleanse us" (1:9). What has changed for you after confessing your sins and being cleansed?

3.3(God Refinding Us): John declares that "God is light" (1:5) and because of this, believers and the church should "live in the light and have fellowship with one another" (1:7). To live as a light that reflects the presence of God, what spiritual activities help you overcome obstacles and temptations in your current life situation?

3.4(God Inspiring US): In your current church, what activities are being done to deal with false teachings and resist the influence of the "antichrist" who tries to tempt and deceive believers?

4) Real Life Today: John warns that even if someone appears to be a "Christian," without obedience and practicing love, they are not truly "saved saints." What areas of obedience should you and your church focus on as "saved saints"? Who should be the target of your love?

### **3. 1 John 2:18-3:3**

1) Observation: What are the characteristics of the antichrists (2:19, 22-23, 26) and the characteristics of true Christians (2:28-29; 3:1-3) that can be found while reading the passage?

2) Interpretation: Why is John concerned and warning about the appearance and activities of the antichrists? (2:18-19)

3) Application:

3.1(God Loving Us): John points out that the antichrists who came into the church and then left appeared to be Christians outwardly but were not truly so inwardly (2:19). Are you living as someone who has been saved by God's grace?

3.2(God Meeting Us): One of the characteristics of the antichrist is "those who want to lead you astray" (2:26). Have you encountered anyone in your community who has misled you? Conversely, have you met someone who has kept you from falling into false teachings by being with you in God's presence?

3.3(God Refinding Us): John says, "remain in fellowship with Christ" (2:28) as a characteristic of true Christians and states that we will become like him (3:2). A true Christian means to "abide in Jesus, have fellowship with him, and live like Jesus." What spiritual practices are you engaging in to become a true Christian?

3.4(God Inspiring US): John identifies "practicing righteousness, being moved by God's love, and purifying oneself" (2:29; 3:1, 3) as characteristics of true Christians. What efforts are you making to practice righteousness and purify yourself? Have you experienced being moved by God's love? Have you encountered good examples within your community?

4) Real Life Today: Are your words and actions being perceived by the people around you as a reflection of a true Christian? If there are areas where you fall short, what aspects should be changed?

#### **4. 1 John 3:4-24**

1) Observation: John focuses on two topics related to the identity of "God's children, Christians." What are these two topics? (3:4-10, 3:11-24)

2) Interpretation: John presents "a person who does not sin and practices righteousness (3:4-9)" and "a person who demonstrates love for one another (3:11-24)" as the embodiment of true Christians. What are the things that "God's children should not do" and "must do"?

3) Application:

3.1(God Loving Us): John states, "Anyone who sins belongs to the devil" (3:8), emphasizing that sin and being a Christian are incompatible. When did you realize and experience God's grace by recognizing your sins and turning away from them?

3.2(God Meeting Us): John says that "sin" cannot coexist with "God's law" (3:4), the ministry of Christ (3:5-6), and the work of the Holy Spirit (3:9). Can you recall a person or a situation where you opposed the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit by committing a grave sin that God allowed or permitted in your life?

3.3(God Refinding Us): John highlights "love," which is the "nature of God," as the criterion that distinguishes between two types of people—God's children and Satan's children (3:10) (3:18-24). What are you currently striving for or need to strive for to live as "God's children" instead of "Satan's children"?

3.4(God Inspiring US): 3.4 (Internalization): Examples of "lack of love" found among "Satan's children" include "murder" (3:12-14), "hatred" (3:15), and "indifference" (3:16-17). All of these issues of "murder, hatred, indifference, and lack of love" originate from the "heart" and are "spiritual" problems (John 15:13-13, 1 Peter 2:19-23). How can these issues be eradicated from the church and community

4) Real Life Today: John urges believers to "love one another" (3:11) and emphasizes that this love should be expressed through actions and truthfulness, not just words and speech (3:16-18). He even states that prayers are answered when such love is practiced (3:22). Who should be the recipients of this love that you and your church should practice?

## **5. 1 John 4:1-21**

1) Observation: Find the different expressions referring to the two kinds of spirits present in the world. (4:1-3, 4, 6)

2) Interpretation: John advises, "Do not believe every spirit but test the spirits to see whether they are from God" (4:1). What are some ways to test and discern whether a spirit is from God?

3) Application:

3.1(God Loving Us): John presents the criterion for distinguishing between "the Spirit of God" and "the spirit of the antichrist" as acknowledging the Spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh (4:2-3). Since when and how did you come to believe in the incarnation of God on this earth?

3.2(God Meeting Us): After emphasizing "brotherly love" as the criterion for distinguishing between "children of God" and "children of the devil" in chapter 3 (3:10-18), John provides four reasons for why Christians should love in chapter 4 (4:7-18). According to John's criteria, assess whether you, as a child of God, practice love.

3.3(God Refinding Us): John gives the following reasons to explain why Christians should love:

- 1) God is love (4:7-8)
- 2) God loved us first (4:9-11)
- 3) The existence of God and the incarnation testify to love (4:12-16)
- 4) It provides a basis for standing confidently before God in judgment (4:17-18).

Among these four reasons, what touches your heart and inspires you to practice love?

3.4(God Inspiring US): After emphasizing the importance of practicing love as Christians, John says, "Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar" (4:20). What activities are you engaged in, both individually and as a church, to avoid being "liars"? What are the things you need to do in the future?

4) Real Life Today: Although you acknowledge and recognize the need to love your brothers and sisters as someone who loves God, there may be situations where it is difficult to practice love or difficult to love certain individuals. How can you overcome these obstacles and fulfill the command to love as stated in the Scriptures?

## **6. 1 John 5:1-21**

1) Observation: Identify three expressions that reveal the identity of a "Christian" (5:4-5).

2) Interpretation: John states that those who are "born of God" and believe that Jesus is the Son of God are the ones who overcome the world. What does it mean to "overcome the world"? (Reference: John 16:33; Romans 8:37; 2 Corinthians 2:14)

3) Application:

3.1(God Loving Us): John repeatedly emphasizes faith, love, and obedience (keeping the commandments) as the characteristics of a "Christian who overcomes the world" (5:1-5). According to these criteria, how would you answer if asked whether God has called you to be an overcomer?

3.2(God Meeting Us): In order to affirm that Jesus is both human and divine, John distinguishes between external testimonies (the Spirit, water, and blood) (5:6-9) and internal testimonies (faith and eternal life) (5:10-12). Have you experienced these testimonies? How did you become convinced that Jesus is the Christ?

3.3(God Refinding Us): John emphasizes faith and knowledge about Jesus Christ together, saying, "Those who believe in the Son of God... know" (5:13), "we know" (5:15), "we know" (5:18), "we know" (5:19). What are you and your church doing to deepen your understanding of Jesus Christ?

3.4(God Inspiring US): John mentions the following as the fourfold certainty of the saints:

- 1) Eternal life (5:11-13)
- 2) Answered prayer (5:14-17)
- 3) Victory over sin and Satan (5:18)
- 4) Being children of God (5:19)
- 5) Knowing that Jesus is the Son of God (5:20).

Do you possess these assurances? If there are people around you who have not yet obtained such certainty, how can you help them?

4) Real Life Today: The book of 1 John begins with an explanation of the attributes and role of Jesus Christ (1:1-2:17) and concludes with a firm conviction about Jesus Christ (5:6-21). Incorrect knowledge about Jesus Christ produces antichrists and leads saints and churches into a critical crisis. What should you and your church do to have a sound understanding of Jesus Christ?