

1, 2, 3 John TCT School of the Bible

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Outline of Study—By episode number

Thematic Approach to studying these books

I Introduction

II Who is Jesus?

III Sin-the Battle within

IV On being a Sinner/Saint

V Marks of a Christian

VI Motivation for pursuing Victory over Sin

VII Spirit of the AntiChrist

VIII Love

IX Love

X Love

XI Love

XII 2 John

XIII 3 John and Conclusion

I. Introduction:

A. Authorship: John

1. John His call—one of the Disciples Matt. 4:20-22
Fisherman
Son of Zebedee
One of the inner circle with James and Peter
Close relationship with Jesus 1:1, 2:5-6. 24, 27-28
“the disciple whom Jesus loved”
the one who reclined “next to him” John 13:23
First cousin of Jesus, His mother was Salome, a sister of Mary Matt 27:56
Mark 16:1 John 19:25
2. Advanced Age—Calls people children 2:1, 28 3:7
Date of writing—85-95 AD
Addresses early forms of Gnosticism
3. Stories from Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles—1871

B. Recipients

Christians 2:12-14, 2:19 3:1 5:13

C. Reasons for writing—1 John

“I write so that” 1 John 1:4, 2:1, 2:12-13, 2:21, 2:26, 5:13

The Purpose of John’s writing in his own words.

- 1) 1 John 1:4: “We are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.”
God and John desire our complete, highest joy. This only comes in knowing and loving Christ.
- 2) 1 John 2:1: “My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” The opposite of joy is the sorrow and horror of sin. John writes to lead us to the source of power over sin, and to remind us that when we do sin we have a wonderful savior and advocate, Jesus Christ.
- 3) 1 John 2:12-13: “I am writing to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven for his name’s sake. I am writing to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have

overcome the evil one.” He is writing to Christians who by God’s grace are already on their way to maturity and victory. He wishes to strengthen these elements in our lives.

4) 1 John 2:21: “I write to you, not because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and because no lie is of the truth.” He’s writing to reaffirm in us that truth is revealed to us in His Word. Objective truth exists and is knowable contrary to the lie that truth is always subjective and relative to the hearer.

5) 1 John 2:26: “I write these things to you about those who are trying to deceive you.” John writes to warn us about the deceiver and false teachings and teachers, lest we fall from the truth.

6) 1 John 5:13: “I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life.” John writes to give joyous confidence that you are God’s child, safe in his arms forever. He goes on to give positive traits or evidences that one is indeed a truly believing, saved, born again child of God.

II. Who is Jesus?

A. Who is Jesus? Compare with John 1

1. Light 1:1 John 1:1, 14
2. Life 1:2
3. Righteous One 2:1
4. Sinless One 3:4
5. Atoning Sacrifice 4:10

B. Jesus

Discussion of 1:1-4, 4:2, 5:6-12

His Humanity

His Deity

C. Main theological opponent—Gnosticism

What is it? Why is it wrong?

1. Man's body is matter. God is spirit. Therefore, the body is evil.
2. Salvation is the escape from the body. Not by faith, but by special knowledge "Gnosis"
3. Christ's humanity denied
 - He only appeared to be human
 - He was natural son of Joseph—The Holy Spirit only occupied his body from his baptism until just before his death. Taught by Cerinthus
4. Results—either beat the flesh into submission—a form of asceticism
 - Or since matter/flesh is evil—and not the breaking of the law,—leads to licentiousness

III. Sin—The Battle Within

A. The Goal—a righteous Life 1John 1:5-7

B. The Dilemma—We all sin 1 John 1:8 Psalm 51:5 Romans 3:23

What is Original Sin?

Sins of Omission

Sins of Commission

C. The darkness is passing—2:8

D. Discuss the instruction in 1 John 2:9-14

Note: What is His Name? 2:12 cf. 3:23

IV. On being a Sinner/Saint

A. What is the goal? No Sin 2:1

B. What is the goal? To confess new sins? Not sins of Parents? 2:8

C. No one who knows Jesus Keeps on Sinning 3:6

D. Run from temptation 3:4-10

1. Can you be perfect or perfected?

E. Cain is an example 3:12

V. Marks of a Christian

Evidences or traits of the true Christian's life.

1. Christians keep God's commandments.

1 John 2:3-4: "By this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. Whoever says 'I know him' but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him."

1 John 3:24: "Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him."

2. Christians walk (live) as Jesus did.

1 John 2:5-6: "By this we may know that we are in him: whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked."

3. Christians love others, they do not harbor hatred in their hearts.

1 John 4:7-8: "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love."

1 John 4:20: "If anyone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar."

4. Christians have a love for God, not the world.

1 John 2:15: "If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

5. Christians confess Jesus, they are not silent about Him.

1 John 4:15: "Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God."

6. Christians are righteous and practice living righteously.

1 John 2:29: "If you know that he is righteous, you may be sure that everyone who practices righteousness has been born of him."

7. Christians hate sin, they don't condone or continue in it unrepentantly.

1 John 3:6: "No one who abides in him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him."

8. Christians are blessed with the presence of the Spirit.

1 John 4:13: “By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.”

9. Christians listen to and treasure the word of God through the apostles.

1 John 4:6: “We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error.”

10. Christians believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

1 John 5:1: “Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God.”

11. Christians overcome the world.

1 John 5:4: “Everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.”

VI. Motivation for Victorious Living

A. Order of Love 1 John 4:7-12

B. Jesus first loved us

1. What is the Greatest Commandment?

2. Summary of the LAW

a. Commandments 1-3 Talk about differing number systems

b. Commandments 4-10

3. What is motivation by guilt?

4. Purpose of the Law

a. Guide

b. Curb

c. Ruler

C. This is the victory 1 John 5:4-5

D. Greater is He 1 John 4:4

E. Word of God lives in You 1 John 1:14b

VII. Spirit of the Antichrist

A. Spirit of the Antichrist—2:18-29, 4:1-6

Identify Characteristics of the Spirit of the Antichrist

Heretics—2:18

Liars—2:22

Children of the devil—3:10

Refers to more than just the end time character

B. Discuss truth 2:20-23

Where is it found?

God's Word Identifies itself as truth

C. Discuss Fear 4:18

D. Rejecting the Spirit of the Anti-Christ

E. Testing the Spirits 1 John 4:1-6

What is the Question the Evil Spirits cannot answer?

F. Flesh connection with Gnosticism?

VIII-XI The Thread of Love - John uses the word “love” 33 times in his epistles.

A. God first loved us

1. 1 Jn 4:10 **God loved us first.** “...not that we loved God, but that he loved us...”
2. 1 Jn 4:9,10b **God’s love is 100% one sided, God gives, we receive.** “...This is how God showed His love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through Him.” “...and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins...”
3. 1 Jn 1:7b **God’s blood was shed for us.** “...and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.”
4. Jn 3:16; 1 Jn 3:16; 1 Jn 3:1; Jn 15:3 **God’s love is awesome.** “This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us.” “How great is the love the Father has *lavished* on us that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!” “Greater love has no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.”
5. 1 Jn 4:17 **We now have boldness as we await the Day of Judgment because of God’s love!** “...love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are like him.”
6. 1 Jn 3:2 **And even more awesome evidences of his love await us!** “...now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.”

Session IX Begins

B. We in turn love God by obeying his commandments. 1 Jn 5:3, Mk 12:30 “Love the Lord your God with all your heart...soul...mind...strength. And a second is this, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no greater commandment than this.”

C. Because God so loved us, we also ought to love one another . 1 Jn 4:11

1. Mark 12:41-44; Jn 12:1-8 **Love lavishly as God does.** “This poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything- all she had to live on.” “Than Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus’ feet and hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.”

Session X Begins

2. Jn 15:13 **“...he lays down his life for his friends.” Two ways to lay down our lives for Jesus: 1) Quickly, as in Stephen’s situation, martyrdom. 2) A day by day joyous effort until He takes us home to heaven.**

3. Mt 10:16 **Love wisely.** “I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves.”

a. 1 Jn 4:7,8 **You cannot love too much, God gives a limitless supply, you but you can act unwisely.** "...love comes from God...God is love."

b. **It is not love to be an enabler of another's sin or abuse. Be a servant, not a door mat.**

c. 1 Jn 5:2 **It is not love to make much of man, rather it is love to make much of God.** "This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and keeping his commands."

Session XI Begins

d. 1 Jn 5:3, 1Jn 4:18 **Love is not lawless license, or anything goes permissiveness.** "This is love for God, to obey his commandments."
"...love...in truth."

4. 1 Jn 5:18, Eph 4:15 **Love is actions, deeds, not merely words. Our lives need to be in harmony with our words, i.e. "walk the talk".** "...let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth." (note:John, is using words to proclaim this truth and includes himself in "us".) "Instead speaking the truth in love we will in all things grow up into him who is the head, Christ." (Note: **Love is not harsh, it is patient and kind.** (1 Cor 13)

5. 1 Jn 3:17 **Love with a Godly stewardship of money and things.** "If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?"

6. 1 Jn 4:12 **Loving others demonstrates that we are God's children and that his love has attained it's goal in us.** "...if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us."

This material is bonus and was not covered in the episode due to time constraints.

D. Do not love the sin filled deceptions of Satan in this world. 1 Jn 2:15-17

1. 1 Jn 5:19 **The word "world" here means the Satan inspired evil in this life.** "...the whole world is under the control of the evil one."
2. 1 Jn 2:16 **"The cravings of sinful man" includes all of our depraved nature's temptations to seek sinful gratification.**
3. 1 Jn 2:16 **"The lust of the eyes" includes envy, desires for ungodly power, sexual lust, material covetousness, etc..."**
4. 1 Jn 2:16 **"The boasting of what he has and does" is pride which refuses to give God the glory for our lives.**
5. 1 Jn 5:17 **All these deceptions and the deceived come to ruin, but the repentant doer of God's will lives forever!**

XII. 2 John

1. Addressed to a lady, either a particular woman or may refer to a church v 1-3
2. Thankfulness and joy for their following the truth. v 4
3. Walk in Love v 5-6
4. Warnings about the deceiver v 8-9
5. Anyone who aids a deceiver shares in the wickedness v. 10-11
6. Plans for a visit v. 12
7. Conclusion v. 13

XIII. 2 John

Letter to Gaius v. 1

1. Health wish v. 2
2. Thankfulness and joy for Gaius following the truth v 3-4
3. Acknowledging in gratitude Gaius' willingness to give hospitality to missionaries v. 5-8
4. Warning to Diotrephes who does not give hospitality to missionaries v. 9-10
5. Exhortation to imitate what is good v. 11-12
6. Plans for visit v. 13
7. Conclusion v. 14

Truths about life that a Christian can count on:

1. Conclusion of John 5:13-21
 - a. 14-15 Answers to prayer cf. 3:21-22
 - b. 16-17 Pray for brothers in sin and God will lead them to life

c. 18-20 Three “we know” statements

Themes shared with 1 John

1. Truth
2. Love
3. Avoid Deception