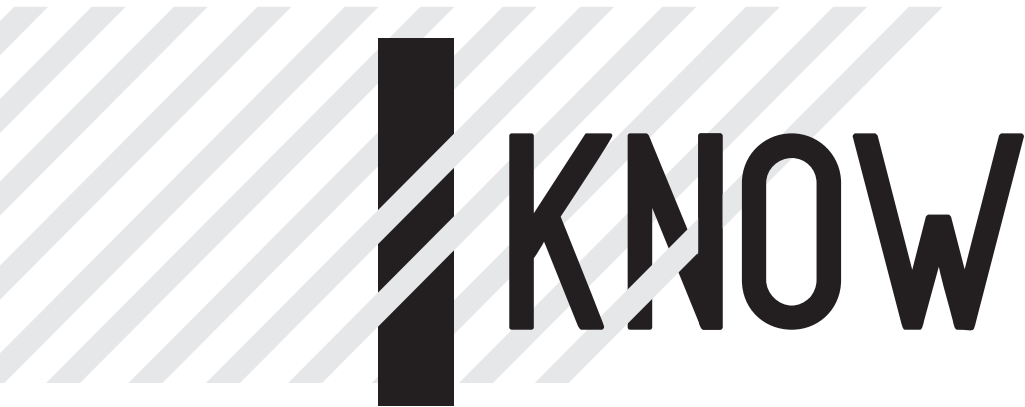




KNOW



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Riverview's mission is to make sacrificial followers of Jesus who grow, serve, and go.

Many thanks to Ryan Freitas, James Granger, Melissa Kranzo, Josh Michels, and Tony Pyle for their work and research in putting together this study guide.

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INTRODUCTION

Hey, Riv family.

Sometimes, it can be easy to read through a book of the Bible and think “this is so obvious” (we think we have learned all that we have to learn), or think “this makes no sense at all” (we give up trying to figure out what the text says). The book of 1 John is crazy because it can cause us to think both of these things and to think them over and over again.

1 John is tricky for a lot of reasons, but one of them is that there is no stated audience (nor stated author, for that matter). Because of this, it is way too easy to reduce this letter to Christian platitudes. However, a deep enough dive into the text shows us John (yes, he is the one who wrote this letter even though he didn’t “sign it”) has written a very pastoral letter to some very real situations to which we can relate. At minimum, the church or churches to whom he wrote were facing the following issues:

False Teachers

Disbelief

Bad Doctrine

Sinful Behavior (probably on the part of believers)

A lack of assurance of salvation

Unloving attitudes toward one another

EVER FACE ANY OF THOSE?

Additionally, at first glance 1 John appears incredibly scattered. The book seems non-linear and the same themes pop up repeatedly in various chapters, interspersed with difficult and challenging individual verses. Sounds a lot like a sermon! In fact, when you read the letter like a sermon, with the preacher returning again and again to the same themes, a cohesiveness begins to emerge from the whole thing. Because of this, over the next six weeks as we walk through the book in our Weekend Services and Life Groups, we are approaching the book in a unique way. Instead of preaching straight through the book verse by verse, various themes will be extracted and continually used to reinforce the central thesis of the book.

Unfortunately, that means that some sections will not be covered in their entirety (including several tricky/controversial passages), but that's where this study guide comes in! Between the Weekend Services, this guide, and a bunch of blog posts we have put together (rivchurch.com/blog), your Life Groups should have plenty of material to wrestle through 1 John together.

Over the next several weeks, we will see that

JOY COMES FROM KNOWING THAT WE AND OTHERS KNOW THAT WE AND THEY HAVE ETERNAL LIFE THROUGH JESUS. WHEN WE/THEY KNOW THIS, WE/THEY OBEY, LOVE, AND BELIEVE (NOT NECESSARILY IN THAT ORDER).

Think that run-on sentence was confusing? Welcome to 1 John! Looking forward to studying this book with you!

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BACKGROUND

WHO WROTE IT?

The Apostle John wrote 1 John (as well as 2 John and 3 John) probably between 85 and 90 A.D.

WHO DID JOHN WRITE IT TO?

This letter is written to Christians in John's immediate context, as well as Christians abroad. Throughout John's letter, we see that he often refers to his readers as "dear children." This, along with the tone of the letter, shows John's connection as a spiritual father to whom he is writing.

WHAT IS THE CULTURAL CONTEXT?

Through what we see in John's letter, it is apparent that the issue of false teachers is present within the church. Many religious heresies were present during this time. For example, Gnosticism (from *gnosis*, the Greek word for "knowledge") was the belief that special knowledge or revelation is required to have relationship with God. Another example was Docetism, which taught that Jesus' humanity was not real and that he only "appeared" to have a physical body. John is the perfect person to write this letter because he was close to Jesus himself. He was a dear friend, partner in ministry, and witness to Jesus' earthly life.

By 85–90 A.D., John was pastor in Ephesus — a large, influential port city in the Roman province of Asia (modern-day Turkey). With this location and influence, many cultures and teachings were introduced to those who lived there. Ephesus possessed a large temple in honor of Artemis, the Greek goddess of fertility. As Christianity spread throughout Ephesus and other regions, it met opposition by many who worshipped Roman and Greek deities.

WHY DID JOHN WRITE IT?

1 John 5:13 gives us a clear purpose behind John's letter: "I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may have eternal life."

John wrote this letter as a means of encouragement to believers. His pastoral and fatherly tone is seen throughout as he reminds his readers of the truths of the Christian faith. John spends time discussing the marks of a Christian life, loving God and one another, and having confidence in our relationship with God through Jesus' finished work on the Cross.

As you read, be encouraged by the truth that Jesus' life, death, burial and resurrection has made you a child of God by faith. As his children, by faith, we are able to live lives of love and joy – for God and for one another.

1 John 4:11 reminds us, "Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another."

JOY COMES THROUGH KNOWING

1 John 1:1-4; 2:1; 2:12-14; 2:21; 2:26; 5:13

INSIGHTS

PURPOSE

1 John starts out with John proclaiming Jesus as the Word of life (similar to how he starts the Gospel of John), strongly reminding his readers that he and others are eyewitnesses to this truth. His eyewitness testimony is to convince the church of the truth of Jesus and to fight against the heresies about Jesus that are seeping into the church.

These verses cover John's purposes for writing this letter and hint at the issues the church was facing. This letter was written...

"...so our/your joy may be complete." (1:4)

"...so that you may not sin." (2:1)

"...because your sins are forgiven for [Jesus'] name sake." (2:12)

"...because you know him who is from the beginning." (2:13)

"...because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one." (2:14)

"...not because you do not know the truth, but because you know it." (2:21)

"...that you may know that you have eternal life." (5:13)

WORD OF LIFE

Jesus is the "Word of life." "Word" simply means the message God speaks to us. In Greek, the word is *logos*, which is defined as "a word (as embodying an idea), a statement, a speech."¹ Jesus is called "The Word" because he was God's message sent down in flesh. The Bible is also called The Word because it's the written message about Jesus and teaches how to have life through him. Jesus is The Word, or "message," of life.

FELLOWSHIP

Fellowship is the Greek word *koinonia*, which speaks of a sharing, a communion, or a common bond.² Fellowship is about a living, breathing relationship with another person. In 1 John 1:3, when John refers to the “fellowship . . . with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ,” he means that someone can have a relationship with God. This idea astounded many of John’s readers. The Greeks highly prized the idea of fellowship, but restricted it to humanity, so the idea of an intimate relationship with God was revolutionary.³

I KNOW

I know Jesus is the Word.

I know I have a relationship with God.

I know Jesus has overcome sin and the evil one.

I know that my sins are forgiven through Jesus and Jesus alone.

I know that through Jesus I have the power to overcome sin.

I know that I have eternal life.

OTHER SCRIPTURE

John 1:1-18; 3:16; 11:25; 14:15-24; 16:33; 17:3

Ephesians 2:8-10; 6:10-17

1 Peter 1

Jude 1:17-21

CONVERSATION

What stuck with you from this week's message?

Read 1 John 1:3. What does it mean to have "fellowship" with the Father, the Son, and other believers? Now read John 14:15-24. Do you feel like you have a relationship like this with God and other believers? What does this look like for you?

There was a false belief going around the church at the time that taught Jesus wasn't really human. It was said that He appeared human, but was really just a spiritual essence. John, concerned about the church being influenced by this idea, wrote to set things straight. What are some of the beliefs that John or the other apostles might be worried about if they were to look at our church today? What would they want to set straight for us?

How often do you think about eternal life? How does your view of eternity affect how you live right now?

John isn't writing to tell the church anything new, but to bring them back to what they already know. Sometimes we need to be brought back to what we already know about Jesus' truth, too. Check out the "I know" statements on the previous page. Do you know these things about Jesus right now? What are some ways you can remind yourself of what you "know?"

THREE LIES & A TRUTH

1 John 1:5-2:2

INSIGHTS

LIES VS. TRUTH

When we believe the lie that...

"WE HAVE FELLOWSHIP WITH HIM WHILE WE WALK IN DARKNESS, WE LIE AND DO NOT PRACTICE THE TRUTH,"

...we are liars. (1 John 1:6)

When we believe the lie that...

"WE HAVE NO SIN, WE DECEIVE OURSELVES, AND THE TRUTH IS NOT IN US,"

...we lie to ourselves. (1 John 1:8)

When we believe the lie that...

"WE HAVE NOT SINNED, WE MAKE HIM A LIAR, AND HIS WORD IS NOT IN US,"

...we make God a liar. (1 John 1:10)

The truth changes everything. 1 John 2:1-2 says, "If anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world."

The truth is that...

"IF WE WALK IN THE LIGHT, AS HE IS IN THE LIGHT, WE HAVE FELLOWSHIP WITH ONE ANOTHER, AND THE BLOOD OF JESUS HIS SON CLEANSSES US FROM ALL SIN."

(1 JOHN 1:7)

The truth is that...

"IF WE CONFESS OUR SINS, HE IS FAITHFUL AND JUST TO FORGIVE US OUR SINS AND TO CLEANSE US FROM ALL UNRIGHTEOUSNESS." (1 JOHN 1:9)

The truth is that...

"IF ANYONE DOES SIN, WE HAVE AN ADVOCATE." (1 JOHN 2:1)

LIFESTYLE OF SIN VS. STRUGGLING WITH SIN

When John talks about “walking in darkness,” he is not talking about struggles with sins where we honestly go to God for help. He’s talking about a practice and lifestyle of unrepentant sin. If you’re honest and repentant in your relationship with God about your sin, you’re covered by Jesus’ blood. Everyone messes up. Everyone sins. But what John is getting at is the overall tone of our lives – is it love and righteousness, or is it sin?

DARKNESS VS. LIGHT

Throughout the Bible, evil is described as darkness and God is described as light. There is no mixture. Think about when light slices through a dark room. The light doesn’t mix with the darkness, it replaces it. Light overcomes darkness.

John’s writings gather up the Old Testament understanding of light and show its fulfillment in Jesus Christ. Light is the revelation of God’s love in Jesus and the penetration of that love into lives darkened by sin (1 John 1:5-7). Jesus said that He is “the light of the world” (John 8:12; 9:5). Jesus is the incarnate Word of God, who came as the light that enlightens all people (John 1:4-14), so that anyone believing in Him will not be in darkness anymore (John 12:46).⁴

I KNOW

I know that if I am in Jesus, I am cleansed and will grow to have a lifestyle that reflects a love and relationship with Him. Instead of loving sin, I love Jesus.

I know that I have always been a sinner, and even as a Christian I still sin and mess up. Now that I’m a Christian, I go to God for help with my sin.

I know God has forgiven me and cleansed me through Jesus, who stands in my place.

I know Jesus stands in the place of everyone else who trusts in Him too.

OTHER SCRIPTURE

Psalm 32:5

Proverbs 28:13

Isaiah 2:5

Jeremiah 2:35

John 1:17; 3:21; 5:38; 12:35

2 Corinthians 6:14

1 Timothy 6:16

Hebrews 9:14

James 3:2

Revelation 5:9; 12:11

CONVERSATION

What stuck with you from this week's message?

What does it mean to walk "in darkness?" What does it mean to walk "in light?" What are some examples of what it looks like to walk in "darkness" or "light?"

In 1 John 1:6, we see that if we say we have a relationship with God but don't walk like it, we are liars. Does your life show a relationship with Jesus? What are some of the ways God has changed you since you accepted Christ?

It's also a lie to flip the statement of 1:6 around and say that if we just walk like we have a relationship with Him, then we must indeed have one. Real faith always results in a transformed life, or "good works" (James 2:26; Matthew 7:16-23), but good works never earns faith. Do you see the difference? Is this ever confusing to you?

Read 1 John 1:8-10. Even though a Christian's life isn't an overall pursuit of sin, we still struggle and mess up. When we do, we are supposed to go to Christ. What do you do when you sin? Do you talk to God about it? To other people?

Is there any sin, or anything at all, that you love more than Jesus?

John reminds us that Jesus stands in for us, and every other person, who puts their faith in Him. Does anyone come to mind that you or your Life Group could be sharing these truths with? How can you do this?

FLIPPING OBEDIENCE

1 John 2:3-6; 2:28-3:10

I KNOW, THEREFORE, I OBEY.

I OBEY, THEREFORE, I KNOW THAT I KNOW.

INSIGHTS

CULTURAL VIEW OF OBEDIENCE

When we hear the word “obedience,” we often have negative thoughts come to our minds. Maybe it’s sending our puppies to “obedience training” so they will learn how to follow our instruction. Or maybe it’s thinking about how our children know what is expected of them and choose not to obey the rules. Either way, the idea of obedience is greatly influenced by the one who calls us to obey. Through the Gospel, we see that Jesus loves us so much that He gave up His life for us. If our faith is in Christ, our thinking shifts from *I have to obey* to *I want to obey*. Because we are loved and secure in our standing with God, we are empowered by the Holy Spirit to obey the new law – the Law of Christ.

ABIDE

John uses the word “abide” 4 times in these passages, and 23 times total in the entirety of his letter. The Greek word for abide is *menō*, which means to “stay, remain, or to continue in.” John repeatedly encourages his readers to stay, to remain, and to continue in Christ. John has lived a life of continuing on “in Christ” and desires the same for those to whom he is writing. Too often, when life gets difficult or when we are amidst tragedy, we tend to pull away from depending on or remaining in Christ. As John shows us, abiding in Christ is important not only during difficult times, but in our daily lives as followers of Jesus.

PRACTICE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS OR SINNING?

John provides a series of contrasts throughout his letter, such as light and darkness, love and hatred, the new command and the old command. In these passages, he contrasts the practice of righteousness and the practice of sinning. A “practice” is a repeated act that leads to the acquisition or mastery of the act. Practicing righteous-

ness is possible through the presence of the Holy Spirit and modeling our lives after Christ's. How did Jesus live? How did he love people? Are we making it a practice to model Christ's life with our own?

As Christians, we are going to sin due to our "old selves" warring with the "new creation" we've become by the power of the Holy Spirit. Thankfully, even when we sin, there is grace for us and our salvation is secure in Jesus' work on the cross. In 1 John 3:9, John gives us an encouraging reminder – that "no one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God."

I KNOW

I know that as a child of God, my salvation is secure in Jesus' work on my behalf.

I know that I obey because I am accepted by God, not in order to be accepted by God.

I know that God's seed abiding in me allows me to live a life of righteousness.

OTHER SCRIPTURE

Matthew 22:36-40

Luke 6:43-49

Romans 4:17-20

Ephesians 1:13

CONVERSATION

What stuck with you from this week's message?

What comes to mind when you think of the word obedience? Does the thought of obeying Christ seem like a burden or a blessing? Why?

John calls his readers to abide in Christ. Why do you think John put such a large emphasis on remaining in Christ? What happens in our lives if we don't make it a practice to continue on in our pursuit of Jesus?

What are some things you have made a "practice" of in your life? What does a "practice of righteousness" look like? How does that compare to a "practice of sinning?"

Take time to pray for one another as you think about John's call to abide in Christ and practice righteousness in your lives.

FLIPPING LOVE

1 John 2:7-11; 3:11-18; 4:7-12

I KNOW, THEREFORE, I LOVE.

I LOVE, THEREFORE, I KNOW THAT I KNOW.

INSIGHTS

LOVING IN DEED AND TRUTH

Sometimes it's easy to say nice things about people. To write an encouraging Facebook message or to leave a uplifting voicemail is always beneficial. John reminds us that our love should not stop there. In 1 John 3:18, John says, "let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth." Love manifests itself when we seek out the needs of others and do what is necessary to meet the need. Although this is more sacrificial and therefore requires more from us, loving in deed and truth not only serves others but is a Gospel witness to the watching world. Our words and lives should be reflective of the love and grace we have received from Jesus and His work on our behalf.

WE LOVE BECAUSE WE ARE LOVED

1 John 4:7-12 is an encouraging and clarifying passage about the character of God and His love for us. John spends time reminding his readers that we only love because of the love that God has so lavished on us. A key part of the Christian life is remembering the love that Jesus displayed for us on the Cross. When we preach the Gospel to ourselves, we are reminded of the character of God and his plan of redemption. John states over and over that our love for God will be reflected in our love for others.

THE WORLD HATES YOU

1 John 3:13 says, "Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you." Ouch! John reminds us that the message of love and grace in Christ is in direct opposition to what the world values and cherishes. The world preaches that we should put ourselves first, while the Gospel says we rank God and others above ourselves. The world says that we should strive for riches and comfort, while the Gospel tells us that Jesus gave up His heavenly riches and comfort to live and die for us. When we are living out God's mission in the world, we should not be surprised when there is opposition.

Encouragement from Scripture, prayer, and godly community around us helps to keep us going in our faith on a daily basis.

I KNOW

I know love by what Jesus accomplished on the Cross in my place.

I know that if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us. (1 John 4:12)

I know that the world hates me, yet, I am thankful because Jesus has overcome the world. (John 16:33)

I know that love is from God, and that whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. (1 John 4:7)

OTHER SCRIPTURE

Matthew 22:36-40

John 13:31-35

John 16:25-33

Romans 12:9-13

1 Peter 4:8

CONVERSATION

What stuck with you from this week's message?

When you hear the word "love," what do you think? How does the world define what love is? How is that different than Biblical love?

Why is it so much easier to love in word rather than deed? What does John show us in this passage about the love we need to have for one another?

Jesus often loved the “unlovables” in his society – those who were sick, disabled, or lived lives of notorious sin. How did Jesus do this? How can we, as the church, love like Jesus did?

John brings up the story of Cain and Abel (1 John 3:12) from Genesis 4. Recap what you know about Cain and Abel and connect it to this sermon.

FLIPPING BELIEF

1 John 2:18-27; 3:19-24; 4:1-6

I KNOW, THEREFORE, I BELIEVE.

I BELIEVE, THEREFORE, I KNOW THAT I KNOW.

INSIGHTS

FALSE TEACHERS

John refers to some people from within their church “going out from them.” There were people in the church who had heard the truth of Jesus and were a part of their community, yet they weren’t genuine believers. This is because, as John says in 1 John 2:19, “if they had been of us, they would have continued with us.” One mark of a saved person is persevering in the truth and enduring in their faith to the end. Because Jesus is the truth (John 14:6), John explains that any teaching that does not express this is false and must be rejected.

OUR HEART

We have all had that feeling – that feeling of guilt, shame, or conviction of a sinful act or thought. We feel this because we know what is right, yet we choose to sin anyway. Sin separates us from God and often has consequences in our earthly life. We may hurt people really close to us, or we may lie, showing our lack of trust in God to help us in our situation. John reminds us that “God is bigger than our heart” (1 John 3:20). Thankfully, even when we sin, Jesus’ work on the cross was bigger, and we can have confidence that his righteousness is ours if we have put our faith in him. This truth doesn’t work itself out in our lives by sinning more often, but by the Spirit convicting us of sin, clearing our conscience, and giving us confidence in our lives as believers.

TESTING THE SPIRITS

“You’re so gullible!” Have you ever heard or been told that? Many Christians are gullible when it comes to their beliefs because they will believe whatever someone says without going back to the Bible. John tells us to “test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world” (1 John 4:1). False prophets often preach messages that sound good and Biblically sound,

yet they are not true and do not affirm the truth of Jesus Christ. As Christians, we need to know the Word, meditate on it, and be aware of when the truth is not being preached. This happens when we take the time to study the Bible personally and in community with one another, dialogue about what we are learning in Scripture, and live it out as the church.

I KNOW

I know that God abides in me by the Holy Spirit whom he has given.

I know that belief in Christ enables me to understand God's word.

I know that by testing the spirits, I can protect my heart from false teaching.

I know that because of Jesus, I can have confidence before God in prayer.

OTHER SCRIPTURE

Matthew 7:15-20

John 16:5-15

John 17

Acts 20:17-35

1 Timothy 4:16

1 Corinthians 1:8-9

CONVERSATION

What stuck with you from this week's message?

Think of some examples of sermons or messages in our culture that possess elements of false teaching. Think of some that are far from Christianity, and also some that resemble the message of Christianity. What are the similarities and differences?

What are some ways you can distinguish false teaching from sound, biblical teaching? What are some strategies you can develop to enhance your ability to “test the spirits?”

Read through John 16:5-15. What does Scripture say about the Holy Spirit? What are some ways in which He works in our lives?

Take time to pray together and thank God that he “is bigger than our hearts” (1 John 3:20). Focus on Jesus’ life, death and resurrection, and let that encourage you in your relationship with Him.

ASSURED

1 John 4:13-5:15

WHEN WE KNOW, OBEY, LOVE, AND BELIEVE, OUR ASSURANCE THAT WE HAVE ETERNAL LIFE GROWS. THIS EXPERIENTIAL KNOWLEDGE LEADS TO JOY.

INSIGHTS

THE SPIRIT, THE WATER, AND THE BLOOD - 1 JOHN 5:7-8

1 John 5:7-8 is known by scholars as The Comma Johanneum, because it contains a unique textual variation. The word comma means “short clause,” and Johanneum means “pertaining to John.” Without the “comma,” the verses read, “For there are three that testify: the Spirit, the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement.” With the “comma,” they read, “For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.” There are different interpretations of what this means, but the evidence seems to strongly point to the shorter version as being original.⁵

Aside from this variation, the passage’s exact meaning is highly debated, too. What exactly does John mean by “the water, the blood, and the Spirit?” The water may be talking about natural childbirth, water baptism (which represents cleansing), or perhaps the clean, pure life that Jesus gives. The blood likely refers to Jesus’ death on the cross, which is how we are justified, reconciled, and able to be perfect before God. The Spirit points to the Holy Spirit, which continues to change us and “perfect” us as we walk with Christ. In each instance, all three, the water, the blood, and the Spirit, point to Jesus.

LOVE – “AGAPE”

When we see the word “love” in John, it comes from Greek word *agape*. Unlike our English word “love,” *agape* is not used in the Bible to refer to romantic or sexual love. The essence of *agape* love is sacrifice. This is also not a close friendship or brotherly love, which comes from the Greek word *philia*. *Agape* love is unique and is distinguished by its nature and character.

Agape is love which is of God and from God, whose very nature is love itself. God does not just love; He is love. Everything God does flows from His love. But it's important to remember that God's love is not the sappy, sentimental love we often hear about. God loves because that is His nature and the expression of His being. He loves the unlovable and the unlovely (us!), not because we deserve to be loved, but because it's His nature to love us, and He has to be true to His nature and character.

God's love is displayed most clearly at the cross, where Christ died for unworthy people who were "dead in [their] trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1), not because we did anything to deserve it, "but God commends His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). The object of God's *agape* love never does anything to merit His love. We are the undeserving recipients on whom He lavishes that love. His love was shown when He sent His Son into the world to "seek and save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10), and to provide eternal life to those He sought and saved. He paid the ultimate sacrifice for those He loves. This is the way we are loved; this is the sacrificial love we are to love people with.⁶

PERFECT LOVE CASTS OUT FEAR

As love grows, a neat thing begins to happen with "fear." The fear John is talking about here is the terror of divinely appointed eternal wrath. This passage tells us that this kind of fear diminishes and vanishes. In its place, confidence builds (v. 17-18). While reverential fear (respect) is a fear we should never lose, that's not the fear talked about here. It is the fear, or terror, of the judgment to come, that is driven out by love.⁷

ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

How can you know that you're saved? Simple. You've placed your faith in Jesus and God is changing you and working in your life!

I KNOW

I know that God loves me.

I know that if I believe in Jesus and His love for me, I am in Him and He is in me.

I know that if I love God, then I'll trust him, obey him, and love other people.

I know that I have eternal life.

I know that I have nothing to fear, in this life or the next, because Jesus has overcome the world.

OTHER SCRIPTURE

Matthew 11:28-30

John 1:9-18; 3:18; 6:68-69; 14:15-28; 15:26; 16:12-15; 16:33

John 3:18

Romans 8:12-17; 10:9

Galatians 4:4-7

Philippians 2:13

1 Peter 1:8-9

2 John 1:6

CONVERSATION

What stuck with you from this week's message?

Have you ever doubted your salvation? Why?

How can we know that we have the Spirit of God in us? (1 John 4:13; 5:6-12)
How have you experienced the Spirit of God working in your life?

What does "abiding in love" mean? What does it look like to live this out?

Biblical love is so different than the world's concept of love. What is the difference? How have you experienced "worldly" love? How have you experienced "biblical" love?

What are the commands we are to follow? (1 John 5:3; also see 1 John 2:5-8, 3:23-24) How are these “not burdensome”? (1 John 5:3; Matthew 11:30)

Think of someone you don't love today. What would loving them look like? What's the first thing to do?

Is God's promise of eternal life a motivator for you? Why or why not? (1 John 5:11-13)

Look at the “I know” statements in 1 John 5:18-20. Change the “we” to “I” – can you confidently say these to yourself? Is there anything that trips you up?

The last verse of 1 John (5:21) might seem like an abrupt shift from everything before it. It seems like a strange way to end the letter, but: what is an idol? Are there idols in your life? Can you see how an idol could easily erode everything we learned from 1 John?

END NOTES

1. Strong's Concordance, 3056
2. This is the type of union seen in the picture of the bride and the bridegroom (John 3:29), the vine and branches (John 15:1-5), and the body and the head (1 Corinthians 12:2; Colossians 1:18).
3. <http://biblehub.com/commentaries/guzik/commentaries/6201.htm>
4. <http://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionaries/bakers-evangelical-dictionary/light.html>
5. <http://www.gotquestions.org/Comma-Johanneum.html>
6. <http://www.gotquestions.org/agape-love.html>
7. <http://www.bible.ca/ef/expository-1-john-4-17-18.htm>

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE TEXT.

Here's a reading plan to get you in the Bible a little each weekday as we go through this series. There's a little in the Old Testament and a little from the New Testament that goes along with what passage we looked at the previous weekend.

WEEK 1

Day 1	1 John 1, John 3:16
Day 2	1 John 1:1-4, John 1:1-18
Day 3	1 John 2:1-14, Ephesians 2:1-12
Day 4	1 John 2:21-26, 1 Peter 1
Day 5	1 John 5, Jude 1

WEEK 2

Day 1	1 John 1, Psalm 32:5, Proverbs 28:13
Day 2	1 John 1:1-4, Isaiah 2:5, Jeremiah 2:35
Day 3	1 John 1:5-10, John 1:16-17, John 3:21
Day 4	1 John 2:1-2, 2 Corinthians 6:14, 1 Timothy 6:16
Day 5	1 John 2, Hebrews 9:14, James 3:2, Revelation 5:9

WEEK 3

Day 1	1 John 2, Matthew 22:36-40
Day 2	1 John 2:3-6, Luke 6:43-49
Day 3	1 John 2:28-3:3, Romans 4:17-20
Day 4	1 John 3:4-10, Philippians 3:12-16
Day 5	1 John 3, Ephesians 1:13

WEEK 4

Day 1	1 John 2, Matthew 22:36-40
Day 2	1 John 2:7-11, John 13:31-35
Day 3	1 John 3:11-18, John 16:25-33
Day 4	1 John 4:7-12, Romans 12:9-13
Day 5	1 John 4, 1 Peter 4:8

WEEK 5

Day 1	1 John 2, Matthew 7:15-20
Day 2	1 John 2:18-27, John 16:5-15
Day 3	1 John 3:19-24, John 17
Day 4	1 John 4:1-6, Acts 20:17-35
Day 5	1 John 3, 1 Timothy 4:16

WEEK 6

Day 1	1 John 4, Matthew 11:28-30
Day 2	1 John 4:13-21, Romans 8:12-17
Day 3	1 John 5:1-8, Galatians 4:4-7
Day 4	1 John 5:9-15, John 1:9-18
Day 5	1 John 5, Philippians 2:13, 1 Peter 1:8-9, 2 John 1:6

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