



Summer Small Group Bible Study



Introduction to 1 John

Historical Setting, Purpose, & Themes

The Historical Setting of the Letter

- Written by the Apostle John around 90 AD while overseeing a missionary program (3 John 5-8).
- Probably sent from Ephesus to the churches of Asia Minor (Revelation 2-3).
- False teachers had caused a major church split (2:18).
- False teachers were trying to deceive the readers (2:26)
 - ...about the person and work of Christ
 - ...about the necessity of obedience

The Purposes of The Letter

#1 - To persuade the readers to remain in fellowship with the author and one another (1:3).

#2 - To complete the joy of the author (1:4).

#3 - To help the readers avoid sin (2:1).

#4 - To reassure the readers of their salvation (2:12-14; 5:13).

Major Themes

- PRIMARY: Evidence of Saving Faith / Assurance of Salvation
- The Threat of False Teaching
- The Person & Work of Christ
 - Humanity of Christ
 - Deity of Christ
 - Atonement of Christ

How to get the most out of this study

- Do the work. Schedule 3 study sessions between each meeting.
 - One 30-minute session to just read and observe the passage.
 - Two 1-hour sessions to do as many questions as you can.
- Pray for God's help to understand and apply the passages.
- Bring your own thoughts and questions for discussion.
- Have faith that God is going to use this study to grow us in love for Him and each other (Hebrews 3:12-13).

Observation Practice: 1 John 1:1-4

1 What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we beheld and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life — **2** and the life was manifested, and we have seen and bear witness and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us— **3** what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you may also have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. **4** And these things we are writing, so that our joy may be made complete.

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- The beginning of this letter is very different from those of Paul.
- The author is emphasizing his personal experience with “the Word.”
- Why is Jesus called “the Word”?
- The 2 “so that”s indicate why the author is writing.