

## Adult Sunday School Class

**Objective:** Increase understanding of our salvation and John's insight concerning God's son, Jesus The Christ.

**Opening Prayer:** Thank you Father, we pause now to acknowledge your presence..... I thank you that you always hear me. That you never leave me or forsake me and that you are an ever present help. I ask for a special anointing on this lesson plan and the time we will spend together today. Bless all who will come in contact with it, speaker(s) and listener(s). Open our hearts to receive a fresh revelation from your Spirit. I bind forces that would hinder and welcome the Holy Spirit as our teacher today. In Jesus name!

**Read:** I John 1:1 - I John 2:-2

Q – Which John authored this letter? Which NT John are we talking about? - John the son of Zebedee.

Q – What was his brother's name? - James.

Q – How did Jesus characterize these two brothers? - Sons of thunder. Mark 3:17 ) James son of Zebedee and his brother John (to them he gave the name Boanerges, which means “sons of thunder”).

Q – Why do you believe Jesus would have referred to these two brothers with such a colorful nick name? - Most likely to describe their nature, personality traits or dispositions.

Q – How would you describe the nature and personality of someone with a nick name of a “son of thunder”?

- One author (Henry Mayer) has described Patrick Henry that way.
- Patrick Henry was a brilliant orator whose devotion to the pursuit of liberty fueled the fire of the American Revolution.
- As a lawyer and a member of the Virginia House of Burgess, Henry spoke eloquently of the inalienable rights all men are born with.
- His philosophy inspired the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and, most significantly, the Bill of Rights.
- Famous for the line "Give me liberty or give me death!"
- Patrick Henry was a man who stirred souls and whose dedication to individual liberty became the voice for thousands.

Q – Are there scriptural references that might give us some insight as to the actual personalities of these two disciples? - There are.

- Luke 9:51) As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem. 52) And he sent messengers on ahead, who went into a Samaritan village to get things ready for him; 53) but the people there did not welcome him, because he was heading for Jerusalem. 54) **When the disciples James and John saw this, they asked, “Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven to destroy them?”** 55) But Jesus turned and rebuked them. 56) Then he and his disciples went to another village.

Q – Why would they believe they could call fire down from heaven on these people?

- They had recently been commissioned to evangelize in the power and authority in which Jesus ministered.
- Earlier in Luke 9 it says, 1) When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, 2) and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. 3) He told them: “Take nothing for the journey—no staff, no bag, no bread, no money, no extra shirt. 4) Whatever house you enter, stay there until you leave that town. 5) If people do not welcome you, leave their town and shake the dust off your feet as a

testimony against them.” 6) So they set out and went from village to village, proclaiming the good news and healing people everywhere.

Q – What was John's nick name when he authored his letters? - The apostle of love.

Q – How would you characterize someone who had the nick name of the apostle of love?

- Full of compassion and grace toward others.
- An attitude of tolerance and acceptance without compromising one's principals.

Q – So what happened to John that caused the transformation from a “son of thunder” to the “apostle of love”

- A couple of things,
  - The fruits of the spirit have had a chance to “ripen” in his personality and life.
  - Said another way, he'd been a good student of the Holy Spirit.
  - He's learned to recognize that still small voice and allow the message of the Holy Spirit to shape his thoughts.
  - Allow me to again quote from the Amplified translation,
    - Proverbs 16:3) Roll your works upon the Lord commit and trust them wholly to Him; He will cause your thoughts to become agreeable to His will, and so shall your plans be established *and* succeed.
  - In addition, in the natural he's older and wiser now.
  - He's lived long enough to learn what's truly important and what's not.
  - Some battles are not only not worth fighting they are not even worth acknowledging.

Q – How many NT books are attributed to John's authorship? - Five (5),

- The gospel of John.
- I, II & III John.
- The book of Revelation.

Q – When, in approximately what year(s) were these books written? - The most common dates suggested are toward the end of his life, between AD 85 and the end of the first century.

Q – How old would John have been when he authored these documents? - Assuming he was born about the same time Jesus was he would have been about 90, plus or minus 10 years.

Q – What is the sequence in which his letters were written? The NIV commentary indicates most scholars believe;

- His first letter was the Gospel of John.
- Followed by the 3 epistles of John in the designated sequence.
- Lastly the book of Revelation.

Q – When was John martyred?

- Ah, it's a trick question he said :-)).
- John is reported to have outlived all the other apostles and was the only one to die a natural death.

Q – Where was John living when he died? - After being released from prison on the isle of Patmos he lived out his remaining days in Ephesus.

Q – How does John refer to himself in this letter? - In the plural, as we or us.

Q – Who is or are the others with him?

- He could be referring to the other apostles but I doubt that as some, like his brother James, had already been martyred for their faith.
- I believe his plural statements could be in reference to the indwelling presence of God's spirit and his sense of oneness with the God head.

Q – I've mentioned this before but it seems appropriate to repeat it. Charlie has a relative who lived in San Diego who used to say, in a mocking way on Sundays, me and the Lord are going fishing. Do you ever think of yourself in the plural sense because of the presence of the Lord?

- As you know, from my frequent reference to the scriptures concerning His continual presence, I truly believe He never leaves us or forsakes us.
- However I have to admit, I know I should, but I don't often think of myself in the plural to acknowledge the ever presence Spirit of God who lives within me.

Q – Would it be problematic if we continually thought of ourselves in a plural sense?

- I don't believe it would be.
- However it would most likely change the way we talk & affect our thoughts and actions.

Q – What was his purpose in writing this letter?

- 3) We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.
- 4) We write this to make our joy complete.

Q – Would you have considered John's writing style in these first 4 verses to be direct or indirect? - I'd say indirect.

Q – If he were writing in a direct style how might he make the same points in his statement of purpose?

- I'm writing to tell you about Jesus of Nazareth who is the son of God.
- He is God and was with God at the beginning.
- He became flesh and lived among us, we were able to touch Him and witnessed His actions.
- We discovered that He is the word of life, eternal life.
- I want to relay His message on to you.
- My purpose is that you may also have fellowship with Him.
- So that our joy may be made complete.

Q – Where in scripture does he make the same or similar points? - In the Gospel of John chapter 1

- 1) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2) He was with God in the beginning.
- 3) Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. 4) In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. 5) The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.
- 6) There was a man sent from God whose name was John. 7) He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. 8) He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.
- 9) The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. 10) He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. 11) He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.
- 12) Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— 13) children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.
- 14) The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.
- 15) John testified concerning him. He cried out, saying, "This is the one I spoke about when I said, 'He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.'"
- 16) Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given.
- 17) For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.
- 18) No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.

Q – What are the key points he makes concerning Jesus in the first 18 verses of John's gospel?

- Jesus is the word of God or the creative force that was used in the beginning.
- He was with God and is God.
- He was with God in the beginning.
- Through Him all things were made that have been made.
- He is the absolute source of life both natural and spiritual.
- The light and life He brings is not understood in this sinful world.
- He became a part of the world He had created.
- The world, even His own did not recognize Him for who He is.
- Yet, to those who received Him, who believed on His name, He gave the right to become children of God. Individuals not born of human sources but spiritual descendants of the Spirit of God.
- God's law came thru Moses but grace and truth came thru Jesus the Christ.

Q – What would John have heard or observed that allowed him to recognize Jesus as the divine word?

- I believe he would have been very familiar with the book of Genesis where Moses writes;
- God said “let there be and there was”!
- He also observed Jesus use words to control the elements and to heal and/or restore people.

Q – What are some of the examples of Jesus actions that would have caused John to refer to him as the “word”?

- Speaking words of life to Jairus' daughter and raising her from the dead.
- Speaking “peace be still” to the storm on the sea of Galilee.
- Commanding the demon spirits to come out of the man possessed by the “legion of demons” or the boy who's father brought his son to the disciples and subsequently to Jesus to be delivered.
- Speaking to or cursing the fig tree.

Q – What is the essence of the message of the gospel that John is writing about? - God is light, pure light, in Him there is no darkness at all.

Q – What do you believe he means by that statement?

- God is holy!
- Our God is “separated or set apart.”
- There is non other like Him!

Q – When the word says be holy for I am holy what is it instructing us to do or be?

- It means to be equally set apart, to be set apart for God.
- To be consecrated, dedicated, hallowed, and live a life that can be considered as a sanctuary for God.
- It also means to be devout, faithful, God-fearing.
- Righteous and virtuous. sacred, blameless and consecrated.
- It means to truly believe God lives in you and consistently act as you would in His presence.

Q – How would you describe the point John is making in verse 6 thru 8? - 6) There was a man sent from God whose name was John. 7) He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. 8) He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

- He is describing John the Baptist and his mission in life.
- He was the individual of whom the prophets spoke of as the forerunner of Christ.

Q – What aspect of our salvation does he reveal in this first chapter of I John?

- The dynamic or continuous aspect of the grace of God in the transaction of our salvation.
- He is saying it is a “real time” & on-going process.

Q – In what verse does he describe the dynamic or continuous grace of God? - Verse 7) But 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, purifies us from all sin.

Q – Why do we consider this to be a dynamic process as opposed to a one time event? - Because of the present tense description of the process of our being divinely cleansed from sin.

Q – What kind of person is being described when he says they walk in darkness?

- 6) If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth.
- He is describing someone whose lifestyle can be accurately described as sinful.

Q – What's the difference in a person who sins and one who lives a sinful lifestyle? - An act of sin(s) vs a non-Christian or non-Christ-like moral standard.

Q – What point(s) do you believe he is making in chapter 2:2?

- I believe he is restating the dynamic aspect of our salvation and describing how it works.
- Jesus intercedes for us or speaks to the Father on our behalf excusing our actions or defending our continuing right standing with God even though we have just committed yet another sin.

Q – Does Paul describe our salvation in a way that is the same or similar to these descriptions of our salvation by John? - He does, Ephesians

- 2:8) For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9) not by works, so that no one can boast. 10) For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Q- Do these descriptions of the plan of salvation and its dynamic nature give us a license to sin?

- No, it gives us the reassurance that we are secure in Him.
- Even though we are creatures of sin with an innate tendency toward sin.

Q – What is the effect of sin on any or all humans, believers and unbelievers alike? - It separates the individual from God.

Q – What did Adam and Eve do after they had sinned and they realized God was coming to visit them? - They hid themselves.

Q – Why did they hide themselves?

- They now knew they were naked.
- They had done what God had specifically told them not to do and they were ashamed.
- They had sinned and instinctively knew sin and a holy God “do no mix”.

Q – Sin causes one to be \_\_\_\_\_ from God? - Separated.

Q – What do you believe is the most significant benefit of being saved?

- An eternal relationship with God.
- Some might say we'll go to heaven when we die or avoid eternal damnation (hell).
- I believe an eternal relationship with God describes both the present and future benefits we receive from Him.
- He will bless and help us in this life and we'll enjoy eternity with Him.