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*This is a self-study course  
designed to help you discover  
for yourself, from the Bible,  
some important basic truths  
concerning the books of  
I, II, III John and Jude.*

## how to study the lesson

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1. Try to find a quiet spot free from distractions and noise.
2. Read each question carefully.
3. Look up the Scripture reference given after each question. Make sure you have found the correct Scripture passage. For example, sometimes you will find yourself looking up JOHN 1:1 instead of I JOHN 1:1.
4. Answer the question from the appropriate Bible passage. Write, in your own words, a phrase or sentence to answer the question. In questions that can be answered with a "yes" or "no" always give the reason for your answer . . . "Yes, because . . ."
5. If possible, keep a dictionary handy in order to look up words you don't understand.

6. Pray for God's help. You need God's help in order to understand what you study in the Bible. PSALM 119:18 would be an appropriate verse for you to take to God in prayer.

7. *Class teachers using this course for group study will find some helpful suggestions on page 63.*

## how to take the self-check tests

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Each lesson is concluded with a test designed to help you evaluate what you have learned.

1. Review the lesson carefully in the light of the self-check test questions.

2. If there are any questions in the self-check test you cannot answer, perhaps you have written into your lesson the wrong answer from your Bible. Go over your work carefully to make sure you have filled in the blanks correctly.

3. When you think you are ready to take the self-check test, do so without looking up the answers.

4. Check your answers to the self-check test carefully with the answer key given on page 64.

5. If you have any questions wrong, your answer key will tell you where to find the correct answer in your lesson. Go back and locate the right answers. Learn by your mistakes!

## apply what you have learned to your own life

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In this connection, read carefully JAMES 1:22-25. It is only as you apply your lessons to your own life that you will really grow in grace and increase in the knowledge of God.

# I John

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By the period of A. D. 85-90 the Church was faced with internal heresy. False teachers were entering into the group proclaiming heresies. There was also a lack of brotherly love on the part of some of the brethren, particularly those who had more material gain than others. For these major reasons and other minor ones, John writes to his "little children."

The text itself lends no indication as to whom the letter was written. It was apparently directed to a group of churches rather than a single church. Some suggest that it was the group of churches surrounding Ephesus.

That John places such a heavy emphasis on the deity of Christ and his relationship to the Father is not surprising. The Gnostics of that day believed that matter was evil. They attacked the person of Christ. They attempted to make Christ less than the divine Son of God who was an equal member of the Trinity. The Gnostics maintained that Christ came upon the man Jesus at His baptism and left Him at the cross.

The epistle is rich with practical truths for the modern-day Christian. John offers a guideline for godly living in the midst of internal and external trouble in the church.

John's first epistle is a source of problems to many who think he teaches that salvation might be lost if the believer sins. This is due to a weak rendering of the English text. John actually teaches that the person who continually sins as a way of life is not a believer, because he never did yield to Christ. The constant sin in his life is proof that he never belonged to Christ.

## *Outline*

1. Relationship of Christ to the Believer and the Believer to His Brother 1:1–2:14
2. Warnings About the World and Heretical Teaching 2:15-29
3. A Consistent Life 3
4. False Teachers and The Christian's Love 4
5. Faith, Assurance, and the Believer's Understanding 5



# Relationship of Christ to the Believer and the Believer to His Brother

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## I JOHN 1:1—2:14

John introduces the first of his three epistles with a discussion of fellowship and the problem of sin in the life. He presents the Christian's answer to sin.

### *Testimony regarding the incarnation*

1. Name three ways in which John had contact with the Word of Life.

1:1 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. What proof does John offer the believer that Christ was manifested?

1:2 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. State one of John's purposes for telling about Christ.

1:3 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Name two of the members of the Trinity having fellowship with believers.

1:3 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. State one reason that John is writing this epistle.

1:4 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### *The sin question*

6. What message is John passing on to his readers?

1:5 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. What makes liars out of us?

1:6 \_\_\_\_\_

8. State the basis of fellowship between two believers.

1:7 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. How are we cleansed of sin?

1:7 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

10. How is it possible for us to deceive ourselves?

1:8 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The Gnostics held the view that matter was evil but the soul was not contaminated by the body. For this reason they said they had no sin. But John states that all have sinned and the sin remains until the blood of Christ removes it.

11. What must we do to have our sins forgiven?

1:9 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

12. How often will Christ forgive us our sins?

1:9 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

13. When we confess our sins, what else does Christ do besides forgiving us?

1:9 \_\_\_\_\_

14. What two conditions exist if we try to say that we have not sinned?

1:10 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

15. What is another of John's purposes for writing 1:1-10?

2:1 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

16. If a person does sin, what help is available to him?

2:1 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

An advocate is one called to the aid of another. It is a judicial term, meaning a pleader. In the Scriptures the word is used only in John's writings (see 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7 of his Gospel where it is translated "Comforter"). The Holy Spirit is presently God's Advocate to men on earth while Christ is man's Advocate in heaven. The same idea is also found in ROMANS 8:26-39 and HEBREWS 7:25.



17. For whose sins did Christ make propitiation?

2:2 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The word “propitiate” refers to God’s grace in sending Christ to die for our sins. By doing so, Christ met the Father’s legal demands of death for those who are sinners.

18. How may we tell whether or not we know Christ?

2:3 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

19. What are we if we claim to keep Christ’s commands when we actually do not?

2:4 \_\_\_\_\_

20. In what relation do we stand to the truth if we lie?

2:4 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

21. How may we have the love of God perfected in us?

2:5 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

22. Of what is this perfection a test?

2:5 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

23. What ultimately happens to those who claim to keep Christ’s commandments but do not bear fruit?

JOHN 15:2 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

24. If a person claims to abide in Christ, what should he do?

2:6 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

John does not use “walk” in the literal sense of moving oneself forward by use of the legs and feet. He is referring to the believer’s daily spiritual life. William’s translates “walk” in COLOSSIANS 1:10 as “leading a life.” It has to do with the outward life as seen by men.

25. What is the purpose of abiding in Christ?

JOHN 15:4 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

26. What promise is made to those who abide?

JOHN 15:7 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

A. T. Robertson says that “this astounding command and promise . . . is not without conditions and limitations. It involves such intimate union and harmony with Christ that nothing will be asked out of accord with the mind of Christ and so of the Father. Christ’s name is mentioned in 15:16.”

27. What is our standard for walking as Christians in our daily life?

2:6 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*The new commandment*

28. How may we test whether the new commandment is true or not?

2:8 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

29. By what means may we know that we are in the light?

2:9 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

30. Contrast the difference between the one who hates his brother and the one who loves his brother.

2:9, 10 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

31. What do we avoid if we abide in the light?

2:10 \_\_\_\_\_

The word “stumbling” is rendered “offense” in the Greek language. It may be anything which causes a brother to sin. See ROMANS 14:15.

32. Tell three things about the person who hates his brother.

2:11 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

33. What is the cause of the preceding condition?

2:11 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## *Separation from the world*

34. Why is John writing this epistle to the little children?

2:12; cf. 2:1 \_\_\_\_\_

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35. Give the reason for John's writing to the fathers.

2:13 \_\_\_\_\_

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In distinguishing the three groups to which John is writing, Robert S. Chandlish says, "As such, as little children, he first addresses them all, and appeals to them all collectively. But then, secondly, he separates them into two classes—'fathers' and 'young men'—old and spiritually exercised Christians on the one hand, and those who are in the fresh and vigorous prime of recent but yet manly Christian experience. All alike are 'little children'; but some are 'fathers,' ripe for glory; others are 'young men,' strong for work."

36. Why does John write to the young men?

2:13 \_\_\_\_\_

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37. What does John add to his message to the young men in 2:14 that he did not include in 2:13?

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## ***check-up time No. 1***

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*You have just studied some important truths about present-day problems related to the question of sin in the believer's life and the believer's love for the brethren. Review your study by rereading the questions and your written answers. If you are not sure of an answer, reread the Scripture portion given to find the answer. Then take the test to see how well you understand the important truths you have studied.*

*In the right-hand margin write "True" or "False" after each of the following statements.*

1. We are cleansed from sin through Christ's life. \_\_\_\_\_
2. If we confess our sins to Christ, we will be forgiven. \_\_\_\_\_
3. When we are forgiven by Christ, He also cleanses us from all unrighteousness. \_\_\_\_\_
4. We can be sure that we love Christ if we attend church faithfully. \_\_\_\_\_
5. We are called hypocrites if we say that we keep Christ's commandments when we do not. \_\_\_\_\_
6. Even if we are liars, the truth still remains in us. \_\_\_\_\_
7. We are abiding in Christ when we walk as He walked. \_\_\_\_\_
8. We are not walking in the light if we hate one of the brethren. \_\_\_\_\_
9. John wrote to the "little children" because their sins were forgiven. \_\_\_\_\_
10. The "young men" referred to in John's first epistle had overcome Satan. \_\_\_\_\_

*Turn to page 64 and check your answers.*