

Bible Reading Notes
1~3 John

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1 John 1

John's three epistles were probably written late in the first century (85-95 AD) from Ephesus to churches in Asia Minor.

1:1-4 – John refers to his experience with Christ – he was an eyewitness and so can accurately testify concerning Christ.

1:5-3:10 – This first section of 1 John will focus on the theme of the light. God's holiness is the basis for the call for us to live in the light.

1:6-10 – *If we say* – Each time this phrase is used it is indicating teaching of the false teachers and the implications of that false teaching.

1 John 2

2:2 – *propitiation...for the whole world* – Jesus' work of turning aside the wrath of God has a universal application in that the Lord has people in every nation.

2:9-11 – The validity of our profession of faith is seen not only in our verbal profession but in the evidence of a changed life out of the darkness into the light.

2:15 – *world* – John uses this term to refer to the fallen world and its values in rebellion against the Lord.

2:18-25 – The antichrist is an example of that which comes from the darkness in contrast to Christ.

2:19 – This verse refers to those who were once part of the congregation but who desert the faith and by leaving show that their professions were never true.

1 John 3

3:1-10 – Others may desert Christ, but the true believer will remain in the light and will receive the blessings that Christ has for us at his coming.

3:11 – This begins the second major section of the letter focusing on love.

3:14 – Love of other believers is another test of genuine salvation.

3:18 – Biblical love is always defined by action, not mere words.

1 John 4

4:1-6 – This is similar to Deuteronomy 13:1-5. True believers will not accept any teaching that is contrary to God's revelation. All teaching must be tested against what the Word says.

4:2 – The doctrinal test in John's day was whether a teacher taught that Jesus truly came in the flesh.

4:6 – We – This is a reference to the apostles that God used to bring the foundational teaching of the faith.

4:7-21 – Our love for others as believers is always based on the prior love we have experienced from God. His love is always first (vv. 10, 19).

1 John 5

5:6 – water and blood – This is a reference to Christ's baptism and death.

5:7 – testify – At Christ's baptism and death it was made manifest that Jesus was the Christ. The Holy Spirit working in believer's lives also adds his testimony of the same fact.

5:16 – sin that leads to death – John is referring to the sin of one whose heart is so hardened that they will not repent. This is the result of ongoing rejection of the gospel.

2 John

1:1 – elect lady and her children – This letter from John was probably sent to a congregation and this is a reference to that congregation and her members.

1:6 – John consistently connects love with obedience to the commandments of God. Love and obedience are never contrary to one another.

1:7 – deceivers – Docetism was an early heresy in the church that taught that Christ only appeared to be human but, in reality, was not.

3 John

1:1 – Gaius – This is a personal letter from John to Gaius that deals with issues related to hospitality for those who are Christian ministers and how to deal with a difficult member (Diotrephes).

1:1 – truth – This is a key term in this letter and is used three times in vv. 3-4.

1:5-8 – Gaius is commended for his support for traveling teachers of the gospel.

1:9-10 – In contrast Diotrephes needs to be corrected for his lack of submission and his refusal to receive the brothers.