

Class Notes on Starting to Study John's Epistles 1 John, 2 John, and 3 John

Welcome to our study of the Johannine Epistles, also known as the Epistles of John, or the Letters of John, where we will be studying the Bible books of 1 John, 2 John and 3 John (in that order.) If you have never read these scriptures with the kind of deeper understanding we have been practicing in our previous studies, you are in for a treat and most likely a number of other "pleasant surprises." These books have a style all of their own and yet convey God's truth in a uniquely powerful way, accurately espousing theology, doctrine, encouragement, accountability, righteousness, truth, love, fellowship, and the character of God in ways that can cause us to grow, mature, and serve Him for years to come. Consider these remarks by Scofield to begin to develop a sense of the first book in our study:

THEME: First John is a family letter from the Father to His "little children" who are in the world. With the possible exception of the Song of Solomon, it is the most intimate of the inspired writings. The world is viewed as without. The sin of a believer is treated as a child's offence against his Father, and is dealt with as a family matter ([1Jn 1:9](#); [1Jn 2:1](#)). The moral government of the universe is not in question. The child's sin as an offence against the law had been met in the Cross, and "Jesus Christ the righteous" is now his "Advocate with the Father." John's Gospel leads across the threshold of the Father's house; his first Epistle makes us at home there. A tender word is used for "children," *teknia*, "born ones," or "bairns." Paul is occupied with our public position as sons; John with our nearness as born-ones of the Father. [Scofield Reference Bible Notes]

Our approach and pace of study: We will continue to study at a pace that yields both understanding and application. There will be no need to rush and we will allow some lessons to more fully develop the topics John is addressing. So, at times our focus will shift from a "big picture" view to a verse-by-verse unpacking of key words and phrases. We will continue to practice using the study tools of "Dig and Discover," word studies, translation comparisons, and other techniques useful to the process of "Inductive Bible Study."

Suggestions on additional study resources: Our study is designed to be open to men of all levels of Bible study from unlearned to well versed, from beginner to advanced, and therefore there is no "requirement" for resources to participate. However, as many are becoming more and more equipped and desire to advance, it is practical for me to suggest that you possess some basic tools and also begin to investigate some additional resources.

- **Basic resources:**
 - **1) A Bible;** preferably at least one without study notes or commentary.
 - **2) A concordance** where you can look up where else in the Bible a Word is used.
 - **3) Dictionaries;** a standard English dictionary but also Greek and Hebrew dictionaries (lexicons.)
 - **4) A Bible Encyclopedia** to look up people, places, and other context-relevant information.
- **Additional resources:** Bible software can be a great complement to Bible study allowing deeper study, quick extensive word searches, interlinear Bibles and other original language tools.
- **Online Resources:** If you have internet access, these basic and many more additional resources are available online; and much of it is free. An introduction to free online resources available can be found by searching on YouTube for "Computer Tools for Bible Study" at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUWOTM9OuQ7KxLHRa0PSQ-w> . A Reference Guide can be downloaded at <https://login.filesanywhere.com/fs/v.aspx?v=8c6a6a885d6474b09d68> .

How to get the most from this study: While there are a variety of ways to benefit from studying John's epistles that have no burdensome requirements at all, the general adage that you'll get as much out of earnest study as you put into it is also true. Therefore, understand that's why I will encourage you to spend time in prayer *before* you sign in, and to read for the big picture to notice key observations in the chapter we are studying also *before* signing in. And before first starting this study, re-visit the Men's Bible Study webpage at <https://www.cape4christ.com/cape-men-4-christ/> where you will find helpful guidelines, handouts and notes. Linking to this page is also a great way to invite men in your sphere of influence to join us. Remember, have as your goal to be an "approved workman" who "accurately handles the Word of God. (2 Tim 2:15).

Sincerely, *In His Service*, Bill Kugel