

Deeper in God Bible Studies

Inductive Bible Study

1 - 2 - 3 John

By Cindy Barnes



*Women's Tabletop
Friendship*
Faith, Friends & Bible Study
with Cindy Barnes



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Dear Sister in the Lord,

The Father desires that you learn about Him, His Son and Holy Spirit. To do that, you need to study His written Word, the Bible.

There are many different Bible methods that will help with the understanding of His Word.

This study will be based on the Inductive Bible Study Method in which we *Observe, Interpret* and *Apply* what we learn.

With the help from Holy Spirit and by employing the observation questions of the 5 W's and H, we can understand the Word of God for ourselves. Holy Spirit is willing and ready to teach us.

This eBook is a study of 1 – 2 – 3 John, written by the Apostle John who lived and walked with Jesus during His three-year ministry. John wrote five books of the New Testament: John, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John and Revelation.

Essentially, this eBook is two books in one as it includes the Inductive Bible Study Method, teaching your how to study inductively. As well, there are Worksheets that accompany this eBook that you will find helpful for recording your findings.

Take your time in this study as it isn't a race to finish but do stay focused on what the Spirit is saying to you.

So, read on, gather the materials you need, and even a hot cup of coffee as you begin this study.

Blessings,



Cindy Barnes

study the Bible
to understand
what God is
saying to you

Instructions

To help you have the best experience at learning to study inductively, here are some instructions as you begin this journey.

1. Print this document for a paper version to work with. It's lengthy so you may want to go to an office supply store to print.
2. Print the worksheets.
3. Print the Master Keyword list, preferably on cardstock or even photo paper works well.
4. Download Kari King Dent's Keyword List to use as a reference (it is quite long to print so use it to guide your markings/codes for keywords.)
5. Gather the tools you will need, ie, pencils, markers, etc. as described in the next section.
6. Read the section on page 5 "How to Study the Bible Using the Inductive Bible Study Method." While this may appear to be overwhelming at first read, take it by small chunks.
7. When marking keywords, determine a symbol by using Kari King's suggested symbols and then marking the keyword on your Master Keyword List. This list can be folded in half and kept in your Bible.
 - a. When deciding on symbols to use, remember that this symbol will be used throughout the Bible, whenever it is a keyword in the text you are studying. This helps keep continuity from book to book allowing you to recognize by symbol what word is key. For example, when I see a heart shape in red marker, I know the keyword is 'love.' If the red heart had a line through it (to mean negative), then I know that it is 'not love' or 'selfish love.'
 - b. At the beginning of the 1 John Series, is the main keyword list for 1 John. 2 and 3 John have their own keywords.
 - c. At the beginning of each chapter is the keyword list for that chapter.
 - d. The first task is always to identify the author and recipients, those he is writing to. Mark these distinctly so they can be spotted at a glance throughout the text.
 - e. You decided on a symbol for a particular keyword and marked it on your Master Keyword list. Now, mark the keyword in this study document of the chapter you are studying. This helps you to get used to the symbol for that word.
 - f. Concentrate on one keyword at a time. Read the chapter, identify and mark the keyword throughout the chapter. Then read the chapter a second time to identify and mark the next keyword. Repeat this until all keywords are marked.
8. As you are reading, ask yourself the 5 W's and H. Why is this happening? To whom is it happening? When will it happen? This is explained further in the "How to Study the Bible" section.

9. After the keywords are marked, then pay attention to the geographic locations. Refer to a Bible map if you want to see where this was taking place.
10. Making lists, expressions of time, contrasts and comparisons and terms of conclusion: each of these will require reading the text again and again as you identify each item. Decide on the marking or symbol, record it on your *Master Keyword List* and then in your Bible.
11. By the time you are finished observing and marking everything that is pertinent to this study, you will have read the chapters between 10 and 20 times. Repeatedly reading it will help you to understand the context and will allow you to notice details that would otherwise be missed with a simple read.

How to Study the Bible

Using the Inductive Study Method

Are you searching for a new way to study your Bible but not sure which method to use? While I have not studied methods such as S.O.A.P. or Bible Journaling, I have studied using the Inductive Study Method and absolutely love it! This eBook will tell you what is involved with this approach.

The Inductive Study Method has the tools you need to dig deep in the Word. You will learn the three main keys to truly seeing all there is in the book or chapter you are studying.

Some of the tools necessary for inductive studying are:

- Bible with wide margins for writing
- Colour pencils
- Colour pens, 4 colours at minimum and preferably archival ink to prevent bleeding through the thin pages of the bibles
- Pencil
- Eraser
- Pencil sharpener
- Worksheet and/or notebook for further recording

Prayer

All Bible Study should begin with prayer. This is key to successfully learning the Word and hearing from God. Ask the Holy Spirit to open your eyes of understanding so you may hear what the Spirit is saying to you. The Spirit is our Comforter, Counsellor, and Teacher. Let Him teach you as you open the Word to study.

Observation

The Discovery process begins with Observation. We learn who the author is and who the author is writing to. Sometimes that is obvious within the first 5 verses or so while other times we are not told explicitly who the author is.

With inductive study, when we observe, we usually employ the questions known as the 5 W's and H. That is, *who-what-where-when-why* and *how*.

Who-What-Where-When-Why-How

Who is

- the author writing to?
- mentioned in the passage/chapter/book?
- doing something?
- not doing something?

What is

- the reason(s) for writing?
- happening or going to happen?
- the author cautioning or warning them about?

Where

- are the recipients?
- is the event(s) going to happen?
- was it said?

When

- will the event(s) happen?
- did or will something happen to a particular person or place?

Why

- will this event happen?
- did the author say this?
- this particular person?
- is this person singled out?

How

- will this event happen?
- is it to be done or completed?
- did the author explain the event?

As you consciously ask yourself these questions, you will notice the little details that are so easily overlooked. Pay attention to these details and make note of them, your understanding of the Word has begun. Don't be in a hurry to rush through this process, take your time to see what is there. Observing the answers to these questions as based on the Word itself, will lead to correct interpretation.

Geographic Locations

If the passage you are studying indicates any geographic locations, mark these distinctly. In my Bible, I can spot geographic locations by the double green underline under the *city, mountain, valley, nation, or planet, ie earth.*

When studying in the Old Testament, this is helpful to note as in the both the books of Kings, there is mention of Northern Kingdom, South Kingdom, nations and various locales. I underline them plus when trying to keep the Kings and their kingdoms matched, I use NK (Northern Kingdom) with the correct king.

Keywords and Key Phrases

Keywords may be a little hard to determine but if you remember that they are essential to the text, you should be able to spot them. Try this, if you remove the word you are thinking is key, does the whole meaning become void?

A keyword or key phrase, when removed leaves the passage meaningless. Often time keywords are repeated by the author as he emphasizes its importance. The repetition may be in the chapter or spaced throughout the book.

As you mark keywords, ask yourself the 5 W questions. An example of a keyword would be “sackcloth”. Ask yourself, Who is wearing sackcloth? Why is that person(s) wearing sackcloth? When will they start to wear the sackcloth?

You can mark the keywords and phrases by using the **Master Keyword List** that is included with this study. This list is compiled of keywords that as you consistently mark your symbols on this list, it becomes your master list for each time you find keywords. In addition, you can download for reference the file by Kari King Dent of symbols and markings to help you with ideas for designing your own symbols.

Make Lists

Lists play an important role as they often reveal truths for steps to take in completing an action. Some lists are simple while others can be longer and a little more involved. Write your lists in a notebook in addition to numbering them in the text.

Some lists are more topical and spread throughout the book. When following a keyword through the book, observe what is being said about that keyword. Make note of it in your notebook or if you have space in the margin of your Bible, you can condense it there.

Making lists will help you recall the truths you have learned from the keywords. When you need to remember it, you will have it at your fingertips.

Expressions of Time

Noticing when events happened or are going to happen, helps to keep the passage in focus. Expressions of time are spotted by the use of certain words, *until, after, when, and then*. It will be helpful to use the symbol of a clock in a specific colour so you can spot these expressions at a glance. I use a green Micron pen for my clock. Other words would be the obvious ones such as *in the year of, at the feast of, or during the reign of*. Place your symbol in the margin to find them quickly.

Contrasts and Comparisons

Contrasts, such as, *light/darkness, or children of God/children of the devil*, are often used to emphasize a truth and its use makes it easier to remember what that truth is.

Comparisons are noted by words such as *like, as, as it were*. Mark the comparisons distinctly so you recognize it as a comparison versus a keyword.

Terms of Conclusion

As my former Pastor used to say, terms of conclusion such as *therefore* are “there for a reason.” Other terms are *since, finally, wherefore, and for this reason*. At this point, you can summarize the message in the preceding verses.

Interpretation

Based on what you learned while observing the text, you are ready to interpret the meaning. To interpret wisely you need to remember that context rules. The meaning of *context* is “that which goes with the text.” This means to keep in mind the surrounding verses as well as the book itself and the whole Word of God. Ask yourself if your interpretation is consistent with the purpose and theme of the book. Is it consistent with other passages? One thing you do not want to do is make the Word of God say whatever you want it to say by taking it out of context.

Another quote from my former Pastor is “the best interpretation of Scripture is Scripture.” The Bible contains all the truth you need and it is God-breathed and inspired. You can trust it, depend on it and as you saturate yourself in it, it will become a part of you so that you will recognize truth from partial truth and wrong doctrine.

Application

At the end of the observation and interpretation, we come to application. Now it is time to apply what has been learned.

If we want to be *doers of the Word* as James said in chapter 1 v 22, then, we need to apply what we learned. Through the application, we allow God to change us to be more like His Son.

Not all Scripture passages can be applied today. There are a few things to keep in mind such as the time period. Cultural standards cannot be applied today but you can apply the biblical standards.

We need to be aware of not using Scripture erroneously to strengthen something we believe in. In this case, we need to submit to God and change our thinking to believe the Scriptures, not the other way around.

Sometimes God is showing us something new in His Word that we hadn't seen before. Or maybe He is correcting a faulty belief we have. These are situations for us to correctly apply the Word of Truth.

Once we apply what we have learned, then we become transformed. Paul taught us that it is *by the renewing of our mind that we are transformed*. Let the Word transform you as you study it inductively!

Now...let's begin studying the books of 1 – 2 – 3 John!

1 - 2 - 3 John

Inductive Bible Study Series

The DIG [Deep in God] Bible Study is designed to help you get more out of the Word of God than a casual reading would produce.

This is the first of eight studies covering the book of **1 - 2 - 3 John**.

Today we look at 1 John, chapter 1.

Surroundings

I would advise you to remove distractions while you are studying. Turn off the phone, put the computer to sleep, and anything else that would take away from your focus.

Set up your study area with

- your Bible
- sticky notes if there is no room in the margins of your Bible to write notes
- worksheets, provided
- a notebook for extra notes, optional
- colour pencils, Micron pens or PaperMate Flair markers for coding the keywords.
- Master Keyword List
- Kari King Dent's keyword list for reference
- Instructions for how to study inductively

Are you ready? Let's begin!

Prayer

As with all Bible Studies, the first thing we want to do is pray. We need the help of the Holy Spirit to direct our study time and to keep us focused. We need Him to teach us the truth of His Word.

You may be familiar with 1 John but this time, it may be that the Spirit has something for you to “see” that could be your, “I didn’t know that was there” moment. Otherwise known as a God-moment.

So, let’s pray: Father God, we love You and we are so grateful that we can sit at your Son’s feet and learn of You. As we study First John, we ask that You would open our eyes to see the truths found in Your Word. We ask that the Holy Spirit would guide us and direct our thinking as we ponder your truth. As Paul prayed, may the eyes of our understanding be enlightened so we may know your truth. As we finish this chapter, Lord, may we be encouraged by Your Word in our everyday lives. We pray this in the mighty name of Jesus, Your precious Son. Amen.

After you have prayed and removed distractions from your surroundings, get comfortable to read the first chapter of 1 John. Take your time as you don’t want to rush through it as you may miss some nuggets.

Chapter 1

The first thing we notice in chapter 1 is that there is no real salutation. The Apostle Paul most always began his letters with his name and he identified who the recipients were but John did not start his letter off in the same manner.

It’s been said that the reason why John didn’t identify himself or who his recipients were is because his readers knew him personally. John left Jerusalem before the destruction began in AD 70 and went to Ephesus and the surrounding areas. The seven churches that are mentioned in Revelation 2 and 3 were part of his ministry. So this letter, 1 John, was probably written to the churches in and around Ephesus.

Observation

Keywords for chapter 1

- Fellowship
- Sin
- Write
- Light
- Truth

The first verse is very specific without naming names, about who “we” are. “We have heard”, “we have seen with our eyes”, “we have looked upon” and “our hands have handled” the “Word of Life”.

Who is the “Word of Life”? Verse two states “the life was manifested” and “we have seen it and bear witness”. Based on what we know about the 12 disciples, we can say that the “we” refers to the disciples of whom he is one of them.

The Word of Life is the Son of God who was manifested in the flesh as Jesus Christ.

So, then, how do we know the author is John? It could be another disciple. If you are a history buff or you study Biblical history, you would have learned that the style and vocabulary of First John are similar to the writings of the Gospel of John. Most scholars agree that this letter is written by the same person.

You and I are probably alike in that we don’t study Biblical history as Biblical scholars do so we’ll more than likely rely on their findings, right?

Fellowship

Verse three is interesting as it speaks to the readers having fellowship with the disciples and with the Father and Son. When we think of “fellowship”, what comes to mind? Gatherings? Church luncheons? Study groups? But “fellowship” with the Father wouldn’t be those activities, would it? John is encouraging readers to have fellowship with God and since He dwells within us when we get together with other believers in any type of activity, we are also having fellowship with the Father in those activities.

However, fellowship with God is more than that. We have the assurance of God dwelling in us through our relationship with Him. Fellowship with God is time spent with Him in prayer, study, or quietness. Meditating on His Word is also fellowship as is conversations with Him.

Why is He Writing?

And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. Verse four gives us one of many reasons why John is writing this letter. This verse, however, comes right after mentioning fellowship with God. Do you think it safe to say that the joy that we might have would be the fellowship with God? Would that give us full joy? Have you thought of it that way before?

The message that John wants his readers to know is that *God is light and in Him is no darkness*. Can you imagine that? Light, full, brilliantly bright light. A light that dispels everything less than it. Dispels

darkness with a tiny flicker. This is our God! Everything He is displaces evil, darkness, hatred, all things opposite of Him. This is the God who lives in us! We want His light to shine through us, to search us, to dispel anything that is not holy, not acceptable to Him. We want others to see Christ in us so that they too would want to meet this Man who died for them.

Is this another reason why our joy would be full?

Fellowship and our Walk

If God is the light that He is and we have fellowship with Him, then believers cannot walk in darkness. Can they? Why not? Because light dispels darkness.

What happens when an unsaved person thinks about getting saved? They often say things like, “I can’t get saved now, I’ve done this sin or that sin” or, “God can’t love me, I’m too dirty” or “I’m not ready yet as I’m still having fun”. Oh, and there’s this “do I have to give up all my fun activities to get saved”? Why do the unsaved think like this? It’s because deep inside them, they know that they are in darkness and God is light. They know the two don’t mix, like oil and water, like righteousness and unrighteousness.

Believers cannot walk on the wild side and the narrow path at the same time. It is impossible for either we will *hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon, Matthew 6:24.* If we say we have a relationship with the Father that He is our God, but yet we still walk on the broad road, then we are lying and deceiving ourselves.

When we make a decision to follow Christ, we leave behind the old desires and sins of the carnal nature and take on the new nature that leads to holy living. Holy living is walking in the light and as believers, we are walking in the light together, fellowshiping with each other as we enjoy the presence of the Lord.

Forgiveness of Sin

We all sin. Either by commission or omission. We either willfully sin or unintentionally sin. Whichever way, it doesn’t matter as we all sin. If a believer says she doesn’t sin, she has been deceived as the Bible says the truth is not in her. She needs to hear the truth so that she can repent and correct her beliefs.

I’m so thankful that John said that *if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* Daily I need to confess my sins and faults and iniquities to the Lord. And daily I receive His mercy and forgiveness.

That’s a Wrap

Living the Christian life is not always easy. The narrow path that few find is uphill and rocky. It requires that we deny our own wants and desires and that we learn what pleases the Father so that we desire the things that He wants us to have.

Even with the adversity that life brings us, we can still have the joy that James speaks of in James 1:2. This is a joy that is deep and abiding and is ours when we *trust in the Lord and lean not on our own understanding.*

Chapter 2

Before we get started though, I would like to share my “light bulb” moment I had. My quote from the chapter 1 study is

*The message that John wants his readers to know is that God is light and in Him is no darkness. Can you imagine that? **Light, full, brilliantly bright light. A light that dispels everything less than it. Dispels darkness with a tiny flicker.***

After our study I was pondering that and thought if the light of God is so brilliantly lit, then in Psalm 139:11-12, the night shines as brilliantly bright as God is. He dispels darkness. No wonder He can see us! He is Light, the night is light to Him. His brilliant white light shines on us no matter where we are, day or night. Oh. Wow! This truly was a light bulb moment as to the “**why**” the night is as the day to Him.

Prayer

Take time to pray before we continue with chapter 2.

Father, let the light of Your Truth shine in us today. May we see with enlightened eyes what you want us to learn. Help us to apply it to our lives so we walk holy and blameless before you. In Jesus name, amen.

Read chapter 2

Keywords to mark in chapter 2

- Abide
- Sin
- Love
- Write
- Born of God
- Light
- Truth
- Know

We’re going to divide this chapter into two main sections:

- Purpose for Writing
- What We Know

Using your worksheet, write in bullet form on your chart what you learn about the reasons for writing and what we know. Don’t forget to include the “address”, that is the chapter and verse. Hang on to this chart as you will need it over the next few weeks as we continue our study of 1 John.

Purpose for Writing

This chapter has the bulk of John's purpose for writing. There are two other reasons with one in chapter 1 that we mentioned last week and the last reason in chapter 5.

[The numbers shown are the addresses]

- 2.1 that we do not sin but if we do sin, we have an advocate with the Father
- 2.12 our sins are forgiven for His name's sake
- 2.13 fathers → you have known Him from the beginning
- 2.13 young men → you have overcome the wicked one
- 2.13 little children → you have known the Father
- 2.14 fathers → you have known Him from the beginning
- 2.14 young men → you are strong and the Word of God abides in you and you have overcome the wicked one
- 2.21 because you know the truth and that no lie is of the truth
- 2.26 concerning those who seduce you (deception)

This is quite a list of reasons for writing! So, what does this tell us? First of all, I am thankful that there is an advocate with the Father when I sin. Not if, but when. Can we take a moment to give thanks to God for our redemption? Take a moment to review the list to see how it relates to you.

As we analyze John's purpose for writing, we learn that

- we have redemption for our sins, that they are forgiven by our Father
- we know Him
- we can overcome the wicked one
- we are strong
- that the Word of God lives in us
- we know the truth
- that lies are not from the Truth but from the enemy
- there will be those who will attempt to seduce us, to lure us away from the Truth

If John was alive today and he was passing through your town, your church, what would he write to your church about? Anything? Everything?

Walk as He Walked

As you read chapter 2, is there anything that caused to you wonder the fullness of it? What it means? For me, I paused on verse 6.

He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.

1 John 2:6 KJV

My question was, just how did Jesus walk? Literally, where did He go? What did He do? Who did He walk with? Who were His friends? His enemies? How did He respond to strangers? To friends? To enemies?

How did He handle himself in conflicts and tough situations? These are questions that you ask when studying inductively, to learn from the answers. If you have read the Gospels, you will recall some of these answers. What can we learn from them?

Off the top of your head, what are a few that you came up with?

- He walked everywhere
- He spent most of His time with His disciples, teaching them
- He was compassionate to strangers
- His compassion showed in His kindness
- His compassion showed when He healed people
- His compassion showed when He forgave them of their sins
- His compassion showed when He rose people from the dead
- His compassion showed when He taught lessons, ie, Mary and Martha, the washing of His feet, the stoning that never happened and let's not forget the Beatitudes!
- He handled tough situations and conflict with the Word of God
- He would go someplace private to spend time with the Father in prayer
- He prayed constantly

There are many more examples. What can you add?

Jesus is our role model of how we ought to 'walk the talk.' How are you measuring up? Are you like me in that I have a long way to go? I'm strong but could be stronger yet! You too?

What We Know

On the worksheet, add the "we know" verses in the appropriate section. As we write this list, let's personalize it to help us in our realization of what it is we know.

- 2.3 I know I know Him IF I keep His commands
- 2.5 I know I am in Him BECAUSE I keep His word
- 2.21 I know the truth BECAUSE no lie is of the truth
- 2.29 I know that everyone THAT DOES righteousness is born of God

The rest of the "we know" verses will be discovered in Chapter 3.

We say "I know that I know", meaning deep down inside, we know. I believe that this is how we are to know these truths.

- "I know that I know" that IF I keep His commands, I know Him.
- "I know that I know" that BECAUSE I keep His word, I am in Him.
- "I know that I know" that I know the truth.
- "I know that I know" that I am born of God BECAUSE I have been made righteous with God.

We have already marked and studied the keywords "write" and "know." Continue coding the remainder of the keywords, marking them in your Bible. In your notebook, write out anything you learn about these words that Holy Spirit is teaching you.

Chapter 3

Prayer

We welcome You, Holy Spirit, in our study. Grant us Your anointing to help us to understand Your Word. Teach us, guide us and enlighten our minds to see the truths that are so plainly in view. Help us to recognize the nuggets of gold that are often missed. Help us to hide Your Word in our hearts so that we treasure it above all else. Thank you, Holy Spirit, for dwelling in us, and that you never leave us. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Read Chapter 3

Before we go any further, we need to read the chapter so we understand the content.

After reading the chapter, what words or phrases stand out to you? Did you notice the word “love?” Also, “sin” is mentioned eight times and “abide” is mentioned four times (KJV).

Keywords for 1 John 3

- abide
- sin
- know
- love
- born of God
- truth

Did you notice that this chapter begins with a song? Are you familiar with it? The lyrics are similar to the King James Version. In my Bible, I mark the verses that have tunes with the musical staff. That way I recognize them right away. Now 1 John 3:1 has a musical staff next to it.

Checking against the list of keywords, above, **read the chapter once** for each keyword. That way you are concentrating on one word at a time. If you are familiar with this study method, you could mark two words at the same time, just take it slow so you don't miss any keywords.

I like the term of endearment that John uses. This isn't a keyword but I did notice in the KJV that it is used in chapters 3 and 4. While I didn't add it to my keyword list, I did mark it as I like what it implies, that John refers to the recipients (to whom he wrote) as someone dear to him. He is also differentiating between the brethren and the heretical teachers.

What We Know

In the last chapter, we learned of several things that *we can know* and we will add to that list from this chapter. Continue adding to your worksheet, the verses where the keyword “know” is found.

- 1 John 3:1 – I am called son (daughter) of God by His love BECAUSE the world doesn’t know God
- 1 John 3:2 – I know that when He appears I shall be like Him BECAUSE I will see Him as He is
- 1 John 3:14 – I know I have passed from death (spiritual) to life (spiritual) BECAUSE I love my brethren
- 1 John 3:19 – I know I am of the truth and shall ASSURE my heart before Him
- 1 John 3:24 – I know He abides in me BY the Holy Spirit He has given me

To capsize what we know, let’s rephrase it as

“I know that I know”

- I am a daughter of God because of His love for me
- that I will be like Him when He appears
- that I have eternal life because I love my brethren
- I am of the truth as my heart is assured of this in His presence
- He abides in me by the power of the Holy Spirit that He has given me

These are pretty powerful things to know! Take a few minutes to let those truths sink in your spirit.

Sin or Not

John mentioned the subject of “sin” in chapter 2 for a total of five times and in this chapter, he speaks again on the subject of “sin” as he mentions it eight times.

What does John say about sin?

- 3:4 – anyone who sins breaks the law because sin is a transgression of the law
- 3:5 – Jesus, who lived in heaven, agreed to the Father’s plan for Him to become the manifestation to redeem mankind from sin. Jesus knew no sin as He is perfect but He took on sin for mankind because of His great love toward us.
- 3:6 – whoever abides in Jesus, does not sin. This is regarding habitual sin. If a person is habitually abiding in God, there is no room for habitual sin. Those who sin, do not know the Father nor have they seen Him. Remember, John said in John 12:45 and 14:9 that he who has seen Jesus has seen the Father.
- 3:8 – those who habitually sin are of the devil because the devil has sinned from the beginning. It was for this purpose, Lucifer’s sin, that Jesus was manifested in the flesh to redeem mankind from sin.
- 3:9 – all those born of God, that is, a believer and follower of Jesus Christ, cannot commit sin because God’s seed is in him which makes him born of God. Therefore, we cannot purposefully sin.

Habitual Sin

Did you notice that these verses apply to habitual sin? Jesus came to earth to put to death the works of the devil (v 8). Those who profess that God dwells in them cannot purposefully and willfully sin as it goes against everything that God stands for. Verse 10 sums it up for us, in that the children of God and the children of the devil are known by righteousness. Those who live righteously belong to God and those who live with evil (unrighteousness) in their heart, belong to their father, the devil.

Love - Verb and Noun

1 John is a book about love. Have you noticed that “love” is mentioned 10 times in this chapter alone? You will be surprised how many times it is mentioned throughout the whole book of 1 John.

As we mark this keyword, (I used a red heart symbol over the word), let’s pay attention to how the word is used. *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance* helped to identify the original Greek meaning of this singular English word.

Agape – noun – affection or benevolence

To further enhance our understanding, the *Amplified Bible* uses the descriptive words.

- 3:1 “incredible quality of love” the Father has shown us
- 3:16 “essential” love that Jesus laid down His life for us
- 3:17 *love of God* is not amplified in the Amplified version

Would you say that this is also known as **unconditional love**?

Agapao – verb – to love in a social or moral sense

- 3:11 “unselfishly” love one another
- 3:14 *love the brethren* is not amplified in the Amplified version
- 3:18 let us not love “merely in theory”
- 3:23 “that we unselfishly love and seek” the best of one another

Have we learned anything about “love”? Not all uses of this word are identical. Even in English, we say, “I love pizza” or, “I love my husband” or, “I love you”. Each instance has a different meaning and it is the same with the Greek words as well.

I trust that the enhanced meaning of the verb and noun usage of the singular word “love” helps clarify how John uses this word.

There is so much in this book on the subject of ‘love’ that it deserves an in-depth study on its own.

Chapter 4

Prayer

Will you pray with me? *Heavenly Father, we come both You as we study Your Holy Word in 1 John 4. Open the eyes of our understanding so we can see the truths in Your Word so we can apply them to our lives and be transformed. Your Word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our paths. Holy Spirit, guide us and teach us as we study today. In Jesus' wonderful name, Amen.*

Read Chapter 4.

Are you familiar with this chapter? If not, please take a few minutes to read 1 John 4.

As you just read, what is the main thought in this chapter?

Keywords for 1 John 4

- Know
- Love

Spirit of Antichrist

What does John say when he uses this term, *beloved*? First, he tells them not to believe every spirit but to test them to ensure they are from God. This means when you hear a word of knowledge or prophecy or even sermons and Bible teaching, to ask the Holy Spirit to quicken your spirit if the source is not from God. Flip over to In 1 John 4:2-3, where he explains how to know that what you hear is of God.

The test is if the source speaks that Jesus Christ was manifested as a man (come in the flesh) then the source is of God. If the source does not believe it or say it, then it is the spirit of the antichrist.

Love

The second usage of the term *beloved* begins the topic of *love*. This chapter has much to say concerning how we ought to love one another, beginning with verse 7 through to the end of the chapter. Let's summarize *love* according to John:

- love one another
- everyone who loves others is born of God and knows God
- he who does not love others does not know God
- God IS love
- love is of God
- God's love for us is manifested in Jesus so we can have eternal life through Him
- because God loves us, we ought to love each other

- God loved us first and sent His Son to be our redeemer for our sins
- if we love one another, it is because God dwells in us and His love is perfected in us
- we know He dwells in us because He has given us His Spirit
- he who dwells in love dwells in God, and God in him, thoroughly interlocked
- our love is made perfect as we will have boldness in the day of judgment
- there is no fear in love as perfect love casts out fear. Fear torments and therefore is not of love.
- we love God because He first loved us
- God has given a commandment that he who loves God also must love his brethren
- we cannot love God whom we have not seen and hate our brother whom we do see

What do you suppose is the theme of this chapter? Would it be concerning love and how we ought to love others on account that we love God?

If you count how many times the word *love* is used in this chapter, it adds up to 27 times! In Chapter 3, it was used 10 times and in Chapter 5, we will read it five times.

When I started this study on 1 John, it struck me how often John speaks about *love* and now I think of this book as being the book on love. Paul taught about love in what we call the *love chapter* (1 Cor 13) and now we have the teaching from John in this book.

What We Know

Keeping with our list on our 1 John worksheet that we began in Chapter 1 regarding *What we Know* John mentions that we know

- that we dwell in Him and He in us BECAUSE He has given us His Spirit
- and believe that God loves us BECAUSE God IS love and we dwell in Him

Wrap Up

Before we finish for the day, read 1 John 4 again and this time, note where we find the source of *love*. Make note of that in your notebook or somewhere on your worksheet.

How do you feel about your brothers and sisters in the Lord? Can you say that you love them or do you need to evaluate that? If you do, spend some time in prayer asking God to reveal to you any causes for your feelings and then repent, receive His forgiveness and ask Him to help you trust in the Word what it says about God's love and then based on the Word, practice love towards the brethren.

Chapter 5

Prayer

Father God, thank you so much for this time that we can set aside to sit at the feet of Jesus, allowing His presence to wash over our souls and refresh our spirits with Your precious word. Teach us, Holy Spirit, what you want us to take away from this chapter today. May the truths that You reveal to us, enlighten our minds and change our thinking to be more Christ-like. But more than that, Lord, may we be transformed by Your word, to live and walk in the Lord. In Jesus' precious name we pray, Amen.

Read Chapter 5

We need to read 1 John 5 through at least once before we proceed to have an overview of its contents.

In your opinion, what is the main point of this chapter? Do you think it has to do with knowing for certain who we believe in? Who we place our faith in?

Keywords for this chapter are

- Sin
- Know
- Love
- Born of God
- Truth

We will be talking about “know”, “love” and “truth”. However, you can continue to read the chapter to mark the other keywords, ‘sin’ and ‘born of God.’

What I Know

Continuing in our list of what we can know, we need to add the eight instances of this keyword, “know”.

I know that I know...

- 5.2 – I love the brethren when I love God and keep His commands
- 5.3 – I have eternal life and that I can believe on the name of Jesus
- 5.15 – God hears me and whatever I ask I know I have the petitions I desired of Him
- 5.18 – that I am born of God and do not continue to sin and that God keeps me safe from harm from the evil
- 5.19 – I am of God and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one
- 5.20 – that the Son of God has come and has given me understanding so I may know what is true
- 5.20 I am in Him who is true, Jesus Christ

In reviewing this list, we learn that we know a lot about ourselves and God's response to us. How do you feel when you read this list? Does it comfort you to read these statements? Does this bolster your faith in any way?

Love

In the previous chapter, John used the word *love* 27 times and in this chapter, it is mentioned five times. Let's look at it in context. I can find this word quickly as I have it marked with a red heart shape symbol.

This word is found in 1 John 5:1-3. Did you just read that? It says that everyone who loves the Father loves His Son PLUS it says that we know we love our brethren because we love God and carry out His commands.

Oh, I know there are people that we don't *like* sometimes, but this isn't talking about liking them. It is talking about loving them. Okay, let's examine the original meaning of the word "love" that John used. He used the same two words previously in chapters 3 and 4 and now again in this chapter.

Agape – noun – affection or benevolence or unconditional love

Agapao – verb – to love in a social or moral sense

"Love" and "loveth" used in verses 1 and 2 are the *agapao* love, that is, *to love in a moral or social sense*.

The word "love" used in verse 3 is the *agape* love that is shown in *affection or benevolence or unconditional love*.

If we are true to ourselves when we say we love God, then we will keep His commandments. Therefore, those we seem not to get along with, for whatever reason, if we apply "love" in the moral or social sense to them, we will learn to love them in the affectionate sense. By doing this, we are obedient to God, and being an example to others that the Word is true and it can be carried out. What do you think?

Truth

I marked the word "true" and "truth" the same, a red outline of an open book. You will find this word in verses 6 and 20.

According to Strong's Exhaustive Concordance and Strong's Complete Dictionary, the meanings of *truth* and *true* are:

Truth – aletheia – noun – what is true in any matter under consideration truly, in truth, according to truth

True – alethinos – adjective – is used to denote true in the sense of real, ideal, and genuine

Keep the above definitions in mind as we read 1 John 5:6. The Spirit is truth and the Spirit bears witness to Jesus who came by the water and the blood. The Holy Spirit is true in any matter. This means that the Spirit is truthful, honest, speaks with verity, in His witness of Jesus. Actually, anything the Spirit says is truthful, honest and spoken with verity.

In 1 John 5:20, the word 'true' is mentioned three times and in all instances, the meaning is the same, which is 'truthful' and 'true'.

Is this the kind of truth you can rely on? Believe in with all your heart? Trust to be true and keep His Word when He makes/gives you a promise? Is this the kind of person you want to be too?

I love verse 20. Jesus has come to give us an understanding of the truth and so that we can KNOW Him. I am so glad I know Him! Aren't you glad you know Him?

Wrap-up

We have only looked at a few of the keywords for this chapter. You will need to find the others and study the text and what it is saying to you. Once you are done that, you will have a better answer to this next question.

What is the theme of this chapter?

Next is the 'summary' of these five chapters where we'll cover the chapter themes plus pull together the contrasts that John uses to make his points. After you have marked the rest of the keywords, read the chapter one more time but this time look for the contrasts such as light/darkness, children of God/children of the devil, etc. Observe what you learn from them and write them on your worksheet.

Summary

There are a few things not on the 1 John Worksheet that you can add in your notebook or in your Bible, such as the chapter themes and "contrast." Let's review the chapters to determine the themes.

Chapter 1

John mentioned the first of several reasons why he was writing to the church. It was so "that your joy may be full." This statement is right on the heels of mentioning "fellowship" with the Father. This may have been one reason why our joy is full.

This chapter focuses on fellowship with God, God is light and in Him is no darkness, forgiveness of sin and the "truth" that we walk in.

We also see our first "contrast" mentioned in this chapter and that is the contrast between "light" and "darkness" as stated in 1 John 1:5-7. This contrast is God versus darkness.

To determine the chapter theme, we would keep in mind the keywords (mentioned above) and come up with a possible theme. As I review the chapter, my theme is *Fellowship with God and Each Other*. If there is space in your Bible, you can pen this in right above the start of the chapter.

Chapter 2

Most of the keywords are present in this chapter. In fact, all but one keyword can be found in these 29 verses.

The two major areas covered, and should be noted on your worksheet, are

- John's reason for writing
- what we "know"

"Abide" or "abideth" is mentioned often and teaches us that God abides in us and whoever does the will of the Father will abide forever. Also, whoever loves his brethren, abides in the light, that is, God. That is good news, don't you think? Oh, and look at verses 1 John 2:20, 27, which speaks of the anointing of the Holy Spirit who abides in us. We are so blessed to have the Father, Son and Holy Spirit dwelling in us!

Sometimes a chapter can have more than one theme. You will see that often in Bibles that already have themes in them. This chapter, for me, has three themes: *Abiding in God*, *What We Know* and *Purpose in Writing*. What did you come up with?

Chapter 3

1 John 3:1 begins with *Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us...*

And here, begins the subject of "love". We learned in the study on Chapter 3 that the Greek words for our English word "love", is two words: agape and agapao. Agape is a noun (*affection, benevolence or unconditional*) while agapao is a verb (*to love in a social or moral sense*). John teaches us to love each other and if we don't love each other then it is impossible to love God. That's it in a nutshell.

We also learn about "sin" in this chapter. Those who are born of God cannot continue to habitually sin. Yes, we sin, because we are sinners, but our love for God supersedes any desire to habitually sin. According to the Scriptures, we cannot do both, habitually sin and say we love God. That's like trying to mix oil and water together, they just don't mix.

Another contrast is introduced and it is "children of God (or light)" and "children of the devil." In 1 John 3:10, we see that the children of God are easily recognized compared to the children of the devil. What sets the two groups apart? One group sins while the other group does not sin.

After studying this chapter again, my observations lead me to determine that the chapter theme is *Love God, Love the Brethren*. Did you come up with something like that too?

Chapter 4

Love, ah, what a wonderful word! John speaks much about love throughout this book and in this chapter alone, he mentions "love" 27 times! Would you say that this is a book telling us how to love one another?

It's easy to determine the chapter theme and I just mentioned it above, *Love One Another*.

Do you think as Christians we have trouble with that? Are we good at loving our brothers and sisters in the Lord? Or do we harbour grudges, unforgiveness, and ill will against a select few? I'm so glad that God is a forgiving God. When the Holy Spirit convicts us of our sin, we can repent and receive forgiveness. The next step is to turn to those same people and love them as God loves them.

Chapter 5

The last chapter of this book focuses on "sin", what we "know" and "love." It also introduces a new thought with the mention of "witness" and "record" in 1 John 5:6-12. We don't have these listed as keywords but it is important to note what this is about. John is teaching us of the divinity of Jesus who came to us by water and blood and the Holy Spirit continually bears witness to this. Just like John tells us that we cannot love God and not our brethren, we also cannot say that Jesus is the Son of God and not believe in God.

The wonderful thing for believers is that our belief in the Trinity of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, gives us the gift of eternal life (verses 11 and 12).

The purpose of the whole book is summed up in 1 John 5:13 as *I [have] written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may **know that ye have eternal life**, and that **ye may believe on the name of the Son of God**.*

I initially thought my chapter theme would be *Faith and Trust in Jesus* but I have added a second theme of the *Divinity of Jesus Christ*. What about you? Would you agree with that?

Don't forget to write the chapter themes in your Bible or in your notebook if you have one started for this study.

Wrap-Up

Well, that's it for wrapping up the summary details though I would like to leave you with a few questions.

This book gave us criteria for "knowing". How can you know whether or not you have eternal life?

John taught us about Jesus Christ. Does your faith in Him match what John taught about Jesus?

Don't forget to answer the final two questions on your worksheet: what you are now confident in and what you need to do to have more of God.

2 John

Second John is a small book, only 13 verses, but it is powerful and full of truth for us.

Prayer

Open your time of study with a word of prayer, asking Father to teach you through His Word.

The keywords to mark are:

- abide(s)
- commandments
- deceiver
- doctrine
- love
- teaching
- truth
- walk

Author and Recipient

As you read through this short book, mark the author and the recipient. This will help place the key players in their positions.

In 1 John 1, the author did not identify himself as scholars concluded that he was writing to people whom he knew and therefore it is assumed that he, John, felt it unnecessary to identify himself. This second epistle and the third one as well were written with the same reasoning. John wrote to specific people who knew him and whom he knew.

It is time to observe “who” and the first “who” is *the Elder unto the elect lady*. John is referring to himself as the Elder and indeed he was. He was one of the 12 disciples who lived and walked with Jesus for three and a half years. After the Holy Spirit descended on the 120 in the upper room, some of the disciples went out to other towns and cities to share the good news of Jesus Christ.

John was an Elder in the church and he is writing to a specific person, the *elect lady, and her children*. Who is she? Did she serve in the church? Was she a stay at home mom or did she have a business? Was she an agent of hospitality, sharing her home and food with strangers?

Maybe ‘she’ wasn’t a specific woman but maybe ‘she’ was the local church. That’s a thought. For the sake of this study, we will consider her as the local church.

We also know that John rejoiced greatly when he found her *children walking in truth* according to the commandment that Jesus gave from the Father.

There is much we don't know about 'her' but we do know that John *loves her in the truth* and he blesses her with *grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ*. To find out what you know about her, make a list of all you discover.

Digging In

I wonder if something was happening that caused John to 'beseech' her to love one another. He then explains what love is and that she should walk according to this commandment. She is reminded that she heard of this command through John and that she should walk in it.

Why did he tell her this, reminding her to walk in love? In 2 John 7, he states the reason. What does it say? He told her that many deceivers are in the world, people who do not confess that Jesus Christ had come as a man. She is told that these people who do not support Jesus Christ are deceivers and antichrists.

Here is the caution for us. Look to yourself, that you keep in your heart and mind the things you learned from John and other men of God who profess Jesus Christ. Don't let anyone deceive you. Keep yourself true to God and true to Jesus Christ.

Beware

There is a reminder of those who do not abide in the doctrine of Christ, that they do not have God in them. These people transgress against God. All those who have the doctrine of Jesus Christ dwelling within them, have both the Father and the Son. Living and walking in the Word will be evident to all. Why? The words you speak and your actions will prove where your heart is, where you have stored your treasure.

If anyone comes to you who does not speak of this doctrine or live according to this doctrine, have nothing to do with him. Do not invite him into your house. John even goes so far as to say, do not even wish him well or in King James verbiage, *neither bid him God speed*. Why? If you do that, you are partaking of his evil deeds. How? Let's look at this for a minute.

Saying the words "God go with you" to a person who is an antichrist is like uniting yourself to their cause. So telling a deceiver "God speed" is making yourself a part of their evil deeds. The NASB puts verse 11 this way, for *the one who gives him a greeting participates in his evil deeds*.

Application

John spoke about 'abiding' in 1 John and again he mentions this to the elect lady. What is she to abide in? What are we to abide in? 2 John 9 states whoever sins and does not abide in the doctrine of Jesus Christ does not have God in them. The opposite of that is whoever has the doctrine of Jesus has both the Father and the Son in them. Sounds simple, right?

Do you think we can look around and tell who has the doctrine of Jesus in them? Since God is light and He is in us, we are to let our light shine so that others will see the love of the Father in us. When we have

the doctrine of the gospel of Christ in us, we live by it, it is hidden in our hearts, we meditate on it, and it overflows from us to others. It can be in our countenance, or our actions, or our words.

Are we abiding in the Word the way we ought to?

'Abide' and 'dwell' mean the same. Who should we not dwell with? Who should we avoid? That's right, those who are deceivers, who do not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Yes, we are to love everyone, yes, we are to share Christ, but we are to be careful who we let into our circle of influence. We do not want to be deceived ourselves. We are to set parameters around us. Paul taught that, Peter taught that, Jesus taught that and John teaches that.

Another question to ponder. If you were faced with the situation of 2 John 10, how would you respond?

Wrap Up

Have you ever had so many things to say to someone that you couldn't finish the letter you started to them? Maybe writer's cramp kicked in so you figure it would be better to tell them in person? Or maybe you figured it would be better to have a conversation so there would be two-way interaction. Well, that's what John finished off this epistle with, that he would see her in person and finish off the conversation then. I wonder what they talked about. And remember, the "her", the "she", we are linking that to the "local church."

To wrap up this study, let's determine the theme of this book. I came up with two phrases. What did you come up with? In my Bible, at the top of the page, I wrote *Walk in Truth* and *Beware of Deceivers*. Is that what you were thinking of?

3 John

This is the final study of the epistles written by John. We will observe and interpret **3 John** as we look at today's text.

Third John is another short letter, only 14 verses directed to a brother in the Lord whom John loved very much.

Prayer

Don't forget to begin your study time with prayer, inviting Holy Spirit to come teach you of His Word.

3 John Key Words & "Contrasts"

Marking key words in this book will be easy as there are only three words to note.

- evil
- good
- truth

Author and Recipient

To begin, we want to learn who is the author and recipient. This information can be recorded on the *3 John Worksheet*.

In Second John, the writer started the letter with reference to himself as *the Elder* and again in 3 John, he uses this same term.

John is the Elder and his audience is Gaius who is referred as *well-beloved Gaius whom I love in the truth*.

On the worksheet, record the Author and Recipient and on the next page, you can record what you learn about Gaius.

Gaius is a beloved man of God who walked in the truth and is faithful in everything that he did for his brethren. His actions spoke well of him as strangers were also on the receiving end of his kindness and faithfulness. What a wonderful testimony and reputation to have as other people knew of his acts of kindness in the church! He even helped out when the brethren from surrounding communities arrived in town. Look at 3 John 7, when the brethren headed out again, they had supplies for their journey as they did not have to take anything from the Gentiles. Such kindness and generosity Gaius displayed!

Who Else?

We are introduced to two other men, Diotrephes and Demetrius. Let's take a closer look at them. Remember, we are asking the questions, *who-what-where-when-why-how* to find out who they are and why they were mentioned.

Diotrephes seems to be a man who loved himself by lifting himself up among the believers. John wrote to Diotrephes' church but he would not welcome John as a traveling speaker. More than that, Diotrephes spoke very unkindly about John and his co-workers, speaking maliciously against them. Diotrephes went so far as to forbid his church to receive John and his team!! And not only that, he cast the church members out of the church! {Jaw-drop!}

John reminds Gaius that those who do good have God in them and those who do evil, are not part of God's family.

Paul told us in his writings that when believers are faced with false teachers, we are to "mark them and avoid them." This means to make it known who the false teachers are so other believers will not be deceived. It is interesting that John also agreed with Paul about this as John mentioned to Gaius that he should not follow Diotrephes. He didn't say that Diotrephes is a false teacher but he certainly did tell Gaius of the treatment he and his team received from Diotrephes. I would say that it is important to be aware of who to avoid. Would you agree?

Demetrius is the opposite of Diotrephes. He has a good report among men and a good reputation regarding the truth. As well, John and his team gave their endorsement of Demetrius so the Christian community would be comforted in knowing they could trust Demetrius.

Quite a difference between these two men, wouldn't you say? Do you see now why they were mentioned?

"Contrasts"

Remember the importance of "contrasts?" They drive home the significant truths and make it easier to remember. One such contrast is two of the key words: *evil* and *good*. The common denominator for them is whether the person has seen God or not. He who does 'evil' has not seen God, therefore he who does 'good', is of God.

John then uses part of this contrast to say that Demetrius has a good reputation among the men. Nothing more needs to be said about Diotrephes.

Wrap-Up

You know what I will be asking you next, right? Based on your observations, what is the theme of this short book? I noted a similarity in themes between Second and Third John. I have two themes at the top of the page, one in each corner in my Bible: *Walk in Truth* and *Do Not Follow After Evil*.

What did you come up with? *The Face of Evil*? Anything else?

As you sum up this book, what is your main takeaway? What information did you receive that will help you in your walk?

Christians “ought to leave a good report,” says the Apostle Paul. How is your testimony before your family and friends and neighbours? Are you known for your compassion and understanding? For your generosity?

Acknowledgement

Resources for this series have been used from the following:

- All Scripture verses are taken from King James Version, public domain, unless otherwise noted.
- New Bible Commentary Revised by Eerdmans
- Matthew Henry Commentary
- Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible
- Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words

thank you for studying with me!

I thoroughly enjoyed this study and I hope you did as well! This is the study that initiated the Facebook group, DIG Gals Bible Study in July 2017. This study has been widely read over the internet and for that, I thank Father God for inviting His daughters to read His words.

If you would like to connect with me, you can email me at cindyfriendship@gmail.com. I would love to hear from you!

My Facebook page, **Women's Tabletop Friendship**, exists to serve God in ministry to women as we dig deep in the Word to understand it better. I would also appreciate it if you would LIKE me on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/womenstabletopfriendship>.

Would you like to share this study with anyone? It would be preferred that you invite your friends to join you in our Deeper in God Bible Study group on Facebook or send them this link: <http://bit.ly/DeeperinGodBibleStudiesgroup>.

Blessings to you,

Cindy



*Women's Tabletop
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Faith, Friends & Bible Study

with Cindy Barnes

