

# 1 John

## Objective:

- What Was Heard, Seen, and Touched
- Fellowship with Him and One Another
- The Test of Knowing Christ
- The Spiritual State
- Do Not Love the World
- Deceptions of the Last Hour
- Let Truth Abide in You
- The Command to Love
- The Imperative of Love
- The Outworking of Love
- Love for God and One Another
- Knowing God Through Love
- Seeing God Through Love
- Obedience by Faith
- The Certainty of God's Witness
- Confidence and Compassion in Prayer
- Knowing the True—Rejecting the False

## Resources:

- [Fr Tadros Y Malaty Commentary](#)
- [Catena Bible Commentary](#)
- [HEMY](#)
- [Fr Dawoud Lamie Bible study \(Arabic\)](#)

## Reading:

- 1 John 1
- 1 John 2
- 1 John 3
- 1 John 4
- 1 John 5

## Key verse(s):

"We love Him because He first loved us" 1 John 4:19

## Comments:

- The Catholic Epistles are Seven
- Catholic = Universal
- The Catholic Epistles differ from the Pauline Epistles as they were not sent to specific persons (Timothy - Titus) or Churches (Galatians - Romans) but sent to Christians in the world
- The Author:
  - He is St. John the Beloved
  - Wrote 5 books
  - He was the last disciple to depart (the only disciple who was not martyred)
  - His writings focus is characterized by the Apologetic theme
  - He defended the true existence of Our Lord and His one nature out of two
- Ch. 1
  - V.1 He starts his epistle by defending the Theology of God
    - "was from the beginning" - Christ existed before all creation: Eternal
    - "We have heard and seen" - He incarnated and became man
    - The true knowledge of God is by knowing Him, hearing and applying His word, and seeing His works in our lives
  - V.2
    - Christ is the life. "Life was manifested" proves His incarnation
    - He is repeating his witness, as some at the time of the end of the first century started doubting the existence of Christ
      - Some are new in faith and stated to doubt His incarnation
      - Christ said that He will come back. Some have been waiting for about 60 years (from the time of the writing of the Epistle) and have started to doubt that He was real
  - V.3: Our main job as Christians is to "we have seen and heard we declare to you"
  - V.4: True fellowship with the Father and the Son is also fellowship with one another in the Church (us)
  - V.5: God is light signifies his true and complete goodness and righteousness
  - V.6-7: A true sign of walking with God is walking in Godly ways. No person can say I am walking with God while also walking with the world - it is either or
  - V.9-10: No one is righteous. If one thinks he is righteous, he is deceived by the devil, who lied to him about not being sinful. He who walks in light clearly sees and identifies his faults. If you say you are sinless, you deceive yourself.
  - V.9: A Biblical reference to show the importance of the sacrament of repentance and confession. We have faith that if we confess and repent, God will forgive our sins no matter how big it was
- Ch. 2
  - V.1-2: Our Lord Jesus is our advocate. His sacrificial and propitiatory intercession is sufficient to give us forgiveness
    - The saints intercede for us
    - Christ only (through his propitiatory intercession) forgives sins

- V.3: Knowing God means to be one with Him
- V.7-8: The old and new commandments are: LOVE
- V.12-14: These represent three spiritual levels
  - Little children: Those who are new in the faith
  - Fathers: Deep spiritual life and advanced in faith and knowledge of God
  - Young men: In between. They entered the faith and know God, but have some weaknesses
- V.15-17: The Church cares about us and does not want us to be attached to the world. This is why the Church, through her wisdom, selected this part to be read in every liturgy
- V.18-19: There are many false prophets. This should alert us that the Second Coming is at hand and that we should be prepared
- V.28-29: Those who love God and live the life of repentance, waiting for His coming, will be looking forward to His coming and vice versa
- Ch. 3:
  - V.1: God loved us so much that He called us His children. This is an honor that we should realize and appreciate. This should also give us peace that He is taking care of us and will always be there for us
  - V.2: The world is sinful and does not know God. If we are truly His children, the world would not know us either
  - V.13-14: We should not be surprised if the world hates us because we are against the world. The world goes against God, and we are His children - so by default the world will hate us. If we are loved by the world, we shall review our spiritual lives lest we be away from God
  - V.18: We show our love through actions and not just words (explained in V.16 when God died for us)
  - V.22: Whatever "Godly" requests we ask, we will receive.
- Ch. 4:
  - V.1-3: It is very important to test the person and the doctrine before following. Nowadays, many people speak on social media. We must test the doctrine and the person lest it take us away from God and not get us closer to Him
    - We test the person by looking at his/her fruits
    - We test the doctrine by seeing if it is Biblical, Apostolic, Comforting, and Godly, or not
  - V.8: God = Love. If you are truly His child, you love everyone
  - V.19: We love God because of all the things He did for us, not because He is waiting or wanting our love
  - V.20-21: You can't say you love God and hate your brother. You see your brother and you hate him, how come you say I love God whom you don't see?!
- Ch.5:
  - V.2: Keeping the commandments means, by default, loving everyone because the commandments encourage us to love people.
  - V.4: Overcoming the world is easy when we are His children
  - V.6: St. John is referencing what happened on the Cross due to its importance. The coming out of blood and water represents the Church that came out of God's side. Baptism is by water through the Blood of the sacrifice (Christ)

- V.7: A proof of the Holy Trinity. The three witnesses are just like what happened during Theophany (Baptism - V.6). The theology of the Trinity is 3 in 1 and 1 in 3 as mentioned in this verse
- V.8: We are reborn in Baptism through water and blood. The Spirit gives the water its power, and the blood on the cross was the reason for the forgiveness of our sins
- V.9: Witness of God on the day of Theophany is greater than anyone's
- V.12: He who believes in the Son will gain eternal life. This verse answers the question if a good person who does not believe in God will gain eternal life or not. This verse clearly answers that attaining Heaven and eternal life is only through the Son of God (Christ)
- V.14: Repeating that we should ask God for requests "according to His will"
  - Godly requests: Wisdom, love, repentance, etc.
  - Ungodly requests: Worldly cares and lusts
- V.16: There is no categorizing of sin. All sins are sins, and if the person repents, all sins are forgiven. Sin leads to death = insisting on sinning without repentance, which is the sin of "Blaspheming the Holy Spirit"
- V.21: The idols can be anything worldly or people that take us away from God. That is why St. John did not specify

### **Review/recap questions:**

*\*\*Servant may add more questions*

1. CHAPTER 1
  1. What is the importance of confession?
  2. What are the conditions for fellowship with God?
2. CHAPTER 2
  1. When in the Divine Liturgy do we recite vv 15 and 17?
  2. How can we protect ourselves from deception?
3. CHAPTER 3
  1. Does St. John claim that Christians do not sin at all?
  2. What attitudes and actions characterize the children of God?
4. CHAPTER 4
  1. How did God express His love for us and how should we respond?
  2. What do you learn about the relationship between the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit?
5. CHAPTER 5
  1. What do water and blood refer to?
  2. What is the difference between a sin leading to death and a sin not leading to death?

### **Homework:**

*\*\*Servant may add more questions*



1. CHAPTER 1
  1. What is the message St. John heard and is declaring?

2. What would cleanse us from all sins?
  2. CHAPTER 2
    1. Who is our Advocate with the Father?
    2. Who does the antichrist deny?
  3. CHAPTER 3
    1. What is the message we have heard from the beginning?
    2. Why did Cain murder his brother Abel?
  4. CHAPTER 4
    1. Who is the source of love?
    2. What can cast out fear?
  5. CHAPTER 5
    1. What can overcome the world?
    2. Name the three that bear witness in Heaven.
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