

# 1-2-3 John and Jude

Study Workbook  
“Pillar of Truth” Series

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## Introduction to the First Epistle of John (1 John)

The First Epistle of John (1 John) is one of the most intriguing and rewarding books of the New Testament (NT). Its language is simple and straightforward, making it easy to read; however, its “simple” prose belies a great complexity to the subjects, themes, and theological doctrines contained within. The epistle is densely-packed with fundamental truths woven into a rich tapestry of practical Christian living. Its style is unique among NT writings; only the Gospel of John comes close to it.

John (“Jehovah is gracious”) is a common name during the historical period in which the NT takes place. There are several men named John in the NT: John the Baptist; John the disciple-turned-apostle of Jesus Christ; John Mark (a.k.a. simply “Mark”); the father of Simon Peter (a.k.a. Jonah; compare John 1:42 and Matthew 16:17); and John, an assumed member of the Sanhedrin (Acts 4:6). Yet, there is nearly unanimous agreement among the “church fathers” (early Christian writers and prominent figures), historians, and Bible scholars that the author of 1 John is John the hand-picked apostle of Jesus.

John was the son of Zebedee and brother of the apostle James (Mark 1:19). John and James, with their father, ran a fishing business in Galilee; they either employed Peter or worked in conjunction with him (Luke 5:10). John was an early disciple of John the Baptist, and was with the prophet when he (John the Baptist) introduced him to Jesus (John 1:35ff). Later, Jesus appointed him to be one of His company of twelve disciples (Matthew 10:2). Along with his brother, James, and his friend and fellow co-worker, Peter, John enjoyed a privileged relationship with Jesus that was considered even closer to Him (in earthly friendship) than the rest of the twelve apostles. This was evident in at least four occasions where John was among the few men that had special and private access to Jesus:

- ❑ When Jesus entered the house of Jairus (to heal his daughter), He took only Peter, James, and John (Mark 5:37, Luke 8:51).
- ❑ When Jesus went up on the mountain in Caesarea Philippi (during His transfiguration), He took only Peter, James, and John (Matthew 17:1, Mark 9:2, and Luke 9:28).
- ❑ When Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, across the valley from Jerusalem, only Peter, James, John, and—on this occasion—Andrew held a private conversation with Him concerning the “sign” of His coming (Mark 13:3).
- ❑ When Jesus was praying in the garden of Gethsemane, the twelve disciples (less Judas Iscariot) accompanied Him, but He took only Peter, James, and John to be closer in proximity to where He prayed alone (Matthew 26:37, Mark 14:33).

John refers to himself anonymously as “the disciple whom Jesus loved” (John 13:23, 20:2, 21:7, and 21:20). This further indicates the close and special relationship that Jesus and John shared. This is especially manifested in the fact that, while He was on the cross, Jesus entrusted the future care of His own mother, Mary, to John (John 19:26-27). John and James were not as outspoken and impetuous as their fellow disciple Peter, yet clearly they saw themselves as leaders of the group

in some respects. This is most evident in their appeal (along with that of their mother, whose name is never disclosed in Scripture) to sit on either side of Jesus' throne when He began to reign in His kingdom (Matthew 20:20ff and Mark 10:35ff). This is a remarkable request, and is not one we would expect of someone who was soft-spoken, reserved, and hiding in the shadow of an assertive man like Peter. There is only one instance where John is mentioned alone as the speaker: when he wanted Jesus to silence a man who was casting out demons in His name (Mark 9:38 and Luke 9:49). In another case, both he and his brother, James, wanted Jesus to call down fire upon Samaritan villages that did not receive Jesus—which Jesus refused to do (Luke 9:51-56). In both cases, John is revealed as a man who loves *justice* and *righteousness*—i.e., people need to do things *justly* and *rightly*, or face the consequences—which gives us a limited but telling insight into his early character.<sup>1</sup>

At the time that the church was established (in Acts 2), Peter served as the leading spokesman of “the twelve,” but John was often close by his side. These two men represented the new movement before the Jewish Council (Sanhedrin); accordingly, they were the first to be arrested because of their prominent roles (Acts 4:1ff). John apparently remained in Jerusalem after the church was dispersed—a dispersion largely due to the persecution instigated by Saul (Acts 8:1-4)—but he did go to Samaria with Peter to impart to the new Christians there the power of the Holy Spirit (to do miracles; Acts 8:14). After this, John slipped into obscurity, being eclipsed by Peter's ministry, a growing number of other church workers and leaders, and especially Saul (Paul) himself. This is not to say John's *authority* or *position* as an apostle waned, but simply that he (like the other apostles) worked behind the scenes to establish churches, provide apostolic teaching, and refute false doctrines that began to creep into the churches.

Tradition says that John, in later life, moved to Ephesus and continued to teach and minister into old age. Because of his leadership in the church, he was exiled by Emperor Domitian (ruled AD 81-96) to the remote island of Patmos for some time (Revelation 1:9).<sup>2</sup> (Patmos is a small island in the Aegean Sea, almost due west of Miletus in Asia Minor.) During this exile, John received his apocalyptic vision from Christ—later called the Book of Revelation. According to early church tradition, John outlived all of his fellow apostles. Irenaeus wrote that John lived until the reign of

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1 We should “not forget that on each of these occasions he was corrected and rebuked by the Master, and he was not the kind of man who could not profit by the rebuke of Jesus. So that vehemence of disposition was held in check, and, while still in existence, was under control, and allowed to have vent only on occasions when it was permissible, and even necessary. So in his writings, and in the reflections in the Gospel, we note the vehemence displayed, but now directed only against those who refused to believe in, and to acknowledge, Jesus” (James Iverach, “John, the Apostle,” *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, electronic edition [database © 2004 WORDsearch Corp.]).

2 “According to Eusebius, the emperor Domitian had banished John from Ephesus (in AD 95) because of his continued witnessing about Jesus. He was released 18 months later by Nerva [the Roman emperor who ruled from AD 96-98]” (Robert Jamieson, Andrew Fausset, and David Brown, *New Commentary on the Whole Bible: New Testament Volume*, electronic edition [database © 2004 WORDsearch Corp.] on Revelation 1:9; bracketed words are mine).

the Roman emperor Trajan (ruled AD 98-117).<sup>3</sup> Tradition also says that John is the only apostle who died of natural causes, rather than facing martyrdom as his brother, James, did (Acts 12:1-2).<sup>4</sup>

The authenticity of John’s first epistle has never been seriously questioned. Guy Woods writes: “The evidence ... regarding the genuineness, authenticity, and canonicity of the Epistle of First John is abundant, reliable, and entirely satisfactory.”<sup>5</sup> The writing style, word choices, and themes (“Word,” light, love, truth, confidence, etc.) between John’s gospel and 1 John, indicate common authorship. Also, many early Christian writers quoted or attributed 1 John to the apostle John, including Polycarp, Papias, Iraeneus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Cyprian, Origen, Dionysius of Alexandria, and Eusebius.<sup>6</sup> Thus, every investigation into either the internal or external evidence concerning authorship easily leads one back to the same conclusion: whoever wrote the Gospel of John also wrote 1 John. If it is not John the apostle, then we have no one else to consider seriously. “It has been said that it would be more feasible to assign any two of Shakespeare’s plays to different authors than the ‘Gospel’ and the First Epistle of John. They are, by all candid and reasonable standards, of the same family, and hence belong together.”<sup>7</sup>

John did not identify himself personally to his readers most likely because they already know who he is. He apparently enjoyed a close relationship with his readers, having intimate knowledge of their successes (2:12-14), struggles (4:1-6), and need for encouragement (3:1-3, 5:13-15, et al). His epistle is likely not addressed to any one church, but to a group of churches—possibly the seven churches of Asia, the same to which Jesus’ revelation to John would be addressed (Revelation 1:10-11).<sup>8</sup> It is generally accepted that John wrote this epistle in the late first century, but scholars are divided on exactly when. Most agree that it was between AD 80 and 100, and particularly around 90-95. The absence of any references to John’s readers being persecuted, especially due to emperor worship, is conspicuous. Since the persecution that plagued the seven churches in Revelation began in the mid-90s, John’s epistle was likely written before it began—specifically, before his exile to Patmos.

John’s audience is never identified to us other than those “who believe in the name of the Son of God” (5:13). His warning about idols (5:21) suggests a primarily Gentile, rather than Jewish,

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3 Simon J. Kistemaker, *New Testament Commentary: Exposition of the Epistle of James and the Epistles of John* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1986), 200.

4 Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1995 (orig. © 1910, Charles Scribner’s Sons), 429.

5 Guy N. Woods, *A Commentary on the New Testament Epistles of Peter, John and Jude* (Nashville: Gospel Advocate Co., 1979), 199.

6 Albert Barnes, *Barnes’ Notes*, vol. 13 (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, no date), 272; Roy E. Cogdill, *The New Testament: Book by Book* (Marion, IN: Cogdill Foundation Publications, 1975), 173; Kistemaker, *Epistles of John*, 195-196; et al.

7 Woods, *New Testament Epistles*, 203.

8 Cogdill, *Book by Book*, 174.

audience. His only allusions to the Old Testament are his mention of Cain and his obscure reference to Satan having sinned “from the beginning” (3:8, 12). Otherwise, the epistle is free from anything Jewish, so to speak, and yet is filled with references to Jesus and His ministry.

**Purpose of Writing:** Scholars and commentators are nearly unanimous in agreeing that a main purpose for John’s epistle is to combat a doctrinal heresy called Gnosticism that had found its way into the church. “Gnostic” is from the Greek word *gnosis*, translated “knowledge” in English-speaking Bibles. (The term “Gnosticism” was first coined by Henry More in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>9</sup>) Thus, Gnostics place a great deal of emphasis on knowledge as a means of drawing near to God rather than on love, service, good works, or holiness. Gnosticism, which is really a re-packaging of ancient Greek Platonism mixed with zodiacal cosmology, is the man-made doctrine that *special* or *mystical* knowledge is the route to divine favor. It is an elitist view, since only certain people will have (or, can obtain) this knowledge, while other (deemed *lesser-valued*) Christians will not. It is also a “dualistic way of looking at God, humanity, and the world.”<sup>10</sup> Having borrowed from Judaism’s view of the end of time (i.e., eschatology), Gnosticism also relies on purported divine revelations and a final consummation of the ages.<sup>11</sup>

It is to be noted that *First John* shows no signs that the Church to which it was written was being persecuted. The peril, as it has been put, was not persecution but seduction; it came from within. ...The trouble which *First John* seeks to combat did not come from men out to destroy the Christian faith but from men who thought they were improving it. It came from men whose aim was to make Christianity intellectually respectable. They knew the intellectual tendencies and currents of the day and felt that the time had come for Christianity to come to terms with secular philosophy and contemporary thought.<sup>12</sup>

So then, Gnostics claimed they could obtain spiritual freedom *not* through the blood of Christ and Christian living, but by unlocking spiritual mysteries of the universe, allegedly given to them by God. This forced a *separation* between the physical or carnal world and the intellectual or spiritual one. In other words, if knowledge is all that is needed, then pious living is not. Simon Kistemaker sums it up with these basic points:

- ❑ The world is evil. This evil causes a separation, in the form of an unbridgeable gulf, between the world and the supreme God. Therefore, the supreme God cannot have created the world.
- ❑ The God of the Old Testament created the world. He is not the supreme God, but an inferior and evil power.

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9 Birger A. Pearson, *Ancient Gnosticism: Traditions and Literature* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 9.

10 Ibid., 12. Pearson goes on to explain that “God” is split into two identities: the “super-transcendent supreme God” who is completely removed from the physical world, and the lower deity responsible for creating and governing it. “The Gnostics saw evil as something inherent in the material creation itself” (ibid., 106). Since the supreme God cannot be responsible for an evil and sinful world, he must therefore be completely detached from it. The only way men can access him is through mystical knowledge.

11 Ibid., 18-19.

12 William Barclay, *The Letters of John and Jude* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976), 4-5.



- ❑ Any teaching of the incarnation [i.e., God being made flesh; John 1:14] is unacceptable. It is impossible for the divine Word to live in an impure [human] body.
- ❑ There can be no resurrection of the body. They who are set free experience liberation from the shackles of an impure body.<sup>13</sup>

But, in order to make this philosophical/intellectual position work, Gnostics had to reconcile how a completely pure, all-knowing, and completely *non-physical* God could have stepped into a sinful, ignorant, and *physical* world (as Jesus claimed to have done). Their answer was to deny that Jesus the Man *was* the Son of God. Gnostics denied not only the incarnation [lit., “made flesh”] of the Son of God, but the very possibility of incarnation. “And the Word became flesh” (John 1:14) is something the heathen writers and pagan philosophers could not accept as true if indeed they were to maintain their Gnostic belief system.

In their efforts to solve this problem they proposed two solutions: Either the Christ was not actually made flesh, but just appeared to be so, or else the Spirit of the Christ did not actually inhabit the human body of Jesus. At least, not until after He had been baptized, and that it must have departed from him before His death on the Cross. The first attempted solution was referred to as Docetism, from the word ‘Dokeo,’ meaning ‘to seem.’ The latter was called Cerinthianism because it was advanced by Cerinthus, who was its chief advocate in the First Century [and a contemporary of John’s].<sup>14</sup>

Either scenario compromised the teaching and basis of the entire gospel of Christ. Actually, a third kind of Gnostic belief taught that the enlightened man was supremely spiritual, and was thus freed from being bound to the flesh. This meant whatever happened in the physical body could not affect the spiritual person. This translated into a lifestyle of gratuitous indulgence, sexual sins, and other vices. Since the one (*soma*, or body) could not affect the other (*pneuma*, or spirit), then there was no moral consequence for one’s bodily behavior. Furthermore, there was no need for Christian love, good deeds, or any other demonstrations of faith, since these practices had no effect on one’s spiritual existence.<sup>15</sup>

On the practical level these new teachers claimed to have reached such an advanced stage in spiritual experience that they were “beyond good and evil.” They maintained that they had no sin, not in the sense that they had attained moral perfection but in the sense that what might be sin for people at a less mature stage of inner development was no longer sin for the completely “spiritual” man. For him ethical distinctions had ceased to be relevant. Perhaps he called them “merely” ethical distinctions. (Christians stand on the brink of disaster when

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13 This list is quoted word-for-word from Kistemaker, *Epistles of John*, 212; bracketed words are mine.

14 Cogdill, *Book by Book*, 175; bracketed words are mine. Cerinthus, whose date of birth and death are unknown to us, was likely born a Jew in Egypt in the mid-first century. He was one of the early proponents of blending Gnostic beliefs with NT theology (“Cerinthus,” [www.britannica.com](http://www.britannica.com); cited February, 2017).

15 Adapted from Barclay, *Letters*, 9-11.

they begin to modify the adjective “ethical” with the adverb “merely.”) The new teaching thus combined a new theology with a new morality.<sup>16</sup>

Gnosticism attempted to resolve an age-old problem that has bothered men for millennia, namely, how a *good God* could have created a *sinful world*. Biblical teaching reveals that the responsibility for sin lies with the people whom God created, not the God who created people, but Gnostics sought a more esoteric and satisfying answer. Thus, they essentially invented an explanation that relied upon superior knowledge rather than a righteousness sought through human faith and divine grace.

In ancient times some people could look around them and see a flawed world, a world that seemed to be dominated by malevolent powers beyond human control. If one feels alienated from one’s social or political environment, as many people did in ancient times (and still do now), and if that same person is eager to embrace a transcendent world where there is no evil, it is not difficult to envision the world in which we live as the flawed product of a foolish or malicious creator, a world controlled by malevolent powers. Such a person might be inclined to look within oneself, to seek the “divine within,” and thus to come in contact with a God who is “beyond God.” Knowledge of that transcendent God is what the ancient Gnostics offered. Salvation was to be found in coming to the knowledge of that God by coming to the knowledge of the divine self within.<sup>17</sup>

John repeatedly denounces Gnosticism throughout his epistle. He presents himself as an eyewitness of Jesus *in the flesh* (refuting Docetism, which claims He was an illusion). He also declares, with the authority of an apostle appointed *by* Jesus, that He (Jesus) is the Son of God, and that this is supported by the testimony of the Holy Spirit (2:20, 27, 5:6-8) and God Himself (5:9). Furthermore, he maintains no one can enter into spiritual fellowship with God (the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) unless he accepts the apostolic teaching concerning Jesus *as the Christ in the flesh*. Thus, John’s epistle is filled with direct refutations of Gnosticism:

- ❑ There is no compatibility between sin and righteousness, nor the practicing sinner and the faithful Christian (1:5-10, 3:4-10, 5:18). Gnostics claim that a faithful Christian (as they describe one) *can* practice sin, since it is inconsequential to his relationship with God.
- ❑ Those who love God will keep His commandments (3:24, 5:1-2). Gnostics claim this is unnecessary, since what is done in the body has no effect on the soul.
- ❑ One who denies that Jesus (the Man) is the Christ (the Son of God) is not in league with Christ, but is an “antichrist” (2:22, 4:1-3, 15).
- ❑ The water, blood, and Spirit testify that Jesus is the Son of God in the flesh (5:5-12). (See comments on that section for clarification.)
- ❑ Those who listen to the apostolic teaching, specifically from John himself, are of God; those who do not are of the world and in error (4:1-6).

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16 F. F. Bruce, *The Epistles of John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 1970), 26.

17 Pearson, *Ancient Gnosticism*, 337.

But we should not look upon John’s epistle *only* as a denouncement of Gnosticism. In the process of refuting error, John also defines, clarifies, and boldly proclaims divine truth. He provides the earnest believer with what are some of the clearest and most powerful declarations of the Christian life found in the New Testament.

While the letter is a powerful refutation of Gnosticism it is [also] a warm, rich treatise on the reality and the rewards of Christian living. Those who are genuine disciples of Christ will live in light, will live a life of righteousness and love and will walk by faith. Christians will be known by their love, and their faith will overcome the world.<sup>18</sup>

**Themes and Style of Writing:** First John is filled with contrasting themes, often with very pointed conclusions. John provides Christians with an understanding of how to walk in fellowship with God—what needs to be done as well as avoided. Directly connected to this is the confidence that believers can have for trusting in God’s help, especially through the avenue of prayer (5:13–15). (John never actually uses the word “grace,” but he alludes to it in every case where he talks about God’s divine power being exercised toward the believer’s salvation.) Positive appeals are consistently countered with the negative ones—in essence, “If you walk with God, then you will be with Him; if you walk with the world, then you will be destroyed along with it.” There is no third alternative, and it is impossible to walk with God *and* the world all at once. Fellowship with God, then, is the result of a real, functional, and covenant-bound relationship between Him and the one cleansed by the blood of Jesus (1:7). In sharp contrast is the one who “does not know God” (4:8), regardless of what he or she says (1:6, 8, 10, 2:4, et al). Other contrasting themes include:

- ❑ Light versus darkness (1:5).
- ❑ Love versus hatred and murder (2:9–11, 4:8).
- ❑ Truth versus error (4:6).
- ❑ “Born of God” versus “in the world” (2:16, 5:4).
- ❑ “Children of God” versus “children of the devil” (3:10).
- ❑ Confidence in the Judgment versus fear of punishment (2:28, 4:17).
- ❑ Keeping God’s commandments versus lawlessness (2:3, 3:4).
- ❑ Practicing righteousness versus practicing sin (3:7–8).
- ❑ Abiding in God (or, God abiding in the believer) versus abiding in death (3:14, 4:12).
- ❑ Spiritual life versus spiritual death (3:14).

John is very black-and-white: there is no “gray area” or moral confusion in his teaching. He says, in essence, “You are either *this*, or you are *that*.” Factors that determine whether you are “this” or “that” begin with God but end with a person’s own decisions. In other words, God lays down the commandments that define fellowship with Him, and these are binding, non-negotiable, and yet “not burdensome” (5:3). One who claims to have this fellowship must live accordingly, which is also consistent with how Jesus Himself lived (2:6). It is impossible for a person to live a life of

<sup>18</sup> H. I. Hester, *The Heart of the New Testament* (Liberty, MO: Quality Press, 1964), 347; bracketed word is mine.

spiritual duplicity—to walk in light *and* darkness, to love God *and* hate his brother, to practice righteousness *and* practice sin, etc.—and be in good standing with God. Such a person is not merely confused, John says, but is “a liar” (used five times) and is identified with Satan rather than with God.

Another contrast underlying the entirety of 1 John is between that of Jesus Christ (and His apostles) and Satan (and *his* apostles, the “antichrists”). Consider the following:

Jesus Christ	Satan (“the devil” or “evil one”)
“From the beginning,” He has proved Himself to be the Son of God (1:1-3)	He “has sinned from the beginning” (3:8)
Jesus’ blood cleanses us of sin (1:7)	Satan’s influence corrupts and deceives (3:7)
Jesus is the Christ (2:1)	Satan denies that Jesus is the Christ (2:22)
Jesus is our Advocate (2:1) and loves us	Satan is our enemy and hates us (3:13)
We are to imitate Jesus’ own “walk” (2:6)	We are not to follow Satan (3:7-10)
Jesus taught us to love one another (2:7-10)	Satan teaches us to hate one another (3:14-15)
Jesus is righteous (2:29)	Satan does not practice righteousness (3:10)
Jesus is pure (3:3, 5)	Satan is evil (as exemplified by Cain; 3:12)
Jesus came to destroy Satan’s works (3:8)	Satan perpetuates his own wickedness (2:16)
Jesus laid down His life for us (3:16)	Satan is a life-taker (murderer) (3:15)
Jesus’ apostles “are from God” (4:6)	Satan’s apostles are “false prophets” (4:1)
Jesus is our propitiation for God’s wrath (2:2, 4:10)	Satan incites God’s wrath [implied]
“Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him” (4:15)	Satan’s antichrists deny that Jesus is the Son of God and are liars (5:10)
The Holy Spirit testifies that Jesus is the Son of God (5:6-9)	The Holy Spirit testifies that false prophets and antichrists are not from God (4:1-3)
“He who has the Son has the life” (5:12)	He who embraces the lies and hatred of Satan embraces spiritual death (3:15) [implied]

There are several statements as well concerning the Holy Spirit (3:24, 4:2, 13, 5:6, and 5:8). The role of the Spirit is to consecrate, protect, and provide a testimony for the believer. He also identifies those who are *true* apostles (the authoritative “we” in John’s epistle) and those who are “false prophets” (4:1-3). John says nothing to indicate a *miraculous* working of the Spirit (i.e., in the form of spiritual gifts or miracles being performed). Instead, the Spirit’s role is provided for *all* who abide

in God rather than the proportionately limited number of Christians to whom miraculous gifts had been imparted.

All said, John’s theme can be summed up in 5:13: “These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.” We can compare this to John 20:31: “[B]ut these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.” John wants his reading audience—faithful Christians—to *know* and *believe* life in God’s name is not only *possible*, but is made *real* and *doable* through the work of Jesus Christ.

The style of John’s epistle is difficult to outline, map, or diagram. John often introduces a new subject or theme, then goes away from it for a while, only to return to that first subject with an entirely new or fresh emphasis. This pattern is more cyclic or spiraling than linear or goal-oriented. Bible scholars have tried to explain this in the following way:

First John is symphonic rather than logical in plan; it is constructed like a piece of music rather than like a brief for a debate. Instead of proceeding step by step in unfolding a subject, as Paul does in Romans, John selects a theme, maintains it throughout the book, and introduces a series of variations, any one of which may be a theme in itself.<sup>19</sup>

This letter is built like an inverted pyramid or cone. The basic apex is laid down in 1:1-4; then the upward broadening begins. Starting with 1:5-10, the base rises and expands and continues in ever-widening circles as one new pertinent thought joins the preceding thought. One block is not laid beside the other so that joints are made. There are really no joints, not even where the new thoughts are introduced. The line of thought simply spirals in rising, widening circles until all is complete.<sup>20</sup>

This kind of literary structure makes 1 John challenging to outline, but not difficult to read or understand. In fact, there is a great deal of intentional repetition of ideas in John’s writing that reinforce important subjects in the mind of the reader, so that when he (the reader) is finished reading this epistle, he is left with a crystallized understanding of God’s will for him (in contrast to Satan’s scheming).

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<sup>19</sup> Merrill C. Tenney, quoted in Robert Jamieson, Andrew R. Fausset, and David Brown, “1 John: Introduction,” *New Commentary on the Whole Bible: New Testament Volume*, electronic edition (© 1990 Tyndale House Publishers; © 2012 WORDsearch Corp.). This source will be cited “JFB Commentary” from here forward.

<sup>20</sup> R. C. H. Lenski, *Commentary on the New Testament: The Interpretation of the Epistles of St. Peter, St. John, and St. Jude* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1998), 366.

## General Outline:

- ❑ Introduction or Prologue (1:1-4)
- ❑ Walking in the Light of God (1:5-10)
- ❑ The “New Commandment” to Love (2:1-14)
- ❑ The Promise of Eternal Life (2:15-29)
- ❑ Children of God and Children of the Devil (3:1-10a)
- ❑ “Love One Another” (3:10b-24)
- ❑ The Spirit of Truth and the Spirit of Error (4:1-6)
- ❑ “God Is Love” (4:7-21)
- ❑ Jesus Is the Christ, the Son of God (5:1-12)
- ❑ Praying with Confidence (5:13-21)