

"If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, His Son, purifies us from all sin."
John 1:7



Winter 2023

session five

Welcome



Thank you for joining me for session five of our study on 1, 2, & 3 John. This was a great week to study God's great love for us as we celebrated Valentine's Day. His love is extravagant, it is lavish, and it is personal for each of us.

As we turn to look at chapter four, we are going to lap the pool (so to speak) and learn how to discern that which is false, lean into the Holy Spirit, love others because of God's great love for us, and that word John repeatedly uses....abide.

It will be interesting to see where God points His finger into your heart on these topics and what He is calling you to do as a response. I pray over each of you as you dig into God's ever-life-giving Word! If you have any questions regarding the study, please feel free to reach out to me via email at cjamison@eastridgetoday.com

Blessings,

Cheryl Jamison



Teaching Notes

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1 John 4:1-21

Additional notes for your personal reference:

Chapter 4 includes two major ideas. The first is that believers should "test the spirits" to see whether they are from God (1 John 4:1-6). The second theme is that God both loves us and "God is love" (1 John 4:7-21), leading believers to love one another.

First John 4 begins with the command to test spiritual claims since not all teachers are true to the faith. Christians are never instructed to believe "just because." In fact, we are often warned to carefully consider before we trust any particular message (Acts 17:11; Colossians 2:8-10). John was concerned that false prophets and false teachings would deceive his readers. First John 4:2 gives the test for spirits which actually come from God. These are those that acknowledge Jesus Christ's real incarnation.

John adds that believers overcome the powers in this world because of God's Spirit within them (1 John 4:4). "The world" refers to godless humanity. A worldly attitude listens to unbelievers and ungodly spirits, and ignores God.

One of the key verses is found in 1 John 4:10 "This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins."



Group Discussion

- Verse 1 of 1 John 4 talks about false prophets, false spirits, and false messages. When you think about our current culture - who are some of the primary false prophets, and what are the messages they are proclaiming?
- Read 1 John 4:5,6. Note the usage of the word "listen" three different times. We know that there is a difference between hearing and listening. Respond to the two following questions that emphasize listening:
 1. In John 10:27 Jesus says that His sheep listen to His voice. How are you deliberately, purposefully listening to the Lord right now?
 2. Who or what are you listening to that you sense is drawing you away from God's truth? What deliberate, purposeful step can you take to change this?
- "Read the following scripture: *"This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. 10 This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins."* 1 John 4:9-10. This scripture tells us that Christ's birth and death show us God's love. How do these two events help you to understand God's love?
- What is the difference between saying that "God is love" and that "God is loving"?

Personal Study 1 John 4:1-21

1. Compare John's test in 1 John 4:1-3 with the Old Testament test for prophets in Deuteronomy 13:1-5; 18:14-22. What do the two have in common?

2. In what sense have John's readers "overcome" the false teachers (1 John 4:4)?

3. According to 1 John 4:5, why are false teachers so often popular?

4. Reread 1 John 2:18-28 and 4:1-6, and summarize each passage in a sentence or two.

5. When you consider the following scripture: "the one who is greater than the one who is in the world" (1 John 4:4), How should this fact affect how you think and what you do in your daily life?



Personal Study 1 John 4:1-21

6. John contrasts who is and isn't from God through the pronouns You, They, and We. Highlight the words You, They, and We in the scriptures below, and then in the columns below, list the attributes that are talked about in the context of each of them. "You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. They are from the world and therefore speak from the viewpoint of the world, and the world listens to them. We are from God, and whoever knows God listens to us; but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. This is how we recognize the Spirit of truth and the spirit of falsehood." 1 John 4:4-6

You

They

We

7. Compare 1 John 4:8 with John 4:24; Hebrews 12:29; and 1 John 1:5. What do we know about God's essential nature?

8. Why did God send His son into the world?

1 John 4:9

1 John 4:10

1 John 4:11

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Personal Study 1 John 4:1-21

9. No one has ever seen God (1 John 4:12), for He is a holy and incomprehensible Spirit (see Exodus 33:18-20; John 4:24). How, then, can people come to see what He is Like (1 John 4:12)?

10. What is the condition for mutually abiding in God (v.15)?

11. If God's love is made complete in us, what are some of the results?

1 John 4:17

1 John 4:18

12. Why does perfect or completed love drive out our fears about Judgement Day and punishment (see 1 John 4:17-18)?

13. John speaks of loving one another as a command. Read John 13:34 and write the context of this command and who gave it.