

Summary of John's letters

You cannot love without speaking the truth and you really shouldn't speak the truth without love. **"TRUTH IN LOVE"**

The Church was now composed of second – and third – generation Christians. For some Christians this was a time of **persecution**. For others perhaps the thrill was gone and the flame of devotion to Christ was flickering. False teachers were infiltrating some of the churches, and some Christians were becoming lax in their Christian standards. Into these circumstances steps John with his letter. **John was very concerned about "authentic Christianity"!**

GNOSTICS: Claiming to possess super intelligence, to be true thinkers, they were known as Gnostics—or **"the knowledgeable ones."** And these "knowledgeable ones," these **"enlightened ones"** Gnosticism taught that the way to salvation was through secret superior knowledge granted to the initiated. They maintained that even if His followers claimed Jesus was God, they were embarrassingly naive to think He had a body physically, for anyone with any intelligence understood that anything in the material realm was inherently evil. Why did they make this claim?

By arguing that everything material is evil, the Gnostics absolved themselves of any responsibility for the activity of their bodies. In other words, their logic allowed them to position themselves as deep thinkers while behaving themselves as party animals. **As a result they were turning (as Jude puts it) the grace of God into sexual depravity** "It is impossible that God actually became a Man," the Gnostics declared. "Jesus was an emanation of God, but not God Incarnate."

This is why John begins this letter by saying... **I touched him, he says, I felt his warm, human flesh, I looked into his human eyes, we felt the beating of his human heart, and yet, as I did, I became aware that I was listening to the heartbeat of God.**

We all come to a point in life where we see what the Bible has told us all alone... **WE ARE IN A WAR, life is a battleground not a playground**, and fairy tale

stories don't cut it. **WE all want something real.**

Wanting something real and finding something real are two different things.

John had discovered that satisfying reality is not to be found in things or thrills, but in a Person – **Jesus Christ, the Son of God.** Without wasting any time, he told us about this “living reality” in the first paragraph of his letter.


2... REAL! Sincere... authentic... Legit!

The word *sincere* comes from two Latin words, *sine* and *cera*, which mean **“without wax.”** It seems that in Roman days, some sculptors covered their mistakes by filling the defects in their marble statues with wax, which was not readily visible – until the statue had been exposed to the hot sun awhile. But more dependable sculptors made certain their customers knew that the statues they sold were *sine cera* – **without wax. Are you the real deal. . . authentic... legit... sine cera? THAT WAS A BIG DEAL TO JOHN!**

This is also one of many evidences that the **Bible is an integrated message system**, the product of supernatural engineering.

HEBREW

ENGLISH



Adam	Man
Seth	Appointed
Enosh	Mortal
Kenan	Sorrow
Mahalalel	The Blessed God
Jared	Shall come down
Enoch	Teaching
Methuselah	His death shall bring
Lamech	The despairing
Noah	Rest, or comfort

The **Bible is an integrated message system**,

John writes to encourage us not to sin, but if we do, he tells us in 2:1, “we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the

righteous.” We have an attorney better than Perry Mason or Matlock... **Jesus Christ, Esquire!** No one in the universe except Jesus Christ can be the Propitiation (atoning sacrifice) (scapegoat) for our sins.


Christian self test kit... John wants us to know that we know so he gives us a Christian self-test kit.

First, we know that it is possible to know God. And you can know that you know God. My eternal destiny is not something I want to leave hanging in the air. I don't want to guess about it: I want to know about it.

Chapter 2 verse 4 The one who says, "I have come to know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, **CHARLES SPURGEON, THE PRINCE OF ENGLISH PREACHERS, WHO ONCE SAID, "AN UNCHANGED LIFE IS THE SIGN OF AN UNCLEANSED HEART."**

How do you know you know God? Do you obey God and love your brother?

Something old and something new... Love is an old commandment because it was given in the Old Testament. It is a new commandment because Jesus gave it to the disciples in **John 13:34. "A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another AS I HAVE LOVED YOU,"** That last phrase, "as I have loved you" is the key to the NEW.



R Kent "The word "love" occurs no less than 24 times in the 105 verses of this letter. For John, as for all the New Testament writers, we might say love is the **circulatory system of the church**. The circulatory system in your body carries blood to every part of the body, nourishing every cell. If your circulatory system shuts down, you die. Just as this system is vital to your physical body, so the Church, the Body of Christ, has its own circulatory system: love."

THIS IS WHAT LOVE IS NOT!!!

1. TOLERATING THINGS THAT ARE WRONG IN THE EYES OF GOD MAY CREATE A COMFORTABLE SURFACE PEACE, BUT IT ISN'T WHAT LOVE DOES.

2. SAYING, "IT'S OK DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT," TO A PERSON WHO DID SOMETHING WRONG IS NOT REALLY LOVING.

3. LIVING INSIDE OF A CIRCLE OF EVIL AND NOT MAKING WAVES MAY CAUSE PEOPLE TO LIKE ME, BUT IT ISN'T LOVE.

4. ASKING OTHERS TO TOLERATE WHATEVER I DO OR SAY BECAUSE THEY SAY THEY LOVE ME IS A FUNDAMENTAL MISUNDERSTANDING OF WHAT LOVE IS AND WHAT LOVE DOES.

5. REFUSING TO STEP INTO TENSE MOMENTS WITH OTHERS BECAUSE THERE IS WRONG BETWEEN US THAT NEEDS TO BE EXPOSED AND DISCUSSED ISN'T LOVE.

6. REMAINING SILENT WHEN I SHOULD SPEAK UP ISN'T LOVE.

7. MAINTAINING PEACE AT ANY COST ISN'T LOVE.

Real, biblical, self-sacrificing, God-honoring love never compromises what God says is right and true. Truth and love are inextricably bound together.


John says there are 3 stages **Spiritual** life...

1. LITTLE CHILDREN

2. YOUNG MEN

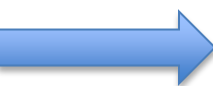
3. MATURE FATHERS. John commends them all.

BIBLICAL SANCTIFICATION. IT'S A PROCESS AND ALL OF GOD'S PEOPLE ARE AT DIFFERENT LEVELS OF SPIRITUAL MATURITY. SPIRITUAL MATURITY IS A PROCESS THAT OFTEN HAS LITTLE TO DO WITH PHYSICAL AGE.



Our sins have been forgiven. **We have come to know God through a saving relationship with Christ.** But certain things ought to be consistently true about us as well. **WE SHOULD BE STRONG SPIRITUALLY. WE SHOULD REMAIN DAILY IN THE WORD SO WE CAN BE STRONG.** We should overcome Satan's influence in our lives by means of our knowledge and practice of the Word.

Chapter 2 verse 15 Do not love the world or the things in the world.



Charles Dutton, the character actor, spent 7 years in prison for manslaughter as a young man. While there, he developed an interest in

acting and participated in some plays. Upon his release, he got small parts on Broadway and hit it big in the Broadway production *The Piano Player*. His career broadened to television and movies, where he became an excellent character actor. After his Broadway success, he was asked in an interview, “*How did you make the remarkable transition through those prison years to Broadway?*” “Unlike other prisoners,” he replied, “**I never decorated my cell because I wanted to be reminded every day this place is temporary.**” Dutton never regarded his cell as his permanent home. This world system is not our home. To love it is folly because it is passing away. **Don’t decorate your cell!**

Don’t love the world! “**World**” ***kosmos*** the organized evil system with its principles and its practices, all under the authority of Satan, which includes all teachings, ideas, culture, attitudes, activities, etc., that are opposed to God.

→ Jesus called Satan “the ruler of this world” (John 14:30; 16:11), and Paul called him “the god of this world” (2 Corinthians 4:4). In Luke 16:8 Jesus referred to all unsaved people as “the sons of this world.”

For all that is in the world - the lust of the flesh (or you can feel great), the lust of the eyes (you can look great), and the pride of life (you can be great) - is not of the Father but is of the world.” Here’s a three-fold web of worldliness: **THE PHYSICAL ABOVE THE SPIRITUAL, the external over the internal, the temporal before the eternal**

17 And the world is passing away, The world system has a built-in design flaw - it is temporary Investing in a doomed company is foolishness... investing in a doomed world is even more so.

→ **Loving the world is a bad investment.**

17 And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

The world will never satisfy. In fact, the more you are **GRATIFIED**, the less you are **SATISFIED**. Loving the world ultimately leaves a bad taste in your mouth,

like a *cold French fry*, a **mouthful of stale popcorn**, or *a lukewarm Coke*.

→ **PSALM 34:8** Oh, **taste** and **see** that the LORD is good

FINISHING VERSE 18 . . . by which we know that it is the last hour.

19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but *they went out* that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.

First, a false teacher departs from the fellowship of the church. *Faith that fizzles before the finish was faulty from the first.*

One must beware of those folks who are so "spiritual" that they can't get along in any church. The imperfect Church is the perfect place to be . . . I always say if you find the perfect Church don't go there because you will wreck it!

22 Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? **the Bible defines Christ - the Messiah, who is fully God and fully man; who perfectly revealed God the Father to us. Deity of Christ is a non negotiable... He claimed to be God!**

JESUS WAS PRE-EXISTENT

JESUS DIRECTLY CLAIMS TO BE GOD

OTHERS SAID HE WAS GOD

INDIRECTLY CLAIMED TO BE GOD

DECLARED DIETY BY HIS TITLES

22 Who is the liar? It is whoever denies that Jesus is the Christ.

24 Therefore let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning.

The phrase “from the beginning” refers to when John’s readers first heard the gospel and believed. From the beginning it was accepted, taught and believed that Jesus was God! Any deviation from that would be “something new” from which one must leave and return to “WHAT YOU HAVE HEARD FROM THE BEGINNING.”

Mormonism... NEW... 1820's Jehovah Witness... NEW 1870's
ISLAM NEW 610AD

25 And this is the promise that He has promised us—eternal life.

‘Keep your fork... the best is yet to come.’

“BEING NICE” is selfishly motivated and is only concerned with how we look to others while Kind and Loving are concerned about how God sees us. As followers of Christ we need to push against the tide of political correctness and false tolerance that is propagated in the world today and also creeping into the Church. We must take a bold stand against the idea that being nice and being loving or kind are synonymous. We must as The Church look to scripture for how it is that Jesus taught us to “practice righteousness “ with those around us and in so doing we will be doing just as Jesus did.

3... The mind blowing, amazing, gift from God...1

John 3:1 Behold **what manner of** love the Father has bestowed or *lavished* on us that we should be called children of God!

John 1:12 To as many as receive Him to them He **gave the right** to become **Children** of God,

2 Corinthians 6:18 *"I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the LORD Almighty,"*

Jesus Christ took our position on the Cross in order that we might take the position of the Son in heaven.

 **REMEMBER WHY JESUS CAME! NOT JUST TO SAVE US FROM HELL BUT TO ADOPT US AS CHILDREN SO WE COULD BE IN HIS FAMILY. NOW!**


Ending verse 2... we know that when He is revealed, we shall **be like Him**, for we shall see Him as He is.

LIKE HIM... **First**, we will have glorified resurrected bodies in Heaven.

Second like Him as we will have a **PURIFIED** character.

Third like Him as we will have a **SATISFIED** heart.

10 In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor *is* he who does not love his brother.

 **As one man said,** “In essence God and Satan are the heads of two families. You are either a child of God or of Satan. Every person who has not been born into the family of God is a member of the family of Satan. The new birth determines what family you are in today. If you have not repented of your sin and believed on Jesus Christ as your Savior, you are still in the family of Satan. At the risk of being too culturally colloquial, in essence John is asking us a crucial question: **“WHO’S YOUR DADDY?”**”

Verse 13 Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you.

Why are Christians hated so much? Taken from R C Sproul’s [The Holiness of God](#).

The world says, “Your virtue makes us look bad and feel guilty; you must be damaged and destroyed.” The truth is that many in the world, especially the elites, would far prefer to be surrounded with homosexuals, thieves, polygamists, criminals, and every false religionist under the sun, than to

spend time with a holy Christian. The former make them feel good about themselves, the Christian makes them feel guilty.” Therefore the Christian must be destroyed. **Darkness hates the light! Verse 13** Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you.

1 John 3:16 By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down *our* lives for the brethren. This is **“CROSS-THINKING”**. If Jesus went to the cross for me - then what can I do for the people around me? It’s no coincidence that while John 3:16 tells us that God loves us - 1 John 3:16 says that since God loves us, we ought to love each other.



R Kent said this, **“I sometimes think fundamentally some of us really would like nothing better in this world than to purchase a life membership in the “ASSOCIATION OF BYSTANDERS.” We can’t just give lip service to love; we must do something about it.**

Too much talk and not enough walk... Is it not enough to **believe rightly**. We must **behave rightly**. Being precedes doing, but all Christian doing must be based on being!

“OTHERS!” THAT’S THE HEART OF JESUS

20 For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things.


THE ONE WHO KNOWS US BEST LOVES US MOST. What a miracle!

4... 1 John 4:1 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but **test the spirits**, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

IF A TEACHING, SUGGESTION, OR THOUGHT IS OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD,

IT WILL AFFIRM BOTH THE DEITY AND THE HUMANITY OF CHRIST.

“eyes wide open” should be the watchword for every Christian.


 R Kent says, “Nobody wants to be known for being a heresy hunter. In our day of watered-down doctrine, some believe we should not get hung up on doctrine. **“Doctrine divides,”** they say. We just all need to love everybody and get along. Let’s have an Oprah group hug and all sing “Kumbaya” around the ecumenical campfire. Why, you don’t want to be intolerant and judgmental of people who don’t agree with you, do you?”

Motives are outside our judgment... as Hughes points out, “Today false prophets are to be *discerned*, their teaching *condemned*, and then *avoided*. The purpose of testing is not to discern whether their motivation is from God, but rather whether the message they speak is true or false.” **So motives are beyond our competence. Judging glaring distortions of biblical teaching is not.**

The Bible calls us again and again to test prophets, spirits, beliefs, and revelations. **You are responsible before God for what you believe.** What we believe matters... and what matters to God matters!

7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. **In the Greek “those who are loved, let us love.”**

God is love! LOVE DOESN’T DEFINE GOD. GOD DEFINES LOVE. **Love is not just an attribute of God; it is part of his nature.**

 Agape love creates value in its object whether there is any intrinsic value there or not. The sun shines on the earth not because the earth is the earth

but because the sun is the sun. God loves me because He is He, not because I am I. When John says, “*God is love*,” he means to say more than just “*God loves us*,” as marvelous as that truth is in and of itself.

No one has ever sinned himself or herself beyond the love of God.

There is nothing you can do to make God love you any more than he loves you right now. There is nothing that you can do to make God love you any less than he loves you right now.

Verse 10 of chapter 4 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the **PROPITIATION** for our sins.

PROPITIATION is a word that means “to appease someone’s wrath.”

Holiness: Wrath: Justice: Mercy... love...

grace God does something for us that we could never do for ourselves. He pays the price of our sin. When Jesus died on the cross, he became our substitute and took the wrath of God against our sin upon himself, thus satisfying God’s justice in a payment for sin. In Jesus’ death on the cross, God’s holiness, justice, wrath, mercy, love and grace all converge.

When God “who is love” allows that love to travel from head to heart it changes you forever!... God did not send His Son so you could become lovable... He sent His Son because He loved... Yes Christ died while yet we were sinners

John says that others’ seeing you loving others is evidence to other people that God is real and that God lives in you. **The invisible God becomes visible through you.**

Edgar Guest has a poem entitled “Sermons We See” It begins like this

I’d rather see a sermon than hear one any day;
I’d rather one should walk with me than merely tell the way.
The eye’s a better pupil and more willing than the ear,

Fine counsel is confusing, but example's always clear;
And the best of all preachers are the men who live their creeds,
For to see good put in action is what everybody needs.

We are never more like him than when we love others. John 13:35 – By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.

17 Love has been **perfected** among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment;

This verse is a reminder that every person, Christian or not, will one day give an account of his or her life in the day of judgment. **A person who is not a Christian ought to be afraid of future judgment.** But we Christians have no fear of future judgment because our judgment is already past. **In John 5:24 Jesus said, "Whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment."**

When we live within the security of God's love for us and practice love for others, we will experience freedom from all fear.

The only reason you have the capacity to love is because you have been a recipient of God's love and have been born again. You could never love God apart from God's loving you first. **If you don't love people, John says you don't love God... it's that simple!**

How do you love God? Cry when you worship... Get Holy Ghost skin bumpel's when you read the Bible... warm fuzzy feeling when you think of God...

NO! KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS. The highest credentials of love are to be found in obedience. Obedience is the proof of your love.

SATAN IS A BULLY! THE WORLD IS HIS SIDEKICK! Remember Satan and the world are bigger than you!

AREN'T WE ALWAYS GRATEFUL FOR SOMEBODY WHO COMES ALONG WHO IS BIGGER THAN THE BULLY?

What is the **VICTORY** that overcomes the **BULLY** of the world? **IT IS OUR FAITH.** We have a big brother named Jesus who can defeat the bully and give us the victory.

Verse 5 of chapter 5 Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

BELIEVES Spurgeon "Look at any Greek lexicon you like, and you will find that the word [faith or believe] does not merely mean to believe, but to trust, to confide in, to commit to, entrust with, and so forth; the very marrow of the meaning of faith is confidence in, reliance upon."


If you believe your put on the bullet proof vest... If you believe you would get into the wheelbarrow.

9 TIMES John uses the word **witness** or **testimony**. **WITNESS:** a person who gives testimony, as in a court of law.

John summons witnesses to the witness box to testify to the truth that *Jesus is the Son of God and the only way to salvation*. Through the magic of time travel, we became members of the jury. **"HEAR YE, HEAR YE, COURT IS NOW IN SESSION!"**

In verse 6 John call water to the stand **FOLLOWED BY** The **blood** of His crucifixion steps into the witness box.

Now John turns to the **Holy Spirit** and begins his questioning.

 The **FATHER** takes the witness box and says... **"This is my Son in whom I am well pleased."**


The **WORD OF GOD** is next and blows the juries mind with objective facts about it's **authenticity**.

52 hours of eyewitness testimony that Jesus had indeed risen from the dead. Mary Magdalene, the 3 men on the road to

Emmaus, All the disciples.

The Jury was in and proclaimed that Jesus is the Son of God and the only way to salvation!

In verses 13-15 of chapter 5 John is trying to point out to us that assurance and confidence in our salvation leads to confidence that God answers prayer.

 Remember prayer is not trying to get what you want, but what God wants for us. There is a world of difference between those two. True prayer is when we come to God and ask what he wants for our lives.

We must not miss those 4 crucial words in verse 14: “according to his will.” God is not going to give you a blank check for your prayers any more than you would give your children a blank check for all the requests they have for you.

Yes even the Ted Bundy’s and Jeffrey Dahmer’s of the world can be forgiven. **SO WE DON’T KNOW THOSE WHO HAVE COMMITTED SIN LEADING TO DEATH... THAT’S WHY WE KEEP PRAYING.** As shocking as that seems, the power of the Cross of Calvary, **the matchless mercy of the Master**, the unfathomable potency of the blood makes such miracles possible. And although at first it seems disquieting and troubling, in reality it gives me great hope because I know if the Lord can save Jeffrey Dahmer, **He can save me.**

John finished his first letter with the short, terse, puzzling command: “keep yourselves from idols.”

We quickly discovered that Idols are more than just carved statues of **wood, stone or medal...** an idol is anything that takes our complete attention and focus off of Jesus.

* We can make an idol of **ourselves...** * The pursuit of **wealth** and **material things** can squeeze Jesus out of being first in all things

* This speaks against worshipping dear friends, or even our children...

* This speaks against worshipping some hobby or pursuit... fear can become an idol.

Colossians 1 18 that in all things He may have the preeminence."

Preeminence... Above and before... **first place in our lives!**



For John, Jesus is the real thing, and anything and everything else, if substitute for Jesus, is an idol. He loves you soooo much and is jealous for your worship... yes, he wants it all... undivided and complete.

The word "**KEEP**" means "**TO GUARD AGAINST.**" Idolatry is something we must guard against in our lives on daily basis.

God's glory and holiness were with the ARK. The Shekinah and Kabod "The glory of God" His presence weight. The idol's can not stand up to God's mighty presence!

Don't focus on removing the idols focus on the Glory of God and your precious relationship with Him. As His presence fills your life the idols will fall!

LAST WORDS STICK, "KEEP YOURSELVES FROM IDOLS."

The **THINGS** that matter in life are not things at all ...

Cliff notes on 2 John "**STAY AWAY FROM HERETICS, WALK IN TRUTH. AND DON'T FORGET LOVE.**"

Love and truth our watchwords... Love and truth, like the right and left ventricle of the heart, function as the circulatory system of the church. When the two are functioning freely, the body of Christ is healthy.

3rd John Oh yes John says don't let false teachers in but those who speak the truth... take care of them! John praised Gaius for his hospitality.

End of verse 6... in a manner worthy of God Christians are not only called to help, but to help in a manner worthy of God. We are to do our best to help others excellently.
Diotrephes is called out by name...

John say he loves to have the preeminence among men Simply, the problem for Diotrephes was *pride*. In his **PRIDE**, he did not **receive** the apostles such as John. This was in contrast to the humble hospitality of Gaius, who walked in the truth.

Instead of an unwelcome intruder, seek to make **humility** the spouse of your soul to whom you have wedded yourself forever. To reflect God's light, don't seek the limelight.

Even the donkey that brought Jesus into Jerusalem knew the applause was not for him. If you get too big for your britches, don't be surprised if God gets you a smaller pair of britches.

Let the Diotrephes in us be crucified... Long live Demetrius.

John ends with the proclamation... **PEACE TO YOU.**