

# 27 GEMS – A Survey of 1 John

*Pastor Jason Dennett's Notes*

## **The MESSAGE of 1 John:**

1 John is the **15th shortest book** in the New Testament with **2,141** Greek words.

1 John was written by the **apostle John**, the brother of James, one of the "inner circle" of Jesus.

1 John was written to combat a dangerous heresy called "**Gnosticism**", a cancer of the Early Church.

1 John contains the word "**truth**" 7 times, and 20 times total in all 3 of his epistles.

1 John contains the word "**know**" and its equivalent over 30 times.

## **The MEGA-THEME of 1 John:**

*"You can **KNOW** that you are truly saved!" (1 Jn 5:13)*

## **The MEGA-STRUCTURE of 1 John:**

**NOTE:** *1 John is a unique book in that it defies the usual outlining and structuring of a New Testament epistle. One of the best ways to survey it, therefore, is to examine the five major reasons that John wrote this powerful letter.*

Reason #1: To Have Godly **ONENESS** (1:3)

Reason #2: To Have Godly **JOYFULNESS** (1:4)

Reason #3: To Have Godly **HOLINESS** (2:1)

Reason #4: To Have Godly **TRUTHFULNESS** (2:26)

Reason #5: To Have Godly **ASSURANCE** (5:13)

**Reason #1: Have Godly **ONENESS** (1:3)**

***"..that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship [is] with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ."***

- **1Jn 1:1-2** - *"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life-- 2 the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us.."*

This is the basis of our **FELLOWSHIP** (Greek "koinonia") with the Lord - that God has come down to die for us, and live within our hearts. It is only through the sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus Christ that we have true oneness with the Lord, and can be saved.

- **1Jn 4:7-8** - *"Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8 He who does not love does not know God, for God is love."*

Since **LOVE** is one of the essential attributes of God, all of those in whom the Spirit of God truly dwells, and all of those who really know the Lord, will also have divine **LOVE** flowing out of their lives. If Christ is your Root, then Love will be your fruit! (Matt 7:17; Gal 5:22)

- **1Jn 4:9-11** - *"In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. 10 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. 11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another."*

Since we have this **ONENESS** and **FELLOWSHIP** with the Lord thru the love of Christ, we should also show that same love to each other. The love displayed through the life and ministry of Jesus, is to be the bond of **FELLOWSHIP** between his followers. (Jn 13:35)

***"Christian fellowship is two-dimensional, and it has to be vertical before it can be horizontal. We must know the reality of fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ before we can know the reality of fellowship with each other in our common relationship to God. The person who is not in fellowship with the Father and the Son is no Christian at all, and so cannot share with Christians the realities of their fellowship." - James Packer***

**Reason #2: Have Godly **JOYFULNESS** (1:4)**

***"And these things we write to you that your joy may be full."***

- **1Jn 1:5** - *"This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all."*

Knowing that God is perfect, holy, and full of "light" will bring you intense **JOY** and peace as a follower of Christ. **JOY** is a quiet, peaceful confidence and contentment, that the Lord is in control of your circumstances and situation. (Acts 16:25; 2 Tim 4:7)

- **1Jn 1:6** - *"If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. 7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin."*

Since the Lord is Light and Perfection, as we walk in that same moral, intellectual, and spiritual light, we will have a full **JOY**, knowing that we are pleasing Him. Closeness and intimacy with the Lord is what delivers deep and lasting JOY to our souls and minds. (*Phil 4:4*)

- **1Jn 1:8** - *"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us [our] sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us."*

Being honest and humble before the Lord, admitting our sins, weaknesses, and failures, brings about eventual **JOY**. When we agree with Christ by "confessing" (Greek "homologeō") our deeds, we can then find true forgiveness, cleansing, and freedom - and true inner **JOY**.

*Prov 28:13* - *"He who covers his sins will not prosper, But whoever confesses and forsakes [them] will have mercy."*

**As a third-century man was anticipating death, he penned these last words to a friend:** *"It's a bad world, an incredibly bad world. But I have discovered in the midst of it a quiet and holy people who have learned a great secret. They have found a joy which is a thousand times better than any pleasure of our sinful life. They are despised and persecuted, but they care not. They are masters of their souls. They have overcome the world. These people are the Christians - and I am one of them."*

### **Reason #3: Have Godly HOLINESS (2:1)**

***"My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."***

- **1Jn 2:3** - *"Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. 4 He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 5 But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him."*

One of the pathways to **HOLINESS** and being set apart from sin is keeping God's Words and living them out in daily life. This will naturally keep us away from sin and wickedness, and put us on a path of Truth and Righteousness. (Ps.119:11; 105)

- **1Jn 2:6** - *"He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked. ... 9 He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now. 10 He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him. 11 But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes."*

The Path of Life that we choose, determines our ultimate destination. The path that Christ walked was characterized by love and holiness, and so will be the life of any true believer. If one chooses the Path of the Unrighteous instead of the Path of the Righteous (*Psalm 1*), he will destroy himself and be lost!

**HOLINESS** = *Wholeness; Happiness, Healthiness.*

- **1Jn 2:15** - *"Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that [is] in the world--the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life--is not of the Father but is of the world. 17 And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever."*

If a person truly loves the Father, they will not love the **WORLD** (Greek "cosmos") system and all its perversions and seductions. A person CANNOT love them both simultaneously; either he will hate the one, or despise the other. You cannot serve 2 masters! (*Matt 6:24*)

**John tells us of 3 broad Sin Categories:** Lust of the Flesh (*body appetites*); Lust of the Eyes (*visual cravings*); Pride of Life (*vanity of self*)

Many Bible teachers see these 3 categories of Temptation active in the **Genesis 3** with Eve, and in **Matthew 4** with Christ.

*"A holy life will make the deepest impression. Lighthouses blow no horns, they simply shine bright." - **D.L. Moody**.*

*"Holiness does not consist in mystic speculations, but in thinking as God thinks, and willing as God wills." - **John Brown***

*"How little people know who think that holiness is dull. When one meets real thing, it is irresistible." - **C.S. Lewis***

**Reason #4: Have Godly *TRUTHFULNESS* (2:26)**

***"These things I have written to you concerning those who try to deceive you."***

- **1Jn 2:18** - *"Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, 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."*

John is here beginning to warn them about False Teacher's that were in their midst, were opposing the **TRUTH** of the Gospel, and had even polluted many people that had already left their assembly. He calls them "antichrist" and states that they weren't truly saved and for this reason departed from them.

- **1Jn 2:22** - *"Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son. 23 Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also."*

Here John is getting to the reason that the Gnostics were heretical - they denied that Jesus Christ was the God-Man. They either denied his humanity ("*Docetists*") or denied his Divinity ("*Cerinthians*"), but in either error were false, dangerous, and heretical.

John clearly says that if a person doesn't have the **TRUE & BIBLICAL** Christ - truly God and truly Man - then that person is also without the Father as well. (*Jn 5:23; Mt 17:5; Ps 2:12*)

- **1Jn 2:27** - *"But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him."*

John is here not denying the need for Teachers and Pastors in the church (*Eph 4:11-16*), but rather saying that the anointing of the Holy Spirit had already taught them and demonstrated to them the **TRUTH** of Christ being the LORD in the flesh. The Holy Spirit had already brought the testimony to them that Christ alone is the God-Man and Saviour of mankind. (*Acts 4:12*)

- **1Jn 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. 2 By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, 3*

*and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the [spirit] of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world."*

An essential element to maintain **TRUTHFULNESS** was for the believers to test or examine the spirits of the messengers that came to their church. They were to examine the messages, teachings, and beliefs of strangers in order to not get contaminated by False Teaching and Heresy. (Acts 17:11)

*"Those that think it permissible to tell "white lies" soon grow colorblind." - Austin O'Malley.*

*"The unattended garden will soon be overrun with weeds; the heart that fails to cultivate truth and root out error will shortly be a theological wilderness." - A.W. Tozer.*

**Reason #5: Have Godly ASSURANCE (5:13)**

***"These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may [continue to] believe in the name of the Son of God."***

- **1Jn 3:4-9** - *"Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness. 5 And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin. **Whoever abides in Him does not sin.** Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him. 7 Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. 8 **He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning.** For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. Whoever has been **born of God does not sin,** for His seed remains in him; and **he cannot sin,** because he has been born of God. 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.**"*

Here John tells us 2 powerful truths: If you are truly saved you will be living an active/habitual life of godly and holy deeds; if you are not saved you will be practicing a habitual lifestyle of sinful and wicked deeds.

The verb tenses here are in the "present active" tense, meaning this is not merely making the occasional sinful mistake or failure, but rather living in open, habitual, unrepentant sin as a lifestyle. This, according to the New Testament, shows you are not saved and are following after satan instead. (Jn 8:44, 47 NLT - *"For you are the children of your father the devil, and*

*you love to do the evil things he does. ... 47 Anyone who belongs to God listens gladly to the words of God. But you don't listen because you don't belong to God.")*

**1Jn 3:6-10** NLT - *"Anyone who continues to live in him will not sin. But **anyone who keeps on sinning does not know him or understand who he is.** 7 Dear children, don't let anyone deceive you about this: When people do what is right, it shows that they are righteous, even as Christ is righteous. 8 But **when people keep on sinning, it shows that they belong to the devil,** who has been sinning since the beginning. But the Son of God came to destroy the works of the devil. 9 Those who have been born into God's family **do not make a practice of sinning,** because God's life is in them. So **they can't keep on sinning,** because they are children of God. 10 So now we can tell who are children of God and who are children of the devil. Anyone who **does not live righteously and does not love other believers** does not belong to God."*

**There are four basic categories of "saved" people:**

- 1) Those who think they are saved, but aren't. Matthew 7:21-3
- 2) Those we think are saved, but aren't. 1 John 2:18-19
- 3) Those who are saved, but don't act like it: Corinthians.
- 4) Those who are saved, and they act like it.