

1 JOHN 5

When you are born of God, you are born to love (vv. 1–3). You will love the Father who gave you life and the Son who gave His life for you. You will also love His children, for you all belong to the same family.

When you are born of God, you are born to win (vv. 4–5). Your first birth made you a sinner and a loser, but your second birth makes you a conqueror. The world wants to entice you (2:15–17) and the devil wants to seduce you (Gen. 3:6), but Christ will give you the victory you need if you trust Him.

When you are born of God, you are born to assurance (vv. 6–13), and you can know that you have eternal life. You are also born to talk to your Father in prayer and receive from Him what you need (vv. 14–17).

When you are born of God, you are born secure, and the evil one cannot harm you (vv. 18–21). You do not keep yourself saved, for the Father does that (John 10:27–30); but you keep yourself from the clutches of the wicked one. As you abide in Christ, you experience His love and care.

2 JOHN

John wrote this letter to an anonymous Christian woman whose home was open for God's people to meet for fellowship and worship. The emphasis is on truth and love, and John points out three dangers believers must avoid.

Knowing the truth but not practicing it (1–6). We must walk in truth and walk according to His commandments. The Word of God is meant for *doing* and not just *knowing*. “If we say” (1 John 1:6, 8, 10) but do not obey, we are hypocrites.

Practicing truth but not defending it (7–8, 10–11). The enemy is busy, and we must oppose him. Love must be balanced by truth (Eph. 4:15), or you will start supporting lies in the name of love (Phil. 1:9–11). It is easy to lose what you have gained by making friends with the wrong people.

Going beyond the truth (9). The word *transgress* means “to go beyond.” When you go beyond God's Word, you are going too far. It is not progress but regress. Beware anybody who has something to add to your Bible.

3 JOHN

John wrote this letter to his friend Gaius to encourage him in a difficult situation in his local church. Again, he concentrated on making God's truth a vital part of life.

Walking in truth (1–4). People could see the truth in Gaius because he loved it and walked in obedience to it, and that brought great joy to John. Every Christian parent can echo verse 4 and even make it a prayer.

Working for truth (5–8). When you assist and encourage God's servants, you become a fellow worker with them in spreading the truth. Christian hospitality was important in those days and ought to be revived today.

Welcoming the truth (9–10). Can you imagine Diotrephes rejecting a message from the apostle John! He was so “separated” that he did not even receive John’s friends. When we welcome God’s people, we welcome God’s truth.

Witnessing for the truth (11–14). Not all church members are like Diotrephes; there are people like Demetrius who love the truth and live it. They are the ones who make the local church healthy (v. 2).

JUDE

Jude, like James, was a half brother of the Lord Jesus (Mark 6:3). His letter focuses on false teachers and echoes Peter’s warnings in 2 Peter 2.

Who they are (1–4). Jude wanted to write about salvation, but the Lord directed him to write about invasion instead. False teachers were creeping into the church and going undetected. These are unsaved people (v. 19), ungodly people, and unprincipled people who use grace as an excuse for sin.

What they do (5–11). Like the Jews in the wilderness, the fallen angels, and the evil cities of the plain, they reject the authority of God. Their words are defiant and defiling. Like Cain (Gen. 4), they have no saving faith, but they do have religion. Like Balaam (Num. 22–24), they use religion as a way to make money; and like Korah (Num. 16), they defy the Word of God and the authority of God’s chosen servants.

What they are (12–16). False teachers promise much but produce little, like rainless clouds and fruitless trees. Enoch had the best word for them: *ungodly*.

What we must do (17–25). Remember the Word and build yourself up in your Christian faith. True believers are “preserved in Jesus Christ” (v. 1), and they prove this by keeping themselves in God’s love (v. 21). Therefore, God can keep them from falling (vv. 24–25).

REVELATION 1

This book is first of all the revelation of Jesus Christ, not the revelation of future events. Before John describes end-time events, he describes the Lord Jesus and reminds you of who He is and what He has done.

According to verse 5, He is the faithful witness (the Prophet), the firstborn from the dead (the Priest), and the ruler over the kings of the earth (the King). He is also the Savior (vv. 5b–6) who has made His people a kingdom of priests (Exod. 19:1–6; 1 Pet. 2:1–10). Never forget that Jesus shed His blood for you, and that His blood cleanses (1:5; 7:14), redeems (5:9), and overcomes (12:11).

When John was in the Upper Room, he leaned on Jesus’ bosom (John 13:23); but when he saw the glorified Christ, he fell at His feet as a dead man (v. 17; 2 Cor. 5:16). Like John, we must begin with worship if God’s revelations in this book are to have any meaning to us.

One day “there shall be no more death” (21:4) because Jesus has conquered death (v. 18). When you know Him as Savior and Lord, you need not fear the future; He has the keys in His hand.¹

¹Wiersbe, W. W. 1997, c1991. *With the word Bible commentary*. Thomas Nelson: Nashville