

**The Book of First JOHN**  
**Introduction & Chapter 1**  
**“TRUE CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP!”**

> **Author:** *John, “the beloved”* one of the famous “*Sons of Thunder*,” the brother of James. New Testament books written by John: The Gospel According To John; 1, 2 & 3 John & The Book of Revelation.

> **Date of writing:** 85 – 95 AD

> **Written to:** *All Christians* (C.I. Scofield gives insight to 1<sup>st</sup> John, “It is a family letter from the Father to His “little children” who are in the world. With the possible exception of *The Song of Solomon*, it is the most intimate of the inspired writings. The sin of a Christian is treated as a child’s offense against his Father, and is dealt with as family matter (1:9; 2:1) . . . A tender word is used for “children” (from Gk. *teknia*), a diminutive meaning *little children, born-ones*. Whereas Paul is occupied with the Christian’s public position as a son, John has in mind the believer’s nearness as one born of the Father.)

> **Theme:** *Fellowship* with God & one another! (*Fellowship* - Sharing things in common with others. In the New Testament, fellowship has a distinctly spiritual meaning. Fellowship can be either positive or negative. Positively, believers have fellowship with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (John 17:21-26; Phil 2:1; 1 John 1:3), as well as with other believers (Acts 2:42; 1 John 1:3,7). The only reason why we dare to have fellowship with God, in the sense of sharing things in common with Him, is that He has raised our status through the death and resurrection of Christ (Eph 2:4-7). What believers share in common with God is a relationship as well as God's own holy character (1 Peter 1:15). Those who have fellowship with Christ should enjoy fellowship with other believers. This fellowship ought to illustrate the very nature of God Himself (John 13:35; Eph 5:1-2; 1 John 1:5-10). Negatively, believers should not have fellowship with unbelievers. This means they should not share in unbelievers' sinful lifestyles (2 Cor 6:14-18). This does not mean, however, that believers should have nothing to do with unbelievers. The Bible plainly teaches that believers are obligated to share the gospel with unbelievers (Matt 28:16-20; Mark 16:15-16; 1 Cor 9:16-17). (From Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Copyright © 1986, Thomas Nelson Publishers)

> **Insight:** “God is *LIGHT*”- 1 Jn. 1:5; “God is *LOVE*”- 1 Jn. 4:8; “God is *LIFE*”- 1 Jn. 5:11

> **Observe the three reasons John wrote this incredible love letter to us:** (1) **1 John 1:3-4** - *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. And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.* (2) **1 John 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.* (3) **1 John 5:11-13** - *And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. 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.*

> **Food for Thought:** John displays **antithetical parallelism’s**: Which are *light vs. darkness, truth vs. falsehood, love vs. hatred, love of the world vs. love of the Father, Christ vs. antichrists, children of God vs. children of the Devil, righteousness vs. sin, the Spirit of God vs. the spirit of the Antichrist, and life vs. death.*

> **Philosophical Challenge:** Gnostic heresy was prevalent during John's time, this belief taught that matter is inherently evil, and a divine being therefore could not take on human flesh. This resulted in the distinction between the man Jesus and the spiritual Christ who came upon Jesus at His baptism but departed prior to His crucifixion. Another variation was Docetism (from *dokeo* - "to seem"), the doctrine that Christ only seemed to have a human body. The result in both cases was the same—**a flat denial of the Incarnation**. In both cases this belief led people to immoral conduct and disregard for Christian ethics. (The Bible teaches in **John 1:1-5** - *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.*)

## > **SEVEN BENEFITS OF TRUE FELLOWSHIP:**

### **#1 – TO KNOW THE WORD OF LIFE!**

> **John gives testimony to Jesus, "the Word of Life":**

- The disciples **heard** Jesus audibly!
- The disciples **saw** Jesus visibly!
- The disciples **handled** Jesus physically!

### **#2 – TO RECEIVE ETERNAL LIFE! (v1)**

- What is with the Father? **Eternal Life**
- What was manifested personally to them through Jesus? **Life after death!**
- What are they doing with this reality? **Declaring it to the world & us!**

### **#3 – TO FELLOWSHIP WITH THE FATHER AND THE SON! (v3)**

> **Fellowship** (Gk. - *koinonia*) means **companionship**, a relation in which parties hold something in common, familiar interaction. **Christians have fellowship with the FATHER and the SON (1 John 1:3) and the HOLY SPIRIT (2 Cor. 13:14), and with ONE ANOTHER (1 John 1:7).**

### **#4 – TO BE FULL OF JOY! (v4)**

- **Conceive!** - John 3:1-16 (A baby is born! Yahoo!)
- **Believe!** - John 11:1-44 (Life after death! Yeehaa!)
- **Receive!** - Acts 2:37-47 (Receive the gift! Hallelujah!)

### **#5 – TO KNOW THAT GOD IS LIGHT! (v5)**

> **From "darkness to light" - John ch. 9**

### **#6 – TO WALK IN THE LIGHT! (v6-8)**

> **How do people lie?** *When they walk in darkness and say they have fellowship with Him.* The word "Walk" (Gk. - *peripatoomen*) is, literally, "walk about"; indicating the habitual course of the life, outward and inward. (Vincent's Word Studies of the New Testament) (Key chain, no car.)

- **How do we have fellowship with one another & the blood of Jesus washes us of all sin?**  
*When we walk in the light.*

- **Cleanses** (Gk. - *katharizei*) - Not only forgives but removes.

> **Paul's LIGHT insight: Acts ch. 9:1-22; Ephesians 5:1-12; Titus 2:11-14-** *For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.*

> **Why do people reject Jesus Christ? - John 3:16-21**

## **#7 – TO CONFESS OUR SINS AND BE FORGIVEN! (v9-10)**

- **What is not in us if we say that we have no sin?** *Truth (John 8:31-36- Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." They answered Him, "We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can you say, 'You will be made free'?" Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.)*

- **What should we do with our sins?** *Confess them to God*

- **What will He do with our sins after our confession?** *He will forgive and cleanse us!*

**"To forgive"**- *Primarily the word means "to send away, dismiss;" hence, of sins, "to remit," as a debt.*

- **Are we sinless?** *No*

> **C.I. Scofield writes-** "Through the Word of God the indwelling Holy Spirit shows the Christian that he (1) still possesses an old nature (v8), and (2) needs the forgiveness of his sins (v9-10). The blood of Christ is the divine provision for both. To walk in the light is to live in fellowship with the Father and the Son. Sin interrupts fellowship but cannot change relationship. Confession restores fellowship and immediate confession keeps the fellowship unbroken."

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

- **Memory verses: 1 John 1:9-10**