



1 John Bible Study

Session 1: January 6, 2021

Warm Up

What accumulated knowledge do we have about John, the disciple of Jesus?

What major themes appear both in the Gospel of John and in 1 John?

Based on your first reading, what controversies seem to be present in the faith community to whom John is writing?

Context

A. Historic Timeline

6-4 BC	Birth of Jesus
AD 24-26	Jesus' public ministry
AD 27-29	Death of Jesus Pentecost—Birth of Church
50	James
52-53	1 & 2 Thessalonians
55	Galatians
57	1 & 2 Corinthians
57-58	Romans
62-63	Philippians
62-63	Colossians
62-63	Philemon
62-63	Ephesians
63	Luke
64	Acts
65	1 Timothy
65	Titus
66	2 Timothy
66	Mark
67	Matthew
67	Hebrews
67-68	1 Peter
68	2 Peter
85-90	John
90-100	1, 2, 3 John

What surprises you about the overall timing of the various New Testament “books/letters”?

What do you make of the fact that John’s gospel was 23 years+ later than other gospels?

What does that say about why you think it was written?

B. What was going on during the period between Pentecost and the writing of John’s gospel?

- The birth of the Church at Pentecost
- World-wide evangelistic efforts begin

- Disciples/Apostles scatter across known world
- Faith communities formed
- Discipleship (Nurturing the Christian faith in others) creates communities around the Disciples. People associate with “their” disciple.
- The Community of John (Life cycle in 4 phases)

Phase 1: 50-80 AD (Before JN gospel written)

John’s followers were being expelled from synagogues due to some of their beliefs or emphases of faith.

Example of this being alluded to in JN Gospel: John 9:22 Healing of the Blind Man.

Phase 2: 90 AD (During Gospel Period)

Gospel written

Persecution continues John 16:2-3

Scars (hard feelings) are formed against “The Jews”

Main points of tension: Beliefs about Jesus Christ (Christology)

Us vs them; Us vs “The World” (light vs darkness)

Phase 3: 100 AD (Epistles)

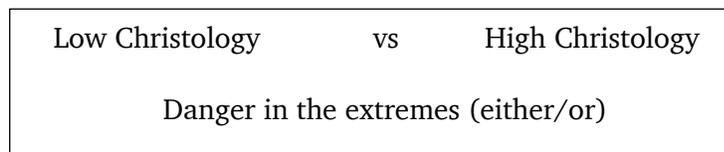
John’s community is divided 1 John 2:19

Two groups interpreting the gospel of Christ in different ways.

The group who left seemed to have the larger following. (1 John 4:5)

Conflict-Areas

Christology (The views, beliefs, understandings about Jesus Christ.)



Ethics (How shall we behave as followers of Jesus Christ?)

Eschatology (The views, beliefs, understandings of the end of time.)

Personally (death, judgement, final destiny of the soul)
The Whole Creation (the Eschaton)
1 John 2:18 (“The hour is late.”)

Pneumatology (The views, beliefs, understandings around the Holy Spirit.)

Phase 4: Some Time after Epistles

Both groups have dissolved.

- Those who left (the successionists) have no fellowship with John’s community. The drift into other streams of theological beliefs at the time.
- The remaining remnant of John’s community merges in with other stream of Christianity (Ignatius of Antioch). The beliefs of John’s community more widely accepted here. This validation helped grow general acceptance of John’s theology.

The Prologue

1 John: Not like other “epistles.”

Note the similarities with John’s gospel

READ: 1 John 1: 1-4

How does our overview add to your understanding of John’s message in these verses?

Teaching Points (Take-aways)

1. Jesus Christ really did _____.

Why is this point important to the recipients of this letter?

2. John and the apostles _____ Jesus Christ.

Why is this point important to the recipients of this letter?

3. _____ can personally _____ Jesus Christ, too.

Why is this point important to the recipients of this letter?

Why is John sharing this testimony?



Increase Our Faith

What instruction or encouragement does this portion of God's Word offer us as we seek to increase our faith?