1 John
1 John 1:1-2

• The focus of 1 John: Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God.
  – Don’t make the mistake of thinking the book is about salvation and eternal life. The “Eternal Life” shown in v. 2 is not salvation, but Christ.
  – John gives testimony that “we” (he and the Apostles) are the authority on the matter of the person of Jesus Christ.
• Translation issues
  – The Voice: We want to tell you about the One who was from the beginning. We have seen Him with our own eyes, heard Him with our own ears, and touched Him with our own hands. This One is the manifestation of the life-giving Voice, and He showed us real life, eternal life. We have seen it all, and we can’t keep what we witnessed quiet—we have to share it with you. We are inviting you to experience eternal life through the One who was with the Father and came down to us.
1 John 1:3-4

• Biblical *koinonia* is the desired outcome of the Apostle John.
  – Koinonia is from the word for “partaker” or “partner” or “companion” (Strong's 2844)
  – If our theology of Jesus isn’t the same, there is no way we can fellowship together.
  – The issue of the identity of Jesus is going to be central to the book of 1*st* John. Our default will be “it is about Jesus.”
1 John 1:3-4

- Translation issues
  - KJV has “your joy” rather than “our joy” in v. 4.
    - Use KJV as the default
    - When others have an incorrect or incomplete understanding of Jesus, they cannot have full joy.
  - *The Message* says, “Your joy will double our joy!”
    - Why do you want a “translation” that just makes stuff up?
  - *The Voice* says, “and we write all this because retelling this story fulfills our joy.”
    - The text doesn’t mention that the joy is in the retelling, but “your joy” comes when you have the full understanding of Jesus.
1 John 1:5

• Verse 5 comes to the core of the matter for the purpose of the letter: God has no darkness.
  – This message was heard from Him and now declared to you.
  – Implication:
    • If you believe Jesus is Eternal Life, the Son of God, then you must reject Gnosticism.
    • Gnosticism is the heresy that says the physical is evil and the spiritual is good.
Modern Gnostic Thought

• The Kingdom of God is spiritual, not physical.
  – There followeth another correction, when he saith, that they must be his witnesses. For hereby he meant to drive out of his disciples’ minds that fond and false imagination which they had conceived of the terrestrial kingdom, because he showeth unto them briefly, that his kingdom consisteth in the preaching of the gospel. There was no cause, therefore, why they should dream of riches, of external principality, or any other earthly thing, whilst they heard that Christ did then reign when as he subduedth unto himself (all the whole) world by the preaching of the gospel…
Modern Gnostic Thought

- …. Whereupon it followeth that he doth reign spiritually, and not after any worldly manner. And that which the apostles had conceived of the carnal kingdom proceeded from the common error of their nation; neither was it marvel if they were deceived herein. For when we measure the same with our understanding, what else can we conceive but that which is gross and terrestrial? Hereupon it cometh, that, like brute beasts, we only desire that which is commodious for our flesh, and therefore we rather catch that which is present. Wherefore, we see that those which held opinion, that Christ should reign as a king in this world a thousand years fell into the like folly.

- http://www.sacred-texts.com/chr/calvin/cc36/cc36010.htm
Modern Gnostic Thought

• The Kingdom of God is spiritual, not physical.
• Institutional “religion” is bad
• Education is the answer to the world’s problems
• To find the will of God, spend time in stillness before God
1 John 1:5

- Translation issues-
  - *The Message* says, “This, in essence, is the message…”
  - In essence? It is or it isn’t.
1 John 1:6-7

• The lie: claiming fellowship but walking in darkness (v 5)
  – Don’t make this say more than it says.
  – Koinonia and salvation are not the same thing.

• The truth: Walking in the light includes
  – Koinonia with one another
  – Forgiveness of all our sin
  – Be careful not to make koinonia and walking in the light as criteria for forgiveness.
  – Principle: don’t make the Bible say what it doesn’t say.
1 John 1:8-10

• Thinking that you have overcome sin because you have been cleansed from sin is personal deception, a lie, and an attack on God's.

• When we sin, we are to confess those sins to have them cast off and the unrighteousness caused by those sins cleansed.
Teaching Outline, 1 John 1

• The focus | vv. 1-2
  – The apostles had direct experience with that which John will write
  – Of all the experience, their experience with Eternal Life of Jesus so outshines all the others that this will be John’s focus.
Teaching Outline, 1 John 1

• The focus | vv. 1-2

• The fellowship | vv. 3-4
  – The Apostles proclaimed Jesus so that we might experience a mutual fellowship in the Father and His Son
  – No earthly joy is complete without this fellowship
Teaching Outline, 1 John 1

• The focus | vv. 1-2
• The fellowship | vv. 3-4
• The feature | v. 5
  – The message of the ages: God is light and in Him is no darkness
  – To attribute any kind of sin to God or His Son is to deny the truth of God’s Word
Teaching Outline, 1 John 1

• The focus | vv. 1-2
• The fellowship | vv. 3-4
• The feature | v. 5
• The fallacy | vv. 6-7
  – We cannot walk in darkness and say we are in fellowship with God
  – These verses hold a two-fold warning:
    • Do not live a sinful lifestyle
    • Do not build a works-based salvation
Teaching Outline, 1 John 1

- The focus | vv. 1-2
- The fellowship | vv. 3-4
- The feature | v. 5
- The fallacy | vv. 6-7

- The fairy tale | vv. 8-10
  - Because it is easy to be deceived, you better watch for personal sin.
  - When you see it, be quick to confess it
  - If you reject this advice, you are not only living a fairy tale, but:
    - You make God a liar
    - You deny God’s Word
Questions?

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