



THE EPISTLES OF JOHN

— LETTERS FROM A BELOVED APOSTLE —

Introduction to 1 John

Author – The Apostle John

External evidence

Internal evidence

Claims to be an eyewitness to the life and ministry of Jesus

Similar concepts to the gospel of John:

- Life & Death
- Light & darkness
- Children of God & Children of the devil
- Love & hate
- Truth & Falsehood
- From the beginning
- Of the world
- Walk in darkness

Similar vocabulary/phrases to the gospel of John:

- Referring to the Holy Spirit as the “helper” 4x in gospel, 1x in letter and nowhere else in NT
- Referring to the Son as the “only begotten” (monogenes) 2x in gospel, 1x in 1 John, nowhere else in the NT
- Others: blind, dead, Savior of the World, we might live, laid down his life, take away sin testimony/seen/proclaimed, accept, believe, death to life, have life, life is in the Son of God, born of God, abide, obey his word/commands, new commandment to love one another, world will hate, don't belong to the world, overcome the world, fullness of joy



Date & Place

Readers

Occasion/Purpose

1. **“We write this to make our joy complete” (1:4).**
2. **“I write this to you so that you will not sin” (2:1).**
3. **“I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know you have eternal life” (5:13).**

Various criterion, gages to KNOW that they are in the truth, the right path:

- Live a Holy Life (1:5-2:2 ; 2:3-11,; 3:6-10, 23-24b; 5:18-20)
 - Love the Brethren (2:7-11; 3;11-20a; 4:7-12, 20; 5:2-3)
 - Listen to Apostolic teaching concerning the person and Work of Christ (2.18-27, 3.23; 4.1-6, 15; 5:1a, .5, 10, 13)
4. **“I am writing these things to you about those who are trying to lead you astray” (2:26)**
 - 2:18-28 antichrists who went out from us...
 - 3:7 Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray
 - 4:1-6 False prophets gone out into the world (4.1)

What was the nature of their error?

- Doctrinal Errors:
- Ethical/Moral Errors



Doctrinal Themes

Doctrine of Christ	Word of Life (1.1) Truly came in the flesh (1.1-3; 4.1-3) Made propitiation for sin (2.2; 4.10) Sinless (3.5) Destroyed the devil (3.8) Proved the father's love (4:9-11) Son of God (5.5) & Son 21x Accomplished by his death (5.6) True God and eternal life (5.20) Christ was sent, has come, was manifested, appeared in the flesh, by water and blood
Eternal Life/Assurance	" <u>We know</u> that we have come to know him" (2.3) " <u>We know</u> that the Son of God has come, and has <u>given us understanding</u> so that <u>we may know</u> Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ." (5:20) " <u>We know</u> by this that He abides in us" (3.24) " <u>We know</u> that we are in him." (2:5) "By this <u>we know</u> that we abide in Him..." (4:13) " <u>We know</u> that we are of God" (5:19) " <u>We know</u> that we have passed out of death into life" (3.14) "...so that you may <u>know</u> that you have eternal life." (5.13)

Structure

John's themes of living a holy life, loving the brethren, and listening to the apostolic witness about the person and work of Christ, are presented like an ever widening spiral, each cycle broader than the previous one.

"As the letter moves along, new threads are woven into it, some that disappear, others that reappear" ~ Lenski