

BE the Church

“Get Ready”

An Introduction to

The Book of 1 John

INTRODUCTION: parallels between Ephesus, Barre, Kent Island...

Global super-power in the midst of constant military tensions

Well educated... relatively sophisticated... much better off than most...

Culturally changing... Philosophically ambiguous... Morally relativistic

Religions abound... pretty much anything goes (except absolute truth)

In our language: things are incredibly liberal... (in a bad kind of way)

Welcome to the book of 1 John...

CONTEXT:

- **Author**
- **Ephesus = *** MAP *** Turkey-bridge**
- **There & Then.... Here & Now.**

➤ **Quote: Donald W. Burdick** (*The Letters of John*)
“Apart from the Judaeo-Christian sphere, the world was religiously inclusivistic. There was always room for a new religion, provided of course that it was not of an exclusive nature. Syncretism, however, did not merely express itself in a mood of tolerance toward other faiths. Its characteristic expression was in the combination of various ideas and beliefs from different sources to form new or aberrant religions.”

T/S: This morning we're going to overview the book of 1 John and lay the groundwork for our verse by verse series...

Big Idea: Get Ready to BE the Church!

1 John offers a 5-Point Portrait of Purity

1 Passion

2 Priorities

3 Pillars

4 Purposes

5 Pragmatic Proof-tests

T/S: “The forceful simplicity of its sentences, the note of finality behind its utterances, the marvelous blending of gentle love and deep-cutting sternness of its contents, and the majesty of its ungarnished thoughts have made 1 John a favorite with Christians everywhere. The plainness of language makes it intelligible to the simplest saint, while the profundity of its truths challenges the most accomplished scholar. Its grand theological revelations and its unwavering ethical demands have left their enduring impact upon the thought and life of the Christian Church. First John is indeed a singular, irreplaceable gem among the books of the New Testament.” - D.E. Hiebert

1 Passion

(Glorifying God thru the shared **Gospel** of Jesus Christ)

Koinonia

1 John 1:3 = *what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have (“koinonia”) with us; and indeed our (“koinonia”) is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.*

VIDEO: Lorraine Sharing

(contrast Church vs American Legion... God is the glue!)

Galatians 1:6-9

2 Priorities

- A. **DEFINE** the one TRUE Church
- B. **DEFEND** the one TRUE Church

1 John 2:22 = *Who is the liar? It is whoever denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a person is the antichrist—denying the Father & the Son.*

*** **“Christ”** = Greek for Hebrew **“Messiah”**

- 1. **LORD**
- 2. **Savior**

Therefore... to deny the Lordship of Christ (and/or the Saving capacity of Christ's crucifixion & resurrection), is to deny the deity of Jesus...

Thus... when anyone denies the full Christology of Jesus (as either Lord or Savior – thru their lips OR their lives), they are specifically identified AND addressed in 1 John 2:22.

- **Light in the darkness:**
 - **Matthew 5:14** = “light on a hill... SHINE”
 - **Philippians 2:15** =

VIDEO: Doranne Sharing

- **Shepherds protect** vs. wolves & followers:
 - Matthew 7:15
 - Acts 20:29
 - 2 Corinthians 11:26
 - Galatians 2:4

- **Spiritual warfare** *there & then... here & now*
 - Ephesians 6... (full armor of God)
 - **Jude 3...** (contend for the faith...)
 - NOTE: parallel *old Caleb & old John...*

- **Damage being done...**
 - Churches being decimated by division
 - *** 1 John 2:19
 - *** Revelation 2 & 3 (5 of 7 rebuked)
 - *** Contrast with John 17:21

KEY ISSUE: 1 John is...

Polemical (arguing against the false teachers/teaching)

Positive (affirming and assuring the true Christians)

Together... **Polemical + Positive = Pastoral**

“Like any (God-honoring) pastor, John could not stand idly by when his people were being assaulted by the satanic lies of false teachers. Responding to the serious crisis threatening the churches under his care, the apostle sent them this letter to help check the deadly plague. “ - **John MacArthur**

3 Pillars

A. **TRUTH** (1:1-3)

First John... “from start to finish John writes with insight, consistency, intensity, and depth. Yet his language is for the most part simple and his vocabulary modest. Line for line there are few biblical writings that surpass 1 John in the imposing demands made on the reader...” - **ESV Study Bible**

B. **LOVE** (3:18)

C. **Faithful-OBEDIENCE** (2:6)

“John believes our faith in the Son of God must be orthodox. He believes faith cannot be separated from obedience and love. He sees faith expressing itself in righteous living. He is convinced that faith and assurance go together. Assured of a right standing before God through faith in His Son who provided atonement for sin, we love God and others; and with this hope in us we purify ourselves, just as He is pure (3:3).” - **New American Standard Commentary**

4 Purposes

A. **Promote** joy via “koinonia” **(1:4)**

1 John 1:4 = *“These things we write, so that your/our joy may be made complete.”*

B. **Prevent** sin **(2:1)**

1 John 2:1 = *My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;*

C. **Protect** against false teachers **(2:26)**

1 John 2:26 = *I write these things to you about those who are trying to deceive you / lead you astray.*

of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.”

--- **1 John 5:13** is *Christologically assuring*
I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life

5 Pragmatic Proofs

1. WALK in the Light or the Dark
2. OBEY or Disobey God’s Word
3. PATTERNS of one’s life tells their real story
4. WORLD or Worship
5. KNOW Him vs. NO Him

A. **1 John 1:6-7 = WALK in Light or Dark**

6If we claim to have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. 7But if we walk in the Light, as He is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

B. 1 John 2:3-6 = OBEY or DISOBEY

3We know that we have come to know him if we keep his commands. 4Whoever says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person. 5But if anyone obeys his word, love for God is truly made complete in them. This is how we know we are in him: 6Whoever claims to live in him must live/walk as Jesus did.

C. 1 John 3:7-10 & 14 = PATTERN of Life

7Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. The one who does what is right is righteous, just as He is righteous. 8The one who does what is sinful is of the devil, ... 9No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in them; they cannot go on sinning, because they have been born of God. 10This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not God's child, nor is anyone who does not love their brother and sister.

14We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love each other. Anyone who does not love remains in death.

D. 1 John 4:5-8 & 13 = World or Worship

5They are from the world and therefore speak from

the viewpoint of the world, and the world listens to them. 6We are from God, and whoever knows God listens to us; but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. This is how we recognize the Spirit^a of truth and the spirit of falsehood.... Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. 8Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.

13This is how we know that we live in him and he in us: He has given us of his Spirit.

E. **1 John 5:20 = KNOW-Him vs. No-Him**

20We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know Him who is true. And we are in Him who is true by being in His Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.

“There is nothing tentative or apologetic about 1 John. The apostle John does not hesitate to call certain classes of people liars, deceivers, or antichrists. He supplies tests by which everybody can be sorted into one of two categories. According to the person’s relation to the Apostle’s tests, they either have God or NOT...; (they either) know God or they do NOT...; (they either) have been born of God or NOT; (they either) have life or abide in DEATH...; (they either) walk in the darkness OR in the light...; they are EITHER children of God, OR children of the DEVIL...

- John Stott

VIDEO: Charlie Sharing

CLOSE:

John's letter is a model for us to use
as we champion Christ's love & light; while
simultaneously combating today's modern heresies...

5 Pragmatic Proofs

4 Purposes

Promote koinonia
Prevent sin
Protect against false teachers
Provide assurance

3 Pillars

Truth, Love, Faithful-Obedience

2 Priorities

Define & Defend the Church

1 Passion

the glory of God thru the shared Gospel of Jesus Christ

T/S:

Let us be forever ready to **Define, Defend, & Disciple...**

Right BELIEFS & Righteous BEHAVIOR.

By God's grace & for His glory!

Amen & Amen.

Let's PRAY