

1 JOHN

3 tests

Integrated sermon and bible study series

8 – 29 March 2015

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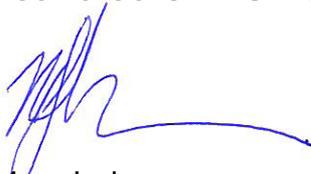
OVERVIEW

The letter of 1 John is one of my favourite in the bible so I really hope you enjoy this series and are enriched by the studies. I think I like it so much because once I figured it out I've found the three tests of 1 John of immense use personally, when thinking about church and evangelistically.

The three test of a robust and practical Christian life that John lays before us are; right doctrine, obedience to God and love for God and one another. None of us excel at all three and my hope is that 1 John will be of great encouragement to us in our strengths and that we'll lovingly build each other up in the areas in which we are a little weaker.

My prayer has been that God would use this series to grow us individually and as a community here at Trinity Inner South.

Your brother in Christ,



Matt Lehmann

Senior Pastor



THE THREE TESTS OF 1 JOHN

In this series we're hoping that you'll really grasp the great message of 1 John through the sermons and the bible studies which follow. Here's an overview of where we are going over the four weeks.

SERMON SERIES

	TITLE	READING 1	READING 2
8 March	The 3 tests of 1 John	1 John 1:1-4	1 John 5:13
15 March	Right doctrine	John 12:27-36	1 John 1:5-2:6
22 March	Obedience to God	John 16:1-16	1 John 2:28-3:10
29 March	Love for one another	1 John 3:14-24	1 John 4:7-12

BIBLE STUDIES

The Bible studies are designed to compliment the sermons and are ideally done in the week following. They can however be done stand alone and perhaps you'd like to listen to the sermons on website afterwards if you weren't at Trinity Inner South throughout the series. Here's an overview of where the studies are going:

	TOPIC	PASSAGE
Study 1	The 3 tests of 1 John	1 John 1:1-4 & 5:13 ++
Study 2	Right doctrine – Understanding Jesus	1 John 1:1-2:2
Study 3	Obedience to God	1 John 2:15-27
Study 4	Love one another	1 John 3:14-18 & 4:7-21

THE THREE TESTS OF 1 JOHN

BIBLE STUDY

Regular Bible study in small groups is a great way to grow as a Christian. If you are able to join one of our small groups and haven't done so yet, please consider it in the next few weeks. There's more information on how to join a group on our website www.trinityinnersouth.org.au under the "Connect" tab where you'll see Community Groups as the first tab.

Many of our small groups meet weekly with some fortnightly, so perhaps on the other week do the study personally or with a partner or friend. If you aren't able to make a group, perhaps find someone else who lives near you to go through the studies week each week. If you find it hard to get out, maybe find someone who you can chat through the studies with over the phone. I'm sure you are getting the picture that we think small group Bible study is important and a great blessing.

BIBLE STUDY – WEEK 1

1 JOHN 1:1-4 & 5:13

THE 3 TESTS OF 1 JOHN

1. If you heard the sermon on Sunday which of the three tests struck you as one you might need to work on a little?
2. If you've been a Christian for a while what churches have you attended or what Christians has God blessed you with that helped you grow in sound doctrine?
3. One of the bits of "right doctrine" that was covered on Sunday was from 1 John 1:8-9. Read this passage and discuss the dangers in getting this point of doctrine wrong and the freedom of getting it right?
4. What are some ways we can grow in our knowledge of right doctrine other than Sunday sermons or Community Groups?
5. John's second test was "obedience to God". If you've been a Christian for a while can you think of some breakthroughs in your Christian life as you've fought against sin, what brought them about? If you're a new Christian what did you used to think about Christian "rules"?

BIBLE STUDY – WEEK 1

6. Read 1 John 3:4-5. Given we know (from our right doctrine) we're liars if we say we have no sin, what do you think this looks like practically?

Write down any questions you have on this one to SMS in to Matt during the third sermon of this series.

7. What do you think is a good way to care for someone who wants your help fighting sin in his or her life?

8. Read 1 John 4:19-20. Most of us don't hate our fellow Christians but many of us fall short of loving them. What do you think are some practical steps we can take to love not just our friends at church?

PRAY: Spend some time in prayer that we'd grow in all three areas of our life together at Trinity Inner South and for any personal areas of growth that you'd be happy to share with the group (please don't feel any pressure to share).

BIBLE STUDY – WEEK 2

1 JOHN 1-2:2 RIGHT DOCTRINE - UNDERSTANDING JESUS

1. What experiences have you had (that you are happy to share) about people walking away from their faith and adopting false beliefs?

Background: The original recipients of 1 John were likely churches that the apostle John was in fellowship with who had people adopt new teaching and leave their midst (2:19). The people who left were not content just to leave but were trying to persuade the church to believe (2:29).

2. Read 1 John 1:1-4 and 5:13 and from these summarise in your own words what the purpose of this letter from John.
3. Given what we discussed in the background how do you think 1 John 1:1-4 would be comforting to the original audience, what is he saying and why should it be comforting to us?
4. In verses 5 and 6 what do you think it means that God is light? What do you think it means to walk in darkness and why does this prevent fellowship with God?

BIBLE STUDY – WEEK 2

5. In verse 7 what do you think walking in the light means for us today? What is its result?
6. How would you sum up what verses 8-10 say about how a true Christian in fellowship with God deals with sin? Is that how you deal with it?
7. Do you think we can be too lenient a view of our sin in view of God's mercy to us? Alternatively do you think we can be too severe? What do you think John has to say about this in 1 John 2:1-2?
8. How would you explain simply to a friend what God's provision is for Christians who sin from verses 1:7 and 2:2?
9. How would you rate yourself in terms of your obedience to God (you don't have to share this but maybe give people some thinking time). How do you think we are going as a community of God's people in terms of our obedience to him? Any blind spots do you think?

PRAY: For the wisdom never to cling to anything but Jesus death on the cross for us to purify us from sin and for a growing desire to be holy.

BIBLE STUDY – WEEK 3

1 JOHN 2:15-27

DON'T LOVE THE WORLD

1. From the sermon on Sunday, how do you think we go in growing in “right doctrine” while staying grounded and applying it practically into our lives week to week?
2. Read 1 John 2:15-17
3. What do you think John is saying here when he says “Do not love the world”, for God so loved “the world” he gave his only Son (John 3:16)?
4. What two reasons does John give for not loving the world in verses 16 and 17?
5. Given the strong command in this passage what do you think this looks like for us today, we’ve discussed the right belief, what is the obedient response?
6. Read 1 John 2:18-27

BIBLE STUDY – WEEK 3

7. From the introduction to 1 John Matt gave in the sermon last Sunday and what you can pick up from this passage, what seems to have been going on in the life of the church John originally wrote to?

8. What conclusions does John come to about both the false teachers and those he regards as the true church in this passage?

9. What (if any) conclusions can we draw about those who have professed to be Christians for a time but now are no longer among us and openly state they no longer follow Christ?

10. What is the command of John (right obedience) in this passage and what is its result? What does this look like for us today?

PRAY: Flowing out of question 10 pray that God might enable us to be obedient to Him in each area of our lives

BIBLE STUDY – WEEK 4

1 JOHN 3:14-18&4:7-21

LOVE ONE ANOTHER

1. From the sermon on Sunday what was one of the key ways we can love one another in our community?
2. Matt seemed to think we could do better here as a community, do you agree or disagree, explain why?
3. Read 1 John 3:14-18
4. Matt didn't seem to think we did this very well as a community, do you agree or disagree, explain why?
5. Quote: "Hate is negative, seeks the other person's harm, and leads to activity against him, even to the point of murder, like Cain against his brother Abel (Gen 4:8 and 1 John 3:12)" (John Stott). How does John (the apostle) contrast such hatred with true love in verse 16, what does this look like for us?
6. Laying down our life for our brothers and sisters in Christ would be the supreme sacrifice but it is also expressed in lesser things. What do verses 17 and 18 tell us about this and how might we encourage one another to do this practically today?

BIBLE STUDY – WEEK 4

7. Read 1 John 4:7-21 (you may want to remind the group of the structure of John described as waves washing over you repeatedly building a great picture of true Christianity before you do so).
8. How would you explain the logic of verses 9-12 as to why brotherly love is so important? Is this logic fool proof or are there exceptions to this?
9. John talks a lot about us ‘living/abiding in him (God)’ (NIV/ESV) throughout 1 John and also about God living/abiding in us. Read through 4:12-18 again with this in mind.
10. How does God’s love for us, our love for another all tie together?
11. What is the main purpose of John’s letter (i.e. what is the verse it is summed up in) & how does this related to what John says in 4:17 & 18?
12. Discuss some of the key ways we might love one another, pray and don’t forget to tie in one of the key ways we can love one another is bear each others burdens in regards to sin in our lives and correct each other lovingly and with gentleness.

NOTES

FEEDBACK

I'd really appreciate feedback on the series, how helpful you found it and any suggestions for improvement. If you are able please send any feedback via email to office@trinityinnersouth.org.au

Feedback on each aspect of the series would be helpful:

SERMONS

1. Do you think they were faithful to God's word?
2. How engaging were they?
3. Did you feel they were applicable to your life?

BOOKLET

1. Were the studies helpful?
2. Would you use them again if they were produced in future?

OVERALL

1. Did the series help you grow in your relationship with God?
2. Do you have a better understanding of how you personally and we as a community can be faithful with the gospel?

Any other comments you have would be welcome.

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