

# faith, hope, love

1 John 1:1-10  
Inductive Discovery Lesson 16

**Proclaiming Love** What is the first thing you do when you walk into a dark room? You look for the light. Light keeps us from stumbling and bumping into obstacles in darkness. Light helps us to see where we're going. Light *shines*. It can't be dark!

In the beginning God said, "Let there be light," and He separated the light from the darkness. God didn't create humanity to live in the shadows—it was sin that let darkness in. It was sin that separated man from God. But when Jesus stepped into our sin-blackened world, God was saying again, "*Let there be light.*" Jesus is the Light! He is Love! This is the message that John proclaimed.

**Author** As a young man, John didn't seem destined to be known as the "apostle of love." In fact, Jesus' nickname for John and his brother James was the Sons of Thunder! John had a strong and ambitious spirit by nature. He brashly rebuked a man for casting out demons in Jesus' name because the man didn't belong to their group (Mark 9:38). He asked for a place of privilege in Jesus' kingdom (Mark 10:35) without grasping the depth of suffering that lay ahead. And when a Samaritan village refused to show them hospitality, John's first reaction (Luke 9:54) was to ask Jesus if they should call down fire to consume the entire population!

How is it possible that such a competitive, hot-headed individual would later write with heartfelt conviction, "Beloved, let us love one another" (1 John 4:7)? We can answer that question in one word: *transformation*. Compassionate love didn't come naturally to John, but he experienced it and learned what true love is from his Lord's example. Surrendering his strong tendencies to the Holy Spirit's control, he became a passionate man mellowed by grace and knowledge. The harsh demeanor was gone—but zeal for the truth remained.

**Background** Christianity was well-established in the Roman world by the end of the first century A.D. All the documents that compile the New Testament had been written. John's eyewitness gospel account and his letters were among the last writings, penned sometime around 90 A.D.

John was an old man near the end of a long life when he wrote this letter. He had been an eyewitness to Jesus' earthly life, ministry, death and resurrection. He had devoted many years to spreading the gospel and helping to establish the early church. As the last of the twelve, John carried a living memory of that unique band of brothers...and of mourning their loss, one by one. In fact, he had lived long enough to see most of the generation of eye-witness believers pass away.

Now John was observing a troubling rise of new ideas and false teachings take hold in the church. Some were distorting the truth about who Jesus was and His purpose for dying on the cross. Duty-bound to set the record straight, John "*the elder*" (as he called himself) sent off this letter to the churches.

## Approximate Timeline of Key Events during John's life:

----- c. A.D. 27	Jesus calls John to be one of His disciples.
----- c. A.D. 30	Jesus' Crucifixion and Resurrection. From the cross, Jesus entrusts the care of His mother to John. Pentecost: Peter preaches and 3,000 are saved. Birth of the Early Church in Jerusalem.
----- c. A.D. 30-47	Church growth—spread of the Gospel. News of salvation among Samaritans reaches Jerusalem; Peter and John are sent to witness the work there; they pray for the Samaritan believers who then receive baptism of the Holy Spirit.
----- c. A.D. 44	John's brother, James, is executed by Herod.
----- c. A.D. 47	Paul begins his first missionary journey.
----- c. A.D. 67	Paul and Peter are executed in Rome. John is living and ministering in Ephesus.
----- c. A.D. 70	Rome destroys the temple in Jerusalem. Church is scattered.
----- c. A.D. 85-90	John writes his Gospel account and letters.
----- c. A.D. 93	John is exiled to the island of Patmos.
----- c. A.D. 96	John is allowed to return to Ephesus upon the death of Emperor Domitian. John writes Revelation.
----- c. A.D. 98	Death of John.

## **Working Text for 1 John 1:1-10**

New King James Version (NKJ)

**1** That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life— **2** the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us— **3** that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. **4** And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.

**5** This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. **6** If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. **7** But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

**8** If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. **9** If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. **10** If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

## OBSERVE

Start by reading the entire chapter at least once. Now read each section and record what you see. **Use the first column to keep track of what you find in the Bible passage.** (Who? What? When? Where?) Briefly describe, *in your own words*, what it says.

**Use the second column to keep track of information you get from other sources** such as scripture references, a dictionary, concordance, maps, etc. You can also use this section to jot down **your thoughts, impressions or questions**. *Do your best to follow John's train of thought.* Does he use a word or phrase repeatedly, or emphasize a particular topic? Are his words urgent? Encouraging? Commanding? What issues or problems does he address? What questions does he ask?

## 1 John 1:1-4

Facts from the passage:

### My Research and Personal Observations:

[illegible]

## 1 John 1:5-7

Facts from the passage:

[illegible]

### My Research and Personal Observations:

[illegible]

## 1 John 1:8-10

Facts from the passage:

This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal dashed lines, typical of primary-ruled notebook paper. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings present.

### My Research and Personal Observations:

[illegible]

## Key Words and Phrases

Write the definition of the following words and phrases. Use a regular dictionary or a Bible concordance with Greek Dictionary if you have one.

**"fellowship"** (vs. 3,6,7) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**"God is Light"** (vs.5,7) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**"faithful"** (vs.9) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**"just"** (vs.9) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## INTERPRET

**Look for a spiritual lesson.** Be careful not to read into the Bible an idea that is not there. Examine each verse in light of the verses around it. To help you find a spiritual lesson, ask questions such as: Is there a command to obey? Is there a promise to claim? Is there a condition to that promise? Is there a warning to heed? Is there an example to follow or avoid? **State the lesson in one simple sentence.**

## APPLY

We don't study the Bible just to gather information—we want to spiritually grow. Our heart needs to be open to change. The only way to move truth off the pages of your Bible and into your life is to **put it into action.**

To apply a spiritual lesson, we must examine ourselves and take deliberate steps to do something with what we have learned. Ask yourself: Is this a new insight for me, or does it reinforce what I already know? What does it challenge me to do? Does it point out error in my attitude or actions? What changes does it require? Think of how the lesson relates to you and what specific course of action you will take. **Write your application in the form of a question to make it personal.**

### 1 John 1 :1-4

Lesson: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Application: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_?

### 1 John 1 :5-7

Lesson: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Application: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_?

### 1 John 1:8-10

Lesson: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Application: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_?

## Summary

Write a simple sentence that summarizes what the chapter is about. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Give a title to the chapter to help you remember what it says.

\_\_\_\_\_

## *Up close and personal*

**If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins  
and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

1 John 1:9

### **Memorize** God's Word

Choose the translation you prefer to memorize the verse in and re-write it here.

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### **Meditate** on God's Word

While you memorize this verse, let it work into your heart and mind. Scripture meditation is like a good cup of tea—the longer it steeps, the richer the flavor. So give yourself permission to slowly savor God's Word! Use the questions below (like a tea bag) to keep dipping into this verse.

Challenge alert: You won't always see an obvious answer directly from the verse. Just *think and pray* about it and share what the Lord brings to your heart and mind.

**Look up.** What does this verse teach you about God? (For example, look for signs of His character, His attributes, His works, His promises.)

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**Look around.** What does this verse teach you about the world and people in general?

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**Look within.** What does this verse teach you about yourself?

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**Look ahead.** Does this verse give you reason to hope? Briefly share your thoughts.

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**Look alive!** Given the opportunity, how would you express the truth found in this verse to someone who needs to hear it?

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 *Make God's Word Your Prayer*

As you memorize and meditate on this verse, pray it back to the Lord. Let the Holy Spirit examine your heart, increase your understanding, and help you to pray. Ask Him for faith and strength to *act* on the truth of God's Word.

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*God's Word Bearing Fruit*

For you personally, what has been the most important lesson from this chapter? How will you put what you have learned into practice?

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*Something to Think About . . .*

Sleep with clean hands: either kept clean all day by integrity, or washed clean each night by repentance.

- John Donne -  
(1572-1631)

Message

Notes:



