



Session

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A LETTER FROM JOHN

1 John

The apostle John, one of Jesus' disciples, wrote this letter. John lived in Ephesus where he continued to minister to the churches in the area. This letter was probably written late in John's life because it is evident in reading the book that there were an abundance of false teachers infiltrating the church. Over time, these false teachers began teaching that either Jesus did not physically live on earth, or Jesus, the man who did live on earth, was not divine. Much of John's encouragement to the church found in the three letters he wrote concern this false teaching and John's desire to make sure the believers truly understood the reality of Jesus Christ.

It appears that the members of the Ephesian church were confused by the false teachers. The believers did not know who they should believe and trust. John offered the churches simple tests to help them understand the truth of Christ and know for sure that believers were filled with the Holy Spirit. John redirected the churches to remember the simple truth of the gospel that they knew in the beginning: God had not changed and the sacrifice of Jesus that they believed in at first was still true for them now. Believers knew that God is light and that in Him there was no darkness. To test the veracity of a teacher's claims, one needed only to identify if the teaching led to the light. Teaching that did not show God as light was false teaching.

John's second purpose for writing this letter was to identify the love of God that should drive all believers to live like Jesus. God is love! God showed His love to people when He sent Jesus to earth. Jesus showed His love for people when He died on the cross to pay for sins, making it possible for people to be reconciled with God. John helped the people refocus on the love of God. The love of God should lead believers to likewise show love to others. The truth of Jesus' sacrifice for all people should drive the way believers show others the love of Christ. Because God loves us, we should love others.