

Calvary Chapel of El Cajon Women's Bible Studies

I JOHN 4: 1-12

Lesson 13

REVIEW:

It is by our actions that we know we are living in the truth... I John 3:19. How have you found this statement to be true in your life?

FIRST DAY:

Read and study I John 4:1-12 inductively. See pages 5 and 6.

SECOND DAY: Read I John 4:1-3

1. John opened his exhortation in I John 4:1 with the word *beloved*. This word expressed God's love for believers as well as John's love. You, too, are *beloved* of God and He wants to speak to you through His Word today just as powerfully as He did to the first century Christians. What does I John 4:1a tell believers to do?
 - a. The word *try* is translated *test* in other versions of the Bible. The believers were to *test the spirits*. *Spirits* here refers to human beings such as teachers, pastors, evangelists activated either by demons or by the Holy Spirit. Why were they to *test the spirits*?
2. According to I John 4:2,3, what is the *test* whereby we can know whether teachers are true or false?
3. Read the following verses and record what you have learned about *false prophets*:
 - a. Matthew 7:15,16
 - b. Matthew 24:4
 - c. Romans 16:18
 - d. 2 Peter 2:1
4. I John 4:1-6 challenges us to use our heads as well as our hearts. It is not God's will that His children be deceived or gullible. There are counterfeiters and deceivers that infiltrate the body. If we are going to be kept from deception, we must be able to detect false teaching such as the denial of the deity of Christ and the inspiration of the Scripture. How will applying the test of I John 4:2,3 keep you from being deceived by one of these counterfeit Christs? (Antichrist can mean either against Christ or a counterfeit Christ).

- a. How do you personally protect yourself from being deceived?

*'Twas much, that man was made like God before.
But, that God should be made like man, much more.
-J. Donne*

THIRD DAY: Read I John 4:4-6

1. Christians in John's time were exposed to the assaults of false teachers. How does I John 4:4 assure the believers that they have the victory over these deceivers? Write your answer phrase by phrase from I John 4:4. Underline or highlight I John 4:4b.

- a. Define the word *overcome*.

- b. If a Christian today is frightened or overwhelmed when confronted by one of these clever deceivers, how would relying on I John 4:4 encourage and assure her she need not fall prey to these men's deceptive teachings?

2. Take a closer look at the false teachers and the true apostles by filling out the following chart from I John 4:5,6a:

False Teachers

True Teachers

- a. They are

- a. We are

- b. therefore

- b. he that

- c. and

- c. he that is not

3. The phrase *hereby we know* appears twice in this passage. From I John 4:1-6, what have you learned that will enable you to recognize the *spirit of truth* and the *spirit of error*?

*Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God,
that we might know the things freely given to us by God.
-I Corinthians 2:12*

FOURTH DAY: Read I John 4:7-10

1. The emphasis of John's letter now shifts from *testing the spirits* to that of *loving one another*. Summarize these emphases by reviewing and writing I John 3:23.
 - a. Print the opening phrase of I John 4:7.
 - b. Realizing this is not just an ardent appeal from John but a command of Christ, how are you obeying this command today? Reflect on your relationships, friendships, and attitudes towards other members of the body of Christ in reference to this command. How are you putting this into practice when you're offended, upset, or crushed?
2. Ponder I John 4:7,8. What did you learn about the origin and nature of this *love*?
Verse 7: Love is _____ Verse 8: God is _____.
 - a. Why do you think John links *loving others* with *knowing God*?
3. How did God manifest or demonstrate His love for us? I John 4:9
4. *In this act we see what real love is; it is not our love for God, but His love for us when He sent His Son to be the atoning sacrifice, that paid the penalty for our sin* (I John 4:10 paraphrase). Define the phrase *Herein is love* by describing this *love* in your own words from I John 4:9,10.
 - a. Did we deserve this love or do anything to earn this love? Support your answer with Scripture.
 - b. Since love is the fruit of the indwelling Spirit, what might not loving others indicate about a person? See John 15:5.
5. Share an insight on loving others that you have gleaned from I John 4:7-10.

Amazing love! How can it be that Thou my God shouldst die for me?
-Sagina

FIFTH DAY: Read I John 4:11,12

1. What did you learn from I John 4:11 about our response to God's love?
 - a. Reflect on the phrase, *God so loved us*. Intently gaze on that *love* revealed in I John 4:9,10. List as many qualities of love as you can think of revealed in that *love*.
 - b. In what way does God's love motivate you to love others?
2. Read I John 4:12. *Whom no one has seen (is seen in) those who love others*. How does our loving *one another* (as God loves us) reveal God to others?
3. According to I John 4:12 we recognize that God has not only done something *for* us but He has done something *in* us. To think that God dwells within us and that through His indwelling presence His love is *perfected* or *matured* in us is an awesome reality. Are you aware of this glorious indwelling presence of God? What difference does it make in your relationships with others to recognize this?

SIXTH DAY: Review I John 4:1-12

1. Identify the two subjects dealt with in I John 4:1-12.
 - a. Which of these two subjects, *testing the spirits* or *loving others*, do you sense you need to concentrate on more fully? Why?
2. Why is what we believe about Jesus Christ crucial to our salvation?
3. *In his conflicts with sin, temptation, or error (false teachers or false doctrine), the Christian should never despair, for his God will ensure him the victory*. Explain why this is true using I John 4:4.
4. So much of I John speaks to us about loving others. In what way does the perspective of I John 4:7-12 increase your desire to be obedient to Jesus' command to *love one another*?
 - a. Share any changes that have taken place in your life as you have responded to the emphasis on love that is urged in I John.

*Nobody will deny that the imperfections of others cause us a lot of inconvenience!
Please understand about love. I am not asking from you a love which is tender and emotional.
All I ask is that your will should choose to love,
that you should make up your mind to love others regardless of your feelings.
"Let Go" - Fenelon*

I John 4:1-12

VERSE

WHAT THE VERSE IS SAYING

- 1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.
- 2 Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:
- 3 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.
- 4 Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world.
- 5 They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.
- 6 We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.
- 7 Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.
- 8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.
- 9 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.
- 10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.
- 11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.
- 12 No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us.

Who:

When:

What:

Where:

Why:

How:

What does this passage mean?

How does it apply to you personally?