

1 John - Study Companion

A printable guide for tracing light, truth, confession, love, obedience, lawlessness, discernment, and assurance across all five chapters

Don't take my word for it - Open your Bible.

READ • OBSERVE • ANSWER • COMPARE • TEST • INTERPRET

Use this Companion beside an open Bible and the full 1 John study at OpenYourBible.org. Read the assigned passage first. Record what you actually see before consulting commentary. The questions mirror the authoritative study manuscript so your notes stay aligned with the teaching.

Name: _____

Date started: _____

Study completed: _____

Study Progress

Session	Passage	Done
1. Walking in the Light Without Pretending	1 John 1:1-2:2	☐
2. Knowing God Should Become Visible	1 John 2:3-17; Leviticus 19:17-18; John 13:34-35	☐
3. Antichrists, Departure, and What Remains From the Beginning	1 John 2:18-27	☐
4. Children of God, Lawlessness, and Family Resemblance	1 John 2:28-3:10; review 1 John 1:8-2:2	☐
5. Love That Becomes Material	1 John 3:11-24; Genesis 4:1-12	☐
6. Test the Spirits - and Then Love Like You Know God	1 John 4:1-21	☐
7. Love for God, Commandments, and Eternal Life	1 John 5:1-12; John 19:31-37	☐
8. So That You May Know	1 John 5:13-21	☐

How to Use the What I Say -> What John Says Should Be Visible Lens

After each session, name the claim or confession John is testing, the visible evidence he says should accompany it, the contradiction he warns against, and the next step into the light. The goal is not obsessive self-inspection or a spiritual scorecard. It is to let John's repeated 'if we say' and 'by this we know' language help distinguish truthful assurance from reassurance built on pretending.

Session 1 - Walking in the Light Without Pretending

OPEN YOUR BIBLE 1 John 1:1-2:2

Read the passage before answering. Record the evidence first. Let Scripture interpret Scripture, and distinguish what the text states from what requires inference.

1. What senses does John appeal to when describing the Word of life?

2. Why might hearing, seeing, and touching matter in a community facing false teaching?

3. Why does John say he proclaims what he has witnessed?

4. What does John say about Yehovah and light?

5. What contradiction does he identify in someone claiming fellowship while walking in darkness?

6. Does John define walking in the light as claiming never to sin?

7. What does he say about someone who claims to have no sin?

8. What does confession require us to admit?

9. What does John say Yehovah does when sins are confessed?

10. Why does John say he is writing?

11. What provision exists if a believer does sin?

12. How does Yeshua's role as Advocate protect the passage from perfectionism?

13. How does John's command not to sin protect it from treating grace as indifference?

What I Say -> What John Says Should Be Visible

Claim / confession John is testing	Visible evidence John expects
Contradiction to watch for	Next step into the light

Session 2 - Knowing God Should Become Visible

OPEN YOUR BIBLE 1 John 2:3-17; Leviticus 19:17-18; John 13:34-35

Read the passage before answering. Record the evidence first. Let Scripture interpret Scripture, and distinguish what the text states from what requires inference.

1. How does John say believers know that they know Yehovah?

2. What contradiction does he identify in someone claiming to know Him while refusing His commandments?

3. Does John say obedience purchases salvation?

4. What does John say about someone who claims to remain in Yeshua?

5. How should that person walk?

6. Why does John describe the love command as both old and new?

7. Where does Scripture command love of neighbor before the New Testament?

8. What does John say about someone who claims to be in light while hating another believer?

9. What truths does John affirm about his readers in verses 12-14?

10. How does John describe 'the world' he warns them not to love?

11. What does he say is passing away?

12. What remains?

What I Say -> What John Says Should Be Visible

Claim / confession John is testing	Visible evidence John expects
Contradiction to watch for	Next step into the light

Session 3 - Antichrists, Departure, and What Remains From the Beginning

OPEN YOUR BIBLE 1 John 2:18-27

Read the passage before answering. Record the evidence first. Let Scripture interpret Scripture, and distinguish what the text states from what requires inference.

1. How many antichrists does John say already exist in his own time?

2. What does this caution us against assuming the term always means?

3. What does John say about those who departed from the community?

4. Why should that statement not become a rule about every person who leaves a congregation?

5. What truths concerning the Father and Son does John consider essential?

6. What does John tell believers to let remain in them?

7. Why is 'from the beginning' important?

8. What does John say about the anointing believers have received?

9. How does the fact that John himself is teaching help clarify what 'you do not need anyone to teach you' cannot mean?

10. How should spiritual claims be tested when they contradict what Yehovah has already revealed?

What I Say -> What John Says Should Be Visible

Claim / confession John is testing	Visible evidence John expects
Contradiction to watch for	Next step into the light

Session 4 - Children of God, Lawlessness, and Family Resemblance

OPEN YOUR BIBLE 1 John 2:28-3:10; review 1 John 1:8-2:2

Read the passage before answering. Record the evidence first. Let Scripture interpret Scripture, and distinguish what the text states from what requires inference.

1. What does John say believers already are?

2. What has not yet fully appeared?

3. What effect should hope in Yeshua's appearing have now?

4. How does John define sin in 3:4?

5. What does anomia communicate?

6. What did Yeshua appear to do concerning sin?

7. What strong language does John use about those born of God and sin?

8. Why can this not simply mean that a genuine believer never commits another individual sin?

9. How does 1 John 1:8-2:2 control our interpretation?

10. What distinction is John drawing between confessed failure and a life characterized by ongoing rebellion?

11. What family resemblance does John expect from Yehovah's children?

What I Say -> What John Says Should Be Visible

Claim / confession John is testing	Visible evidence John expects
Contradiction to watch for	Next step into the light

Session 5 - Love That Becomes Material

OPEN YOUR BIBLE 1 John 3:11-24; Genesis 4:1-12

Read the passage before answering. Record the evidence first. Let Scripture interpret Scripture, and distinguish what the text states from what requires inference.

1. What message does John say believers have heard from the beginning?

2. Why does he introduce Cain?

3. What relationship does John draw between hatred and murder?

4. How does Yeshua define love through His own action?

5. What practical example does John give?

6. Why does material generosity belong in a discussion about love?

7. What does it mean to love in action and truth?

8. How might a believer's heart condemn them?

9. What does John say about Yehovah in relation to the heart?

10. What commands does John bring together near the end?

11. What role does the Spirit play in assurance?

What I Say -> What John Says Should Be Visible

Claim / confession John is testing	Visible evidence John expects
Contradiction to watch for	Next step into the light

Session 6 - Test the Spirits - and Then Love Like You Know God

OPEN YOUR BIBLE 1 John 4:1-21

Read the passage before answering. Record the evidence first. Let Scripture interpret Scripture, and distinguish what the text states from what requires inference.

1. Why does John tell believers to test spiritual claims?

2. Does spiritual language automatically prove a message comes from Yehovah?

3. What confession concerning Yeshua is central to John's test?

4. What does John say about the One who is in believers?

5. How does John define love?

6. Who loved first?

7. What action demonstrates Yehovah's love?

8. How does love among believers make the unseen God visible?

9. What role does the Spirit play in assurance?

10. What kind of fear does John connect with punishment?

11. Why should 'perfect love casts out fear' not be used to shame people for anxiety, ordinary fear, caution, or trauma responses?

12. What contradiction does John identify in someone claiming to love God while hating another believer?

13. How do truth concerning Yeshua and practical love remain connected in the same chapter?

What I Say -> What John Says Should Be Visible

Claim / confession John is testing	Visible evidence John expects
Contradiction to watch for	Next step into the light

Session 7 - Love for God, Commandments, and Eternal Life

OPEN YOUR BIBLE 1 John 5:1-12; John 19:31-37

Read the passage before answering. Record the evidence first. Let Scripture interpret Scripture, and distinguish what the text states from what requires inference.

1. What does John connect with being born of God?

2. How does love for the Father affect love for His children?

3. How does John define love for God?

4. What does he say about Yehovah's commandments?

5. Does John portray love and obedience as enemies?

6. Does 'not burdensome' necessarily mean obedience never costs anything?

7. Why should commandments not automatically be expanded into every human religious rule?

8. What does John say overcomes the world?

9. How do faith, love, and obedience work together?

10. What does John say about water and blood?

11. What role does the Spirit play?

12. What major interpretations of the imagery have been proposed?

13. What does John clearly emphasize regardless of the symbolism?

14. Where does eternal life reside?

What I Say -> What John Says Should Be Visible

Claim / confession John is testing	Visible evidence John expects
Contradiction to watch for	Next step into the light

Session 8 - So That You May Know

OPEN YOUR BIBLE 1 John 5:13-21

Read the passage before answering. Record the evidence first. Let Scripture interpret Scripture, and distinguish what the text states from what requires inference.

1. Why does John say he has written?

2. Does his stated goal suggest assurance or perpetual uncertainty?

3. What confidence does he describe in prayer?

4. What qualifies prayer in verse 14?

5. What does John say about sin leading to death?

6. Does he explicitly define that sin?

7. Why should we avoid dogmatism where John gives little explanation?

8. What does John say about those born of God and ongoing sin?

9. What textual and grammatical questions affect the second half of verse 18?

10. What role does protection from the evil one play?

11. What declarations of knowledge appear near the end?

12. What interpretive question surrounds 'This is the true God and eternal life'?

13. What is John's final command?

14. Why might idolatry be an appropriate final warning?

What I Say -> What John Says Should Be Visible

Claim / confession John is testing	Visible evidence John expects
Contradiction to watch for	Next step into the light

Whole-Letter Synthesis

Read 1 John 1-5 one final time. Use the questions below to trace the whole letter rather than one isolated verse.

1. What does John say his readers can know?

2. What claims begin with 'if we say'?

3. What statements use language such as 'by this we know'?

4. How does John distinguish walking in light from claiming sinless perfection?

5. What provision does he give believers who sin?

6. What does John say about knowing God and keeping His commandments?

7. How does he connect remaining in Yeshua with walking as Yeshua walked?

8. What role does love play in assurance?

9. What role does obedience play?

10. What role does truth concerning Yeshua play?

11. How does John define sin in 3:4?

12. How should 1 John 1:8-2:2 help interpret the strong sin language in chapter 3?

13. What does John say about people who remain in hatred?

14. How does practical care for material needs become evidence of love?

15. What does John tell believers to do with spiritual claims?

16. Why is 'God is love' not the same thing as saying every human definition of love is correct?

17. What kind of fear does mature love cast out in chapter 4?

18. How does John define love for God in chapter 5?

19. What does he say about Yehovah's commandments?

20. What does John teach about eternal life and the Son?

21. What interpretive questions remain concerning water and blood?

22. What uncertainty surrounds the sin leading to death?

23. Why is John's stated purpose in 5:13 so important for interpreting the tone of the letter?

24. What does John's final warning about idols contribute to the message?

25. Where does your profession of faith most clearly match your life?

26. Where is there still a gap between what you say you believe and what your conduct reveals?

27. Does that gap call for despair - or confession, repentance, and continued walking in the light?

Final Assurance Map

What truths about Yeshua anchor assurance in 1 John?

What place does confession have in walking in the light?

How do obedience and love function as fruit rather than purchase price?

What false forms of assurance does John expose?

What does John say believers can actually know?

Where does your profession already match your life, and where is Yehovah calling you further into the light?