



# I JOHN

## JOHN'S REASON FOR WRITING

**1** <sup>1</sup>The Word of life existed from the beginning. We have heard it. We have seen it. We observed and touched it. <sup>2</sup>This life was revealed to us. We have seen it, and we testify about it. We are reporting to you about this eternal life that was in the presence of the Father and was revealed to us. <sup>3</sup>This is the life we have seen and heard. We are reporting about it to you also so that you, too, can have a relationship with us. Our relationship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. <sup>4</sup>We are writing this so that we can be completely filled with joy.

## THROUGH JESUS WE HAVE A RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

<sup>5</sup>This is the message we heard from Christ and are reporting to you: God is light, and there isn't any darkness in him. <sup>6</sup>If we say, "We have a relationship with God" and yet live in the dark, we're lying. We aren't being truthful.

<sup>7</sup>But if we live in the light in the same way that God is in the light, we have a relationship with each other. And the blood of his Son Jesus cleanses us from every sin. <sup>8</sup>If we say, "We aren't sinful" we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. <sup>9</sup>God is faithful and reliable. If we confess our sins, he forgives them and cleanses us from everything we've done wrong. <sup>10</sup>If we say, "We have never sinned," we turn God into a liar and his Word is not in us.

**2** <sup>1</sup>My dear children, I'm writing this to you so that you will not sin. Yet, if anyone does sin, we have Jesus Christ, who has God's full approval. He speaks on our behalf when we come into the presence of the Father. <sup>2</sup>He is the payment for our sins, and not only for our sins, but also for the sins of the whole world.

## THOSE WHO KNOW CHRIST OBEY HIS COMMANDMENTS

<sup>3</sup>We are sure that we know Christ if we obey his commandments. <sup>4</sup>The person who says, "I know him," but doesn't obey his commandments is a liar. The truth isn't in that person. <sup>5</sup>But whoever obeys what Christ says is the kind of person in whom God's love is perfected. That's how we know we are in Christ. <sup>6</sup>Those who say that they live in him must live the same way he lived.

<sup>7</sup>Dear friends, it's not as though I'm writing to give you a new commandment. Rather, I'm giving you an old commandment that you've had from the beginning. It's the old commandment you've already heard. <sup>8</sup>On the other hand, I'm writing to give you a new commandment. It's a truth that exists in Christ and in you: The darkness is fading, and the true light is already shining.

<sup>9</sup>Those who say that they are in the light but hate other believers are still in the dark. <sup>10</sup>Those who love other believers live in the light. Nothing will destroy the faith of those who live in the light. <sup>11</sup>Those who hate other believers are in the dark and live in the dark. They don't know where they're going, because they can't see in the dark.

DECEMBER 19

### **1 John 1:1-2:27**

God will forgive everyone who asks for forgiveness for what they have done wrong and then tries to obey him. Christians are characterized by their effort to live holy lives. Note that genuine Christians do not continue to intentionally sin. If a Christian does sin, however, Jesus is ready to forgive.

**DON'T LOVE THE WORLD**

<sup>12</sup>I'm writing to you, dear children, because your sins are forgiven through Christ.

<sup>13</sup>I'm writing to you, fathers, because you know Christ who has existed from the beginning.

I'm writing to you, young people, because you have won the victory over the evil one.

<sup>14</sup>I've written to you, children, because you know the Father.

I've written to you, fathers, because you know Christ, who has existed from the beginning.

I've written to you, young people, because you are strong and God's word lives in you. You have won the victory over the evil one.

<sup>15</sup>Don't love the world and what it offers. Those who love the world don't have the Father's love in them. <sup>16</sup>Not everything that the world offers—physical gratification, greed, and extravagant lifestyles—comes from the Father. It comes from the world, and <sup>17</sup>the world and its evil desires are passing away. But the person who does what God wants lives forever.

**LIVE IN CHRIST**

<sup>18</sup>Children, it's the end of time. You've heard that an antichrist is coming. Certainly, many antichrists are already here. That's how we know it's the end of time. <sup>19</sup>They left us. However, they were never really part of us. If they had been, they would have stayed with us. But by leaving they made it clear that none of them were part of us.

<sup>20</sup>The Holy One has anointed you, so all of you have knowledge. <sup>21</sup>I'm writing to you because you know the truth, not because you don't know the truth. You know that no lie ever comes from the truth.

<sup>22</sup>Who is a liar? Who else but the person who rejects Jesus as the Messiah? The person who rejects the Father and the Son is an antichrist. <sup>23</sup>Everyone who rejects the Son doesn't have the Father either. The person who acknowledges the Son also has the Father. <sup>24</sup>Make sure that the message you heard from the beginning lives in you. If that message lives in you, you will also live in the Son and in the Father. <sup>25</sup>Christ has given us the promise of eternal life.

<sup>26</sup>I'm writing to you about those who are trying to deceive you. <sup>27</sup>The anointing you received from Christ lives in you. You don't need anyone to teach you something else. Instead, Christ's anointing teaches you about everything. His anointing is true and contains no lie. So live in Christ as he taught you to do.

**Today**

Tell God about all the sins you have committed during the last day. Be specific. Ask for his forgiveness and pray for strength to avoid repeating these sins.

**DECEMBER 20****1 John 2:28-4:21**

Christians become God's beloved children. God's children are known by their love for each other and their love for and faithfulness to God.

**WE ARE GOD'S CHILDREN**

<sup>28</sup>Now, dear children, live in Christ. Then, when he appears we will have confidence, and when he comes we won't turn from him in shame. <sup>29</sup>If you know that Christ has God's approval, you also know that everyone who does what God approves of has been born from God.

**3** <sup>1</sup>Consider this: The Father has given us his love. He loves us so much that we are actually called God's dear children. And that's what we are. For this reason the world doesn't recognize us, and it didn't recognize him either. <sup>2</sup>Dear friends, now we are God's children. What we will be isn't completely clear yet. We do know that when Christ appears we will be like him because we will see him as he is. <sup>3</sup>So all people who have this confidence in Christ keep themselves pure, as Christ is pure.

<sup>4</sup>Those who live sinful lives are disobeying God. Sin is disobedience. <sup>5</sup>You know that Christ appeared in order to take away our sins. He isn't sinful.





<sup>6</sup>Those who live in Christ don't go on sinning. Those who go on sinning haven't seen or known Christ.

<sup>7</sup>Dear children, don't let anyone deceive you. Whoever does what God approves of has God's approval as Christ has God's approval. <sup>8</sup>The person who lives a sinful life belongs to the devil, because the devil has been committing sin since the beginning. The reason that the Son of God appeared was to destroy what the devil does. <sup>9</sup>Those who have been born from God don't live sinful lives. What God has said lives in them, and they can't live sinful lives. They have been born from God. <sup>10</sup>This is the way God's children are distinguished from the devil's children. Everyone who doesn't do what is right or love other believers isn't God's child.

#### LOVE ONE ANOTHER

<sup>11</sup>The message that you have heard from the beginning is to love each other. <sup>12</sup>Don't be like Cain. He was a child of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did Cain murder his brother? Because the things Cain did were evil and the things his brother did had God's approval. <sup>13</sup>Brothers and sisters, don't be surprised if the world hates you.

<sup>14</sup>We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love other believers. The person who doesn't grow in love remains in death. <sup>15</sup>Everyone who hates another believer is a murderer, and you know that a murderer doesn't have eternal life.

<sup>16</sup>We understand what love is when we realize that Christ gave his life for us. That means we must give our lives for other believers. <sup>17</sup>Now, suppose a person has enough to live on and notices another believer in need. How can God's love be in that person if he doesn't bother to help the other believer? <sup>18</sup>Dear children, we must show love through actions that are sincere, not through empty words.

<sup>19</sup>This is how we will know that we belong to the truth and how we will be reassured in his presence. <sup>20</sup>Whenever our conscience condemns us, we will be reassured that God is greater than our conscience and knows everything. <sup>21</sup>Dear friends, if our conscience doesn't condemn us, we can boldly look to God <sup>22</sup>and receive from him anything we ask. We receive it because we obey his commandments and do what pleases him. <sup>23</sup>This is his commandment: to believe in his Son, the one named Jesus Christ, and to love each other as he commanded us. <sup>24</sup>Those who obey Christ's commandments live in God, and God lives in them. We know that he lives in us because he has given us the Spirit.

#### TEST PEOPLE WHO SAY THEY HAVE GOD'S SPIRIT

**4** <sup>1</sup>Dear friends, don't believe all people who say that they have the Spirit. Instead, test them. See whether the spirit they have is from God, because there are many false prophets in the world. <sup>2</sup>This is how you can recognize God's Spirit: Every person who declares that Jesus Christ has come as a human has the Spirit that is from God. <sup>3</sup>But every person who doesn't declare that Jesus Christ has come as a human has a spirit that isn't from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist that you have heard is coming. That spirit is already in the world.

<sup>4</sup>Dear children, you belong to God. So you have won the victory over these people, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. <sup>5</sup>These people belong to the world. That's why they speak the thoughts of the world, and the world listens to them. <sup>6</sup>We belong to God. The person who knows God listens to us. Whoever doesn't belong to God doesn't listen to us. That's how we can tell the Spirit of truth from the spirit of lies.

#### ***Who was Cain and why did he murder his brother? (3:12)***

Cain was the first son of Adam and Eve, and he was a farmer. He brought some of his crops as a sacrifice to God. His brother Abel was a shepherd who sacrificed a lamb to God. God accepted Abel's offering but not Cain's. Cain became angry and killed his brother. God then sent Cain away to wander the earth. (See Genesis 4.)





**GOD'S LOVE LIVES IN HIS PEOPLE**

<sup>7</sup>Dear friends, we must love each other because love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born from God and knows God. <sup>8</sup>The person who doesn't love doesn't know God, because God is love. <sup>9</sup>God has shown us his love by sending his only Son into the world so that we could have life through him. <sup>10</sup>This is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the payment for our sins. <sup>11</sup>Dear friends, if this is the way God loved us, we must also love each other. <sup>12</sup>No one has ever seen God. If we love each other, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us. <sup>13</sup>We know that we live in him and he lives in us because he has given us his Spirit.

<sup>14</sup>We have seen and testify to the fact that the Father sent his Son as the Savior of the world. <sup>15</sup>God lives in those who declare that Jesus is the Son of God, and they live in God. <sup>16</sup>We have known and believed that God loves us. God is love. Those who live in God's love live in God, and God lives in them.

<sup>17</sup>God's love has reached its goal in us. So we look ahead with confidence to the day of judgment. While we are in this world, we are exactly like him, with regard to love. <sup>18</sup>No fear exists where his love is. Rather, perfect love gets rid of fear, because fear involves punishment. The person who lives in fear doesn't have perfect love.

<sup>19</sup>We love because God loved us first. <sup>20</sup>Whoever says, "I love God," but hates another believer is a liar. People who don't love other believers, whom they have seen, can't love God, whom they have not seen. <sup>21</sup>Christ has given us this commandment: The person who loves God must also love other believers.

**Today**

Ask God to show you a new way to demonstrate your love for him.



**DECEMBER 21**

**1 John 5:1-21**

John continued to describe God's true children. God's children are people who believe that Jesus is the Messiah, obey God's commands, and love him. John concluded that God's children will receive eternal life and that they can live knowing that they have God's approval.

**THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN JESUS ARE GOD'S CHILDREN**

**5** <sup>1</sup>Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Messiah has been born from God. Everyone who loves the Father also loves his children. <sup>2</sup>We know that we love God's children when we love God by obeying his commandments. <sup>3</sup>To love God means that we obey his commandments. Obeying his commandments isn't difficult <sup>4</sup>because everyone who has been born from God has won the victory over the world. Our faith is what wins the victory over the world. <sup>5</sup>Who wins the victory over the world? Isn't it the person who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

<sup>6</sup>This Son of God is Jesus Christ, who came by water and blood. He didn't come with water only, but with water and with blood. The Spirit is the one who verifies this, because the Spirit is the truth. <sup>7</sup>There are three witnesses:<sup>a</sup> <sup>8</sup>the Spirit, the water, and the blood. These three witnesses agree.

<sup>9</sup>We accept human testimony. God's testimony is greater because it is the testimony that he has given about his Son. <sup>10</sup>Those who believe in the Son of God have the testimony of God in them. Those who don't believe God have made God a liar. They haven't believed the testimony that God has given about his Son.

<sup>11</sup>This is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is found in his Son. <sup>12</sup>The person who has the Son has this life. The person who doesn't have the Son of God doesn't have this life.

**CONCLUSION**

<sup>13</sup>I've written this to those who believe in the Son of God so that they will know that they have eternal life.

<sup>14</sup>We are confident that God listens to us if we ask for anything that has his approval. <sup>15</sup>We know that he listens to our requests. So we know that we already have what we ask him for.

<sup>a</sup>5:7 Four very late manuscripts add verses 7b-8a: "in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit. These three witnesses agree. And there are three witnesses on earth:"





<sup>16</sup>If you see another believer committing a sin that doesn't lead to death, you should pray that God would give that person life. This is true for those who commit sins that don't lead to death. There is a sin that leads to death. I'm not telling you to pray about that. <sup>17</sup>Every kind of wrongdoing is sin, yet there are sins that don't lead to death.

<sup>18</sup>We know that those who have been born from God don't go on sinning. Rather, the Son of God protects them, and the evil one can't harm them.

<sup>19</sup>We know that we are from God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one.

<sup>20</sup>We know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding so that we know the real God. We are in the one who is real, his Son Jesus Christ. This Jesus Christ is the real God and eternal life.

<sup>21</sup>Dear children, guard yourselves from false gods.

**Today**

Ask God to help you identify and control attractive but potentially destructive influences. Be careful to guard your time with God.

