

Book 62: 1 John

“And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.” – 1 John 1:4

- By this time John was the last of the original twelve apostles that remained alive.
- Jerusalem had been destroyed by the Romans in A.D. 70.
- John was now in Ephesus, where Paul and Timothy had both previously served.
- The Apostle John wrote his epistles, along with his Gospel and Revelation, toward the end of the 1st Century, around A.D. 95.

- By this time the church had matured, so the early excitement present at the very beginning was now gone.
- The Ephesian church was very active, but, as stated in Revelation 2:4, they had “left their first love.”
- False teachers, notably the Gnostics (claiming to have special knowledge), were also trying to gain a foothold and needed to be confronted.

- “John wrote this fatherly epistle out of loving concern for his “little children,” whose steadfastness in the truth was being threatened by the lure of worldliness and the guile of false teachers.”
– The Open Bible

- John actually gives us several reasons why he wrote this letter. For example:
 - 1:3 To encourage our fellowship
 - 1:4 That our joy may be full
 - 2:1 That we may not sin.
 - 2:26 To protect us against deceivers.
 - 5:13 To give assurance of eternal life.

- This letter contains several “God is...” statements that are very important in helping us to understand Him:
 - 1:5 God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.
 - 3:20 God is greater than our heart, and knows all things.
 - 4:8 God is love.
 - 4:16 God is love (again).

1 John: Key Words

- There are a total of 105 verses in the 5 chapters of 1 John.
- The word “love” appears in 26 of these verses.
- The word “know” appears in 32 of them.
- “Jesus” appears 12 times, most of those as “Jesus Christ”, which we find in every chapter.

1 John: Studying the Letter

- As we read through the letter, look for how the key words *love* and *know* are used.
- Also look for contrasts:
 - Light and Darkness
 - Love and Hate
 - Christ and Antichrist
- Finally, look for the things that contribute to a healthy Christian life and to a healthy church.