Precept™

Precept upon Precept

ESV

1 John and 2 & 3 John

How to Know You Have Eternal Life

Know God deeply. Live differently.

Greetings from Precept,

We are so glad you've chosen to study God's Word. You're in for a rich time learning about God, His character, His ways, and the relationship we have with Him. We're confident God's Word will give you the knowledge and the motivation to help you walk in a manner worthy of your calling in Christ Jesus and that you'll be personally challenged, encouraged, and changed by the power of His supernatural Word.

We'd like to stay in touch with you so that we can tell you about the wonderful things God is doing through Precept. Will you connect with us? We want to hear your story of how God's Word has impacted you by studying Inductively.

Visit the Precept Africa website at www.precept.org.za or join us on *Facebook* at *Precept Africa*.

Finally, we want to thank you for your commitment to faithfully study God's Word in order to ***"present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth"*** (2 Timothy 2:15 *NASB*). We share a special bond with you because of our love of God's Word.

Looking forward to hearing from you,

The Precept Team

ESV

PRECEPT UPON PRECEPT®

English Standard Version

1 John and 2&3 John

HOW TO KNOW YOU HAVE ETERNAL LIFE

Originally published as:

1 JOHN AND 2&3 JOHN
How to Know You Have Eternal Life

PRECEPT UPON PRECEPT®

English Standard Version

1 JOHN
and
2&3 JOHN

HOW TO KNOW YOU HAVE ETERNAL LIFE

ISBN 978-1-62119-469-9
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2017—1st Edition

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Printed in South Africa
October 2026

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HELPFUL STUDY TOOLS

ARTHUR, KAY; ARTHUR, DAVID; DE LACY, PETE
How to Study Your Bible
Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 1994/2010

The New Inductive Study Bible—English Standard Version
Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 2013

Greek Word Study Tools

RECOMMENDED COMMENTARIES

BLUM, EDWIN A.; BARKER, GLENN W.
The Expositor's Bible Commentary: 1, 2 Peter; 1, 2, 3 John; Jude
Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996

BURDICK, DONALD W.
Everyman's Bible Commentary: The Epistles of John
Chicago, Illinois: Moody Press, 1970

STOTT, JOHN R. W.
Tyndale New Testament Commentaries: The Letters of John
Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1996

WALVOORD, JOHN F.; ZUCK, ROY B., EDS.
The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament
Wheaton, Illinois: Victor Books, 1983-c1985

RECOMMENDED SOFTWARE

Logos Bible Software
Powerful search engines and up to 4,000 electronic Bible study resources (commentaries, lexicons, Bible dictionaries etc.) make it fast and easy to do simple and complex searches of multiple sources, then pull materials together for orderly presentation—excellent for word and topical studies based on English or original Hebrew and Greek. Available at www.logos.com.

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LESSON ONE
1 John Overview and 2 & 3 John

THIS LESSON INCORPORATES
The following located in the Appendix:
Observation Worksheets of 1 John
"1 John at a Glance"

Oh, how those who claim to be Christians need to understand the messages of John's three letters!

DAY ONE

God's Word is truth and it cannot be comprehended merely by natural means. God's truth is revealed by His Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:9-14). Therefore, whenever you study God's Word, begin with prayer, asking God by His Spirit to open the eyes of your understanding and to lead you and guide you into truth.

1. We'll begin this week's lesson with an **overview** of 1 John. The purpose of the overview is to help you understand the context of the book and, thus, how the author achieves his purpose for writing.

   If you have never done a Precept™ course before, we suggest you take time to read the chapters entitled "The Rule of Context—Context Rules!" and "Getting the Big Picture" in *How to Study Your Bible.* This will give you the big picture of 1 John and familiarize you with some of the terms we will use in this study.

2. Using the Observation Worksheets located in the Appendix, read 1 John 1:1-4 and circle *we.* What do you learn about "we"?

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Although the author's name is not mentioned in this book, it has been accepted since the early church fathers that the Apostle John is the author. John had been with Jesus—seen Him, touched Him. You can read more about this when you are directed to do commentary work.

3. Now read all of 1 John and mark each use of *write* and *writing*. Then answer the following:

   a. Why did John write what he did?

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b. What did he say he wrote about?

c. Who did he write to?

DAY TWO

1. Begin today in prayer, and then read 1 John again. Mark each mention of those John is writing to, the recipients. You might shade them orange. Notice the pronouns "you" and "your."

   Summarize below what you learn about them.

2. As you observed what the author wrote and why and the facts about the recipients, did you notice any words or phrases that the author repeated? If so, list them below.

Well, Beloved, you've begun! There are hundreds of thousands around the world who would tell you that Precept Upon Precept is the best and most comprehensive study they've ever done. They would tell you that their lives have never been the same. Eventually these skills will become second nature! So friend, press on.

DAY THREE

1. Today you will read 1 John two times and mark the following key words, each in a distinctive way.

   a. The first time you read 1 John, mark *sin** and *know.*

   b. The second time, mark *love** and *abide.*

   *Indicates words with marking suggestions on the back of this workbook.

2. On the next page, you'll find the chart "Key Words in 1 John." When you finish marking the key words, record on the chart the approximate number of times each word is used or repeated in each chapter. Also, note the total number of times each is used in the book. Don't stress about an exact count. The purpose of this chart is to see emphasis of the various subjects through repetition of key words.

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KEY WORDS IN 1 JOHN

Chapter	Sin	Know	Love	Abide
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
Total				

3. What do you observe about the content of 1 John from looking at the "Key Words in 1 John" chart?

4. In the Appendix you'll find "1 John at a Glance." An At a Glance chart is a tool that helps you "see" the overview of a book.

   You have already marked and answered some questions about why John wrote, what he wrote, and who he wrote this letter to. Now review Day 1, number three to see what you learned about *write* and *writing.* Then do the following:

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a. Record why John wrote in the space provided for the "Purpose" on the "1 John at a Glance" chart.

b. Read 1 John 5:13 again. Record what John wrote about in the space provided for the Book Theme on the "1 John at a Glance" chart.

c. What was happening when John wrote this letter? Record this under "Historical setting" on "1 John at a Glance."

5. Read the introductory remarks in commentaries about 1 John. Don't go beyond the author, the main theme, and the purpose of this letter.

DAY FOUR

Now that we have the overview, the big picture of 1 John, let's see what 2 and 3 John say. Since these letters are only one chapter each, we don't need an overview.

We'll begin by observing 2 John.

1. Use the 2 John Observation Worksheet at the end of this lesson. Look for words you marked in 1 John and other repeated words.

   For instructions on observing a chapter, read the chapter entitled "Focusing in on the Details" in *How to Study Your Bible,* or read "How to Do a Chapter Study," found in the Appendix of this Precept Upon Precept® book.

2. At the end of this lesson, you'll find "2 John at a Glance."

   a. Using words from the text, summarize the book theme or main subject of the letter.

   b. Now summarize the theme or main subject of the paragraphs listed on the At a Glance chart. Again, use words from the text.

3. Why do you think this letter was written? Record this under "Purpose" on "2 John at a Glance."

4. Does the text tell you anything about the Historical Setting of 2 John? If so, record it on "2 John at a Glance."

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5. How does 2 John compare with 1 John?

DAY FIVE

1. Today let's move to 3 John.
   a. Observe the letter, using the Observation Worksheet at the end of this lesson.
   b. Fill out "3 John at a Glance."
   c. How does it compare with 1 and 2 John?

2. How do you think the three epistles (letters) of John relate to our times?

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3. Read any information commentaries give on 2 and 3 John. Note your insights.

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2 JOHN
Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

THE elder to the elect lady and her children, whom I love in truth, and not only I, but also all who know the truth,

2 because of the truth that abides in us and will be with us forever:

3 Grace, mercy, and peace will be with us, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ the Father's Son, in truth and love.

4 I rejoiced greatly to find some of your children walking in the truth, just as we were commanded by the Father.

5 And now I ask you, dear lady—not as though I were writing you a new commandment, but the one we have had from the beginning—that we love one another.

6 And this is love, that we walk according to his commandments; this is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, so that you should walk in it.

7 For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. Such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist.

8 Watch yourselves, so that you may not lose what we have worked for, but may win a full reward.

9 Everyone who goes on ahead and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God. Whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son.

10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house or give him any greeting,

11 for whoever greets him takes part in his wicked works.

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12 Though I have much to write to you, I would rather not use paper and ink. Instead I hope to come to you and talk face to face, so that our joy may be complete.

13 The children of your elect sister greet you.

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2 JOHN AT A GLANCE

Book Theme:

	Paragraph Themes
Author:	**1-2**
Purpose:	**3**
Key Words:	**4**
	7-12
Historical Setting:	**13**

3 JOHN
Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

THE elder to the beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth.

2 Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, as it goes well with your soul.

3 For I rejoiced greatly when the brothers came and testified to your truth, as indeed you are walking in the truth.

4 I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.

5 Beloved, it is a faithful thing you do in all your efforts for these brothers, strangers as they are,

6 who testified to your love before the church. You will do well to send them on their journey in a manner worthy of God.

7 For they have gone out for the sake of the name, accepting nothing from the Gentiles.

8 Therefore we ought to support people like these, that we may be fellow workers for the truth.

9 I have written something to the church, but Diotrephes, who likes to put himself first, does not acknowledge our authority.

10 So if I come, I will bring up what he is doing, talking wicked nonsense against us. And not content with that, he refuses to welcome the brothers, and also stops those who want to and puts them out of the church.

11 Beloved, do not imitate evil but imitate good. Whoever does good is from God; whoever does evil has not seen God.

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12 Demetrius has received a good testimony from everyone, and from the truth itself. We also add our testimony, and you know that our testimony is true.

13 I had much to write to you, but I would rather not write with pen and ink.

14 I hope to see you soon, and we will talk face to face.

15 Peace be to you. The friends greet you. Greet the friends, each by name.

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3 JOHN AT A GLANCE

Book Theme:

Author:

Purpose:

Key Words:

Historical Setting:

Paragraph Themes
1
2-4
5-8
9-10
11-12
13-14
15

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Appendix

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EXPLANATIONS OF THE ENGLISH STANDARD VERSION BIBLE TEXT FORMAT

Paragraphs are designated by bold face numbers or letters. These were determined by the translators.

In the New Testament, **Old Testament quotes** are indented.

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1 JOHN 1
Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

THAT which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—
2 the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us—
3 that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.
4 And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.
5 This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.
6 If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.
7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.
8 If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
10 If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

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1 JOHN AT A GLANCE

Book Theme

Author:

Date:

Key Words:

Purpose:

Historical Setting:

Chapter Themes

1
2
3
4
5

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What I Can Know	How I Can Know It

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HOW TO DO A CHAPTER STUDY
LET'S GET STARTED!

*A **chapter study** helps you to focus in on the details in the chapter to better understand what the author is saying. Each of the skills is used to bring important points to light.*

- LOOK FOR THE 5 Ws AND H

  Read the text asking the 5 Ws and H—*Who*, *What*, *When*, *Where*, *Why*, *How*. For example, when studying John 1, read the text asking questions like:

  Who is this about?
  When?
  Where was the Word?
  Who was the Word?
  What did the Word do?

  Don't expect every verse or chapter to answer all the 5 Ws and H about a particular subject or person, but you should read with a questioning mind-set.

- MARK KEY WORDS AND PHRASES

  Marking key words and phrases and making lists help you to answer the 5 Ws and H.

  KEY WORDS are repeated words within a text which are vital to its meaning.

  Mark in a distinctive way each key word or phrase in the chapter along with its pronouns and synonyms. Use colors and/or symbols.

  Example: ***Word*** is a repeated word that is key to understanding John 1.

- LISTS

  The next step is to list what the chapter says about each of the key words. Look at each place you marked a key word and list what the text says.

  A LIST is a compilation of the facts given about a particular word or person. It gives the 5 Ws and H (who, what, when, where, why, how) about that word or person. Use words from the text.

  A list about the ***Word*** from John 1 begins this way:

  was in the beginning, v. 1
  was with God, v. 1
  was God, v. 1
  was in the beginning with God, v. 2

- MARK AND EVALUATE:

  CONTRASTS — point out differences. To mark a contrast, put a symbol in the margin by the verse(s), such as .

  John 1:17 *For the **Law** was given through Moses; **grace** and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.*

  But, *however*, or *nevertheless* might indicate a contrast.

  John 4:2: *…Jesus Himself was not baptizing, **but** His disciples were….*

  COMPARISONS — point out similarities. To mark a comparison, put a symbol in the margin by the verse(s), such as .

  John 10:9 *I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved....*

  Sometimes *like* or *as* indicate a comparison.

  John 3:14-15: ***As** Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; so that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life.*

  TERMS OF CONCLUSION — show that a conclusion or summary is being made. These help us understand *why*. Look for the words signifying a conclusion or result such as ***therefore***, *for this reason*, and *finally*.

  John 12:50: *I know that His commandment is eternal life; **therefore** the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has told Me.* 

  EXPRESSIONS OF TIME — give timing, sequence of events, or progression. Look for words such as *then*, *after*, *when*, *until*, t*he day of....*

  John 1:2 *He was **in the beginning** with God.* 

- DENTIFY SUBJECTS OR THEMES

  Identify main subjects, events, or points of a chapter by observing it paragraph by paragraph. Paragraphs can be shown with boldface type for the first verse number of a paragraph, by a paragraph symbol, or by an indention at the beginning of a paragraph.

  Read each paragraph, and in the margin list the event, subject, or main point of the paragraph.

  John 1:6-8

  John testified about the Light

  6 *There came a man sent from God, whose name was John.*
  7 He came as a witness, to testify about the Light, so that all might believe through him.
  8 He was not the Light, but he came to testify about the Light.

To learn more about doing a chapter study and other inductive Bible study skills, we encourage you to keep on hand a copy of *How to Study Your Bible*. If you don't yet have a copy, you can order one by visiting shop.precept.org.za or calling +27(021) 531 1836.

ABOUT PRECEPT

PRECEPT was raised up by God for the sole purpose of establishing people in God's Word to produce reverence for Him. It serves as an arm of the church without respect to denomination. God has enabled Precept to reach across denominational lines without compromising the truths of His inerrant Word. We believe every word of the Bible was inspired and given to man as all that is necessary for him to become mature and thoroughly equipped for every good work of life. This ministry does not seek to impose its doctrines on others, but rather to direct people to the Master Himself, who leads and guides by His Spirit into all truth through a systematic study of His Word. The ministry produces a variety of Bible studies and holds conferences and intensive Training Workshops designed to establish attendees in the Word through Inductive Bible Study.

Jack Arthur and his wife, Kay, founded Precept in 1970. Kay and the ministry staff of writers produce *Precept Upon Precept* studies, *In & Out* studies, *Lord* series studies, the *New Inductive Study Series* studies, *40-Minute* studies, and *Discover 4 Yourself Inductive Bible Studies for Kids*. From years of diligent study and teaching experience, Kay and the staff have developed these unique, inductive courses that are now used in nearly 185 countries and 70 languages.

ANSWERING THE CALL

Now that you've studied and prayerfully considered the scriptures, is there something new for you to believe or do, or did it move you to make a change in your life? It's one of the many amazing and supernatural results of being in His life-changing Word—God speaks to us. At Precept South Africa, we believe that we have heard God speak about our part in the Great Commission. He has told us in His Word to make disciples by teaching people how to study His Word. If you share our passion for establishing people in God's Word, we invite you to join us! Will you prayerfully consider giving monthly to the ministry? To do so, you can make a payment online at *precept.org.za/Support_Us* or make a direct deposit into our account:

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Please pray about how the Lord might lead you to answer the call.

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