Precept™

Precept upon Precept NAS

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

PRECEPT UPON PRECEPT®

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®

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

© 2017 Precept Ministries International. All rights reserved.
This material is published by and is the sole property of Precept Ministries International of Chattanooga, Tennessee. No part of this publication may be reproduced, translated, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.

Precept, Precept Ministries International, Precept Ministries International The Inductive Bible Study People, the Plumb Bob design, Precept Upon Precept, In & Out, Sweeter than Chocolate!, Cookies on the Lower Shelf, Precepts For Life, Precepts From God's Word and Transform Student Ministries are trademarks of Precept Ministries International.

Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are from the New American Standard Bible, ©1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by the Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. www.lockman.org

2017—1st Edition

PRECEPT SOUTH AFRICA
www.precept.org.za | support@precept.org.za
Tel. +27 (021) 531-1836

Printed in South Africa
October 2026



CONTENTS

PAGE	LESSONS
1	LESSON ONE: 1 John Overview, 2 & 3 John
17	LESSON TWO: 1 John 1
27	LESSON THREE: 1 John 2
37	LESSON FOUR: 1 John 2
47	LESSON FIVE: 1 John 3
59	LESSON SIX: 1 John 4
69	LESSON SEVEN: 1 John 5

	APPENDIX
82	Explanations of the New American Standard Bible Text Format
83	Observation Worksheets
95	1 John at a Glance
97	What I Can Know and How I Can Know It
99	How to Do a Chapter Study

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—New American Standard Bible
Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 2000

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.

PRECEPT SOUTH AFRICA
187 Ringwood Drive, Pinelands
Tel. +27 (021) 531-1836 | support@precept.org.za

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"?

© 2017 Precept Ministries International

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, written,* and *writing*. Then answer the following:

   a. Why did John write what he did?

© 2017 Precept Ministries International

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.

© 2017 Precept Ministries International

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.

© 2017 Precept Ministries International

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, written, writing.* Then do the following:

© 2017 Precept Ministries International

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."

© 2017 Precept Ministries International

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?

© 2017 Precept Ministries International

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

© 2017 Precept Ministries International

2 JOHN
Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

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

2 for the sake of the truth which 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 Son of the Father, in truth and love.

4 I was very glad to find *some* of your children walking in truth, just as we have received commandment *to do* from the Father.

5 Now I ask you, lady, not as though *I were* writing to you a new commandment, but the one which 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, that you should walk in it.

7 For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ *as* coming in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist.

8 Watch yourselves, that you do not lose what we have accomplished, but that you may receive a full reward.

9 Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he 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, and do not give him a greeting;

11 for the one who gives him a greeting participates in his evil deeds.

© 2017 Precept Ministries International

12 Though I have many things to write to you, I do not want to *do so* with paper and ink; but I hope to come to you and speak face to face, so that your joy may be made full.

13 The children of your chosen sister greet you.

© 2017 Precept Ministries International

2 JOHN AT A GLANCE

Book Theme:

Author:

Purpose:

Key Words:

Historical Setting:

Paragraph Themes
1-3
4-6
7-11
12
13

© 2017 Precept Ministries International

3 JOHN
Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

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

2 Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers.

3 For I was very glad when brethren came and testified to your truth, *that is,* how you are walking in truth.

4 I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth.

5 Beloved, you are acting faithfully in whatever you accomplish for the brethren, and especially *when they are* strangers;

6 and they have testified to your love before the church. You will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God.

7 For they went out for the sake of the Name, accepting nothing from the Gentiles.

8 Therefore we ought to support such men, so that we may be fellow workers with the truth.

9 I wrote something to the church; but Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them, does not accept what we say.

10 For this reason, if I come, I will call attention to his deeds which he does, unjustly accusing us with wicked words; and not satisfied with this, he himself does not receive the brethren, either, and he forbids those who desire *to do so* and puts *them* out of the church.

11 Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. The one who does good is of God; the one who does evil has not seen God.

© 2017 Precept Ministries International

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

13 I had many things to write to you, but I am not willing to write *them* to you with pen and ink;

14 but I hope to see you shortly, and we will speak face to face.

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

© 2017 Precept Ministries International

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

© 2017 Precept Ministries International

Appendix

© 2017 Precept Ministries International

EXPLANATIONS OF THE NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE TEXT FORMAT

Italics are used in the text to indicate words which are not found in the original Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek but implied by it.

Small caps in the New Testament are used in the text to indicate Old Testament quotations or obvious references to Old Testament texts. It should be noted that modern rules for the indication of direct quotation were not used in biblical times; thus, the ancient writer would use exact quotations or references to quotation without specific indication of such.

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

© 2017 Precept Ministries International

1 JOHN 1
Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

WHAT was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life—

2 and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us—

3 what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.

4 These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete.

5 This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.

6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him and *yet* walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth;

7 but if we walk in the Light as He Himself 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 that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us.

9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.

© 2017 Precept Ministries International

1 JOHN AT A GLANCE

Book Theme

Author:

Date:

Key Words:

Purpose:

Historical Setting:

Chapter Themes
1
2
3
4
5

© 2017 Precept Ministries International

What I Can Know	How I Can Know It

© 2017 Precept Ministries International

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:

PRECEPT MINISTRIES
Standard Bank, Rondebosch Branch
Acc Nr: 078 203 716
Reference: ATC and your name.

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

PURCHASE WITH PURPOSE

When you buy books, studies, videos and audios, please purchase from Precept through our online store (precept.org.za/online store). We realize you may find some of these materials at a lower price through for-profit retailers, but when you buy through us, the proceeds support the work that we do to:

- Translate more studies into other languages
- Support efforts in South Africa and throughout Africa
- Train pastors and Bible Study Leaders in South Africa and Africa
- Equip people of all ages with Bible Study skills that transform lives

When you buy from Precept, you help to establish people in God's Word!