

faith, hope, love



1 John 4:1-21
Inductive Discovery Lesson 19

Believing Love Do you want to make a difference in this world by being different? When faith is firmly rooted in God's unchangeable love, it isn't afraid to stand its ground and say, "I believe." So...do you know what you believe?

When it comes to spiritual beliefs and practice, our culture is saturated with options and most people lean into whatever makes them feel good—or at least less bad—about themselves. Worldly wisdom says find what works for you, and that's what is true. And truth be told, sometimes Christians operate on that same principle. That's why John cautions us to carefully test every teaching by the Word of God to know if it's true. Believing love is not afraid to ask questions or be questioned, but it doesn't waver or drift with the tide. Believing love knows where the answers are found.

1 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. **2** By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, **3** and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already. **4** Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. **5** They are from the world; therefore they speak from the world, and the world listens to them. **6** We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. **8** Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. **9** In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. **10** In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. **11** Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. **12** No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us. **13** By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. **14** And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.

15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. **16** So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. **17** By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as he is so also are we in

this world. **18** There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love. **19** We love because he first loved us. **20** If anyone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. **21** And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.

OBSERVE

Start by reading the entire chapter at least once. Now read each section and record what you see. **Use the first column to keep track of what you find in the Bible passage.** (Who? What? When? Where?) Briefly describe, *in your own words*, what it says.

Use the second column to keep track of information you get from other sources such as scripture references, a dictionary, concordance, maps, etc. You can also use this section to jot down **your thoughts, impressions or questions.** *Do your best to follow John's train of thought.* Does he use a word or phrase repeatedly, or emphasize a particular topic? Are his words urgent? Encouraging? Commanding? What issues or problems does he address? What questions does he ask?

1 John 4:1-6

Facts from the passage:

My Research and Personal Observations:

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1 John 4:7-14

Facts from the passage:

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Facts from the passage:

Facts from the passage:

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My Research and Personal Observations:

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1 John 4:15-21

Facts from the passage:

This image shows a full page of primary-ruled paper. It features multiple sets of horizontal dashed lines spaced evenly down the page, providing a guide for handwriting practice. The lines are light gray and extend across the entire width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings present.

My Research and Personal Observations:

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Key Words and Phrases

Write the definition of the following words and phrases. Use a regular dictionary or a Bible concordance with Greek Dictionary if you have one.

“test the spirits” (vs. 1) _____

“propitiation” (vs.10) _____

“confesses” (vs.2,3,15) _____

“believe/believed” (vs.4,16) _____

INTERPRET

Look for a spiritual lesson. Be careful not to read into the Bible an idea that is not there. Examine each verse in light of the verses around it. To help you find a spiritual lesson, ask questions such as: Is there a command to obey? Is there a promise to claim? Is there a condition to that promise? Is there a warning to heed? Is there an example to follow or avoid? **State the lesson in one simple sentence.**

APPLY

We don't study the Bible just to gather information—we want to spiritually grow. Our heart needs to be open to change. The only way to move truth off the pages of your Bible and into your life is to **put it into action.**

To apply a spiritual lesson, we must examine ourselves and take deliberate steps to do something with what we have learned. Ask yourself: Is this a new insight for me, or does it reinforce what I already know? What does it challenge me to do? Does it point out error in my attitude or actions? What changes does it require? Think of how the lesson relates to you and what specific course of action you will take. **Write your application in the form of a question to make it personal.**

1 John 4:1-6

Lesson: _____

Application: _____

_____ ?

1 John 4:7-14

Lesson: _____

Application: _____

_____ ?

1 John 4:15-21

Lesson: _____

Application: _____

_____ ?

Summary

Write a simple sentence that summarizes what the chapter is about. _____

Give a title to the chapter to help you remember what it says.

Up close and personal

**We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us.
God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God,
and God abides in him.**

1 John 4:16

Memorize God's Word

Choose the translation you prefer to memorize the verse in and re-write it here.

Meditate on God's Word

While you memorize this verse, let it work into your heart and mind. Scripture meditation is like a good cup of tea—the longer it steeps, the richer the flavor. So give yourself permission to slowly savor God's Word! Use the questions below (like a tea bag) to keep dipping into this verse.

Challenge alert: You won't always see an obvious answer directly from the verse. Just *think and pray* about it and share what the Lord brings to your heart and mind.

Look up. What does this verse teach you about God? (For example, look for signs of His character, His attributes, His works, His promises.)

Look around. What does this verse teach you about the world and people in general?

Look within. What does this verse teach you about yourself?

Look ahead. Does this verse give you reason to hope? Briefly share your thoughts.

Look alive! Given the opportunity, how would you express the truth found in this verse to someone who needs to hear it?

 Make God's Word Your Prayer

As you memorize and meditate on this verse, pray it back to the Lord. Let the Holy Spirit examine your heart, increase your understanding, and help you to pray. Ask Him for faith and strength to *act* on the truth of God's Word.



God's Word Bearing Fruit

For you personally, what has been the most important lesson from this chapter? How will you put what you have learned into practice?

Something to Think About . . .

Love is not an attribute of God, it *is* God.
Whatever God is, love is.
If your conception of love does not agree with justice and judgment,
and purity and holiness,
then your idea of love is wrong.

- Oswald Chambers -

[illegible]

